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POETS AND WARRIORS: CONSTRUCTIONS OF HEROISM IN SOUTHEY, WORDSWORTH, AND COLERIDGE 1789-1815

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate

School of The Ohio State University

By

David Andrew Evans, M.A.

*****

The Ohio State University
1998

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ABSTRACT

Critical discussions of British Romantic-era heroism have typically focused on the Byronic hero and other Romantic hero-types: egocentric, Promethean figures characterized by a marked separation from society at large. These discussions often overlook a cultural emphasis on martial heroism engendered by the British wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. These wars prompted many politically driven writers to invoke British martial figures when defining or defending their political stances, a practice that demonstrated the connection between politics and the construction of heroism. This dissertation examines that connection as it existed in British poetry between the storming of the Bastille and Wellington's victory at Waterloo. It focuses on Robert Southey, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge: all poets whose work engaged the pressing socio-political issues of the time and participated in a debate over what constitutes heroic activity. It primarily examines martial heroism, describing the writers' changing attitudes toward the British military, but also considers the poet as hero. In so doing it reveals both the high degree to which non-Byronic conceptions of heroism were vital to contemporary culture and the significant role played by martial heroes in contemporary political discourse. Moreover, by providing a thorough account of how these poets' attitudes toward British martial efforts changed, it contributes to an understanding of how, during those tumultuous years, they positioned and repositioned themselves with regard to the British nation-state.

The study also highlights the ways in which issues involving family and home, or the domestic sphere, informed contemporary conceptions of heroism. It argues that these
three writers, like Edmund Burke, perceived the nation as an extension of the family, and that their changing political views were consistently informed by and reflective of the high value they placed on stable households. It reveals their insistence that martial heroism be informed by commitment to the domestic sphere and shows the home to be at the center of Wordsworth's vision of the poet-hero. By examining the intersections of poet, hero, home, and nation-state, the dissertation seeks ultimately to broaden current notions of Romantic-era heroism and to make more clear contemporary conceptions of the goals, methods, and power of poets and verse.
Dedicated to Leigh, with thanks for her love and support
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And special thanks to my parents, Linda, and Joe—who have helped me from the start.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: National Heroes--The Cultural Context</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Southeyan Heroes, the Domestic, and the Pattern of Apostasy</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Wordsworth, War, and the British Martial Hero</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: Coleridge and the Citizen-Soldier</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Heroes of Truth</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of References</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

In "The Monument Glut," a 1995 piece that appeared in the New York Times Magazine, James Reston Jr. questions the appropriateness of the recent wave of war monuments proposed for or constructed in Washington, D.C. Towards its end he writes:

As the soul of the nation, the nation's capital should reflect the breadth of the society's achievements. But coming to Washington is turning into a martial experience: a contemplation of wars won, lost and stalemated. . . . It is as if America recognizes only one type of hero. What happened to the American hero as scientist? As religious leader? As artist or musician? Shouldn't a memorial to the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. take precedence over black Revolutionary War veterans on the mall? (49)

These remarks reflect assumptions that drive this dissertation project: that conceptions of heroism inform national identity, and that, consequently, they constitute a vital facet of political discourse. Reston implies that an inappropriate standard of heroism could negatively affect America's direction, and his critique of Washington's war memorials reveals the social and political value of constructions of heroism. He aims not simply to alter Washington's landscape but also to challenge the military focus of the American "superpower."

Reston's critique stems from the powerful but malleable conceptions of heroism that can exist in a nation or other social or political group. Recognizing and celebrating behaviors as heroic can encourage those behaviors and empower the people who perform them, a phenomenon that, since all members of a society are typically not in agreement on what is and is not heroic, makes heroes and concepts of heroism sites of political struggle. Indeed, such differences in opinion lead to the editorializing evident in
Reston's piece. His preference for a memorial to Dr. King over one to war veterans shows that he considers Dr. King more heroic, which in turn emphasizes passive resistance over armed political confrontation. However, despite a typical lack of consensus as to what constitutes heroic activity, it is reasonable to assert that a dominant societal conception of heroism often arises, against which competing notions must position themselves. A ready example from Western culture is reflected in the Horatian slogan "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori." ¹ in response to which Wilfred Owen wrote his famous anti-war poem "Dulce Et Decorum Est." The idea that dying in the service of one's country is always heroic is remarkably powerful—consider the surge of war memorials described by Reston—and it is this very power that writers like Reston and Owen are interested in opposing.² If they could change that dominant conception of heroism, they could effect significant societal change by challenging their respective nations' war policies and practices.³ Such an attempt is, clearly, a patently political activity.

In this dissertation I seek to explore such a connection between politics and the construction of heroism as it existed in Britain at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. In so doing I will focus on three poets—Robert Southey, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge—whose work both responded to the pressing socio-political issues of that time and participated in a debate over what constitutes heroic behavior. Because the wars with France were a primary political concern during these authors' most productive poetic periods, and because those wars spurred national debate as to what constitutes heroic behavior, I will focus primarily

¹While Horace's tone in the original can be read as ironic, British culture has generally accepted this as a sincere sentiment.
²Implicit in their works is a desire to challenge "[t]he old lie" (Owen 1. 27) that "[t]he old lie" (Owen, Collected Letters 500).
³As Reston points out, America's Vietnam experience has challenged this conception of heroism, and the increasing number of war memorials can be seen as aimed toward addressing that challenge.
on martial heroism, tracking the writers' changing attitudes toward the British military. However, because each of them ascribed substantial power to writers and attempted to influence national, even military, events with their pens, I will also consider the poet as hero and how that figure relates to conceptions of martial heroism. The study has three broad goals. First, it seeks to present for the first time in one place a thorough account of these poets' changing attitudes toward the British military and its opposition to Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. While I cannot claim it to be definitive, it features valuable information that is often overlooked in discussions of these authors' political development. Second, it works to establish the degree to which the martial hero was a figure in contemporary political discourse. Despite the currency and political utility of the martial hero, discussions of British Romantic-era heroism most often consider Byronic hero-types; this project insists that non-Byronic conceptions of heroism were vital to contemporary culture. Finally, by exploring the changing ways in which these writers presented the British martial hero, as well as their ideas concerning the poet-hero, it contributes to an understanding of how they positioned themselves with regard to the British nation and nation-state. Central to this final concern is an understanding of how these writers conceived of the connections between home, nation, and state, as well as how these entities relate to their notions of heroism.4

While these three authors are certainly not the only British Romantic writers relevant to these concerns, they will be the focus of my work for a number of reasons.

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4The concepts of "nation" and "nation-state" are, of course, currently being critically contested, with particular emphasis placed on the relationship between nationalism and modernity, and that between the nation and the state (see, for example, Anderson; Anthony D. Smith's The Ethnic Origins of Nations [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986]; and Liah Greenfeld's Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity [Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1992]). Since this study focuses on late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain, I will follow Coleridge in using "nation" to refer to the British people as opposed to their governing bodies, or the "state" (a more thorough discussion of Coleridge's conceptions of "nation" and "state" appears in Chapter 1). I will also use "nation-state" to refer to Britain as a functioning whole where "nation" and "state" interact; in so doing I follow Kenneth Cmiel, who writes that "the nation-state is a specific figuration that champions a correlation between a collective people and a particular government that rules a bounded space" (185).
First, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey were friends and sometimes neighbors, and Coleridge and Southey were brothers-in-law. Despite their occasional protests against such classification, these three came to be known as the core of the "lake school" of British Romantic literature, and their personal and professional relationships are conducive to examining them as a group. Second, and more important than their personal relationships or the way they have been grouped by literary historians, is that each of them participated extensively in the public discourse concerning contemporary socio-political issues important to Britain. The three were publishing often between the storming of the Bastille and Wellington's victory at Waterloo, and they were recognized by reviewers as contributing to discussions relevant to British society and politics. Moreover, all of them embraced but then rejected republican, or radical, politics, developments that are readily apparent in their portrayals of martial heroism.

Military figures were rhetorically important to these and other writers because the wars with France provided a conspicuous site of political struggle. Loyalists and oppositionists, especially before French aggression could no longer be seen as a potentially liberating force, were defined in part by their attitudes toward British martial efforts. Because military forces are typically seen as executing the will of the state, writers could position themselves politically through their representations of British and French martial figures. Indeed, the association of certain military figures with particular political stances was to some degree institutionalized. It was known in 1794, for

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5Works of other authors that may seem immediately appropriate for in-depth consideration can serve as points of comparison and contrast. William Blake created "alternative" heroes to help convey political messages, but his writings did not enjoy a broad readership and he did not abandon his radical principles. Percy Shelley and Lord Byron, of course, are also well known for constructing heroes, but, like Blake, they did not come to support loyalist causes, and most of their writing appeared after Waterloo, when the threat of French invasion was no longer a potent influence on British political discourse. Further discussion of the Byronic hero and its relationship to the heroes with which I am primarily concerned appears later in this introduction, while a consideration of Shelley's conception of the social value of poetry and the poet appears in Chapter Five.

6I use the term "oppositionists" to refer to both reformists and radicals.
example, that Lord Hood was a loyalist hero while Admiral Howe was favored by the Whigs (Woodring, *Politics and Coleridge* 83), and it was a common oppositionist practice to celebrate such heroes of the seventeenth-century English civil war as John Hampden and Algernon Sidney. Because of their political currency, martial heroes could and did serve as powerful rhetorical tools.

Of course, a degree of uncertainty attends the concept of an author's using martial heroes to convey political messages. Arguing for such a process implies a textual stability that poststructuralist thought contests as well as an acceptance of authorial intentionality. Despite the degree to which these concepts have come into question, however, they are essential to this enterprise and others like it, for to argue that an author is consciously making a political statement in a written work is to assume the validity of both intentionality and some degree of textual stability. Certainly, the writers of the time felt themselves capable of communicating political beliefs to readers, a point that helps justify this study of how they sought to do so.

Significantly, the writers I will examine could hope for a broader and newer readership than their predecessors. The eighteenth-century rise in literacy rates contributed to the proliferation of contemporary British political writing; loyalists, reformists, and radicals sought to gain the support of the increasingly literate middle and, to a far lesser degree, lower classes. The heightened literacy rates enhanced the opportunity to influence readers through presentations of heroism. Since even many of

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7 This dissertation subscribes to a core belief of what Jonathan Arac and Harriet Ritvo describe as a macropolitical approach to literary studies: "Literature, and any other writing in a culture, cannot be assured the innocence and purity of radical autonomy, yet it is not on that account simply to be condemned. The relation of writing to power makes it possible for the activity of writing and the products of writing to help bring about change. Language is socially formed, and thus to some degree limited, and even predetermined, in its possibilities; yet language is also socially formative" (1-2). I would also note that while Arac and Ritvo's assertions are relatively recent (1991), similar assumptions seem to drive important studies that precede theirs, including James K. Chandler's *Wordsworth's Second Nature: A Study of the Poetry and Politics* (1984) and Nicholas Roe's *Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years* (1988).

8 For the increase in literacy rates see Altick.
the illiterate were likely aware of the traditional association of heroism with martial valor performed in Britain's name, loyalist authors could confirm in print what new readers had probably heard previously in church, at another community function, or from a recruiter. Simultaneously, though, new readers would not have had an established sense of literary propriety and hence may have been more open than seasoned readers to oppositionist variations of heroic themes. An inviting audience awaited the poems and pamphlets of the day.

At stake in the rhetorical struggle for political support was nothing less than Britain itself. Would it remain a monarchy or become a democracy? Would it be war-like or peaceful? Would it seek continuity or reform? These writers sought to determine the nature of Britain's "political space," to which Laura Berlant refers as the "'National Symbolic'" and describes as "not merely juridical, territorial (jus soli [place of birth]), genetic (jus sanguinis [nationality of fathers]), linguistic, or experimental, but some tangled cluster of these" (4-5, her emph.). She further asserts:

Law dominates the field of citizenship, constructing technical definitions of the citizen's right, duties, and obligations. But the National Symbolic also aims to link regulation to desire, harnessing affect to political life through the production of "national fantasy." By "fantasy" I mean to designate how national culture becomes local--through the images, narratives, monuments, and sites that circulate through personal/collective consciousness. (5)

Since heroes have long been central to national cultures, to national fantasies and their local ramifications, it is not surprising that the martial hero was a key figure in the struggle to (re)imagine Britain.

While a study of heroes is by no means a new venture, this project departs in important respects from much of the work that has been done in this area. Since it emphasizes the construction of heroism as a response to immediate and local socio-political phenomena, it proves different from much of the archetypal work that has been
done on heroism. Writers such as Joseph Campbell, Sir James George Frazer, Lord Raglan, Otto Rank, and G.R. Levy have explored heroic patterns and sought primarily to locate the source of these patterns in universal human needs and desires. This study, on the other hand, considers the heroes on which it focuses not as the products of their creators' superstitions or subconscious desires, but as elements of their authors' positions within the discourse surrounding the social and the political.

This study's embrace of a non-archetypal approach leads it to consider heroes clearly distinguishable from the Romantic and Byronic heroes so readily associated with the literature of the day. Fundamental assertions of archetypal criticism reveal the degree to which a Jungian approach is conducive to the study of Romantic and Byronic heroes. Campbell writes: "Stated in direct terms: the work of the hero is to slay the tenacious aspect of the father (dragon, ogre, king) and release from its ban the vital energies that will feed the universe" (352). The obvious Promethean overtones of this statement are also evident in Maud Bodkin's 1934 study, Archetypal Patterns in Poetry, where she describes the "hero-archetype" as "the projection of man's underlying sense of his own active nature" (241). She goes on to describe Paradise Lost as exhibiting contrary human impulses: "In the figure of Satan as hero, we may say, an objective form is given to the self of imaginative aspiration, or to the power-craving, while the overthrow of Satan, and his humiliation as infernal serpent, satisfies the counter movement of feeling toward the surrender of personal claims and the merging of the ego within a greater power" (244). She then speculates: "Can we go beyond this and venture to maintain that such an emotional pattern of self-assertion and abasement as corresponds to the form of tragedy is the deepest and most universal pattern that the hero-image can reflect?" (244).

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The connection between Milton's Satan, the "hero-archetype," and the Romantic hero is in turn made clear by Peter Thorslev, who maintains that the sensibility and Satanism of Romantic heroes distinguish them from others in the heroic literary tradition who fulfill the Aristotelian criteria of being simultaneously mortal and more than human, of featuring both a tragic flaw and extraordinary virtue (186-88). According to Thorslev, Romantic heroes have "almost infinite capacities for feeling" and a Satanistic tendency toward rebellious individualism (188-89). Their Satanism means that they fulfill what Bodkin calls the "devil archetype" (232) as well as the "hero-archetype"; they are thus fit subjects for archetypal analysis. In *The Romantic Agony*, for example, Mario Praz devotes a chapter to "The Metamorphoses of Satan," asserting "it was Byron who brought to perfection the rebel type, remote descendant of Milton's Satan" (61). And in *Byron and His Fictions* Peter J. Manning explores the Oedipal undertones of Byron's corpus, an undertaking that complements Campbell's association of heroes with father-slaying. Thorslev's study is not explicitly Jungian, but it too focuses on hero-types, showing the relationship of the Byronic hero to previous Romantic hero-types such as Faust and the noble outlaw. While I will not argue that the high degree to which Romantic and Byronic heroes are fit for archetypal criticism is the sole reason they are the heroes primarily associated with British Romantic literature—they are, after all, interesting and memorable characters—their status as the subjects of a once powerful critical school certainly contributed to their critical prominence.

This study is not archetypal; it is concerned with the political currency of constructions of heroism and how they relate to competing conceptions of the British nation-state. I will argue that central to these authors' notions of heroism are meaningful connections with the home and the nation, and that their insistence on such connections distinguishes their heroes from those known as "Romantic" or "Byronic." Thorslev writes at some length on the centrality of individualism to such heroes, stating:
the Romantic movement was a rebellion in the name of individualism, and there has perhaps always been an alliance between aggressive humanism, self-reliance, and Satanism, on the one hand, and God-reliance, total commitment to Absolutes, and consequent self-immolation on the other. Milton's Satan and Marlowe's Faustus share a common sin, the sin of *hubris*, but one must also admit that it is this very human pride or self-reliance which gives them the nobility of tragic heroes. (189)

For Thorslev, the Byronic hero differs from the Romantic hero in degree, not kind. The Byronic hero is the epitome of the Romantic hero, constructed from the same traditions that produced Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein, Johann Schiller's Karl Moor, and Emily Brontë's Heathcliff. Byron's heroes simply eclipsed these others in grandeur and cultural effect and were thus the most powerful of the Romantic heroes. Thorslev specifically discusses the individualism of Byronic heroes, stating "Byronic Heroes were individualists, not collectivists" (196), and he anticipates the significance of this for our concerns, contending that Byronic heroes were "far too individualistic ever to be seriously concerned with nationalism" (195). While we need not see Romantic or Byronic heroes as wholly individualistic--Walter Reed and Frederick Garber insist that the Romantic hero is ultimately unable to achieve complete separation from society, its history, and its values (Reed 10, 14-16; Garber 214-17)--a meaningful and conscious commitment to home and ultimately nation separates the heroes we will examine from Byronic and Romantic hero-types. Indeed, the contemporary martial figure that in Britain was most clearly aligned with the rebellious individualism that Thorslev describes was Napoleon, whom each of these authors came to oppose.

Anne Mellor contends that the Promethean tendency of Napoleon, Romantic heroes, and Byronic heroes to see the self as an agent of revolutionary change distinguishes the politics of "masculine" and "feminine" Romanticism. She writes:

10Northrop Frye also emphasizes the Byronic hero's separation from society, writing that "the so-called Byronic hero is . . . an outcast, a solitary much given to communing with untamed nature, and who thus represents the potentially expanding and liberating elements in that nature" (30-31; see also 41).
Feminine Romanticism differs markedly from masculine Romanticism in its attitude to the political process. In opposition to the revolutionary Promethean politics urged by the young Wordsworth and Coleridge, by Blake, Godwin and Percy Shelley, a program that advocated radical social change and utopian transformations of the social and political order, the women writers of the Romantic era offered an alternative program grounded on the trope of the family-politic, on the idea of the nation-state that evolves gradually and rationally under the mutual care and guidance of both mother and father. Frequently invoking Edmund Burke, they endorsed his concept of the organic development both of the mind and of the political body under benevolent parental control as the model for a successful human community, although . . . at the same time they challenged Burke's patriarchal sexual politics. (65)

Mellor rightly emphasizes that "the relationship between 'masculine' and 'feminine'
Romanticism is finally not one of structural opposition but rather of intersection along a fluid continuum," and that "[a]ny writer, male or female, could occupy the 'masculine' or the 'feminine' ideological or subject position, even within the same work" (4). Like Mellor's, this study will explore the dynamics of how the spheres of family, nation, and state interact; and like hers, it will challenge prevalent conceptions of the nature of Romantic political thought. However, by considering constructions of heroism, it will show that a brand of family-politic was used in the name of revolution and will highlight the degree to which Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge—even while young—emphasized the importance of home and family to national concerns.

Indeed, a primary focus of this study is the relationship between the political and domestic spheres, a relationship that Hannah Arendt describes as a product of the modern age and the rise of the nation-state. She argues that in Greek thought, in the age of the city-state, a sharp distinction existed between the home and the "polis," but that this distinction is lost to modern sensibility:

we see the body of peoples and political communities in the image of a family whose everyday affairs have to be taken care of by a gigantic, nation-wide administration of housekeeping. The scientific thought that corresponds to this development is no longer political science but "national economy" or "social economy" or Volkswirtschaft, all of which
indicate a kind of "collective housekeeping"; the collective of families economically organized into the facsimile of one super-human family is what we call "society," and its political form of organization is called "nation." We therefore find it difficult to realize that according to ancient thought on these matters, the very term "political economy" would have been a contradiction in terms: whatever was "economic," related to the life of the individual and the survival of the species, was a non-political, household affair by definition. (28-29)

She continues:

with the rise of society, that is, the rise of the 'household' (oikia) or of economic activities to the public realm, housekeeping and all matters pertaining formerly to the private sphere of the family have become a 'collective' concern. In the modern world, the two realms indeed constantly flow into each other like waves in the never-resting stream of the life process itself. (33)

As I will show, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge examined the relationship between household and politics, and the former was central to their evolving political positions and visions of heroism. Of particular interest to this study is the relationship between domesticity, or the concerns of the home, and the politically domestic, or the concerns of Britain. As Deidre Lynch notes, these concerns were most influentially broached by Edmund Burke, whose Reflections on the Revolution in France "aimed to homogenize the private and public meanings carried in the words 'home' and 'domestic'--to make mothering the type of domestic policy in both senses of that term, and to make home-life underwrite the authority of administrative institutions like the Home Office, as well as notions of a home-country" (45).¹¹ The politically domestic and the sphere of domesticity appear in these authors' constructions of heroism as impacting one another and influencing the fate of the nation.¹²

¹¹Lynch also notes that despite the matrocentric inflection of Burke's argument, his emphasis on the importance of entailed property, which went from fathers to sons, disinherited women from the national arena (46).

¹²For simplicity, I will use "domestic sphere" and "sphere of domesticity" to refer to the household, and I will use "politically domestic" when referring to issues involving Britain as opposed to the international community.
The first chapter examines contemporary political and cultural phenomena, characterizing how military figures were presented by advocates of opposing political positions. It describes some of the primary political controversies of the day and some of the various rhetorical approaches taken toward them. The second examines how Southey's presentations of martial heroes changed as his political thought grew increasingly loyalist; it shows the rhetorical value of heroic figures in political discourse and highlights the way in which Southey insisted that true heroism be meaningfully involved with the sphere of domesticity. The third continues to consider such issues as they appear in Wordsworth's work, focusing especially on his efforts to regulate heroism and establish a role for the poet in Britain's martial affairs. Chapter Four shows how Coleridge engaged the issues of heroism, home, nation, and state; and it examines the citizen-soldier as a figure who balances his concern for each. The final chapter considers an alternative to martial heroism, the poet-hero, especially in relation to Wordsworth's and Coleridge's careers; it closes by considering how their perception of the poet-hero was maintained by three significant later writers: Percy Shelley, Thomas Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold.
CHAPTER ONE

NATIONAL HEROES--THE CULTURAL CONTEXT

"England's war against the Revolution changed an age of sentiment to an age of politics."
(Carl Woodring, Politics in English Romantic Poetry, 87)

When William Hazlitt wrote that Wordsworth's was a "levelling" muse (233), he recognized a connection between the political and the poetic that dates at least as far back as Greek nationalist epics. As a glance at almost any periodical of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries makes clear, poetry was then an especially vital medium for the expression of political views and comprised an important part of the cultural context for contemporary, politically concerned writers and artists. Such writers benefited from a general ambivalence surrounding the nature of heroism that provided them an opportunity to negotiate in verse the constituent elements of the heroic. This chapter explores the roles played by poetic and other cultural constructions of heroism in promoting competing conceptions of the British nation-state. In so doing it describes the cultural milieu within which Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge worked; some of the rhetorical options readily available to them; and various ways that home and family were invoked in discourse concerned with British martial efforts.

The State of the Nation

Important to an understanding of how these authors approached their political writings is a conception of how the British nation-state was then perceived. Two
important contributions to the relatively recent and increasingly active critical consideration of English and British nationalisms are Gerald Newman's *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* and Linda Colley's *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*. These works share the goal of tracing the development of and explaining the reasons behind the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rise of nationalism in, respectively, England and Britain. However, and not surprisingly given the ambivalence surrounding the concept of the nation and their authors' focusing on different political entities, they feature very different arguments and emphases. Newman describes English nationalism as a primarily psychological and cultural phenomenon that rose in response to aristocratic oligarchic dominance, and that is necessarily egalitarian, though not necessarily anti-monarchical. He emphasizes cultural nationalism, tracing the rise of sincerity as a national ideal that countered the cosmopolitanism, especially the cultural francophilia, then associated with the English ruling class. Colley, on the other hand, stresses political nationalism, beginning her study in the year of the Act of Union. While she too highlights the importance of resistance to French dominance, she focuses most fully on British Protestant opposition to French Catholicism and the British martial response to the threat of French invasion. While Newman argues that an anti-aristocratic impetus drove the rise of English nationalism, Colley counts among the forces contributing to British nationalism the attempt by aristocrats to restore their political credibility after the loss of the American colonies. The differences in these studies reflect not only the current critical ambivalence regarding the concepts of nation and nationalism, but also a historical phenomenon essential to this study of literary constructions of martial heroism: that the idea of nationhood was being negotiated during Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge's most productive periods. Newman's contention that English nationalism rose in opposition to the aristocracy finally complements Colley's argument that British nationalism rose in part due to the efforts of
the aristocracy to reestablish their political credibility. Both views show the emergence of nationalism to have involved political struggle, as competing political constituencies sparred over the structure of the nation and the roles they would play in the nation-state.

The contemporary negotiation surrounding such issues—and since my primary interest here involves martial concerns, I focus on Britain— is evident in the diverse meanings then attached to the often used and nationally involved term “patriotism.” John Dinwiddidy traces the British meanings for this term through the eighteenth century to beyond the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. He asserts: “For most of the eighteenth century the word ‘patriotism’ was frequently, perhaps predominantly, used with connotations which in nineteenth century terminology would have been called liberal or radical” (55). Its association with “a love of freedom,” he continues, began in the seventeenth century when the term was applied to those who resisted Stuart attempts to strengthen the royal prerogative by appealing to the traditional liberties of Englishmen, and Hanoverian oppositionists looked back in favor to such “patriotic” figures as Hampden and Sidney. Some, the more democratically minded, also looked to Anglo-Saxon times as demonstrating a free and popular government that was destroyed by the Norman “yoke.” Eighteenth-century “patriots” were devoted to “the welfare of the nation as a whole, the people at large, as distinct from devotion to the interests of the ruling few,” and were preoccupied with “the dangers of corruption and arbitrary power.” Early in the Hanoverian period the patriots were specifically opposed to a standing army and royal influence over members of Parliament, and by the later part of the eighteenth century they resisted aristocratic influence of parliamentary elections and advocated both extending the franchise and redistributing parliamentary seats (55). These “patriots,” many of whom lived in London and were committed to British commerce, favored an

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1Colley shows the high degree to which Scotland contributed to British martial efforts after the Jacobite uprising of 1745 (103, 120). I should note that, as John Dinwiddidy points out, “[i]n [contemporary] England, the terms ‘British’ and ‘English’ were often used . . . more or less interchangeably” (61–62).
insular, as opposed to a cosmopolitan, perspective (55-56) and, it is clear, saw the concerns of the nation as extending beyond and even existing in contrast to, those of the ruling class. They supported what they perceived to be the British nation, but they opposed oligarchic dominance of the British nation-state.

The years of the American and early French Revolutions, though, opened to challenge the “patriotism” of such oppositionists, who tended to support these revolutionary movements and, often due to commercial interests, to oppose British martial action against them. While the term maintained its political connotations during the period of the French Revolution, it began to be associated with a cosmopolitanism that made it subject to charges of disloyalty once Britain and France were at war. By 1793, loyalist writers began to distinguish between “patriots” and the “True Patriots” who were supportive of Britain’s war efforts, and, as support for the war grew in response to French aggression and Napoleon’s political ascendancy, the idea of loyalist “patriotism” increasingly gained credence, and loyalists could even claim to be defenders of, not threats to, British liberty (Dinwiddy 56-64). This shift in the meaning of “patriotism” signaled a shrinking of the gap between the nation and the state, as the British people grew to support, albeit not in a wholly uniform manner, the ministerial war policy and to unite in the common cause of national defense. As the threat of French invasion ebbed after Trafalgar and the eventual British victory at Waterloo, though, oppositionist thought began to return to prominence, and oppositionists began again to be designated as “patriots” (69-70). Lord John Russell described this resurgence of opposition from the perspective of 1823:

The few enthusiastic Jacobins of 1793 were converted, in 1817 and the following years, into hundreds of thousands of malcontents. The pressure of sixty millions of taxes have indisposed more sound and loyal men to the Constitution of their country, than the harangues of Citizen Brissot and fraternizing decree of November could have done in a hundred years. (quoted in Dinwiddy 70)
The gap between the nation and the state again began to widen, a phenomenon signaled by a return to the predominant eighteenth-century meaning of the term "patriotism."

The shifting meanings of "patriotism" reflect shifting contemporary conceptions of the British nation and the role of the British state. Such a term, though, was not merely reflective of socio-political change, but also constitutive of it, as various parties contended to have their preferred notion of the term predominate. Newman contends that "[n]ationalism is, at the outset, a creation of writers" (87), and he argues that the artist-intellectual plays an essential role in the development of nationalist ideology (56). This assertion confirms what we have seen regarding the linguistic negotiation involved in an emerging nationalism and complements Benedict Anderson's argument that nations are "imagined communities" that were in part enabled by the rise of print technology. Southey and Wordsworth, of course, were artist-intellectuals who wrote concerning the British nation and national affairs, but Coleridge, a prolific public commentator on contemporary socio-political events, theorized the nation more thoroughly than either of his fellow "lakers." While I would not argue that his ideas regarding the British are representative of those of Southey, Wordsworth, or any other contemporary thinker, they provide an approach to these powerful and protean concepts that will aid our attempt to determine how constructions of martial heroism related to the development of the British nation-state.

Coleridge's opinions regarding the appropriate roles and actions of the British state, of course, varied as he moved from a primarily oppositionist to a largely loyalist political stance. It is clear, though, that he saw the British people sharing a distinct character that forged them into what he repeatedly called a "nation," and that he distinguished the British nation from the British state. He explicitly distinguishes between a nation and its government in the eighth of his "Letters on the Spaniards,"

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2Further discussion of Coleridge's political development appears in Chapter Four.
written for *The Courier* in January of 1810. In defending the Spaniards against those
who condemned their conduct during their conflict with France, he asserts that “the
complainants had furnished no statement on the conduct of Spain, in which the faults of
the Government were uniformly preserved distinct from the faults attributed to the
Nation” (*EOT* 2.91 his emph.). His continuing commentary, which invokes England and
France, again insists on this distinction:

> recalc [sic] to mind the detail of our own History during the reign of
> Charles the First, but more especially the events which took place from
> the time that the Parliament first got possession of the King’s person, to
> the restoration of the brotheller, tyrant, and hireling of France, Charles II.
> Above all, recollect the more recent scenes which have been acted before
> our own eyes in France, from the first meeting of the States in 1789, to the
> introduction of a military despotism by their First Consul and present
> Emperor: of him at least, in whose Emperorship the Great Nation is a co-
> partner. (2.91)

In Spain, Britain, and France, the nation, according to Coleridge, exists beyond and at
times in contrast to the state, which, he emphasizes, can act independently of the nation.

Accordingly, Coleridge asserts that a nation is held together not by its governing
body, but by an intangible bond which he refers to as the national “genius,” “spirit,” or
“character.” In the same letter he avers his belief in such a bond:

> that there is an invisible Spirit that breathes through a whole people, and
> is participated by all, though not by all alike; a spirit, which gives a colour
> and character to both their virtues and vices, so that the same actions, such
> I mean as are expressed by the same words, are yet not the same in a
> Spaniard as they would be in a Frenchman, I hold for an undeniable truth,
> without the admission of which all history would be a riddle. I hold
> likewise, that the difference of nations, their relative grandeur and
> meanness, all, in short, which they are or do . . . all in which they
> persevere, as a nation, through successions of changing individuals, are
> the result of this spirit. . . . (*EOT* 2.94)

At other times he speaks of this bond in less ethereal terms that show it not to be wholly
independent of the state. In an 1804 manuscript he invokes “the genius of G. Britain, by
which I mean that blended result of Laws, Language, Customs, long enjoyment of
personal and political Independence, <illustrious Forefathers,> and whatever else constitutes a grand national character, and makes a Nation more than merely an aggregate of Individuals” (EOT 3.191), and in a 1799 Morning Post piece he asserts: “We are fortunate enough to live in a country in which, with all its defects, the national character is made up, though in different quantities, by . . . the influence of a Court, the popular spirit, and the predominance of property” (EOT 1.48). The British nation is distinguished by the bond of its people, and while this bond gives them an identity that is independent of their governance, the bond is at least partially determined by their environment, the nature of which is influenced by the state, its structure, and its laws.

While, as we have seen, Coleridge emphasizes that a nation is "more than merely an aggregate of Individuals," he recognizes the role of the individual within the nation. Indeed, in an 1813 piece written for The Courier, he states that the conduct of individuals is "the only permanent fountain of national grandeur" and that "by a wonderful circuit, by a sublime mystery of multifold reaction, the full stream filtrates down through numberless channels, and by continued attraction, returns to feed and enrich the fountain" (EOT 2.364). Individuals and the nation thus enjoy a symbiotic relationship that strengthens both. Such a relationship is further evident in his contention that "national virtues . . . often act in partnership with individual passions" (EOT 2.39-40) and in his 1816 assertion that the wars with France had taught the British people what he describes as a "home truth": that "national honesty and individual safety, private morals and public security" are intertwined and mutually dependent (EOT 2.433).

A distinction he makes while asserting this "home truth," though, indicates that Coleridge considered some individuals to be more influential within the nation than others. He writes that the war had forced this truth “on the higher and middle classes—say rather on the people at large as distinguished from the mere populace” (2.432-33). His use here of "mere populace" indicates a hierarchy that other statements he makes
involving the nation and social class confirm. Writing for The Morning Post in 1799 he proclaimed that, given contemporary socio-political realities, property should determine the degree of individual influence within the nation-state: “For the present race of men Government must be founded on property; that Government is good in which property is secure and circulates; that Government the best, which, in the exactest ratio, makes each man's power proportionate to his property” (EOT 1.32, his emph.). He continues: “Artificial power must be balanced against physical power; and when the physical strength of a nation is in the poor, the Government must be in the hands of the rich” (1.32). By thus assigning the propertied classes a more powerful role in the nation-state, he follows Burke in perpetuating a social hierarchy within the nation. Other comments show that Coleridge held such a hierarchy essential to the bond that he felt constituted the British nation. In The Friend he wrote that leveling tendencies are hostile to nationalism (1.447), and in an 1814 Courier piece criticizing the formation of working-class clubs and guilds he states:

this [the formation of such clubs and guilds] I dare pronounce the most formidable, the most intensely jacobinical phaenomenon [sic] that has ever appeared in Great Britain3 at least, threatened our social virtues and national character, inasmuch as it dislocates and unjoins the ordained and beneficent interdependence of the higher, middle, and lower ranks, destroying or distempering the moral feelings and principles that are the natural growth of these relations, and by which the stout vessel of British Greatness has hitherto been made tight, as with ribs of steel, and “pins and chains of adamant.” (EOT 2.393-94)

Coleridge’s conception of the nation was thus not threatening to aristocratic political dominance.

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3Coleridge here inserts a note that reads in part: “But in truth and candor it should be said, that the Working Classes did not substitute Rights for Duties, and take the former into their own guardianship, till the higher Classes, their legitimate protectors, had subordinated Persons to Things, and systematically perverted the former into the latter” (EOT 2.393).
Other elements that Coleridge held essential to the British nation were trade and literature. He writes in *The Friend*:

> As there are two wants connatural to man, so are there two main directions of human activity, pervading in modern times the whole civilized world; and constituting and sustaining that nationality which yet it is their tendency, and, more or less, their *effect*, to transcend and to moderate—Trade and Literature. These were they, which, after the dismemberment of the old Roman world, gradually reduced the conquerors and the conquered at once into several nations and a common Christendom. The natural law of increase and the instincts of family may produce tribes, and under rare and peculiar circumstances, settlements and neighbourhoods: and conquest may form empires. But without trade and literature, mutually commingled, there can be no nation; without commerce and science, no bond of nations. (1.507)

In keeping with this assertion, he held that British unity was enhanced by its national debt (*Friend* 1.233) and argued for liberty of the press (*EOT* 1.57, *Friend* 1.233). Coleridge recognized a need to establish national unity and, as we will see in Chapter Four, envisioned a role for the poet in so doing.

**Heroic Contexts: 1660-1800**

Coleridge's, of course, was only one contemporary conception of the British nation and its relation to the British state; these conceptions were, as we have seen, being negotiated during the years of war with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. The socio-political instability of the 1790s led to debate as to the appropriate conception of the nation-state, and that debate is reflected in literary uncertainty regarding the nature of the hero. The protean nature of contemporary cultural conceptions of heroism is evident in Robert Folkenflik's broad survey of how definitions of the hero changed from ancient times to the eighteenth century. He relates that the hero began with the Greeks as "a warrior with intimations of immortality" who is "either a demigod or at least one of the

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4I could also include here what Coleridge called the "National Church," but I will reserve discussion of that element until Chapter Five.
gods' favorites." The *Oxford English Dictionary* reports that the first reference to a "hero" in English was to an allegorical Christ-figure (1387), but in the Renaissance the hero still was generally associated with classical times: "Goddes made of men whom the antiquitie called heroes." Nathan Bailey's definition in his 1721 *Etymological Dictionary* maintained this emphasis on the hero's classical roots: "A great and illustrious Person, a Person of singular Valour, Worth, and Renown, among the Ancients, who although he was of mortal Race, was yet esteemed by the People to partake of Immortality, and after his Death was reckoned among the Gods." Samuel Johnson's 1755 *Dictionary*, however, provided two definitions indicating that the conception of the hero had widened: "a man eminent for bravery" and "A man of the highest class in any respect." This more liberal idea of the hero is reflected in the figures James Boswell chose as the subjects of his biographical works: the English man of letters Samuel Johnson and the Corsican general Pasquale Paoli (11-12).

James Johnson's more focused account of how conceptions of heroism changed between 1660 and 1800 further indicates that ideas of heroism became less narrow as that period progressed. He asserts that while the Stuarts enjoyed traditionally heroic portrayals as commanders for some five years after the Restoration, scandals, corruption, and military defeats soon led to a change in how they and even combat itself were viewed. Most infamous was the behavior of the Duke of York at a naval battle off Harwich (May 1665), where his young favorite, Lord Fitzhardinge, was killed. At his death, Fitzhardinge's blood and brains were splashed on the Duke, who showed what was deemed unheroic horror, called cowardice by some. By the 1680s the "traditional depiction of Stuart heroism [had come to be] laughed away as sycophantic puffery," and the "underlying political and psychological motivations" for martial heroism were being
questioned, even by a military hero such as Lord Rochester. Shortly thereafter an emphasis on the possibility of civic, not just military, heroism arose. While William III’s martial prowess helped reestablish traditional military concepts of heroism—he was the last of the monarchs to be painted wearing armor—Queen Anne’s 1702 appointment of Marlborough, a man with no royal blood, as her military commander prompted Jonathan Swift to contend in the Examiner papers that a drive for glory in battle stems not from patriotism but from ambition, pride, and avarice. An increasing disjunction of “military leadership, aristocratic superiority, and heroism” ensued. While the idea of the extraordinary, superior hero was maintained in eighteenth-century English popular thought, other, more ordinary types of heroism began to challenge its ascendancy. Judicial, civic, and Christian heroism became recognized as legitimate and important, and the realm of the heroic opened up to men and women of all social classes. In a passage from The Spectator, No. 248 (December 14, 1711), Richard Steele describes opportunities for heroism that are available to people of varying walks of life: “to give Comfort to an Heart loaded with Affliction, to save a falling Family, to preserve a Branch of Trade in their Neighbourhood, and give Work to the Industrious, preserve the Portion of the helpless Infant, and raise the Head of the mourning Father.” James Johnson concludes that no consensus existed in Stuart-Georgian England as to “the attributes of the hero, the constituent elements of heroism, or even as to whether the heroic concept had any validity” (25-34). This lack of a predominant conception of heroism influenced the political controversies of 1789-1815, for it allowed writers from

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5Rochester was known for bravery in the naval battles of 1665-66, but he later contended in his Satire Against Reason and Mankind that men fight only as a result of their fears and that “all men would be cowards if they durst” (Johnson 28-29).
6Queen Anne dismissed Marlborough from that role in 1711.
7This passage anticipates Sidney Hook’s 1943 description of a democratic hero: “any individual who does his [or her] work well and makes a unique contribution to the public good” (239).
various political viewpoints to seek support by contending that true heroism attended their politics.

The broad social concerns evident in the more ordinary heroism described by Steele is reflected in the often humble poetic subjects of the second half of the eighteenth century. While those decades along with the first several of the next century saw the more traditionally heroic figures of the Ossianic tradition and such heroes of "superhuman effectiveness" as Schiller's Karl Moor, Goethe's Faust, and Byron's Manfred (Butler 2-3, 16-17), a more prevalent literary trend was to focus on "the real-life underdog" (Butler 31). As Marilyn Butler states, in the second half of the eighteenth century the arts "do not characteristically celebrate a hierarchy: they tend to be strongly humanitarian, sympathetic to the simple and the weak, and thus, if anything, 'levelling' in their social implications" (19). Accordingly, toward the end of the century, artists focused more on ordinary human figures than on "gods, kings, or leaders" (Butler 22), and much poetry then featured what Robert Mayo calls "objects of sympathy": "bereaved mothers and deserted females, mad women and distracted creatures, beggars, convicts and prisoners, and old people of the depressed classes, particularly peasants" (495). Alongside such figures was "the cast of villains... drawn from proud men representing authority, downwards from the House of Lords, the bench of bishops, judges, local magistrates, attorneys, to the stern father" (Butler 31).

While Butler warns that "[i]t would be rash indeed to confuse these universal but disconcertingly stylized liberal sentiments with anything like a will to practical reform," she contends that "[s]ome of these topics have an implicit political reference," especially

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8Thorslev asserts that while the most well recognized version of the Romantic hero, the Byronic hero, did not become a potent cultural force until 1812, when the first two cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage were published, Romantic hero types were widely available to the British reading public in the closing decade of the eighteenth century and the opening decade of the nineteenth. They appeared in the German Sturm und Drang tradition as well as in British literature, especially gothic works and those, such as Henry Mackenzie's The Man of Feeling (1771), that present heroes of sensibility.
those concerned with war. She asserts: "When literature dwells on the sufferings of war's English victims, it inevitably sounds like opposition to authority, or perhaps literally Opposition to Government" (31). Indeed, during the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, British poetic portrayals of war were highly and explicitly politicized, and the figure of the martial hero was central to this politicization. While loyalist poets could support the wars through positive portrayals of British martial heroism, radical or reformist poets could oppose them through challenging such portrayals or focusing on the victims, not the heroes of war. While some oppositionist poets sought to provide alternative heroes to replace the British warriors whom they opposed, many were content to contest the ascendancy of such figures or simply to ignore them.

The lack of consensus surrounding eighteenth-century ideas of heroism was furthered by the political ambivalence attending two genres associated with traditional conceptions of the heroic: the epic and the romance. Stuart Curran remarks that while a "signal difference" exists between these genres—the epic "embellishes upon historical truth and the other upon the improbable"—for many writers and commentators of the British Romantic period "the distinction between [them] . . . was at best blurred" (131-32, 158-59). The political implications of working within (or between) these genres was similarly blurry.

At first glance it would seem that the martial, nationalistic nature of The Iliad, The Odyssey, and The Aeneid would make the epic a genre best suited for conveying loyalist sentiments in the Britain of 1789-1815. Curran, however, shows that numerous

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9 A brief survey of such loyalist and reformist poetry appears below.
10 An example is Southey's Thalaba the Destroyer, of which an unsigned review in the Monthly Magazine stated: "It offers . . . scope beyond other metrical romances . . . " ("From an unsigned review, Monthly Magazine," Madden 67). Lionel Madden writes that Southey considered the work "a metrical romance," but that "epic" remained as a convenient term for contemporary and later critics to use when referring to the group of long verse narratives that Southey wrote between 1801 and 1814 ("Introduction" 6).
poets of a variety of political stamps were then eager to adapt the epic as a poetic form. He attributes this outpouring of epics, which he calls "unique in the history of Western literature" (158), to the Romantic period's political upheavals:

The sense of historical urgency, even destiny, that accompanied the fall of the Bourbon monarchy in France and which then was brought to a head with the British declaration of war is everywhere evident. Its presence is felt in the sudden outpouring of nationalistic epics, particularly in the years at the turn of the century when invasion threatened; in attempts to adapt the typology of Biblical subjects to the historical crisis; in radically subversive and visionary works that would liberate all nations; and naturally in those poems which endeavored to translate national missions into epic dimensions. (159)

Far from associating the genre with loyalism, Curran contends that "[s]ubversion is . . . the life blood of the epic" (167), and he shows how contemporary writers conceived of the form's reformist and radical applications. William Hayley asserts in his influential Essay on Epic Poetry (1782) that young bards should be freed from "'oppressive awe" and that the new national epic should have the primary goal of celebrating "'The splendid fane of British Freedom'" (161); and the preface to Joel Barlow's The Columbiad (first published in 1787 as The Vision of Columbus: A Poem in Nine Books) condemned Homer and Virgil for promoting martial glory and social hierarchies. Barlow's own work has different aims: "The real object of the poem . . . is to inculcate the love of national liberty, and to discountenance the deleterious passion for violence and war; to show that on the basis of the republican principle all good morals, as well as good government and hopes of permanent peace, must be founded" (170). Other writers, Curran notes, produced "pacifist" and "libertarian" epics (169, 166).

Fundamental to the epic's use by politically divergent authors was the possibility of national rebirth offered by the times. John Lucas argues that since "epics coincide with or are about the birth of a nation" (14), some Restoration and eighteenth-century Tory authors, including Dryden and Pope, avoided writing English epics in order to
avoid recalling the English Revolution and Commonwealth or bringing into question their hierarchically structured society. Epic virtues—bravery, daring, "unappeasable anger"—are potentially dangerous, for they can be divisive and marshaled for selfish or reformist, even radical, causes. Therefore, he contends, Dryden's *Aeneid* recalls an Augustan Rome "where the civic and liberal arts could flourish under the benign influence of an all-powerful and thus peace-ensuring emperor," and Pope's corpus features the mock-epic, treating the epic itself "as a merely literary mode, to be imitated and parodied." A civic virtue such as benevolence was more appropriate than epic virtues for maintenance of the status quo (3, 14-17). The revolution in France, however, made undeniable the prospect of a nation's re-forming itself, so authors from a variety of political perspectives offered epics in hopes of influencing Britain's future.

The romance was similarly used by participants in contemporary political debates. This "deeply nationalistic" genre enjoyed a revival in the first decade of the nineteenth century (Curran 129, 133) and featured, especially after Sir Walter Scott, the antithetical impulses toward the fictive and the real, the past and the present (135-40). David Duff reveals that the elements of romance were used by both loyalists and radicals in the political debates of the 1790s. He writes that "with the French Revolution, history itself seemed to enter the domain of the miraculous, and romance to offer a vivid and accurate language to describe what was happening" (3). Burke brought romance to the center of the political debates when he wrote in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) that the imprisonment of Marie Antoinette represented the death of chivalry, a statement that drew comments from nearly all of the many replies to that work. While some oppositionists simply discounted the concept of chivalry (4), others, as I will show, challenged the idea that the martial defense of royalist governance constitutes chivalric behavior. This rhetorical struggle for chivalric ideals continued into the nineteenth century:
The effect of this dispute was to politicise the whole question of chivalry, with the result that the so-called "chivalric revival" which took place after the turn of the century--mainly through the influence of Scott, though it had begun earlier--was strongly coloured by politics. Broadly speaking, the chivalric revival was a reactionary phenomenon, its function being to amuse the upper classes and to galvanise patriotic sentiment during the era of the Napoleonic Wars. There were, however, a number of writers of a different political persuasion or social class who sought to continue the polemic with Burke and his successors by adapting the fashionable theme of chivalry to their own purposes, and reinterpreting its codes in terms of a radical or liberal politics. Foremost among these were Leigh Hunt, Thomas Love Peacock, and [Percy] Shelley . . ., who together formed what may be described as a radical cult of chivalry in the years 1815-17.

The concept of chivalry and the genres of epic and romance were important elements of the turn-of-the-century political context, as literature, politics, and constructions of heroism merged in contemporary discourse.

Loyalist Heroics

Loyalist attempts to enhance support for the wars with France featured appeals to state-patriotism, including celebrations of patriotic heroism. The British martial hero was thus at the center of contemporary political debates. Colley examines the desire of the aristocracy to portray themselves as patriotic leaders and the degree to which recurring fears of invasion by the French made the British public particularly susceptible to the loyalist agenda, and she shows a number of ways through which loyalists sought to gain political support. First, the system of public schools and universities helped prepare the young male members of the English ruling class to become warriors. Being sent away to school with other young aristocrats gave them both an enhanced sense of their social standing and lessons in living away from home for long periods of time. School sports helped prepare them physically for battle, and their reading and writing steeped them in the lessons of martial heroism. The classical curriculum--featuring of course
Homer, Livy, and Plutarch—provided a rich source of stories of glory in battle, and the prize winning poems and themes of the time were often written in celebration of martial or imperialist activities (Colley 167-70). The degree to which this military emphasis existed was perhaps best evident at Eton, where "the senior scholars were allotted military titles (captain, marshal, ensign and serjeant-major) and wore junior versions of British military uniforms" (168-69).

Uniforms, though, were not important only for the students; they were also a concern of actual officers. As Colley continues, "[n]ever before or since [the Napoleonic era] have British military uniforms been so impractically gorgeous, so brilliant in colour, so richly ornamented or so closely and cunningly tailored. And the more exclusive a regiment an officer belonged to, and the higher his rank, the more dazzling his uniform was likely to be. In every sense he was dressed to kill" (186). Worn publicly and privately, these uniforms could enhance a wearer's sense of self-importance, distinguish him as an elite, and show his loyalty to the state (186); of course, they always distinguished him from the French "sansculottes." The message of patriotic service by the elite that these uniforms sent was reinforced through the visual arts. Paintings depicting the deaths of officers in battle came into vogue, and they typically portrayed the officer as a martyr to his country by presenting him in the thick of action, surrounded by concerned colleagues, and assuming a self-sacrificial pose reminiscent of Christian iconography. Notable examples include the American Benjamin West's The Death of General Wolfe (1770) and Arthur William Devis's Death of Nelson (c. 1805) (178-81). The message of such paintings was echoed in Parliament, which decided "in the early 1790s to employ state revenue to place statues of military and naval officer heroes in St. Paul's cathedral in London—something which had never been done before" (182). The artifice surrounding such celebrations of martial heroism is reflected in the metaphors Burke uses as he famously laments chivalry's end:

29
All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely worn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion. (77)

With regard to chivalry's martial elements, Burke seems premature in announcing its demise.

But clothing and visual arts were not the only means by which the British public was encouraged to see the glories of martial heroism. Theaters, for example, presented depictions of military glory. In 1795 the Drury Lane Theatre presented Alexander the Great; or, The Conquest of Persia, a work celebrating Alexander's storming of Gaza and glorious entry into Babylon. It features a scene from the siege of Gaza that the True Briton describes as follows:

Alexander, enraged [at the previously successful defense of the city], plants a ladder himself against the towers, and is mounting, when it breaks, and leaves him clinging to the walls; he gains the battlements, in spite of all opposition, and, regardless of the entreaties of his Officers, desperately precipitates himself, unattended, into the midst of the hostile garrison. . . . The battering rams are brought up, the fortifications are levelled with the earth, and Alexander is seen singly engaged in the town with whole troops of the enemy; at the moment the breach is made, the King, exhausted with fatigue, receives a dangerous wound; Thalestris, the Generals, and soldiers, rush to his assistance; the city is stormed, and Alexander is borne off by his disconsolate attendants. ("Alexander the Great")

The presentation of this classical saga would have reinforced the pro-military messages of the classical education described by Colley, and the depiction here of the bravery of an imperialist king would have been in keeping with a loyalist mind-set. A similar theatrical event based on a more contemporary battle--the 1793 capture of Valenciennes from the French by British and Austrian forces--was presented in 1793 at Astley's Amphitheatre at the Westminster Bridge. Titled The Siege of Valenciennes, or, The
Entrance of the British Troops into France, it is described by the Sun as "a new, grand Military Spectacle, in Three Parts, interspersed with Songs, Duets, Choruses, and various striking and interesting War Operations" and was said to display "the brilliant, gallant and successful [sic] manoeuvres of the Allied Armies . . . under the command of His Royal Highness the Duke of York" ("The Siege of Valenciennes"). Here again the bravery of the British warriors, especially that of their aristocratic leader, was presented to entertain and instruct the public. It was no accident that Shakespeare's Henry V, which had enjoyed a revival as part of a patriotic response to the Jacobitism of the 1740s (Trussler 179), returned to Drury Lane in 1789 for the first time in over forty years (Brown).

Such theatrical presentations of martial heroism were reinforced by the appearance in the periodical press of anecdotes of heroic behavior on the part of British soldiers and sailors. Consider the description of the heroic death of Captain Henry Harvey in a battle at sea:

In the early part of the Action he was wounded in the hand, which he did not so much as dress, but tying his handkerchief round the wounded part, gave his directions; soon after a gun being dismounted near him, a heavy splinter of the carriage struck him on the back, which threw him, and rolled him a considerable way on the ship's side--he rose with great pain, but still continued his station with unabated spirit and resolution, when, towards the close of the Engagement, his right-arm was carried off by a twenty-four pounder. He was then taken to the cockpit, and an amputation took place, with every favourable circumstance.

When he arrived in Port after the Action, the contusion which he received on the back, and which he scarcely minded in the heat of action, grew very bad; in short, it brought on a fever, and a mortification in the kidneys, of which he died.

His Majesty did him the honour to reward his gallant services . . . with the rank of Rear Admiral [but he did not learn of this honor before growing delirious and dying]. ("Anecdotes of Capt. Henry Harvey")

This presentation of Harvey's death is careful to emphasize his dedication to his country's cause and to present his many wounds as relatively painless when considered as part of
his duty. He does not need to dress his hand, no mention of pain is associated with his arm being blown off, and in the heat of battle he hardly notices what will prove to be his death wound. The message is clear enough: being a hero may entail gloriously losing one's life for Britain, but it will not be particularly painful for the true patriot, and it might result in posthumous royal recognition.

A similar message is conveyed by "A Sailor's Letter," which was printed in the True Briton. This is a 1796 description of a battle with the French frigate Proserpine in which the letter's fourteen year old author, T. Forrest, was involved while aboard the British frigate Dryad. It begins with "Dear Mother" and includes this account of the events:

When we fired our first broadside, we could have thrown a biscuit on board the Frenchman. -- There was a desperate fire on both sides, when she struck to the British Flag, and we could scarcely stop our men from firing, when we hoisted out our boats, and took possession of her; but I never saw a more dreadful slaughter and carnage then [sic] on board her -- there were legs, arms, brains, and bodies of Frenchmen -- her decks were covered with slain -- we killed sixty-five of the Enemy, wounded forty-two; twenty-three whereof have lost their legs and arms. They killed on board the Dryad two men, one of whom was a mess-mate of mine, and wounded five; and only one of the wounded has broke [sic] his thigh with a splinter. ("A Sailor's Letter" 2)

While this letter does show a fourteen year old to be endangered in the battle--his mess-mate is killed--it makes that danger out to be minimal due to the superiority of the British naval forces. The French lose many more sailors than the British and suffer more, and more serious, wounds. While the description of such carnage could have deterred some from entering or supporting the war, this letter, like the anecdote of Henry Harvey, glorifies the British navy and shows the pain of the British war effort to be relatively minimal. Such descriptions of British valor constituted the dominant portrayal of heroism in Britain and provided loyalist poets with potent cultural figures to incorporate into their works.
The above anecdotes appeared in newspapers with clear loyalist leanings—the Sun and the True Briton respectively—and a number of loyalist newspapers and periodicals were publishing stories, editorials, and poetry that were in keeping with their political views. As Bennett states: "Both the establishment and the radical opposition attempted to stir up public opinion by means of pamphlets, broadsides, and public meetings, but recognized that the quickest and most effective means of reaching large segments of the public was through newspapers and periodicals. Political bias determined what was published . . ." (16). A few of the more notable publications biased toward loyalist politics were the Times, the Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine, the Daily Advertiser, and the Star (Bennett 16). Such publications featured a large body of poetry, with loyalist poets expressing, among other things, their support for the British military as well as for monarchies in Britain and France, along with their opposition to the French military, democracy, and revolution. They made clear their allegiance to loyalist causes and constructed heroes to help convey their beliefs. In so doing they did not rely on the neo-classical formalism that is associated with the great, often Tory, poetry of the Restoration and earlier eighteenth century and that is contradistinguished so readily from the "republican" poetic style associated with Lyrical Ballads. Instead, they often used the imagery, diction, and meters of "common" verse in an effort to broaden their work's appeal.

Like the paintings that Colley describes, some of this poetry sought to support the British military by showing heroic officers valiantly dying for their nation; works such as "On the Death of Captain Westcott, Of his Majesty's Ship Majestick; who fell gloriously, on the First of August, 1798. (By Dr. Crane)" (1798, Bennett 219-20) and "To the Memory of Sir Ralph Abercrombie" (1804, Bennett 333-34) insist that their subjects lost

11 Also of loyalist bent were the Public Advertiser, the Public Ledger, the World, the Diary (Bennett 16), the Anti-Gallican Monitor, the Tomahawk (Bennett 20), the Sun, and the True Briton.
their lives performing noble martial deeds in the service of a grateful people. The heroic
couplets of the former and the alternately rhymed lines of the tetrameter quatrains of the
latter show that writers presented such heroism in a variety of poetic forms, an effort to
appeal to a wide audience. And, as we might expect, the death of an especially notable
officer like Nelson drew a great deal of poetic attention. Unlike those paintings,
though, the poetry also recognized the service of the lower ranks, often describing their
willingness to serve king and country and sometimes the deaths that accompanied their
so doing. Of course, part of the reason for writing such poems was to encourage the
lower classes to join and remain faithful to the war effort, a motive that is especially
evident in a work like "Soldier BOB RUSTY's Night Cap" (1797, Bennett 195-96). This
poem's speaker, a soldier, states that Rusty's "night cap is CONTENT" (ll. 6, 12, 30, 36)
despite his facing danger, possibly losing his love, and gaining nothing monetarily from
his war efforts. He closes with: "My fellow-soldiers, scorn old Care, / That certain
ladder to despair, / And be, like Bob, Content" (ll. 40-42). In short, the poem encourages
unquestioning loyalty to the King's cause. A similar motive seems implicit in "The
Ploughman's Ditty, Being an Answer to that Foolish Question, What Have the Poor to
Lose?" (1803, Bennett 314-15), which has a lower class English speaker emphasize that
he enjoys a high degree of love, freedom, and safety that is well worth defending.
Indeed, one of the most common types of pro-British military poetry in the 1790s was
the call to arms in response to French threats of invasion. Again and again British men
from the middle and lower classes were called, in a variety of verse forms, to leave their

12 See, for example, "Dirge On the Death of Lord Nelson" (1805, Bennett 350-51), "Horatio's Death"
(1805, Bennett 351-52), "Epicedium On the Death of Lord Nelson" (1805, Bennett 354), and John
Mayne's "Nelson—A Dirge. By John Mayne" (1812, Bennett 446-47). Here again a variety of poetic
forms are represented.

13 Among the poems of this type are "Poor TOM. A Tale From Tales of the Hoy,' by Peter Pindar" (1799,
Bennett 216-17) and "Tom's Triumph" (1805, Bennett 355). Bennett argues that the concern for the lower
classes evident in both pro- and anti-war poetry of the time helped establish the common people as fit
subjects for poetry (66-67).
work and their families behind in order to protect their homes from invading forces.\textsuperscript{14} Significantly, these poems often do not raise the possibility of the heroic fame that the aristocratic officers were portrayed as obtaining; instead, these men are called to serve their nation's needs humbly, almost anonymously. This call to arms tradition was in keeping with the broader poetic interest in common subjects, but by no means did it seek to disrupt Britain's hierarchical social structure.

While the threat of invasion was taken very seriously, much of the poetry of the time sought to bolster British spirits by showing little belief that the French forces would be any match for the British, especially on the sea. Many poems celebrated British military power, and some were devoted to specific victories such as that of Howe in the Atlantic on June 1, 1794, of Nelson on the Nile in 1798, of Wellington at Vittoria in 1813, and, of course, of Wellington at Waterloo in 1815.\textsuperscript{15} This poetry did not, however, ignore the fact that many died fighting for Britain. Instead, it sought to confirm the already prevalent belief that honor existed in so doing. "The Dying Patriot," for example, has as its epigraph "Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori," and its three stanza description of the glories of dying for one's country is striking enough to merit quoting in full:

\begin{center}
When, rous'd into arms at the voice of the State,
His sword the bold Patriot draws,
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{14}See, for example, "The Voice of the British Isles" (1803, Bennett 294-97), John Mayne's "English, Scots, and Irishmen. A Patriotic Address to the Inhabitants of the United Kingdom, July, 1803. By John Mayne, Author of Glasgow, a Poem" (1803, Bennett 311-12), "A British War Song" (1803, Bennett 313-14), "From an Unpublished Poem. Ascribed to Ossian" (1805, Bennett 349-50), and "An Old Soldier's Answer" (1809, Bennett 414).

\textsuperscript{15}For examples of poems generally describing Britain's might, see "Britain's Triumph, Or the Dutch Well Dressed. A Song. Tune--'In the Garb of Old Gaul" (1797, Bennett 202-03) and "The Triumph of Britons" (1799, Bennett 237). For examples of more specifically targeted works, see "Song. Tune, 'To Anacreon in Heaven" (1794, Bennett 115-16), "For the Tomahawk. Song, by Della Crusca, On Lord Howe, And the Action of the First of June. Tune--'Kate of Aberdeen" (1795, Bennett 159), "Nelson's Victory. An Ode" (1798, Bennett 217-19), "Ode on the late glorious Victory of the 1st of August 1798" (1798, Bennett 221-22), "The Battle of Talavera. A Song" (1809, Bennett 409), "The Plains of Vittoria; Or, The Death of the Brave" (1813, Bennett 461-62), and Thomas Fitzgerald's "The Battle of Waterloo. Written by Wm. Thos. Fitzgerald, Esq" (1815, Bennett 492-94).
How bright is the lustre that shines on his fate,
If destin'd to sink in her cause!

While the eyes of the hero are closing in death,
How graceful, how sweet, is the scene!
Encircled with glory, he yields up his breath,
Mid the tortures of anguish, serene.

Oh! mark to each feature what radiance is given
As he drops on the verge of the grave!
'Tis the sunset of valour, the day-spring of heaven,
The triumph that waits on the brave! (1811, Bennett 444-45)

While it recognizes the "anguish" that can attend death in battle, this poem stresses that such an experience is "bright," "sweet," "serene," and triumphant if it is done in patriotic fashion, and its familiar ballad-like stanzas indicate that such heroism can be achieved by members of the lower as well as the upper classes.

Loyalist poetry was also careful to counter the anti-war poets' continued emphasis on the devastating effects that war can have on families. While many poems did this simply by showing family members bravely accepting a father or son's decision to go to war or even his death in battle, "The British Heroes" stresses that British women could be as heroic as Spartan women by encouraging their men to go to war (1804, Bennett 335-36). This poetry also sought to shield British fighting men from pacifist opposition to war's cruelty by emphasizing their compassion. A compassionate Nelson is portrayed in "On Lord Nelson's sending a flag of truce to Copenhagen in the midst of victory" (1801, Bennett 255-56), a soldier's generosity to an old mendicant is described in "The Generous Soldier. An Anecdote by Mr. Booker" (1800, Bennett 250-51), and a soldier's adoption of a British child who had been orphaned by the war is detailed in "On a Late

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16For a full discussion of this emphasis see the discussion of reformist poetry below.
17See, for example, "A Family Dialogue, On a Son's Wishing to Go to Sea" (1797, Bennett 197-98), "Colin's Return to Sea" (1800, Bennett 249-50), and "Song" (1806, Bennett 362).
18As Southey describes in his Life of Nelson, some controversy attended this move, as the Danish commander-in-chief used it to hint that the British forces were eager to stop the hostilities for their own sake, not out of compassion. Nelson heatedly countered this assertion (Ed. Fenwick 225-26), and this poem may have been written as a response to the Danish claims.
Noble Action" (1810, pp. 425-26). These heroes are presented as brave, but not pitiless, and their actions are thus in keeping with the chivalric principle of serving the vulnerable.

These positive portrayals of British soldiers and sailors had a counterpart in negative descriptions of the French fighting forces. They are portrayed as cruel in "On the Invasion of Egypt by the French," which states that the invasion was harder on the Egyptians than the Old Testament plagues which God imposed on them (1801, Bennett 260-61); the French troops are thus presented as lacking the chivalrous nature of the British. More often, though, they were portrayed not as cruel, but as ineffective. The "Epitaph on General Custine" describes an unsuccessful French general as having used orders with which he disagreed to curl his hair (1793, Bennett 90), and "Bonaparte's Bridge, to The Tune of This is the House that Jack Built" shows the ineffectiveness of French lines of command and Napoleon's willingness to secure his own safety while others carry out his orders (Bennett 466-67). Poems stressing the inferiority of the French fighters are perhaps best exemplified in the couplets of the "Epigram On the Frequent Defeats of the French Army":

The toast of each Briton in war's dread alarms,
O'er bottle or bowl, is "Success to our Arms;"
Attach'd [sic], put to flight, and soon forc'd from each trench,
"Success to our Legs," is the toast of the French. (1813, Bennett 466)

Bonaparte, of course, drew a great deal of this poetic criticism, both as a general and as an eventual despot. See, for example, "Buonaparte" (1799, Bennett 226-30), "Bonaparte's Coronation: An Infernal Ode" (1804, Bennett 330-31), and "Bonaparte's Title to the Emperor of the French vindicated" (1814, Bennett 474). It is interesting to note that, after Waterloo, Napoleon's strength could be used to validate British military prowess; consider the heroic statue of Napoleon that resides in the Wellington Museum at Apsley House. For further discussion of Napoleon, see Chapter Three.

See also "A Favourite Song, Founded on Facts . . ." (1793, Bennett 94-95), which describes a French cobbler who had been recruited by the Jacobin army quickly seeking safety by going over to the British army.
Such works call into question the heroism, indeed at times the masculinity, of the French soldiers.

With George II the last of the British monarchs to lead troops into battle (Folkenflik 19) and George III known not only as "Farmer George" but also as the king who lost the American colonies, turn-of-the-century loyalist poets did not attempt to portray their king as a martial hero. They did, however, seek to defend the established order that had been so severely challenged by the Puritan and Glorious Revolutions and to assert that George III was rightfully empowered as monarch. In this way they contributed to the broader attempts—most notably a marked increase in royal celebrations and public appearances by the King—to confirm the validity of the Hanoverian monarchy; this seemed necessary after the American Revolution and the "sporadically splendid and assured" nature of George III's early reign as well as those of his Hanoverian predecessors. However, the dramatic events in France inspired some loyalist writers to associate the French royalty with the heroic. An account of Louis XVI's execution in the Gentleman's Magazine described Louis as heroically meeting his death:

The dying Monarch ascended [the scaffold] with heroic fortitude, with a firm step, and undismayed countenance. . . . In the middle stood the block, and near it two large ill-looking brutes, one of whom held the axe in his hand. The King for a moment looked around upon the people, with eyes which beamed forgiveness and love. . . . He spoke, but all the expressions that could be distinctly heard were these: "I forgive my enemies: may God forgive them, and not lay my innocent blood to the charge of the Nation: God bless my People!!!!"

The Confessor fell upon his knees, and implored the King’s blessing, who gave it him with an affectionate embrace. The religious and good

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21 See, for example, "Church and King, A Song. Tune,—"Rule Britannia" (1793, Bennett 71-72) and "Song. To the Tune of Nancy Dawson" (1795, Bennett 161-62).
22 See Colley's chapter "Majesty."
Monarch then laid his head upon the block with admirable serenity; and he ceased to live in this world.

(quoted in Liu 147)

Poetic accounts of this event similarly portray the French monarch. "Louis XVI. to His Subjects" appeared in February of 1793 (Bennett 69-70), the month after he was guillotined. It describes Louis not as an authoritarian, but as a benevolent, indeed heroic, martyr interested in freedom and peace for his subjects. The speaker, assuming the voice of Louis, states:

Alas! my people, what is then my fault,
On truth and justice still my mind was bent:
Your happiness was all the good I sought,
But now you drag me forth to punishment . . . (ll. 1-4),

and

Alas, my people, am I doom'd to bear
From you such sorrow, such afflicting pains?
To give you freedom was your Monarch's care,
And now my recompense is cruel chains. (ll. 9-12)

He then argues that his reign was less bloody than that of the Jacobin government (ll. 27-28) and asserts that he willingly yields his life in the hope that it will help the French people: "But if my life to fix your peace avails, / Receive the blood which freely I bestow . . . " (ll. 29-30). The poem's portrayal of Louis as "freely" succumbing to his execution achieves several effects. By portraying him as selfless and keenly interested in the peace and freedom of his former subjects, the poem implies that "dragging [him] forth to punishment" was a tragic mistake as well as an evil and unjust deed. At the same time, by portraying him as a willing national martyr the poem associates him with the heroism that attends dying for one's country; Louis sacrifices himself for his people's peace. Furthermore, by making him, not the Jacobins, the agent of his death ("Receive

\[23\] Implicit in such opposition to the execution of Louis XVI is criticism of the English execution of Charles I in the previous century; loyalists despaired of the actions of both revolutions.

39
the blood which freely I bestow"), and by including "to His Subjects" in the poem's title, it refuses to surrender Louis's kingly power.24

Another work that associates the ancien régime with the heroic is "Stanzas, supposed to be written whilst the late QUEEN OF FRANCE was sleeping, by her attendant in the TEMPLE" (Bennett 87-89), which appeared in October, 1793 (Bennett 87), the very month that Marie Antoinette was guillotined. Like "Louis XVI. to His Subjects," this poem seeks to criticize the rise of the revolutionary forces and their killing of the king and queen; however, it features an attendant, not a member of the royalty, speaking, and it emphasizes not the good intentions that the ruling family held, but the chivalric glory that was lost when the monarchy fell. The speaker shows the degree of the queen's suffering, calling her "thou with'red beauty, wretched Queen, / Thou tortur'd mother, thou,— a wife no more" (ll. 17-18), and stating that her "sick pulse... throbs with cureless woe" and "Grief's haggard phantoms haunt the midnight calm" (ll. 42-43). Like her, "lost Versailles" has suffered, victimized by "unhallow'd rapine" while "fall'n magnificence sits trembling by" (ll. 36-40). This suffering and want exists in marked contrast to former monarchical splendor, a time of "bright courts" (l. 21), "adoration" (l. 23), and "triumph" (l. 28); a time when:

Chivalry was there, romantic maid!
And the fine glow of gallantry and grace,
And grandeur blaz'd, in regal pomp array'd;
And gay Versailles was Pleasure's fav'rite place. (ll. 29-32)

It is important that this loss of chivalry is bemoaned by an attendant, not by a member of the royalty or a noted MP like Burke. While this speaker's personal relationship with the queen certainly distinguishes her from the masses, her sense of loss nevertheless

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24Other poems that are critical of Louis's death include Thomas Adney's "Elegiac Sonnet: Written on the Murder of the late unfortunate Monarch of France" (1793, Bennett 74) and Mary Robinson's "A Fragment, Supposed to be Written near the Temple, On the Night Before the Murder of Louis the Sixteenth" (1793, Bennett 74-76). Not all radicals were for the execution; Thomas Paine, for example, opposed it (Foot and Kramnick 16).
indicates that the non-ruling classes appreciated and even enjoyed the chivalric splendor that revolutionaries found so appalling. The poem is an attempt to defend monarchy by asserting that its chivalric elements can help unify a nation.25

Loyalist verse also sought to destroy any notion that British radicals might be heroic, or even well-intentioned, in the attempt to promote democracy. While, as Sidney Hook reminds us, democracy is resistant to excessive valorization of any one hero (229), and oppositionist poetry was not quick to promote military heroes, George Washington and, for a while, Napoleon were recognized as heroic figures with democratic associations.26 One way that loyalist poets sought to oppose any idea of democratic heroism was to associate oppositionist thought with the satanic. "Song. The REPUBLICANS to the DEVIL. Tune, 'To Anacreon in Heaven'" (1794, Bennett 113-15) aligns British Jacobins with Satan in an attempt "to convey Wealth, Glory, and Freedom, from Britain away" (ll. 8-9), and "The Weird Jacobins" (1795, Bennett 160-61) features such British anti-war advocates as Charles Fox, John Thelwall, and Earl Stanhope as the witches in a parody of the first scene of Macbeth. Other ways of discrediting democratic and reform forces within England relied on less sensationalist approaches. "For the Tomahawk. A Dramatic Fragment" (1795, Bennett 163) argues that the reformists are merely attempting to gain power and riches for themselves, and both "The Farmer and Labourer" (1794, Bennett 117-19) and "Song. Tune, 'Why Moses, why Aaron'" (1805, Bennett 345-46) contend that social hierarchies are necessary for an ordered and prosperous society. In the former, the farmer says to the labourer:

25 This poem is not alone in its emphasis on the queen's domestic woes; see also Charlotte Smith's "On the present unhappy Situation of the QUEEN OF FRANCE, and her Son" (1793, Bennett 81-82), as well as "Evening. An Elegy. Written on reading the melancholy Separation of the Dauphin from the Queen of France" (1793, Bennett 91-94). It is interesting that concern with feminist and domestic issues transcended nationalist interests, as writers such as Smith and Wollstonecraft, who were not loyalist in their thinking, sympathized with Marie Antoinette. See the discussion of reformist verse below for how the effects of war on domesticity were an important facet of the period's anti-war poetry.
26 For more on Napoleon, see Chapter Three; on Washington, see Chapter Five.
All men, 'tis true, are made of flesh and blood;
But brains like thine are not of self-same mud.
God's providence distinction made; for thou
Canst shew no wisdom but in team or plough;
And, couldst thy knavish holiday take place,
The strongest club would give the weakest chace:
Till devastation reign'd through all the land,
And man, supine, be lost to all command. (ll. 46-53)

The latter, spoken by a member of the working class, asserts:

there must be fine Lords and fine Ladies;
There must be some little, some great;
Their wealth the supply of our trade is,
Our hands the support of their state . . . (ll. 16-19),

and

Some are born for the court and the city,
And some for the village and cot;
But, oh! 'twere a dolorous ditty,
If all became equal by lot. (ll. 21-24)

The second of these is particularly striking in the way it posits a symbiotic relationship between rich and poor that maintains political stability, "the support of their state" (my emph.). By implication, the role of the poor is to help maintain this stability, not to engage in revolution, and radicals and reformists seek to destroy a necessary and natural social hierarchy. According to contemporary loyalist thought, people from different social strata have different social roles, and thus varying forms or heroism are appropriate for them. Loyalist brands of heroism were consistently dedicated to preserving the oligarchic structure of the British nation-state.

Reformist Responses

Clearly, a powerful sense of pro-war, pro-monarchy, and pro-aristocracy nationalism existed in Britain at the time of the French Revolution and the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, but it faced challenges from an opposition that questioned the glory of war generally, the appropriateness of war with France
specifically, and the legitimacy of British social stratification. Indeed, the challenge from writers and reform societies adhering to such positions was sufficient enough to merit the notorious government proclamation against "wicked and seditious writings" in May of 1792 (Cookson 92), the suspension of Habeas Corpus in 1794, and the repressive "Two Acts" of 1795 (Scrivener 25).27 As J.E. Cookson argues, though, these proclamations and the subsequent treason trials of such radicals as Thomas Hardy, Thomas Holcroft, and John Thelwall did not entirely repress oppositionist thought (91-103). Contemporary reform movements sought significant change within British society and governance and used means similar to those of the loyalists to achieve various ends that were in accordance with the process of democratization that had begun even before the 1790s and featured an expanding literacy, increased educational opportunities, and a rise in the importance of public opinion.28 Two particularly important forces within the reform movements were reform societies and the reform press, for they served vital communicative and organizational functions.

The three primary reform societies exhibit the breadth of oppositionist thought. They were the Friends of the People, formed in 1792 by liberal Whigs; the Society for Constitutional Information (SCI), formed in 1780 by middle class dissenters; and the London Corresponding Society (LCS), formed in 1792 by artisans and tradesmen. While these three groups did at times have such overlapping interests as sympathy for the French Revolution, opposition to British war with Revolutionary France, opposition to the "Two Acts" of 1795, and, ultimately, support for the 1832 Reform Bill, they were not often uniform in their goals and even distrusted one another (Scrivener 12-14). The Whigs of the Friends of the People were more interested in opposing Pitt and gaining a

27Habeas Corpus protects the individual from imprisonment without a trial; the "Two Acts" made it illegal to hold large meetings without a magistrate's permit and to incite contempt of the constitution by speech or writing (Roberts and Roberts 2.520).
28See Scrivener 23-24 for a discussion of this process of democratization.
governmental stronghold than in fighting for the needs of the lower classes. They succeeded under Fox in 1792 in obtaining a new libel law that let juries, not the government, decide on what was libelous, but they did not typically support the plebeian desire for universal suffrage (12-13). While more members of the SCI were interested in the fate of England's lower classes and in such radical changes as universal suffrage and even some forms of socialism, and while they were supportive of the abolition of slavery, they were on the whole "either indifferent to or fearful of poor people." Instead, they primarily sought to amend what they considered to be "Old Corruption": "religious discrimination, aristocratic domination of parliament, disabling restrictions on trade and business, and overall a government that did not adequately represent the society" (15). The LCS, however, maintained an emphasis on such concerns of the lower classes as universal suffrage, annual parliaments, and expanded educational opportunities (12, 15-19).

These reform societies sought to voice the various concerns of those who wanted to change the British government, and they had the benefit of a well established oppositionist press to help them do so. Reform thought was a powerful part of Britain's periodical writing even before the French Revolution (Scrivener 20), and while government repression in the form of increasing taxation of the production and sale of newspapers as well as legislation against writing considered seditious, blasphemous, or libelous hindered reformist writing (Scrivener 21), opposition publications managed to remain a powerful part of public discourse (Cookson 93-103). Indeed, during the 1790s "[t]he number of anti-government newspapers always roughly equalled the number of pro-government newspapers" (98), as loyalists, reformists, and radicals enthusiastically sought to use various media to garner public support for their respective positions. Among the oppositionist newspapers were the Morning Chronicle and the Cambridge Intelligencer, and among their political journals were Pig's Meat, named in response to
Edmund Burke's infamous reference to the "swinish multitude"; the Moral and Political Magazine; and the Monthly Magazine (Scrivener 21-23).

As it was for the loyalists, poetry was an important medium for oppositionist thought, and like their loyalist counterparts, such poets used a variety of poetic forms and various degrees of specificity, with songs, or ballads, and comic verse serving as especially popular choices (Scrivener 25-26). Like the "major" Romantic poets and again like the loyalists, these writers "rework[ed] established genres, revising and redefining conventions rather than breaking entirely with them" (Scrivener 29). They clearly sought to appropriate traditional genres for their political ends, and among the things various oppositionist writers sought to express were support for revolution and democracy, and opposition to monarchy, the British government, aristocratic privilege, the British military, and war generally. While they sometimes promoted alternative modes of heroism, they more often simply challenged the cultural ascendancy of the British martial hero.

Significant precedents existed for their so doing, as important eighteenth-century novels and histories showed that martial service was not necessarily heroic. Some novels, for example, presented as main characters men with ambivalent or even negative relationships with the British military. Henry Fielding's Tom Jones becomes a soldier when it is necessary and convenient for him to do so, but never really assumes the patriotic stance of a sincere fighter, and Tobias Smollett's Roderick Random has a miserable, horrifying experience when he is impressed for service aboard a British war ship. Two of the most influential histories of the time were written by Scotsmen, David Hume and Smollett, and they also criticized British fighting forces. While Hume's History of England, from the Invasion of Julius Caesar, to the Revolution, in 1688 (1754-}

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29 Others were the Gazetteer, the General Advertiser, the Morning Herald, the Morning Post, the "spurious Star," the Argus (Bennett 16), the Watchman, and the Cabinet (Bennett 20).
62) and Smollett's *The History of England, From The Revolution to the Death of George The Second. (Designed as a Continuation of Mr. Hume's History)* (1785) describe numerous British martial victories, they also feature criticism of British war practices. Hume often describes the mercenary and at times even piratical behavior of the British navy during Elizabeth's reign, while Smollett repeatedly draws attention to the impressment and questionable recruiting practices that often characterized the British military and which he states "must always be a reproach to every free people" (3.518). Smollett also describes on numerous occasions the cruelty of which British fighting forces were capable; an example is this description of their treatment in 1746 of the Scottish supporters of the "Young Pretender" Charles Stuart:

In the month of May, the duke of Cumberland advanced with the army into the Highlands, as far as Fort Augustus, where he encamped, and sent off detachments on all hands, to hunt down the fugitives, and lay waste the country with fire and sword. The castles of Glengary and Lochiel were plundered and burned: every house, hut or habitation, met with the same fate, without distinction: all the cattle and provision were carried off: the men were either shot upon the mountains, like wild beasts, or put to death in cold blood, without form of trial: the women, after having seen their husbands and fathers murdered, were subjected to brutal violation, and then turned out naked, with their children, to starve on the barren heaths. One whole family was enclosed in a barn, and consumed to ashes. Those ministers of vengeance were so alert in the execution of their office, that in a few days there was neither house, cottage, man, nor beast, to be seen in the compass of fifty miles: all was ruin, silence, and desolation. (3.183-84)

As Smollett understood, "[t]he humane reader cannot reflect upon such a scene without grief and horror" (3.184), and by presenting it in such detail he exhibits an unwillingness to give the British military his unquestioning support. While English readers may have been tempted to attribute such criticism to Smollett's Scottish sympathies, the account of the cruelty is nevertheless powerful and is certainly far removed from the chivalric notions of the British martial mission that loyalist poets sought to convey.
Of course much seventeenth- and eighteenth-century verse is politically driven and thus a part of this context, and Milton's poetic promotion of his republican agenda presented an especially influential precedent. It is not surprising, then, that Milton's willingness to question the primacy of martial heroism would become a characteristic of much of the oppositionist poetry that followed him. The invocation to Book IX of Paradise Lost declares a preference for "Patience and Heroic Martyrdom" (l. 32) to "Wars, hitherto the only Argument / Heroic deem'd" (28-29), and while of course the question of who the hero of Paradise Lost is has been long contested, and Blake, Byron, and Percy Shelley granted Satan heroic status, it is clear that the last ten books of Paradise Lost and the whole of Paradise Regained denigrate Satan and show Christ as triumphant. Moreover, while Christ is powerful during the war in heaven, he exhibits no physical aggression when on Earth. Instead, he judges but then pities Adam and Eve in Book X of Paradise Lost and then stoically counters Satan's temptations in Paradise Regained. His actions when on Earth are in keeping with the "Heroic martyrdom" that the invocation to Book IX invokes and that is also evident in Samson's final act in Samson Agonistes. Similarly, the angel Abdiel shows military vigor during the war in heaven by gaining the first stroke against Satan, but his simple refusal to join the fallen angels' rebellion is more significant in the epic's scope. This insistence on the legitimacy of non-martial heroism, along with the rise of "common" poetic subjects in the second half of the eighteenth century, provided the oppositionist poets that followed Milton with a precedent for challenging the British military and monarchy.

Oppositionist poets were typically against British war with Revolutionary France, and, as Bennett relates, their poetry either sympathized with the Revolution's ideals or emphasized that in joining the alliance against France, Britain, a constitutional monarchy,

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30Stuart Curran describes the 1790s as "a period of intense interest in Milton" and details the numerous editions of his work printed in that decade and the next (159).
was supporting Austria and Prussia, two totalitarian monarchies, in an effort to reinstate the French totalitarian monarchy (30). They at times used heroic discourse to challenge this policy. An example is "Pro Patria Mori. From the German of Burger" (1796, Bennett 176-77), which posits a hierarchy of heroism:

For virtue, freedom, human rights, to fall,
Beseems the brave: it is a Saviour's death.
Of heroes only the most pure of all
Thus with their heart's blood tinge the battle-heath.

And this proud death is seemliest in the man
Who for a kindred race, a country bleeds:
Three hundred Spartans form the shining van
Of those, whom fame in this high triumph leads. (ll. 1-8)

The first line's mention of "human rights" and "freedom" aligns the poem with radical principles, and the work's appearance in the *Monthly Magazine* confirms its oppositionist sympathies. Implicit in these first stanzas is a call for Britons to bleed not for their allies but for a "kindred race," the French. The poem affirms the heroic nature of dying for a benevolent monarch:

Great is the death for a good prince incurr'd;
Who wields the sceptre with benignant hand:
Well may for him the noble bare his sword,
Falling he earns the blessing of a land . . . (ll. 9-12),

but it does not contend that giving one's life for ineffective or tyrannical leaders is heroic:

But for mere majesty to meet a wound--
Who holds that great or glorious, he mistakes:
That is the fury of the pamper'd hound,
Which envy, anger, or the whip, awakes.

And for a tyrant's sake to seek a jaunt
To hell--'s a death which only hell enjoys:
Where such a hero falls--the gibbet plant,
A murderer's trophy, and a plunderer's prize. (ll. 17-24)
Despite its lack of specificity and its nod to benevolent monarchy, features likely included so the author and magazine could avoid prosecution, the poem is clear in its opposition to "mere majesty" and tyranny. It opposes the idea that Britain's allied opposition to France is heroic,\(^{31}\) and the relative sophistication of its slant rhymes and varied meter reflect its complex rhetorical task: to make that opposition strong but subtle enough to avoid official censure. As Scrivener notes, however, with the rise of Napoleon, reformist poetry became less likely to question the appropriateness of being at war with France (159). But it did criticize notable failures in carrying out the war, such as the Convention of Cintra, which allowed the escape of the French army in Spain, and the Walcheren Expedition, which led to the death of thousands of British troops due to fever. It also exposed questionable military successes such as that over neutral Denmark in September of 1807.\(^{32}\) Such poetry countered the portrayals of and calls for British martial heroism evident in loyalist verse.

A similar strain of poetry opposed British war efforts by taking a more general anti-war stance. These poems oppose the government's war policy and the literary heroes constructed to support it by describing the horrors, not the glory, of war. A movement against literary portrayals of martial heroism is particularly evident in two poems contending that peace, not war, is the proper subject for poetry. Peter Courtier's

\(^{31}\)See also Helen Maria Williams's "Ode to Peace. Written in Paris By Helen Maria Williams" (1801, Bennett 266-67). For additional poems opposed to war with Revolutionary France, see "A New Song. By Captain Morris" (1794, Bennett 125-28), "Anticipation" (1795, Bennett 156-58), and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's "On the Death of Lieutenant-Colonel Buller, Killed in Flanders in 1795: Written by Mr. Sheridan, At the Request of His Present Lady" (1796, Bennett 179-81).

\(^{32}\)For criticism of the Convention of Cintra, see "An Imitation" (1808, Bennett 396-97), "Catch, Now signing by the People, the Ministers, and the Three Great Commanders!!!!" (1808, Bennett 398-99), "A Political Parody. A Christmas Gambol. As sung at the Priory. By the War Minister" (1809, Bennett 399-400), and "Glee: In the New Tragedy of 'Much Ado About Nothing.' By John Bull" (1809, Bennett 400-01); for criticism of the Walcheren Expedition, see "Walcheren Expedition; Or, the Englishman's Lamentation for the Loss of His Countrymen" (1810, Bennett 418-20), "The Disastrous Administration" (1810, Bennett 421-23), "Extempore on the INVASION of WALCHEREN. By Clio Rickman" (1809, Bennett 410-11), and "Poor Joe" (1811, Bennett 439-41); for criticism of the attack of Copenhagen see "[Ode on the Big-Endiums]" (1807, Bennett 375-76), "The New Mariners, For 1808" (1807, Bennett 377), and "Song on the New Affair of Copenhagen, (not Lord Nelson's)" (1808, Bennett 379-80).
"Ode to Peace" (1796, Bennett 168-69) states that peace is the Muse's "darling theme" (l. 11) and that:

The groans of Widows, and the Virgin's scream,
The sack of cities, and the daring fight,
Afford her no delight!
Willing from Devastation's reign she turns,
With trembling nerves and bitterness of soul,
To scenes for which with ecstasy she burns!
When Happiness shall reach the farthest pole;
When Amity each barrier will remove,
And hostile nations join the bands of love. (ll. 12-20)

Similarly, William Crowe, in a poem printed in Coleridge's The Watchman, contends that the tradition of poetry celebrating war is a spur to those seeking martial fame (untitled, 1796, Bennett 174-75):

In evil hour, and with unhallow'd voice
Profaning the pure gift of poesy
Did he begin to sing, he first who sung
Of arms and combats, and the proud array
Of warriors on the embattled plain and raised
The aspiring spirit to hopes of fair renown [sic]
By deeds of violence. For since that time
The imperious victor, oft unsatisfied
With bloody spoil and tyrannous conquest, dares
To challenge fame and honour; and too oft
The poet, bending low to lawless power,
Hath paid unseemly reverence, yea, and brought
Streams clearest of the Aonian fount, to wash
Blood-stain'd ambition. (ll. 1-14)

Crowe's lines demonstrate a powerful faith in the relationship between poetry, heroism, and the execution of war, and share with much of the period's anti-war poetry a concern with unnecessary martial destruction.33

33The carnage of war is also stressed in "The Bishop of London's Opinion on War" (1793, Bennett 84-85), which bemoans the slaughter that a king can produce by declaring war and asks God to prevent his creatures from falling "Unpitied Victims at Ambition's shrine" (ll. 15-16); in "Lines by John Gabriel Stedman," which parodies Homer to show the mutual destruction of the English and the French (1793, Bennett 102-03); in "Reflections on a Field of Battle," which calls war the "senseless slaughter of the human kind" (1797, Bennett 191, l. 10); and in George Dyer's "On the Return of a Festival. By Mr. Dyer"
In keeping with this attitude, a large number of poems promote peace, often contrasting its benefits to war's horrors. While such poems may not challenge military heroism directly, they strongly oppose the very process that produces it. The couplets of Leigh Hunt's "The Olive of Peace" (1801) read:

Now sheath'd is the Sword that was wild as the blast:
The Tempest of Slaughter and Terror is past;
Old Albion her Neighbour all smilingly hails—
For the OLIVE of PEACE blooms again in our Vales!

Divinest of Olives, O, never was seen
A bloom so enchanting, a verdure so green!
Sweet, sweet do thy Beauties entwiningly smile
In the Vine-tree of France and the Oak of our Isle!

(Bennett 264-65, ll. 1-13)

While some poems recognize that war can be economically beneficial to the opportunistic, many make it clear that it is hardest on the lower classes; they stress the homelessness and poverty often occasioned by the conflicts with France by featuring wanderers and mendicants similar to those evident in the poems of Wordsworth and Southey. Of course, as Amelia Opie notes, one of the benefits of peace is the removal of the threat to families that war represents—"fond parents, faithful wives, / Who've long for sons and husbands feared, / Peace now shall save their precious lives" ("Lines Written at Norwich On the First News of Peace," 1802, Bennett 285-86, ll. 29-31)—and

(1798, Bennett 223-24), which emphasizes the death of thousands. Interestingly, John Duncombe's "Ode to Peace" (1797, Bennett 200-02) supports the British monarchy and opposes the French Revolution but nonetheless declares war to be an unfit poetic topic for poetry, thereby showing that not all anti-war poetry assumed an oppositionist stance.

34See also "Ode to War" (1794, Bennett 123-24), Thomas Adney's "Sonnet" (1800, Bennett 248-49), "Sonnet to Peace" (1808, Bennett 392), "A Tear for Albion.--1808" (1810, Bennett 432-33), and "Address to a Warrior" (1811, Bennett 443).

35See "War the Source of Riches" (1813, Bennett 458-59) and "Petition for a New War!" (1815, Bennett 484-85).

36See, for example, "The Fruits of War" (1800, Bennett 253), "The Beggar Girl" (1802, Bennett 258-59), "The Worn Soldier" (1808, Bennett 382), and "The Soliloquy of a Sailor, With one eye, one arm, and one leg, as he limped through St. James's Park yesterday" (1814, Bennett 475-76).
war's threat to domestic peace constitutes a significant focus of reformist verse.

Especially prevalent are works relating the effects of a young man's death on his bride and child. Representative is J. Irving's "Deeds of Glory" (1814, Bennett 481-82), which features among its stanzas:

See a widow senseless falling
On her bleeding husband's breast;
Hear her now, in horror, calling
On the sword to give her rest.

See her babes in stupor standing,
And, in Nature's artless tongue,
Still with tears of her demanding,
Why their father sleeps so long?

See the maid, in wildest sorrow,
Seeking, 'mong the ghastly slain,
Him who promis'd that the morrow
Bound them in the nuptial chain. (ll. 17-32)

In some cases, the mourning bride will die of grief, as in Opie's "The Orphan Boy's Tale" (1800, Bennett 247-48), and in one especially memorable poem a war widow who cannot find her child food murders it by dashing its head against a wall ("War Elegy. By Joseph Fawcett" 1802, Bennett 270-72). Such descriptions of the horrors of war demonstrate the devastation that accompanies displays of martial prowess and emphasize the effects that state policy can have on the domestic sphere.

Reformist poets also sought to counter the praise for chivalric monarchy evident in the poems on the French royal family and the increasing displays of British royal splendor described above. "1694" is so titled in order to avoid a charge of seditious libel, but it is clear in its condemnation of unjust monarchs and the idea that they rule by divine right (1794, Scrivener 77):

\[\text{See also "Thomas and Kitty" (1796, Bennett 170-72), "The Widow" (1801, Bennett 267-69), and "Mary of Carron. A Ballad" (1803, Bennett 299-300).} \]
Such Kings curst be their power and name,
   Let all the World henceforth abhor 'em,
Monsters which knaves sacred proclaim,
   And then like Slaves, fall down before 'em,
What can there be in Kings divine?
The most are Wolves, Goats, Sheep, or Swine. (II. 13-18)

The last lines of this poem enhance its message by invoking Aesop's fable of the frogs and the stork, wherein the frogs ask Jove for a king, and first receive from him a log, which they find an inadequate ruler, and then a stork, which begins eating them (note 77). This poem emphasizes the tragedy, not the chivalric glory, of regal power, and other reformist poems offer broader attacks on Britain's social hierarchy. In these ways oppositionist poets sought to counter the propaganda of their loyalist counterparts, and a rhetorical battle over the nature and effects of Britain's martial mission filled the newspapers and magazines of the day.

Politics and the Home

As this brief survey of loyalist and oppositionist poetic practices indicates, partisan poets invoked issues concerning the sphere of domesticity, or the home, in order to make political points. Loyalist poets encouraged British families to send their men to

38 See also "Logs, Storks, and Asses" (1794, Scrivener 78-79) and "Sonnet: The Lion" (1796, Scrivener 128).
39 Criticism of the British government, though, was not restricted to that of the monarch; other government figures and sometimes specific policies came under fire as well. William Pitt and Edmund Burke were the targets of critical verse—see "The Reform. By the Right Hon. William Pitt" (1792, Scrivener 48-49), "Burke's Address to the "Swinish Multitude!"" (1793, Scrivener 65-67), and "Edmund Burke's Address to the "Swinish Multitude"" (1794, Scrivener 69-72)—as were questionable recruiting practices and laws suppressing freedom of the press. For poems targeting the suppression of a free press see "Sedition Act" (1796, Scrivener 45-47), "Examples of Safe Printing" (1794, Scrivener 68-69), and "Supposition.--A New Song. Tune--Shelah Negari" (1796, Bennett 173-74); for those targeting impressment and dubious recruiting practices see "The Wrongs of Poverty" (1793, Scrivener 54-55), "The Tender's Hold, Or, Sailor's Complaint" (1794, Bennett 122-23), and "The Crimp Serjeant" (1813, Bennett 465-66).
40 See "The Vision" (1795, Bennett 145-46), Mary Robinson's "January, 1795" (1795, Bennett, 142-44), Thomas Spense's "[Jubilee Hymn] From Spense's Rights of Man. A Song, to be sung at the Commencement of the Millennium, when there shall be neither Lords nor Landlords; but God and Man will be all in all. First printed in the year 1782. Tune--'God Save the King'" (1793, Scrivener 63-65), "Address to Poverty" (1795, Scrivener 92-93), "A Parallel between Riches and Poverty. From the Greek of Rhianus" (1795, Scrivener 86-87), and "On Abuses" (1794, Scrivener 90-91).
war and portrayed the French Revolution as an attack on the domestic stability of the
French royal family, while oppositionists presented the war with Revolutionary France as
an endangerment to British homes. We should remember that the contemporary merging
of domesticity and the political was perhaps most influentially asserted by Burke, who,
as James K. Chandler reminds us, wrote in his Reflections: "To be attached to the
subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle, (the
germ as it were) of public affections," and "We begin our public affections in our
families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We pass on to our neighborhoods, and
our habitual provincial connections . . . so many little images of the great country in
which the heart found something which it could fill" (quoted in Chandler 39). Partisan
poetry and Burke's assertions confirm Arendt's argument that modern thought blurs the
distinction between home and polis.

Significantly, Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge echo Burke's thinking in this
regard. Southey, as I will show, contends that a commitment to the home increases the
desire to defend the nation, and in the Convention of Cintra (1809) Wordsworth, in an
argument clearly related to Burke's, posits connections between domestic, national, and
international levels of social involvement:

the man, who in this age feels no regret for the ruined honour of other
Nations, must be poor in sympathy for the honour of his own Country;
and that, if he be wanting here towards that which circumscribes the
whole, he neither has—nor can have—a social regard for the lesser
communities which Country includes. Contract the circle, and bring him
to his family; such a man cannot protect that with dignified love. Reduce
his thoughts to his own person; he may defend himself,—what he deems
his honour; but it is the action of a brave man from the impulse of the
brute, or the motive of a coward. (329)

Coleridge too explores these connections in The Friend (1810), though his statement is
less of a description of their existence than a plea that they be recognized and influential:

41 See the discussion of his Life of Nelson in Chapter Two.
54
If ever there were a time when the formation of just public Principles becomes a duty of private Morality; when the principles of Morality in general ought to be made to bear on our public suffrages, and to effect every great national determination; when, in short, his COUNTRY should have a place by every Englishman’s Fire-side; and when the feelings and truths, which give dignity to the Fire-side and tranquility to the Death-bed, ought to be present and influential in the Cabinet and the Senate— that time is now with us. (2.299-300)

Coleridge again expresses a belief in the interrelationship of the political and domestic spheres in a Courier piece of January 1812. He there describes a contemporary philosophic de-emphasis of both familial and national connections—highlighting Rousseau’s infamous delegation of his children’s care to the Public Hospital— and then attributes the bloodshed of Revolutionary and Napoleonic France to such philosophic cosmopolitanism (EOT 2.329-30).42

As these statements indicate, Wordsworth and Coleridge recognized the connection that Burke championed between the domestic and political spheres, and they and Southey were eventually to advocate loyalist politics as the best means of preserving British families, the British nation, and the British nation-state. However, as the above survey of partisan poetics shows, the domestic sphere was not exclusively invoked by loyalist thinkers. Despite, and in response to, Burke’s insistence that Britain’s constitutional monarchy best preserves national stability, oppositionist writers showed the disruptive effects that Britain’s war policy had on its families. As chapters two, three, and four argue, while Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge followed Burke in describing a connection between the domestic and political spheres, as younger thinkers they did not do so in the service of loyalist thought. Despite their changing political stances, these poets consistently considered the domestic sphere in their political formulations and conceptions of heroism..

42The piece first appeared in the Salopian Journal in December 1811 (EOT 2.328-29, note).
"[Southey] adds to splendid heroism domestic charities, to lion-hearted courage the
gentleness and truth of tender affections..."  ("John Taylor Coleridge, unsigned review
of Roderick, The Last of the Goths; A Tragic Poem, British Critic," Madden 184)

For the epigraph to his 1797 Poems Robert Southey chose lines from the
eighteenth-century poet Mark Akenside that, in the revolutionary climate of the time,
expressed a desire for democracy in England and France and a belief that poetry could
help accomplish that end: "Goddess of the Lyre! with thee comes / Majestic Truth; and
where Truth deigns to come, / Her sister Liberty will not be far."1 In keeping with these
assertions, Southey's then-radical politics are clearly evident in his poetry; Jonathan
Wordsworth notes: "Two years before the Advertisement to Lyrical Ballads (September
1798) [Southey] had developed a plain style that was quite as 'experimental' as anything
in Wordsworth and Coleridge, and quite as affronting in its social implication"
("Introduction" to Southey's 1797 Poems). Central to the young Southey's radical verse

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1 In his essay "Politics and the English Language," Orwell lists "democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic,
realistic, justice" as words which "have each of them several different meanings which cannot be
reconciled with each other" (205). In Southey's time, if not now, "liberty" could also be so described.
Butler writes of a parliamentary use of the term in the latter half of the eighteenth century: "the House of
Commons resisted reform with fine and sincere rhetoric about royal tyranny and the need to uphold
ancient liberties. These 'liberties' were genuinely traditional, but they were also, as in other countries,
confined to the upper classes... It may seem to us now a paradox that the oligarchs themselves came to
talk and write so much about liberty, and that the individualistic rhetoric of the Dissenting minority was
splendidly echoed in the House which refused them equal rights" (14-15). Given the content of Southey's
volume, though, "liberty" there carries radical connotations.
was his contesting loyalist propaganda through describing courageous and responsible heroism as existing outside of the British aristocracy; this proved a central element of his critique of the British power structure and his promotion of oppositionist politics. While he advanced chivalric courage and service, he divorced them from aristocratic and monarchical associations. Ultimately, though, as his politics become increasingly loyalist, his attempts to portray heroism in defiance of the British social hierarchy waned. His desire for domestic peace and national stability finally inhibited his willingness to locate heroes among the potentially anarchic common people. As I will show, Southey used first oppositionist and then increasingly loyalist poetic practices to position himself with regard to the British nation-state and to influence others' opinions toward it. In so doing he consistently relied on characterizing the relationship between martial heroes and the domestic sphere, a practice that highlights his changing perception of how homes, the nation, and the nation-state interacted in Britain. The trajectory of his political and rhetorical development reveals a strong connection between politics and the presentation of heroism and establishes a broad pattern also evident in the careers of Wordsworth and Coleridge.

Southey's movement from a radical to a loyalist political stance is well documented and does not need to be rehearsed in full here. However, a brief survey of its highlights will inform the readings that follow. Southey had radical leanings even as a schoolboy and felt that the French Revolution, which began when he was fifteen, offered a new hope for humankind (Curry 11-12); he was among the British citizens who were happy that the Duke of Brunswick's mission (1792-93) to restore the French

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2See Curry and Carnall.
3Southey's dates are 1774-1843. At Westminster he wrote against Burke (Carnall 14), participated in "a school rebellion," and was ultimately expelled for pseudonymously authoring a piece against corporal punishment in Christian schools (Curry 8-10). His expulsion at Westminster led to his being denied admission to Christ's Church College at Oxford; he enrolled at Balliol College, Oxford instead (Curry 10, 18), but never finished his degree.
monarchy failed (Carnall 18-19). He considered emigration to either France or America in 1793 (Carnall 28) and showed great—though relatively short-lived—enthusiasm for the idea of a "Pantisocracy" (1794): the utopian society he and Coleridge planned to establish in America featuring no private property, complete religious freedom, and equal government by all (Curry 21-30). While in the middle of this decade he grew concerned regarding Jacobin violence and began to fear a civil war would result from the marked political strife then existing between loyalist and oppositionist groups (Carnall 33-34), he still associated with radicals and adopted an anti-militarist stance (38). His support for the French cause was still clearly evident in 1797, when he wrote an article for the liberal Monthly Magazine describing how well his sailor brother Tom was treated while he was a French prisoner of war (43). Indeed, he sympathized with the French rather than the British government until the end of 1799, when Bonaparte established his power with the coup d'etat of November tenth (47, 55).

In the next decade Southey maintained reformist sympathies, supporting governmental aid to the poor, the extension of public education (Curry 49), and the abolition of both the slave trade and capital punishment (Carnall 81, 76-77), but as Napoleon's power grew and English fear of invasion heightened, his support for France ebbed, and he became an advocate of a powerful British military (Carnall 58-61). Especially important for his conversion to a largely loyalist political viewpoint was the 1808 Spanish and Portuguese insurrection against France, for which Southey felt great enthusiasm and which further justified for him the use of British arms against Napoleon.4

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4Southey had developed a keen interest in things Spanish and Portuguese, writing about them enough to lead a later reviewer to state: "In almost all the former productions of his pen, various and important and skilfully [sic] wrought as they were, it was manifest that the cultivation of Spanish history and literature was his darling passion" ("From an unsigned review, Monthly Censor," Madden 305). Among the related writings he had published by this time were the prose translations Amadis of Gaul (1803), Palmerin of England (1807), and The Cid (1808) (Bernhardt-Kabisch 128); Letters Written During a Short Residence in Spain and Portugal (1797) (162); and Letters from England: by Don Manuel Alvares Espriella (1807) (162).
By 1810 he was a committed supporter of British martial strength and public order in the hopes of supporting Spain and controlling an increasingly restless British citizenry. A former advocate of violent revolution in France, he felt it important to prevent such in England and came to feel that internal security justified the establishment of an increasingly powerful prime minister and even a dictator (Camall 101, 121-22, 150).

Southey was named Britain's Poet Laureate in 1813 and wrote his most popular book, the *Life of Nelson*, that same year (Curry 50). This was the first of his contributions to the glorification of British military success then so pervasive in his culture; he would later write two multivolume martial histories. *Lives of the British Admirals* (vols. I-II, 1833; vol. III, 1834; vol. IV, 1837) describes, among others, Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, and Sir Walter Raleigh; and the *History of the Peninsular War* (vol. I, 1823, vol. II, 1827, vol. III, 1832) includes the following statements in Southey's dedication of the work to George IV:

> When the Regency devolved into your hands, the fortunes of our allies were at the lowest ebb, and neither arts nor efforts were spared for making the spirit of this country sink with them. At that momentous crisis every thing [sic] depended, under Providence, upon your single determination; and to that determination is Great Britain beholden for its triumph, and Europe for its deliverance. (iii)

This dedication is signed "Your Majesty's / Most dutiful subject and servant, / ROBERT SOUTHEY." These writings were part of a larger turn toward political conservatism which featured Southey's becoming a consistent supporter of the British government and its war policies. He eventually came not only to advocate continued British resistance to France but also to support government repression of oppositionist thought; by 1819 he

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5 This work was reprinted as *English Seamen* (ed. D. Hanney, 1895, 1904).
supported governmental gagging acts, the suspension of Habeas Corpus, and transportation for seditious journalists (Carnall 149).§

Southey, however, did not move from a purely radical to a wholly loyalist position. He had what Kenneth Curry describes as a "determined, life-long, and somewhat unreasoning hatred and distrust of the Roman Catholic Church" (33), and he continued to support many of the liberal causes he advocated as a younger man--prison reform, the abolition of slavery, the extension of public education, and government assistance for the poor--even after he had adopted a loyalist stance with regard to opposing France and suppressing revolution within Britain. While supporting loyalist causes he never considered himself a Tory or a servant of the government (Curry 48), and throughout his life he experienced a fear of mobs. While such a fear at first seems to contradict his early support for the French Revolution, in Britain pro-government mob activities such as the 1791 Birmingham riots were then indicative of the prevalent public opinion, and by opposing his government he was, in effect, opposing such mob activities at home. After the 1790s, however, such mob activity more likely involved oppositionist groups--for example the Burdett Riots (1810) and the Luddite Riots (1811-12)--and his later views supported the government against what he perceived to be potential anarchy (Carnall 120-23). Equally significant for Southey, and related to this fear, was his desire for peace and stability in the domestic sphere (Curry 20). Deprived of a stable home as a child, Southey spent the bulk of his adult life within the family circle he established at Greta Hall.® Southey's notorious political shift, then, did not include his entirely abandoning the reformist ideals that received his early poetic support, nor did it signal a

§Like that of Wordsworth and Coleridge, his political transformation earned him the disdain of later Romantics; Byron was especially critical of Southey, lampooning him in "The Vision of Judgment" and Don Juan.

®His father pursued field sports to the detriment of the family income, and Southey lived from age two to six with an eccentric aunt (Curry 3-5).
complete change in his person. It did, however, see him changing the nature of the literary heroes he constructed as he sought to advance increasingly loyalist views.

**Radical Heroism: Wat Tyler and Joan of Arc**

In *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc* Southey explicitly contests loyalist portrayals of heroic opposition to Revolutionary France as well as ideas of monarchical and aristocratic glory. Southey wrote *Wat Tyler: A Dramatic Poem* in 1794; he was twenty years old, the treason trials involving prominent radicals were taking place, and he and Coleridge were still planning their "Pantisocracy" (Jonathan Wordsworth, "Introduction" to *Wat Tyler*). Though he left the work with Ridgeway and Symonds, they never published it (Curry 54), and by the time a pirated copy of this radical piece appeared in 1817 Southey was Poet Laureate and a known loyalist who had stated that when "the man of free opinion commences professor of moral and political philosophy for the benefit of the public . . . his very breath becomes venomous, and every page which he sends abroad carries with it a poison to the unsuspicuous reader" ("From a debate in the House of Commons," Madden 236). The irony was of course immediately apparent, and Southey's response to the publication was simple: "God be thanked that the worst which malice can say of me is no more than what I was once proud to say of myself, and never shall be ashamed of saying--that I was a Republican in my youth" (J. Wordsworth, "Introduction" to *Wat Tyler*). The high degree of radicalism evident in the then Poet Laureate's work was even alluded to in Parliament; William Smith, a Whig, is reported to have stated during a session of the House of Commons that *Wat Tyler* "appeared . . . to be the most seditious book that was ever written; its author did not stop short of

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8Curry relates that Southey wrote this work in three days (25).
9"Pantisocracy" was the name of the utopian society Southey and Coleridge planned to establish in America featuring no private property, complete religious freedom, and equal government by all (Curry 21-30).
exhorting to general anarchy; he vilified kings, priests, and nobles, and was for . . .
perfect equality" ("From a debate in the House of Commons," Madden 237).

Joan of Arc, which Southey originally wrote in 1793 and prepared for the press in
1795 (Carnall 35), was published with less notoriety, but its radicalism also drew critical
attention. It tells of the fifteenth-century French military successes under that peasant
maiden against the invading British army, and the implications involved in writing such
an epic during Britain's war with Revolutionary France were lost on neither Southey nor
his loyalist reviewers. Southey writes in the poem's "Preface": "It has been established
as a necessary rule for the Epic, that the subject be national. To this rule I have acted in
direct opposition, and chosen for the subject of my poem the defeat of my country. If
among my readers there be one who can wish success to injustice, because his
countrymen supported it, I desire not that man's approbation" (vii). Though Geoffrey
Carnall notes that "the aristocracy behaved with great liberality to the poem" (36), a
review that appeared in the loyalist Anti-Jacobin Review and Magazine of its slightly
less explicitly radical second edition addresses this issue of its subject, citing it as the
editors' "chief objection" ("Art. II" 120). The review asserts, in phrasing that echoes
Southey's: "The established rule for the epic, that the subject be national, is, surely,
founded on true patriotism. To this rule Mr. S. has acted in direct opposition, and
chosen, for the subject of his poem, the ignominous defeat of the English" (120). It then
goes on to ask:

if the subject that first struck his fancy appeared such, as to cooler reason,
as must necessarily place his countrymen in a disadvantageous light, why
treat it at all? Why violate a law of criticism, approved both by the
ancients and moderns, and, at the same time, offend against the most

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10 In a letter of May 1796, though, Southey shows concern for having offended the aristocracy by
"medd[ing] too much with public concerns" (quoted in Carnall 36). He attributes the work's generally
positive reception not to the aristocracy but to the number of critical journals who shared his political
vision ("Preface" to the final edition of Joan of Arc 12); see, for example, John Aiken's unsigned review
from the Monthly Review (Madden 41-42).
amiable passion that actuates man, either in uncivilized or polished life, we mean, the love of our country? Why, at this crisis more especially, represent the English as continually routed and disgraced, in their conflicts with the French? Is there not a squint of malignity—a treacherous allusion in such a picture? And was it not rather a seditious than a poetic spirit that first contemplated the Maid of Orleans, as the heroine of an English epic?

(121)\textsuperscript{11}

The commentaries of both Southey and the reviewer recognize that the epic's favoring of the French has political implications, as does Southey's insistence on revising the poem as his political views changed.\textsuperscript{12} As he does in \textit{Wat Tyler}, Southey here seeks to challenge dominant conceptions of British martial heroism and the loyalist political agenda that they served.

Both works oppose British intervention in Revolutionary France by portraying British fighting forces in a markedly unsympathetic manner. In \textit{Wat Tyler}, Southey portrays King Richard II and his attendants not as the noble warriors featured in loyalist verse, but as sneaky, cruel members of a selfish ruling class. Richard deceives the peasants by granting them a charter that he does not intend to honor (pp. 34-37, 59-60), and the peasants convincingly describe the war he is waging with France as vain and unnecessary. Tyler remarks:

\begin{quote}
What matters me who wears the crown of France?
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{11}Unsigned reviews in the \textit{Critical Review} (Madden 43-45) and \textit{Analytical Review} (Madden 47-48) support Southey in his choice of subject matter.

\textsuperscript{12}Not all of Southey's revisions, which are many, seem especially politically motivated. But, as Carnall notes, as early as 1798 he had begun "muffling" the work's Jacobinism by omitting two attacks on National Fasts and adding numerous historical notes that emphasize the antiquarian, not the political, aspects of the work (43). Moreover, Southey states in the "Preface" to the final edition, which appeared in \textit{The Complete Poetical Works}: "[the faults] which expressed the political prejudices of a young man who had too little knowledge to suspect his own ignorance . . . have either been expunged, or altered, or such substitutions have been made for them as harmonize with the pervading spirit of the poem, and are otherwise in accord with those opinions which the author has maintained for thirty years, through good and evil report, in the maturity of his judgment as well as the sincerity of his heart" (13). Some of the more notable of these changes are noted below. Despite such revision, though, radical elements of the poem are still evident in its final edition; in the "Preface" to the final collection of his complete poetical works, Southey is careful to distance himself from his early political opinions (7). Because it shows Southey as especially radical, I focus on the 1796 version.
Whether a Richard or a Charles possess it?
They reap the glory— they enjoy the spoil—
We pay— we bleed! -- The sun would shine as cheerily,
The rains of heaven as seasonably fall,
Though neither of these royal pests existed. (6)

Denied the pretense of acting honorably in a noble war, the aristocrats oppress the peasants while living lives of slothful ease. Tyler asks with regard to the state's ever increasing taxes:

who should pay for
The luxuries and riots of the court?
Who should support the flaunting courtier's pride,
Pay for their midnight revels, their rich garments,
Did not the state enforce? (7)

Similarly, John Ball, a radical preacher, says to the peasants:

Ye are all equal; nature made ye so.
Equality is your birth-right; -- when I gaze
On the proud palace, and behold one man
In the blood-purpled robes of royalty,
Feasting at ease, and lording over millions;
Then turn me to the hut of poverty,
And see the wretched labourer, worn with toil,
Divide his scanty morsel with his infants;
I sicken, and, indignant at the sight,
"Blush for the patience of humanity." (31)

Ball's criticism of royalty is further justified by the king's forces' reaction to the uprising: they are afraid when the mob has the upper hand (34-36) but merciless once the advantage is theirs (62). In all of these ways the aristocrats are far removed from the heroic images then current in British culture.

Southey's disdain for British opposition to Revolutionary France is similarly evident throughout Joan of Arc in its negative characterization of the British forces. British soldiers rarely act heroically, but often cruelly or with fear. Joan calls the British
invaders "wolves" (3.198) and "those fierce sons of guilt" (1.271), and her colleague Conrade speaks of the merciless actions that inspired him to leave his gentle ways and take up arms against the invaders:

"the invader's savage fury
Spare not grey age, and mocks the infant's shriek
As he does writhe upon his cursed lance,
And forces to foul embrace, the wife
Even on her murder'd husband's gasping corse!" (1.412-16)

Far from chivalric, British soldiers prey on vulnerable French families. In opposition to loyalist depictions of how the French royal family suffered during the Revolution, here loyalist British forces threaten French homes. And this emphasis on the invasion's destruction of French families is typical of the poem's descriptions of the horrors to which the invasion subjected the French people. Many other passages, for example, emphasize that starvation was common in the besieged French cities. The way that the poem challenges the British soldiers' heroic status by emphasizing their cruelty is perhaps best seen in its treatment of an especially revered British hero, Henry V. While a French survivor of Agincourt concedes that the "honor that a conqueror may deserve / He merits, for right valiantly he fought / On that disastrous day . . ." (2.535-37), Henry is most often described as merciless. The same character counts him among the "warrior scourges of mankind" (2.666) and says of him:

"I did think
There was not on this earth a heart so hard
Could hear a famish'd woman cry for bread,
And know no pity" (2.667-70),

and

"When we sent the herald to implore

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13 In the text, passages spoken by characters have quotation marks, but those spoken by the narrator do not; hence the internal quotation marks here and the quotation marks around the indented passages spoken by characters.

His mercy on the helpless, he relax'd
His stern face into savage merriment,
Scoffing the agonies." (2.681-84)

Given these assertions, it is not surprising that when Joan has visions of hell in the epic's ninth book Henry is among those suffering there. Speaking from a portion of hell reserved for such conquerors as Nimrod and Caesar, he says of himself:

"when I heard of thousands by the sword
Cut off, or blasted by the pestilence,
I calmly counted up my proper gains,
And sent new herds to slaughter...." (731-34)

Southey's negative portrayal of Henry was disturbing enough to the noted poet Anna Seward to prompt a poetic response defending Henry and the British against Southey's charges of cruelty.¹⁵

As he does with the aristocrats in Wat Tyler, Southey here presents the British soldiers as not only merciless, but also afraid. Just the threatening words of Joan's messenger inspire them with fear (6.243-51), and after their first defeat at her hands they lose the desire to fight:

vain the attempt
To kindle in their breasts the wonted flame
Of valour; for by prodigies unmann'd
They wait the morning, or in silent dread,
Or pouring out their fears in many a prayer. (7.36-40)

While some of their chiefs maintain their courage throughout most of the poem, the majority of the soldiers consistently experience such dread,¹⁶ and they even retreat in a cowardly way, leaving their weak and wounded to the mercy of their enemies (10.247-

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¹⁵"Lines Written by Anna Seward, After Reading Southey's 'Joan of Arc'" appeared in The European Magazine in 1797 (Bennett 198-99). In the "Preface" to the final edition of Joan of Arc Southey relates that Seward's criticism of the poem's content and praise of its poetic beauty helped establish his authorial career (12).

¹⁶See 7.483-90, 7.512-16, 8.156-58, and 10.390-94.
Southey's depiction of the British martial forces is thus again far removed from that of loyalist verse.

His treatment of the aristocracy in this work further highlights Southey's then democratic leanings. None of the primary French heroes are aristocrats, except Dunois, who is the bastard son of Orleans, and the poem criticizes kings both English and French, not only showing Henry to be cruel but also insisting that the French King Charles VII was a profligate and corrupt coward. Despite having a wife, Charles is known to have seduced away the valiant Conrade's love Agnes (4.220-45), and he lives in luxury while ignoring the suffering of the people of Orleans as they survive under British siege. He ultimately receives a stern warning against monarchical abuse when he receives his crown from Joan (10.712-46). Southey further conveys his democratic bent by insisting that, despite his faults, Charles, not Henry VI, is the monarch that the French people choose. When a British herald comes to Orleans asking for French surrender before the siege begins, Gaucour, a French chief, replies:

"France will only own as King
   Him whom the people choose. On Charles's brow
   Transmitted through a long and good descent
   The crown remains. We know no homage due
to English robbers. . . ." (5.372-80, see also 6.172-75)

This trace of the democratic is bolstered by explicit Rousseauian statements that insist on a human bliss that existed before the development of social hierarchies and their accompanying oppression (7.440-65, 9.825-69). Significantly, the poem's closing lines

18Clare Simmons notes that in the era of the first English Revolution the Parliamentary party claimed that, according to the laws of primogeniture, Alfred the Great would not have become king and was therefore elected to that duty (33). Edmund Burke goes to great lengths in his Reflections on the Revolution in France to discount the idea of choosing a monarch (13-27).
19Significantly, Southey later edits this passage to de-emphasize the element of choosing. In the last edition of the poem, he writes: "France will only own as King / Her own legitimate Lord" (p. 33).
20Such an idealized concept of ancient political bliss is in keeping with the British myth of the "Norman Yoke," which describes a Saxon liberty that existed before the Norman Invasion and which was important
are: "Thus the Maid/ Redeem'd her country. Ever may the All-Just/ Give to the arms of
Freedom such success" (10.746-48).\textsuperscript{21} Though it ends with the crowning of a French
king, this epic’s insistence on the importance of social equality and the dangers of
oppressive monarchy goes beyond favoring the French over the British to make a general
statement against monarchical governance that is in keeping with the thrust of
contemporary radical poetry.\textsuperscript{22}

In keeping with his oppositionist aims, Southey ascribes to Tyler, Ball, and Joan
the characteristics of chivalric heroism that he denies but that loyalist poetry attributes to
British soldiers and sailors. Tyler’s heroic nature is evident from the start, when he
defends his daughter from a tax collector who “lays hold of her” (16). His so doing is in
keeping with the long-held idea that heroism attends defending one’s home and family,
the chivalric tradition of protecting the vulnerable, and the emphasis on domesticity
evident in the earlier noted anti-war poetic tradition. Because this is the event that leads
the disgruntled peasants to revolt, their rebellion is grounded in a noble action. Ball also
enjoys heroic associations early in the play. Imprisoned for preaching of human equality,
he is humbly Promethean in his willingness to oppose authority and his suffering under
its retribution. Both Tyler and Ball are further heroic in dying for the sake of their fellow
British workers; they perish in the service of their peers, not of their king. Tyler is cut
down by a royal attendant who feels he is insolent when talking with Richard (44), and
Ball is sentenced to a horrible execution for his support of the revolt (68). Southey is
careful to present Tyler’s death more heroically than David Hume’s \textit{History of England}
does, a relevant portion of which was published with one edition of the poetical drama

to the reform movement (Scrivener 18). "Inscription VIII.: For the CENOTAPH at ERMENONVILLE,"
from Southey’s 1797 \textit{Poems}, is in honor of Rousseau.
\textsuperscript{21}In the final version of the poem the last lines are “Thus spake the Maid of Orleans, solemnly /
Accomplishing her marvellous mission here” (p. 59).
\textsuperscript{22}See, for example, “1694” (1794, Scrivener 77) and “Sonnet: The Lion” (1796, Scrivener 128).
68
itself. While Hume states with regard to Tyler’s meeting with Richard that Tyler had "ordered his companions to retire till he should give them a signal, after which they were to murder all the company, except the king himself, whom they were to detain prisoner" (xxi), Southey simply relates Tyler’s order: "on your lives I charge you, / Let none attempt to harm [the King]" (40). By omitting the rest of the devious and cruel plan Southey ennobles the rebel, thus challenging many readers’ belief that Richard, not Tyler, was the hero of the day. A similar effect attends Ball’s composure when told that he is to be hanged, disemboweled, have his heart removed, and be beheaded and quartered:24 "Why be it so. I can smile at your vengeance, / For I am arm’d with rectitude of soul" (69). His courage is superior to that of the vengeful, previously frightened aristocrats who are sentencing him to death and gives a heroic cast to his democratic politics. Moreover, Tyler and Ball are chivalric in their honorable treatment of their adversaries. Neither advocates anarchic violence. Indeed, Ball charges the peasants to be merciful (32-33),25 and Tyler explicitly orders them not to plunder (34). And the other peasants, while not heroic, clearly have a sense of justice. Ball explains their violent acts, such as beheading the Archbishop of Canterbury (47) and burning the palace of Gaunt, as natural responses to the tyranny they had suffered (47-48), and they punish one of their own who is looting at that palace by throwing him into the fire (52-53).

Joan of Arc similarly portrays the opponents of the British monarchy as heroic. The French soldiers are not invading someone else’s homeland, but valiantly defending their own (10.95-117), and they are enthusiastic about fighting; they awake in the midst of their campaign by "[I]eap[ing] up invigorate . . . / impatient to renew the war" (8.143-

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23This and other prefatory materials were intended to further embarrass the then loyalist Poet Laureate.
24Significantly, the punishment here echoes that described by Paine in The Rights of Man when he describes the inhumanity of governments: "In England, the punishment in certain cases is by hanging, drawing, and quartering; the heart of the sufferer is cut out, and held up to the view of the populace" (213, his emph.).
25Significantly, Ball comes to regret having advocated mercy (58); his so doing shows Southey advocating the type of revolutionary violence he would later so thoroughly fear.

69
Their enthusiasm is equaled by that of their leaders, who are repeatedly presented as valiant in battle but conspicuously without Henry's cruel nature. Orleans, who lost to Henry at Agincourt, is presented as both valorous and benevolent (2.487-90, 2.496-503), and while Dunois, Conrade, Theodore, and Joan all consistently show courage and effectiveness when at arms, they are capable of being merciful and even humble. Southey, then, presents the British as losing to the French and inferior to them in character. The Anti-Jacobin's review is correct in its assertion that, when written during a time of British and French conflict, such a presentation is politically charged; it expresses Southey's support for the French revolutionary project and questions British resistance to it.

Southey's politically driven manipulation of the characteristics of heroism is particularly evident in Joan; he attributes to this poor French maiden chivalric traits—courage, martial strength, and a desire to protect the vulnerable—often invoked by loyalist poets in descriptions of British fighting men. Like Tyler, though, Joan is a hero constructed largely in keeping with democratic principles. She is distinguished from her British opponents by her humble roots and her commitment to social justice. Notably, she also possesses a strong sense of mercy. While Southey occasionally describes her as an avenger (7.58-72, 7.166-68), he gives more attention to her merciful actions; for example, after the French forces regain Orleans, the narrator states:

Nor now the Maid
Greedy of vengeance urges the pursuit.
She bids the trumpet of the retreat resound;
A pleasant music to the routed ranks
Blows the loud blast. Obedient to its voice
The French, tho' eager on the invaders' heads
To wreak their wrath, stay the victorious sword. (6.380-86)  

26 See, for example, 5.494-500, 6.263-73, 6.380-86, 8.76-83, 8.492-95, 8.507-21, 10.559-63, and 10.577-82.
27 See also 6.154-60, 6.380-86, 8.492-95, and 10.80-89.
Southey presents such mercy as a positive attribute. He juxtaposes it with descriptions of
the British invaders' cruelty and endorses it through the poem's events. For instance, at
the battle of Patay, Conrade, one of Joan's closest companions and one of the piece's
most effective warriors, offers the British chief Talbot, who is in danger of dying at
Conrade's hands, the opportunity to live (10.540-43, 559-62). Though Talbot refuses
and their struggle results in both of their deaths, Conrade appears more noble than the
merciless Henry, even showing concern for the effects Talbot's death would have on his
family (10.577-82). The acceptance of Joan's policy of mercy by this remarkable
warrior, who had earlier stated that "in the clang of arms, / We win forgetfulness" (7.478-79), is a clear endorsement of it as a moral and military practice; and his concern
for Talbot's family again shows Southey's insistence on a connection between heroism
and the domestic sphere. Her mercy receives an even more dramatic endorsement,
though, when, after the French begin to take the fort of Tournelles, Joan chooses to take
prisoners instead of killing the British troops. Though this policy creates concern for a
number of the French soldiers, and one warrior, D'Orval, argues that these actions
weaken the French position by taking the troops who are to guard the prisoners out of
battle (8.498-507), she maintains that it is more godly to preserve life:

"I tell thee, Chief,
God is with us! but God shall hide his face
From him who sheds one drop of human blood
In calm cold-hearted wisdom---him who weighs
The right and the expedient, and resolves,
Just as the well-pois'd scale shall rise or fall.
These men shall live---live to be happy Chief,
And in the latest hour of life, shall bless
Us who preserved. What is the conqueror's name,
Compar'd to this when the hour of death shall come?
To think that we have from the murderous sword
Rescued one man, and that his heart-pour'd prayers,
Already with celestial eloquence,
Plead for us to the All-just." (8.508-21)

The British do attack after the prisoners are removed, but the French troops win the skirmish due to Joan's decision to feign retreat and then seal off the walls of the Tournelles from the British attackers. Some of the British troops then retreat to a tower over the Loire, and again D'Orval exclaims against Joan's previous decision:

"Ill maiden has thou done! those valiant troops
Thy womanish pity has dismissed, with us
Conjoin'd might press upon the vanquish'd foes,
and plant the lillied flag
Victorious on yon tower." (8.630-34, my emph.)

Again, though, Joan defends her decision:

"Dark-minded man!

Brings with itself an ample recompense.
Chieftain! let come what will, me it behoves,
Mindful of that Good Power whose delegate
I am, to spare the fallen; that gracious God
Sends me the minister of mercy forth,
Sends me to save the ravaged realm of France.
To England friendly as to all the world,
Foe only to the great blood-guilty ones,
The masters and the murderers of mankind.29

God is with us!... God is with us!
Our Champion Manifest!" (8.634-51)

Her decision is then immediately shown to be right when, in an event that seems to justify her faith in God's favor, the tower holding the British troops collapses (8.651-67).

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28See also 2.710-24.
29Joan's being opposed only to the "masters and the murderers of mankind" is in keeping with Southey's emphasis in Wat Tyler on the way that the lower classes fight in wars with little or benefit to themselves. See also her assertion that another reason why the British troops deserve pity is that they are "Misguided men, led from their little homes, / The victims of the mighty" (8.525-26).
Joan's merciful actions do not result in more French dead and wounded, but in easier and faster French victory; her mercy thus appears morally and tactically sound.30

When Joan is arguing with D'Orval about whether or not to take prisoners, he alludes to her "womanish pity" (8.631).31 This sense that her mercy stems from her sex highlights another way in which this poem challenges dominant contemporary conceptions of martial heroism: it features a female hero. While Southey shows Joan to be a brave and effective warrior--leading her troops into battle and excelling in brutal hand to hand combat32—he often describes her in ways that highlight what were then perceived as feminine characteristics.33 The first description of her appears when she finds Dunois injured:

Dunois unseals his eyes,  
And views a Form with mildly-melting gaze  
Hang o'er his wounds: loose to the morning breeze  
Wav'd her brown hair, and on her rubied cheek  
Hung Pity's crystal gem. (1.24-28)

These gentle looks are complemented by her voice: "soft as breeze that curls the summer clouds / At close of day, stole on his ear a voice / Seraphic" (1. 34-36), and in these early scenes with Dunois "all the Woman reign'd" (l. 89). Before receiving her holy mission, Joan shows an aversion to combat: ""It is most horrible with the keen sword / To gore

30For a similar reading of this work's republicanism and concern with morality see Bernhardt-Kabisch's chapter "Arms and a Maid: Joan of Arc."
31An Englishman echoes D'Orval's description of her decision, stating: "Our foes / In woman-like compassion, have dismissed / A powerful escort, weakening thus themselves, / And giving us fair hope, in equal field, / Of better fortune" (8.553-57). Similarly, in Madoc, an Aztecan warrior who had tried to kill one of Madoc's fellow Welsh settlers responds to Madoc's releasing him, as opposed to retaining him as a prisoner, by calling Madoc a "weak and woman-hearted man" (2.78).
32See, for example, 6.262-73, 8.296-98, 8.345-50, and 10.332-78.
33Southey writes of the power of femininity in "The Triumph of Woman," which appears in the 1797 Poems. This work, which retells events from the apocryphal book of 1 Esdras (chs. 3-4), relates how King Darius of Persia agreed to rebuild Jerusalem and grant its freedom in response to a song detailing the power of truth and how women's charms can subdue even conquerors. In a prefatory poem titled "To Mary Wollstonecraft" Southey recognizes the impropriety of limiting the power of women to an ability to captivate men; he explains that "At that age / No Maid of Arc had snatch'd from coward man / The heaven-blest sword of Liberty . . ." (ll. 5-7).
the finely-fibred human frame! / I could not strike a lamb” (1.408-410); and even after
she has engaged in battle she is “[l]ovely in arms” (7.42) and disturbed at the sight of
human blood on her plumage (7.415-19). Southey’s persistent emphasis on Joan’s
having “feminine” traits is clearly related to what other characters perceive as her
“womanish pity,” which he presents as a godly and successful element of warfare. Her
“womanish” mercy separates Joan from ruthless conqueror heroes, several of whom she
had seen in hell with Henry. Moreover, it distinguishes her as a superior warrior and
places her in the tradition of Christ, whose merciful nature is often described in feminine
terms. That Joan’s “womanish pity” makes her a more just and effective warrior calls
into question the prevalent equation of martial prowess with masculinity, which in turn
enhances the work’s larger challenge of notions of British martial heroism. Finally,
Joan’s mercy highlights an essential element of Southey’s then radical agenda: a concern
for the good of humankind that challenges nationalist and class distinctions. By
“contemplat[ing] the Maid of Orleans, as the heroine of an English epic,” Southey
develops a hero who, while a potent warrior, is radically different from those of loyalist
poetry and who clearly advocates oppositionist ideals.

In the preface to the 1796 Joan of Arc Southey reveals an interest in the morality
of heroes: “There are few readers who do not prefer Turnus to Aeneas; an emigrant,
suspected of treason, who negligently left his wife, seduced Dido, deserted her, and then
took Lavinia forcibly from her betrothed husband!” (vi). Such concern for the morality
of the heroes he presents distinguishes Southey’s work from that of what Hegel calls the
“heroic age,” which he describes as a Greek, but not Roman, phenomenon wherein

34For other descriptions of her as lovely see 3.289-92 and 3.319-20. While Southey does not describe her
as a man, he does compare her to a boy (5.1-9, 7.107-13), a practice that allows him to convey her
“masculine” aggression while maintaining her purity and relative innocence.
35Southey often portrays another noted warrior, Nelson, as compassionate; see Life of Nelson (Ed.
36Since Aeneas is sometimes claimed as an ancestor of Brut, and hence of the royal line, Southey’s
criticism of him can be seen as implicit criticism of the British monarchy.

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heroes "undertake and accomplish a complete enterprise in consistent reliance upon their personal resources and initiative, and with whom it is consequently a purely arbitrary act of their own when they execute anything in accordance with the moral principle" (188-89). For Hegel, Roman heroes, including Aeneas, and those that followed them "surrendered personality" to the state (188), and while Tyler and Ball may challenge the state instead of surrendering to it, they do so not in pursuit of personal glory but of more just governance, and their relations with others and with the "moral principle" are defining elements of their heroism, as well as of Joan of Arc's.

As Southey's comments regarding Turnus and Aeneas indicate, the morality central to his heroes is clearly and consistently evident in their relationship with the domestic sphere. In the same "Preface" Southey contends that Ulysses is a superior epic hero to Achilles or Aeneas because his appearing as "the father and the husband" allows him to generate more sympathy than those other warriors do (vi). This connection between the heroic and the domestic is evident in Joan of Arc's saving French families from the cruelty of the British invaders as well as in Wat Tyler, where the peasants' disdain for the war with France is linked to its effect on British families. Hob Carter, a peasant friend of Tyler, complains in the play's first act that government agents "lure, or force away our boys, who should be / The props of our old age--to fill their armies, / and feed the crows of France ...," and that they do so "to crown our chiefs / With glory!" (p. 6). And, as I mention above, the peasant revolt begins when Tyler defends his daughter from an aggressive tax collector. Kenneth Curry writes that "[a] dominant theme in [Southey's] letters and in his occasional poetry is the desire for a settled home, peace, and security" (20), a remark that is clearly applicable to "The Battle of Blenheim," which appeared in The Annual Anthology of 1800 and was also included in the preface of the

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37The importance of the domestic is also considered in his Sir Thomas More: or, Colloquies on the Progress and Prospects of Society (2.141-42, 2.259-60, 2.295-96). Both Meachen (597, 601, 605) and Bernhardt-Kabisch (67) refer to domesticity as a central theme in Southey's work.
edition of *Wat Tyler* that features the segment from Hume (xii-xv). The poem's narrator, "Old Kaspar," relates the following events that happened as a result of the 1704 British victory over the French in the War of the Spanish Succession:

"My father liv'd at Blenheim then,  
Yon little stream hard by;  
They burnt his dwelling to the ground,  
And he was forc'd to fly;  
So with his wife and child he fled,  
Nor had he where to rest his head.

With fire and sword the country round  
Was wasted far and wide,  
And many a childing mother then,  
And new-born infant, died."  (*Preface* xiii-xiv)\(^38\)

As *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc* show, Curry's remark can be extended to the longer poetic works as well, where Southey often presents domestic issues as intricately linked with politics. He is quick to remind readers that political practices have significant domestic effects, and his heroes, like Tyler, are often in the position of defending their homes against those who would disrupt domestic peace.\(^39\) Significantly, in the case of Joan of Arc, he privileges the home over the politically domestic, advocating the French cause over Britain's due to the devastation that the British invasion brought to French families.

In both these works the moral principle demands violently opposing the British government, for it is destroying homes; the implication is that Britain is a threat to, not a protector of, families, who would be better served by a British democracy than by its monarchy. By villainizing British martial forces and locating his heroes among French soldiers and British dissidents, the young Southey challenges the British state and its advocacy of aristocratic and monarchical socio-political structures. Ultimately unable to

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\(^{38}\)Blenheim, now Blindheim, is located on the Danube in Germany. That this victory was achieved under a notable British hero, the Duke of Marlborough, enhances the effect of its anti-war sentiments.

\(^{39}\)For additional poetry involving the effect of martial service on the domestic sphere, see the second and third of "The Botany-Bay Eclogues."
fulfill the egalitarian vision of an American "Pantisocracy," Southey nevertheless criticizes the Britain that spurred him and Coleridge to seek their utopia elsewhere. Significantly, though, his vision of heroes as the preservers of families leads him, as Napoleon's power and British lower-class unrest increase, to locate such later heroes as Madoc, Roderick, and Nelson among aristocrats and British warriors.

**Increasing Loyalism: Madoc and Roderick**

Southey began writing *Madoc* in 1794 but revised it extensively and did not publish it until 1805 (Meachen 590), after Napoleon became emperor and in the midst of the decade that saw the poet assuming a largely loyalist political stance. While this work shares the emphasis on merciful valor evident in *Wat Tyler* and *Joan of Arc*, its hero, the twelfth-century Welsh explorer and colonizer Madoc, is a British conqueror more in keeping with the loyalist heroic tradition than Tyler or Joan. While he shares some of the characteristics of the Southeyan heroes that precede him, Madoc ultimately contributes to a far less radical message, for he embodies a loyalist belief in the sanctity and primacy of things British. He and Roderick, of *Roderick, The Last of the Goths; A Tragic Poem*, show Southey constructing heroes in keeping with his increasingly loyalist politics and consistent domestic concerns.

*Madoc*'s less radical thrust is evident in its "Preface," where Southey writes:

"*[Madoc] assumes not the degraded title of Epic; and the question, therefore, is not whether the story is formed upon the rules of Aristotle, but whether it be adapted to the purposes of poetry*" (vol. 1, page vii). Southey is no longer challenging the rules of the nationalist epic tradition as he did in the "Preface" to the 1796 *Joan of Arc*, but is instead avoiding them by insisting that this forty-five book poem—which features a setting of two continents, an aristocratic explorer-warrior hero, and an Odyssean recollection of
heroic exploits—is not an epic. Moreover, he emphasizes artistic issues to the exclusion of the political implications of epic writing. He devotes a page to these lines:

Three things must be avoided in Poetry; the frivolous, the obscure, and the superfluous.

The three excellencies of Poetry; simplicity of language, simplicity of subject, and simplicity of invention.

The three indispensable purities of Poetry; pure truth, pure language, and pure manners.

Three things should all Poetry be; thoroughly erudite, thoroughly animated, and thoroughly natural.

Triads (1.iii)

While political concerns could enter into such criteria as "pure truth" and "pure manners" and could be reflected in his choosing to present his thoughts on poetry in the Welsh form of triads, Southey assumes in these prefatory remarks the stance of a politically disinterested poet. The poem, however, cannot escape its political concerns. Broken into halves—"Madoc in Wales" and "Madoc in Atzlan"—it describes how its hero abandons the struggle for the crown of North Wales in which his brothers are embroiled by seeking a more just society in the Americas. He there enters into native conflicts, seeking to free a less powerful tribe, the Hoamen, from the dominance of another, the Aztecas, and to convert both from idol worship and human sacrifice to Christianity. Monarchy, the birth of nations, and the ethics of conquest are all issues in this work.

Southey's politics were in transition at the time of Madoc's publication, and, accordingly, the heroic characteristics of his title character are politically ambivalent. His very lineage has significant and mixed political implications. On the one hand he is an aristocratic male British warrior and a genuine Briton, opposed to "Saxon" invaders and angry that his brother David, who had seized the Welsh crown, had married Emma,

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40Since Henry II, who invaded Wales in 1157, 1163, and 1165, was a Plantagenet, of French lineage, Southey's use of "Saxon" here does not denote Germanic heritage but is in keeping with the following definition given by the OED: "[u]sed . . . for 'English' in contradistinction to Welsh and Irish or Gaelic" (14.541). This use of the term occurs primarily with Celtic speakers and is noted to have first come into use in the latter decades of the eighteenth century.
the half-sister of Henry II. Madoc's status as a genuine Briton is emphasized throughout
the poem through repeated references to King Arthur (1.41, 1.123, 1.188)\(^1\) and Madoc's
disdain for David's "Saxon friends" and "Saxon yoke" (1.128-29). As Bernhardt-
Kabisch notes, for all of these reasons Madoc invokes the ideal of a "true Britain" (110-
11). On the other hand, though, Madoc is not English. While Southey presents the early
Britons suffering under the "Saxon" invasion, many late eighteenth and early nineteenth-
century radicals wrote of the Norman yoke that destroyed Saxon\(^2\) liberty. In the
nineteenth century things Saxon were essential to British identity,\(^3\) and, since for some
British speakers "Saxon" became synonymous with "English," Southey, by choosing a
Welsh hero who opposes the "Saxons," was still, to some extent, choosing a hero outside
of the English heroic tradition that dates back to the Saxon Alfred. While he is not as
radical a heroic choice as a British peasant or a French maiden, Madoc is still a hero who
opposes the English monarchy. Written when a Hanoverian king sat in England on the
British throne, such an anti-"Saxon" hero could represent a trace of the seditious spirit
that Joan of Arc is said to have revealed. Madoc's lineage, then, shows him to have
characteristics of the loyalist British aristocratic hero and earlier Southeyan oppositionist
heroes.

Of those earlier Southeyan heroes, Madoc has the most in common with Joan of
Arc, for like her he is a valiant but merciful warrior interested in freeing a conquered
people. While his forces dominate the North American natives primarily due to superior
technology, such as effective armor and boats, he shows his valor when he is taken
prisoner and forced to engage in hand-to-hand combat while chained to the Aztecas'
stone of sacrifice. He kills one warrior and is engaged with perhaps the Aztecas' most

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\(^1\)Bernhardt-Kabisch notes that Southey was engrossed by King Arthur "even in the days of his most
fervent anti-British Republicanism" (110).
\(^2\)In the sense of the Germanic people who conquered England in the fifth and sixth centuries.
\(^3\)See Simmons.
fierce, Tlalala, when his countrymen attack and his opponent is forced to join the larger struggle (2.125-34). And Madoc's mercy is shown repeatedly: after their initial victory over the Aztecas, his troops heal the others' wounds and free their prisoners (1.87), and he later leads a rescue effort to save Aztecas who are fleeing a volcanic eruption (2.239, 2.244). He even releases Tlalala the first time they meet, after he is caught trying to ambush one of the Welsh settlers. No merely cruel invader, Madoc advocates interracial families and seeks to coexist peacefully with the natives who are willing to accept Christianity (2.166-67). He wants to "conquer and protect" (1.63) and be "the righteous conqueror / Who conquers to redeem" (2.211), the "Great Deliverer (2.211). He is "not of conquest greedy nor of gold" (2.5) and seeks to avoid gratuitous violence; an unsigned review says that the poem's "leading characteristics are . . . tenderness and humanity" ("From an unsigned review, Imperial Review," Madden 105). And Madoc's conflict with the Aztecas begins only when a home is threatened in a way reminiscent of the beginning of Wat Tyler: he leaps to save a Hoamen child chosen by the Aztecas for sacrifice to their idol-god Mexitli (1.68-70). Madoc is another Southeyan hero seeking to preserve domestic peace, a chivalric savior to the Hoamen people who had previously been more cruelly conquered by the Aztecas.

The poem's first half shows Southey promoting not only a hero similar to Joan but also an anti-monarchical message similar to that of his previous work. "Madoc in Wales" highlights the violence and deceit that can accompany a hereditary monarchy, showing the willingness of Madoc's brother David, who has assumed the throne of North Wales, to kill their brothers Hoel and Yorwerth, imprison their brother Rodri, and force their brother Ririd into exile (1.16-17, 1.25-26). Madoc's renowned father, Owen, even acts cruelly, having had his nephew, Cynetha, blinded in order to prevent his claiming

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44 He also calls for mercy after another victory over the Aztecas (2.178).
45 Bernhardt-Kabisch notes that an early outline of the poem had Madoc less eager to fight (124).
lands that were rightly his (1.37-38). Such cruelty, along with the unfortunate arranged marriage between David and the remarkably kind Emma, shows the potential for corruption and abuse a line of succession engenders. Instead of seeking to amend the existing system by helping to place Llewelyn, the elder brother Yorwerth’s son and the rightful heir, on the throne, Madoc rejects it altogether, voyaging to the new world with what Bernhardt-Kabisch (110, 111) and Meachen (600) rightly call Pantisocratic plans. He flees the turbulent domesticity of his royal family for a distant hope of peace, taking along as many family members as can and will accompany him. In these ways the first half of the poem recalls the radicalism of Southey’s earlier verse.

While the poem’s second half describes Madoc’s valor and mercy, it nevertheless undermines much of the first half’s radical politics, a point that is evident in the conspicuous absence of any mention of the poem’s Welsh concerns in an introductory poem that appears after the "Preface" but before the work proper:

COME, LISTEN TO A TALE OF TIME OF OLD!

COME, LISTEN TO MY LAY, AND YE SHALL HEAR
HOW MADOC FROM THE SHORES OF BRITAIN SPREAD
THE ADVENTUROUS SAIL, EXPLORED THE OCEAN WAYS,
AND QUELLED THE BARBARIAN POWER, AND OVERTHREW
THE BLOODY ALTARS OF IDOLATRY,
AND PLANTED IN ITS FANES TRIUMPHANTLY
THE CROSS OF CHRIST. COME LISTEN TO MY LAY! (l.ix)

In Mexico, Madoc ceases to be the Briton opposing "Saxon" aggression and becomes the British opponent of American barbarity, a mission to which Southey gives a heroic cast by comparing Madoc and his crew to Jason and the Argonauts (1.189). Despite his often honorable intentions, Madoc is finally an imperialist hero, an embodiment of, not a challenge to, British martial aggression.

In Madoc, Southey advocates the type of British military aggression that loyalist thinkers encouraged, and he supports it in a way common to loyalists and oppositionists
alike, by claiming that God endorses it. In Joan of Arc it is clear that God is on the side of those opposing the British power structure, but the situation is reversed in Madoc, where the Christian God is key to the British victory over the idolatrous Aztecas. Seemingly divinely protected ocean travel (1.46-56, 2.5-6), the volcano that helps subdue the resilient Aztecas (2.237-38), and the testimony of the king of the Aztecas himself (2.243, 2.244) indicate that God is central to Madoc's victory. While a number of the natives prove courageous, those who refuse to accept Christianity do not receive the poetic endorsement given to Madoc and those who convert. The work's final lines, which refer to the Aztecan exodus to reestablish their community and religion elsewhere in Mexico, state that they thrived:

\[
\text{till Heaven,} \\
\text{Making blind zeal and bloody Avarice} \\
\text{Its ministers of vengeance, sent among them} \\
\text{The heroic Spaniard's unrelenting sword. (2.256, my emph.)}
\]

Despite their avarice, the conquering Spaniards are "heroic" in opposing the idolatrous Aztecs because they conquer in the name of Christianity.46 Southey here assumes the white man's burden (Bernhardt-Kabisch 123).47 The North American natives recognize the Welsh as a superior race (1.67, 2.73), and Southey calls the Britons "colonists" (2.24). Despite his insistence on the noble nature of the Aztecas,48 Southey justifies all of Madoc's imperialist actions through emphasizing the horrors of their religious practices; their engaging in human sacrifice provides Southey with an opportunity to justify the British aggression he so vigorously opposes in Joan of Arc. Even though Madoc offers the Hoamen queen co-rule (2.211-12), he assumes

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46While one could consider reading "heroic" here as ironic, the work's emphasis on the need to violently correct the Aztecas and Southey's renowned respect for Spanish culture challenge the credibility of such a reading.

47Southey supported British imperialism as early as 1802 (Carnall 78-79).

48See, for example, Madoc's being impressed with the priest Neolin's devotion to the snake-god (2.59), the Aztecan king Yuhidhiton's refusal to resort to subterfuge, even in the face of defeat (2.226-28), and the warrior Tlalala's choosing to take his own life instead of admitting to defeat by Madoc's forces (2.256).
control of the territory, forcefully imposing Christian beliefs on the Hoamen (2.71-73) and demanding the migration of the Aztecas, who refuse to adopt his religion. Madoc's opposition to human sacrifice reflects Southey's concern for the violence of other societies evident in his statement in the Annual Review for 1802 that, because of the violent nature of the South Sea Islands, the British need not argue for the right to conquer them: "the right of conquering cannibals and child-murderers! the right of preventing human sacrifices by force!" (quoted in Carnall 79). In Madoc, Southey accordingly describes the Welsh defeat of the Aztecas as "righteous slaughter" (2.176).

The actions of its conqueror-hero in the new world reflect the concern for opposing Napoleon and controlling revolution within Britain that would characterize Southey's thought shortly following the publication of Madoc. As mentioned earlier, Southey's fear of mobs is evident in both his radical and later loyalist positions, and it is clearly evident in the work's insistence on the importance of controlling, even killing, the powerful, idolatrous Aztecas. Similarly, a concern for domestic peace drives his first opposing but here advocating British military aggression. The same military that could destroy late eighteenth-century British families through dubious recruiting practices could help protect early nineteenth-century British homes from the aggression of Napoleon and the chaos of British worker rebellions. The poet began to see domestic stability as best protected by loyalist philosophies and practices, and the British Madoc is a preserver of, not a threat to, domesticity.

Southey maintained an emphasis on the importance of the relationship between the domestic and the heroic in his Laureate writings. He began Roderick, the Last of the Goths; A Tragic Poem in late 1809 and finished it in July, 1814 ("Preface" to final edition 646). Like Joan of Arc and Wat Tyler, this work describes the overthrow of oppression, but this time the oppressors are Moors, not British; the poem endorses
vengeance, not mercy; and the preferred form of government is monarchical, not
democratic. A description of the eighth-century repulsion from Spain of Moorish
invaders, the poem reflects Southey's interest in things Spanish as well as his promotion
of British military support for the Spanish Insurrection. Roderick, like Madoc, is a hero
who has ambivalent political implications but who ultimately serves loyalist ends.

Like Joan of Arc, Roderick is a highly religious, strong warrior; unlike her,
however, he has a guilty past. Formerly a celebrated Visigoth king—he had defeated a
rival family for the throne—Roderick brought about the Moors' invasion by raping the
young and chaste Florinda, causing her father, Count Julian, to adopt Islam and, along
with his men, help the Moors invade. Roderick's grief for wronging Florinda and thus
sparking his people's destruction leads him to set out alone and become a highly penitent
holy man; he ultimately returns and mixes incognito with the Spaniards, serving their
various religious needs. Inspired to join in the work's final battle, he helps lead the
Spaniards to victory then disappears again to resume his penitence. Eager to serve and
potent in arms, Roderick has the makings of a chivalric hero.

Unlike Joan, Tyler, and Madoc, though, Roderick is merciless. Indeed, in this
work "[t]he word is, Vengeance!" (706), as Roderick and his countrymen utterly destroy
the Moors in response to their invasion and cruel sacking of Auria. An anonymous
reviewer remarks:

It must be admitted, that the circumstances of the plot made it necessary to
exhibit the workings of a [deeply vindictive] spirit to a certain degree, in
order to be true to nature: but the fault lies in the apparent zest and relish

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49 In his unsigned review in the British Critic, John Taylor Coleridge contrasts the severe penitence of
Southey's Roderick with that of Sir Walter Scott's, who wrote a poem on the same subject. He says of
Scott's Roderick, in a passage that emphasizes the cultural importance then ascribed to the literary
construction of heroism: "we are presented with a semi-barbarian chief, struggling with remorse, and bent
by circumstances, rather than by conviction, to an unwilling and ineffectual repentance—in the very act of
confession proudly shrinking from shame, and in submission still imperious; one, in short, of those very
faulty characters whom it has been too much the fashion of modern poets to render somewhat dangerous
by investing them with military gallantry, or cheap generosity" (Madden 185).
with which this is done. Instead of being cast into the shade, as a
necessary but unwelcome blemish in the picture, it is forced upon the eye
both by prominence of situation and strength of coloring. ("From an
unsigned review, British Review, Madden 191)

While such an emphasis on revenge runs counter to Christ's teachings, violent retribution
obtains Christian significance in this poem, which Edward Meachen describes as "the
poetic sanction of the just war, or 'holy war'" (604). The relationship between violence
and Christianity is evident in the Spaniards' carrying a cross into battle (707), in the
ceremony with which a young Spanish nobleman, Alphonso, takes up his arms vowing

To wage hereditary, holy war,
Perpetual, patient, persevering war,
Till not one living enemy pollute
The sacred soil of Spain . . . (676),

and in Roderick's status as a warrior-priest. Moors refer to him as a "destroying Angel"
and "no human foe," and the Spaniards describe him as "of no mortal mould," "the aid
of Heaven," and ask "wherefore should we not believe / That this may be some Saint or
Angel, charged / To lead us to miraculous victory?" (706). Once he makes his identity
known to all, the Spanish troops shout "Roderick the Goth! Roderick and Victory! /
Roderick and Vengeance!" (708, 709). As a vengeful, "destroying Angel," Roderick
shuns mercy; instead, he comes to regret ever having exercised it. When he recovered
the throne from Witiza, blinding him as Witiza had blinded Roderick's father
Theodofred, Roderick spared several of Witiza's children. They subsequently joined
Count Julian in seeking revenge on Roderick by aiding the Moors, and Roderick's mercy
to them is considered by himself and others to be central to the Moors' conquest (661,
664). Roderick ultimately seeks them out in battle to gain his vengeance (708, 709). In
this work, mercy is divorced from martial heroism.

50 For Coleridge on holy war, see Chapter Four.
51 He does at one point qualify this regret; see 664.
Roderick also shows Southey becoming a proponent of monarchy and the aristocracy. The support for democracy that is plainly evident in Wat Tyler and Joan of Arc disappears, as do the Pantisocratic elements of Madoc. While, like Madoc, Roderick recognizes the problems that can accompany hereditary monarchy, it does not advocate sweeping change, but enhanced cooperation among royal families and the placement of a Visigothic nobleman on the Spanish throne. And it includes statements privileging bloodlines, such as those spoken by the Archbishop of Toledo during the ceremony making Pelayo king of Spain. He calls Pelayo "Son of a race / Of Heroes and of Kings" and "Thou in whom the Gothic blood, / Mingling with old Iberia's, hath restored / To Spain a ruler of her native line . . ." (689). Furthermore the heroes of this work are aristocratic. Roderick is a former king; and while Adosinda, a woman and the only survivor of the Moors' assault on Auria, is like Joan of Arc in being zealously inspired, leading in battle, and sparking renewed opposition to invasion, she is, significantly, "The Lady Adosinda" (658, my emph.). While he describes all the Spaniards who repel the Moors as valorous, Southey locates courage primarily among the aristocrats. As Bernhardt-Kabisch notes with regard to Roderick, the "restoration of the monarchy, an embarrassed concession to history in Joan of Arc and a side issue in Madoc, now became a central theme" (132).

Notably, Roderick's repulsion of the Moors allows Southey simultaneously to support British war efforts to repel the French from Spain as well as British, and to some degree European, imperialism. In the poem's last book Southey describes the variety of peoples who die fighting under the Moorish flag:

Join'd in the bonds of faith
Accurs'd, the most flagitious of mankind

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52See also 666, 667. Southey does recognize the importance of a monarch enjoying the support of the people (667).
53See 706.
From all parts met are here; the apostate Greek,
The vicious Syrian, and the sullen Copt,
The Persian cruel and corrupt of soul,
The Arabian robber, and the prowling sons
Of Africa, who from their thirsty sands
Pray that the locusts on the peopled plain
May settle and prepare their way. Conjoined
Beneath an impious faith, which sanctifies
To them all deeds of wickedness and blood,—
Yea, and halloos them on,—here are they met
To be conjoin'd in punishment this hour. (709, left col.)

This sense of righteous punishment shows Roderick to share the imperialist impulse of
Madoc; both the Welsh and the Spanish share a Christian faith that must oppose the
horrors of other religions and, as in the case of post-Revolutionary France, enlightenment
religious skepticism. Southey was as confident in God's opposition to the Moors as he
was that God opposed the British invasion of Joan of Arc's France.

Roderick further displays Southey's continued emphasis on the connection
between heroism and domesticity. Indeed, family issues are at the work's core, causing
Roderick's and Spain's downfall as well as signaling their recovery. Previous conflict
among aristocratic Visigothic families weakens the people's unity, even before the Moors
invade, and Roderick's unhappy, politically driven marriage is said, even by Florinda
herself (670, 673), to have led to his raping her (652, 661). And family problems
continue to plague the Spaniards throughout the work as, in the midst of their uprising,
Pelayo's sister, Guisla, runs off with a Moor and gives them information concerning the
Spaniards' position. The result of the conflicts caused by such domestic woes is best

54 This highly negative portrayal of Islamic peoples is significantly different from that of Thalaba the
Destroyer (1801), where Islam is portrayed in a way that emphasizes its similarities with, not its
differences from, Christianity.
55 The poem is unfortunate in its justifying Roderick's raping Florinda and in her assigning much of the
blame for that act to herself. In an unsigned review John Herman Merivale says of this feature: "Mr.
Southey has sacrificed all the moral as well as the actual, probability of the story to the design of
extenuating the fault of his hero, when in fact the strength of the subject consists in the very enormity of
56 This act, however, ultimately serves the Spanish well, as her information leads the Moors into an
ambush.
seen in the utter destruction of Auria by the Moors and an image of a destroyed family—the dead bodies of Adosinda's parents, husband and child:\(^{57}\)

there upon the ground
Four bodies, decently composed, were laid,
Though horrid all with wounds and clotted gore:
A venerable ancient, by his side
A comely matron, for whose middle age,
(If ruthless slaughter had not intervened,)
Nature, it seem'd, and gentle Time, might well
Have many a declining year in store;
The third an armed warrior, on his breast
An infant, over whom his arms were cross'd. (656, left col.)

The image of the dead family reflects the pains of the Spanish nation-state, as warriors, children, and grandparents suffer alike.

Concurrent with the recovery of Spain, though, is the restoration of much family unity, even if it is often marred by death. Alphonso returns to his father, Count Pedro, and his mother, Favinia (674); Roderick is reunited with his mother, Rusilla, just before she dies (690, 691); and Florinda and Count Julian reunite in Christian harmony before he dies of a wound and she dies of grief (703, 704). Harmony between families improves as well, as formerly rivalrous families put their differences behind them in the name of overthrowing the Moors. The valor of Roderick and others leads to the recovery of the Spanish throne, a return to harmony within and among aristocratic Spanish families, and the overthrow of what the poem describes as an especially cruel Moorish people. As Meachen states: "In Roderick Southey asserts the family's right to use violence to defend itself for the good of humanity" (605). That the relevant families are all aristocratic is a sure indicator of Southey's political change.

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\(^{57}\)This image is reminiscent of one in a note to the poem "To Horror," from the 1797 Poems (143).
**Nelson's Achilles' Heel**

While Madoc and Roderick show Southey's increasing loyalism, it is more plainly evident in the hero of a prose work, Admiral Nelson. In the *Life of Nelson* Southey celebrates that renowned British warrior-hero, showing his courage and devotion to God, King, and Britain. Southey's even undertaking such a project shows the marked political differences between the Laureate and the author of *Joan of Arc*. In hoping that the work would "become a manual for the young sailor" (iv), he moved from seeking to criticize to attempting to train the British military. Southey here presents Nelson as the consummate British warrior, but, significantly, he tempers his praise with criticism of Nelson's extramarital attachment to Lady Emma Hamilton. He finally presents the admiral as a flawed hero, and in so doing he further insists on the connection between domesticity and martial heroism.

Foremost in Southey's description of Nelson is his absolute dedication to the state. In the first chapter Southey quotes Nelson's remembrance of the moment he dedicated himself to martial service, a passage that is striking in its similarity to descriptions of religious conversion. Nelson is at the time a young sailor returning home from service in the East Indies, where he had grown ill and, as a result, begun to despair of his ability to succeed in the navy. Nelson states:

"My mind was staggered with a view of the difficulties I had to surmount, and the little interest I possessed. I could discover no means of reaching the object of my ambition. After a long and gloomy reverie, in which I almost wished myself overboard, a sudden glow of patriotism was kindled within me, and presented my king and country as my patron. 'Well, then,' I exclaimed, 'I will be a hero!' and, confiding in Providence, I will brave every danger!'" (Ed. Callender 13)

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58 While the book never was required reading for the Royal Navy, it was for a time distributed to every United States naval officer (Fenwick 16).

59 Due to availability issues, I had to use two different editions of the *Life of Nelson*, one edited by Kenneth Fenwick and one by Geoffrey Callender. I note Callender's name where I cite from his edition but simply provide the page numbers when I cite from Fenwick's.
Southey highlights the religious undertones of this description, remarking that Nelson often stated that from the time of this experience "a radiant orb was suspended in his mind's eye which urged him onward to renown" and that Nelson "always seemed willing to believe . . . that the light which led him on was 'light from heaven'" (Callender 13-14). Nelson was an adherent to the loyalist belief that God favored Britain, and he saw himself as a servant of God, King, and country.

Nelson went on, of course, to serve the state with remarkable zeal. Early in his career he spoke to a young midshipman of three things always to keep in mind: "'First, you must always implicitly obey orders, without attempting to form any opinion of your own respecting their propriety. Secondly, you must consider every man your enemy who speaks ill of your king: and, thirdly, you must hate a Frenchman as you do the devil'" (Callender 49). The commitment evident in these words was clearly reflected in Nelson's deeds. While watching and pursuing the French fleet between May 1803 and August 1805 he left his ship only three times, never for more than an hour and each time on official business (Callender 275); and despite several battle injuries and severe fatigue he remained in naval service until his death at Trafalgar. He lost an eye at Calvi (Callender 66-67) and an arm at Teneriffe (Callender 110-11); he had internal injuries from the Battle at St. Vincent (Callender 277); and he suffered a head wound at the Battle of the Nile (Callender 137). Through all of these setbacks, Nelson remained focused on service, stating before Trafalgar that he "'may, with care, live yet to do good service to the state'" (Callender 277). His final signal to his fleet was "'England expects every man will do his duty!'" (Callender 306), and his dying words were "'Thank God, I have done my duty'" (Callender 316).

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50 Callender notes that the actual phrasing of the signal was: "'England expects that every man will do his duty'" (306 note).
Significantly, though, Nelson's dedication to the state did not rob him of independence of mind. Indeed, despite the advice he gave the young midshipman, he often disobeyed orders when he thought doing so would allow him to do his duty more effectively. He carried on a blockade at Genoa without the blessing of the commander-in-chief (Callender 81), and he disobeyed orders during battle if he perceived what he believed to be a more effective means of proceeding (Callender 99, 227). He contended, however, that his so doing did not constitute a lack of respect for orders themselves, stating: "To serve my king and to destroy the French, I consider as the great order of all, from which little ones spring: and if one of these militate against it . . . I go back, and obey the great order and object . . . " (Callender 197). Nelson relied less on his superiors than on what Southey called an "intuitive and all-commanding genius" (Callender 208); it was an ability to perceive situations and make appropriate decisions. He was willing to ignore orders if he believed he could better serve Britain by so doing.

Nelson's strengths, though, extended beyond his vision and commitment. He was also particularly capable of winning the respect and affection of the sailors he led. In 1797 he was assigned to the Theseus, a ship that had been part of the Great Mutiny of that spring; within a few weeks of his arrival a paper was dropped on the quarterdeck stating that the men were happy with the current leadership and willing to die in their support (Callender 106). That anecdote is representative of the respect and admiration that Nelson consistently won. Southey states: "Never was any commander more beloved. He governed men by their reason and their affections. They knew that he was incapable of caprice or tyranny; and they obeyed him with alacrity and joy, because he possessed their confidence as well as their love" (Callender 267). Nelson was hesitant to use corporal punishment (Callender 267), and he sought ways better to reward ordinary sailors (Callender 268) and enhance the relationship between officers and their men (Callender 29). And when injured at the Nile he refused to accept preferential treatment,
insisting instead on waiting his turn to receive medical attention (Callender 137). Such behavior was not lost on the common sailors, who would say that Nelson was "as brave as a lion, and as gentle as a lamb" (Callender 267). Though a warrior, Nelson was humane, and despite his skill at and enthusiasm for battle, he--like Joan of Arc, Wat Tyler, and Madoc--was capable of showing mercy when at arms. He sent a flag of truce to the Danish fleet during the battle at Copenhagen because he felt several of their ships were being massacred unnecessarily (Callender 231-32), and at Trafalgar he twice ordered that firing upon the French Redoubtable should cease because he felt the ship had surrendered; the Redoubtable did not fly a flag, so the usual method of communicating surrender was not available. It was after he had twice so ordered that the shot that killed him was fired from that ship (Callender 313).

In many and important ways, then, Nelson was an exemplary warrior; he was dedicated, brave, insightful, and humane. But Southey does not present him as unflawed. He shows Nelson to be jealous, albeit justifiably, of official recognition (Callender 39, 279), and he attributes the Admiral's being shot at Trafalgar partially to his being conspicuous to the enemy; he insisted on wearing his medals into battle (Callender 307, 313). Southey's primary criticism of Nelson, though, stems from his involvement with Lady Emma Hamilton, an attachment that Southey presents as negatively affecting Nelson's performance of his duties. We have seen that Southey considered the domestic sphere central to heroic behavior, and he asserts it to be so in the Life of Nelson, contending that domestic attachments are an asset, not a liability, to a military hero. Though Southey does not balk at Nelson's assertion that service to Britain takes precedence over family involvement (Callender 40), he contends that having a family is

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61 This state of affairs arose in part from the Danish forces not following the rules of warfare. Their ships' crews were reinforced from the land, and the newly arriving combatants would fire on the British even from Danish ships that had already surrendered. This action would cause fresh British fire. The Danish ships that had surrendered were also receiving shot from Danish batteries on shore, which were trying to protect the struck ships (Callender 230-31).
conducive to martial heroism. Southey reports that, after Nelson's wedding, one sailor stated that "the navy lost one of its greatest ornaments by Nelson's marriage. It is a national loss that such an officer should marry: had it not been for this, Nelson would have become the greatest man in the service." Southey replies: "The man was rightly estimated, but he who delivered his opinion did not understand the effect of domestic love and duty upon a mind of true heroic stamp" (48). Southey perceives such influences as enhancing a heroic mind. Nelson, however, shunned domestic love and duty, separating from his wife and becoming romantically involved with Lady Emma Hamilton, wife of Sir William Hamilton, the British Envoy to the Court of Naples. This liaison resulted in her having his daughter even before Sir William's death. Southey writes: "Happy would it have been for Nelson if warm and careful friendship had been all that awaited him [at the Hamilton residence]" (146), and he says of their relationship in its early stages: "it is certain that he had now formed an infatuated attachment for Lady Hamilton, which totally weaned his affections from his wife. Farther than this there is no reason to believe that this most unfortunate attachment was criminal; but this was criminality enough, and it brought with it its punishment" (166). Southey describes this punishment as increased psychological distress and Nelson's being implicated, along with the Hamiltons, in the dishonorable breaking of a treaty in Naples (166-68).

The agreement was struck by Cardinal Ruffo, who was leading a multinational land force against the Neapolitan rebels while Nelson sailed to collect other ships of the fleet in anticipation of a battle. Ruffo offered the outnumbered rebels at two castles safe passage to Toulon or safe continuance in Naples if they would surrender the castles. They did, and within two days Nelson returned, seeking to annul the treaty and asserting that he would only accept unconditional surrender. His will eventually won, and the rebels were delivered to the Neapolitan royalists, who executed them (166-68). Nelson also ordered a court martial hearing for Prince Francesco Caracciolo, a Neapolitan noble.
who had fought for the rebels but claimed to have been forced to do so. He was found guilty and hanged (169-71). Kenneth Fenwick, editor of The Folio Society's Life of Nelson, writes to exonerate Nelson from any dishonor in these proceedings (172-75), but Southey clearly believed Nelson to have been at fault in breaking the agreement, calling the events "the only blot upon his public character" (166) and "[a] deplorable transaction! a stain upon the memory of Nelson and the honour of England!" (168). And, significantly, he attributes Nelson's behavior to the influence of Lady Hamilton, whom he describes as devoted to the Neapolitan court (171). He states that Nelson's relationship with her led to his actions (166), and when writing of Nelson's order for a court martial hearing, he states: "Doubtless the British Admiral seemed to himself to be acting under a rigid sense of justice; but, to all other persons, it was obvious that the was influenced by an infatuated attachment--a baneful passion which destroyed his domestic happiness, and now in a second instance ineffaceably his public character" (171).

This event exemplifies the connection between the domestic, the heroic, and the political that Southey's corpus consistently presents. For Southey, Nelson's domestic failings led to actions that resulted in the defacement of his heroic character and the miscarriage of justice. Though a remarkable hero of the British nation-state, Nelson damaged Britain's honor as a result of having forsaken his wife and home, and Southey felt himself obligated to make clear to his readers the full significance of Nelson's mistake: "To palliate it would be in vain; to justify it would be wicked; there is no alternative, for one who will not make himself a participator in guilt, but to record the

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62Fenwick presents some compelling evidence in his defense of Nelson, but he is clearly off the mark in claiming that Southey misrepresented these events because his sympathy for the Neapolitan rebels outweighed his admiration for Nelson. As we have seen, Southey's political development does not bear out Fenwick's assertion of Southey's continued radicalism: "Southey had hailed the French Revolution with a joy which was only turned to hatred by the execution of the Girondins and his passionate revolutionary republicanism remained, but it was transferred from France to all other people who rose against their rulers. To him all existing governments were those of 'tyrants,' so that the Neapolitan Jacobins were heroes of liberty who only leagued themselves with the French because they were honestly misguided" (173). Callender also defends Nelson's actions in this affair.

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disgraceful story with sorrow and with shame" (168). The implications are clear: the domestic sphere informs the national arena, and heroes must attend to both.

Southey, though, ends his Life of Nelson with praise; the concluding paragraph includes these lines:

The most triumphant death is that of the martyr; the most awful that of the martyred patriot; the most splendid that of the hero in the hour of victory. And if the chariot and the horses of fire had been vouchsafed for Nelson's translation, he could scarcely have departed in a brighter blaze of glory. He has left us, not indeed his mantle of inspiration, but a nature and an example, which are at this hour inspiring thousands of the youth of England: a name which is our pride, and an example which will continue to be our shield and our strength. (Callender 322)

This passage ignores Nelson's involvement with Lady Hamilton and the affair in Naples, but Southey later presents martial figures who do not achieve Nelson's glory but who balance morality and martial service in an exemplary way. These figures, one ideal and one allegedly historical, appear in the Colloquies. The first is the "good and wise man" described by Sir Thomas More in "Colloquy VII":

The object of a good and wise man in this transitory state of existence should be to fit himself for a better, by controlling the unworthy propensities of his nature, and improving all its better aspirations; . . . to do his duty first to his family, then to his neighbours, lastly to his country and to his kind; to promote the welfare and happiness of those who are in any degree dependent upon him, or whom he has the means of assisting, and never wantonly to injure the meanest thing that lives; to encourage, as far as he may have the power, whatever is useful and ornamental in society, whatever tends to refine and elevate humanity; to store his mind with such knowledge as it is fitted to receive, and he is able to attain; and so to employ the talents committed to his charge, that when the account is required, he may hope to have his stewardship approved. (1.165)

Though such a man has duties to his nation-state, which presumably include fighting for it when necessary, he also has domestic, neighborly, and educational tasks that would inform and at times take precedence over such service. Though he is charged with

63Though the Colloquies were published in 1829, well after the years on which this study focuses, these representative figures are important enough to consider here.
serving humankind, his primary concern is the next world, not this one, and he must control "the unworthy propensities of his nature" and must not "wantonly . . . injure the meanest thing that lives." If called into martial service, such a man would act as a citizen and father, son, or brother; not as a conqueror-hero. Indeed, this "good and wise man" stands in contrast to Napoleon, whom Southey, as well as Coleridge, had previously associated with greatness (Bainbridge 8, 22).

The second figure, from "Colloquy VIII," is described by Montesinos and presents a more explicit challenge to the conqueror-hero:

I remember to have read or heard of a soldier in our late war, who was one day told by his officer to take aim when he fired, and make sure of his man. "I cannot do it, Sir!" was his reply. "I fire into their ranks, and that does as well; but to single out one among them, and mark him for death, would lie upon my mind afterwards." The man who could feel this was worthy of a better station than that in which his lot had been assigned. (1.210)

This figure sounds like a "good and wise man" who has been called into service. Though he performs his duty for his country, he does not relish the carnage of war and is more interested in the state of his conscience than in the approval of his officer. Indeed, he follows not Nelson's advice to the young midshipman but Charles James Fox's assertion that "[u]nconditional and indiscriminate obedience, is not the duty of a Soldier in a free state"; though his officer's request is certainly not an unreasonable one, the soldier would rather disobey it than abandon what he considers a more conscionable approach to warfare. He balances his willingness to serve with a type of moral restraint, and in so doing he epitomizes what Southey most valued in a martial hero: commitment to a moral cause. As I will show, Wordsworth and Coleridge similarly insisted that martial heroes

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64 Fox made this statement during parliamentary debate regarding separate barracks for British troops; see Chapter Four for the broader context of this remark.
65 In an exchange that immediately follows this description of the morally driven soldier, Sir Thomas More and Montesinos discuss how the demands of a military life can strengthen one's character. However, Montesinos ultimately undermines this stance, stating: "There is, indeed, in the military and naval professions, what Dr. Johnson has well called the dignity of danger, and which, as he observes, accounts
embody morality, an insistence that is evident in their treatment of the relationship between the martial hero, the home, and the British nation-state.

for the proper estimation in which they are held. But I know not how many parents, who consider the moral danger incident to those professions, can make choice of either for a son” (1.211).
CHAPTER THREE

WORDSWORTH, WAR, AND THE BRITISH MARTIAL HERO

"Southey's mind does not seem strong enough to draw the picture of a Hero."
("Wordsworth, from two letters to Sir George Beaumont," Madden 100)

The title page to the pirated edition of Wat Tyler features two quotations that emphasize Southey's political conversion. The first reads: "Come, listen to a Tale of Times of Old!-- / Come, for ye know me--I am he who sung / The 'Maid of Arc' . . . ,"
and the second states: "And I was once like this! . . . / . . . Twenty years / Have wrought strange alteration." Both are followed by "Southey," first with one, then with three exclamation points. Wordsworth might have been subjected to similar treatment if his A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff had, like Southey's drama, come to the public's attention after he had abandoned his radical political stance.¹ Probably written in February or March of 1793, but not published in Wordsworth's lifetime,² the Letter's self-proclaimed "republican spirit" (31) is evident in its defense of revolutionary violence and the execution of Louis XVI; its attacks on primogeniture, the aristocracy, and the nobility; and its insistence that a republic is a form of government superior to a constitutional

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¹John Williams argues that "if Wordsworth was anything [in France], he was a Girondin, never a Jacobin." But he also points out that "Brissoit's creed was certainly radical by English standards; radical, even, when compared to the avowed aims of many members of the London Corresponding Society" ("Salisbury Plain" 168).
²W.J.B. Owen and Jane Worthington Smyser convincingly argue in their "Introduction" to the piece for this date of composition, as opposed to a competing claim for June of that year as the earliest possible time Wordsworth could have written it (20-21). They also give two possible explanations as to why it was it was never published: 1) the 1792 government proclamation against seditious writing might have deterred Wordsworth or his publisher, Joseph Johnson; 2) contemporary events in France would have undercut Wordsworth's assertion of French revolutionary unity (24-25).
monarchy. Its first paragraph reveals Wordsworth’s indignation at the Bishop’s (Richard Watson) having abandoned his previous oppositionist stance to condemn French revolutionary violence and support the British constitution. The paragraph can, with our knowledge of the poet’s eventual embrace of many loyalist principles, be read as brimming with irony:

Reputation may not improperly be termed the moral life of man. Alluding to our natural existence, Addison, in a sublime allegory well known to your Lordship, has represented us as crossing an immense bridge, from whose surface from a variety of causes we disappear one after another, and are seen no more. Every one [sic], who enters upon public life, has such a bridge to pass, some slip through at the very commencement of their career from thoughtlessness, others pursue their course a little longer till, misled by the phantoms of avarice and ambition, they fall victims to their delusion. Your Lordship was either seen, or supposed to be seen, continuing your way for a long time, unseduced and undismayed; but those, who now look for you, will look in vain, and it is feared you have at last fallen, through one of the numerous trap-doors, into the tide of contempt to be swept down to the ocean of oblivion. (31)

While Wordsworth, of course, did not suffer oblivion, his turn toward loyalist politics drew oppositionist contempt that heartily challenged his integrity, for example from Byron, who lumped him and Southey together as "shabby fellows" whose "conversion" had gained Southey his Laureate’s "salary" and Wordsworth "his place in the Excise" ("Dedication" to Don Juan). Byron could treat the two poets in like manner because Wordsworth’s political development ran roughly parallel to Southey’s. Wordsworth similarly moved from an oppositionist to a loyalist political stance, and he too first opposed but then embraced British martial efforts against France. Like Southey’s,

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3 Williams argues that the Letter is not a wholly accurate barometer of Wordsworth’s political stance upon his return from France in 1792 ("Salisbury Plain” 168-69) and traces the poet’s politics to an “Old Whig” (or “Revolution Whig”) tradition that could “accommodate opinion that was virulently anti-government,” but that, in recognition of the anarchy to which the French Revolution led, did not question the pairing of liberty and property (“Salisbury Plain” 168-72).

4 A similar sentiment regarding Wordsworth is more respectfully conveyed in Percy Shelley’s "To Wordsworth."
Wordsworth’s portrayals of British martial heroes changed with his political views, and they too present the home as relevant to martial heroism. However, Wordsworth’s corpus shows marked ambivalence toward the power of renowned British martial heroes and carves out a place for the poet in martial affairs.

An early radical who said of himself in a 1794 letter, "I am of that odious class of men called democrats, and of that class I shall for ever [sic] continue" (quoted in Thomas 151), Wordsworth, like any number of early republicans, became disillusioned with the French revolutionary project and hostile to Napoleonic aggression. He maintained a belief in the importance of "liberty" and an "instinctive humanitarian generosity of spirit" (Gill 235), but he came to support the British military, and to some degree the British government, as defenders of, not threats to, the British nation. Stephen Gill concurs with Wordsworth’s 1794 self-assessment, stating that after the fall of the Girondins, the Terror, and the fall of Robespierre, Wordsworth was "a shaken but unrepentant republican" (87), but by 1797, with French expansionist aims growing more clear and the ideals of the Revolution continuing to fade in France, Wordsworth could no longer attribute British war efforts to Pittite “malevolence” (108-09). By 1802 he was expressing some loyalist sentiments (208-09), and while composing the thirteen-book Prelude in 1804-05 he began to distinguish between his current thinking and his previous, more radical stance (235-39). In the same year that Southey became Poet Laureate, 1813, Wordsworth accepted a government post as "Distributor of Stamps for Westmorland and the Penrith area of Cumberland," an act that confirmed his growing loyalty (296). By 1817 he was particularly active in local Tory politics (328-31), and he eventually would argue against the Catholic Relief Bill (1829) and the 1832 Reform Bill (362-63). Some ten years later, at the age of seventy-one, he would be asked to

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5Unless otherwise noted, references to Gill are to his William Wordsworth: A Life.
6Interestingly, Britain’s war efforts expanded the need for such civil servants (Speck 16-17).
stand as a Conservative candidate for the Ayr Burghs (383), and at seventy-three he would become the Laureate upon Southey's death.

Despite their similarities and shared exposure to Byronic wit, though, Wordsworth's political development finally seemed less dramatic than that of his fellow "laker." While this is certainly due in part to Southey's assuming the Laureateship in 1813 and the appearance of the pirated *Wat Tyler* in 1817, it is also because, as is evident in the suppression of *A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff*, the young Wordsworth did not publish material as explicitly radical as Southey's. As Gill notes with regard to the poet in 1795:

> Since publishing *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches* [1793] he had declared himself a friend of liberty, had written a *A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff* and *Salisbury Plain*, and had planned in a radical journal [*The Philanthropist*] to "give every additional energy in my power" to foster "the changes of opinion respecting matters of Government which within these few years have rapidly taken place in the minds of speculative men." But not a word had been published. While Hardy, Thelwall, Tooke, and Holcroft were on trial for their lives as a result of their public commitment to the cause, he had contributed nothing. (89)

While early published Wordsworthian works certainly have oppositionist features and were associated by some with republican principles, they are not as explicitly radical as Southey's *Joan of Arc* or *1797 Poems*; indeed, *Lyrical Ballads* received a positive review from the *Anti-Jacobin* (Reiman 1.22). Wordsworth seemed a less blatant "apostate" than Southey, but the two poets shared both similar political trajectories. Wordsworth's writing, though, exhibits an habitual caution regarding the portrayal of individual British heroes that stands in contrast to the enthusiastic embrace of the heroic evident in much Southeyan work. Wordsworth ultimately seeks to regulate the heroic impulse, and, as I will show, considers the home a viable check to potentially dangerous brands of heroism.

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^7Butler, for example, notes that the "two great contemporary interpreters of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* and his Preface to it," Coleridge and Francis Jeffrey, reacted negatively to its republican leanings (61-64).
Wordsworth and the British Martial Hero

While portraits of Wordsworth generally show him exhibiting contemplative power, and Benjamin Robert Haydon's *Wordsworth on Helvellyn* aligns him with the sublime,® Catherine Clarkson's 1799 assessment of the poet attributes to Wordsworth a physical presence that may be surprising to readers familiar with his endorsement of "wise passivity":9 "He has a fine commanding figure is rather handsome & looks as if he were born to be a great Prince or a great General" (quoted in Gill 167). According to Wordsworth himself, her assessment was not that far afield; in his later years he held that he once had "studied military history with great interest, and the strategy of war; and he always fancied that he had talents for command; and he at one time thought of a military life" (quoted in Roe 41-42). His actual military experiences, though, did not meet the perceived potential evident in his remembrance and Clarkson's observation. In October of 1803, after the Peace of Amiens was formally ended, Wordsworth went to Ambleside to volunteer his services and don the British uniform (Gill 233), an act that led Dorothy to write of her brother: "surely there was never a more determined hater of the French nor one more willing to do his utmost to destroy them if they do come" (quoted in Bainbridge 83-84).10 From a military perspective, though, this service was not especially significant, for, as Dorothy knew, if the French troops penetrated to the point where Wordsworth's service would be necessary, French victory would have already been won. He clearly was not involved in a vital military operation, but his volunteering for service was a meaningful and public indicator of Wordsworth's ongoing political change (Gill 233).

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8 Portraits of the poet are readily available in Gill's *William Wordsworth: A Life*.
9 The phrase is from "Expostulation and Reply"; I discuss Wordsworthian passivity in Chapter Five.
10 Colley writes: "between 1798 and 1805 at least, the prime incentive to volunteer was not camaraderie, or aggression, or greed, or the fear of seeming less than a man, or coercion from above, but quite simply fear of invasion" (305).
The significance of this change is best seen in contrast to his earlier opposition to Britain's joining the alliance against Revolutionary France in 1793. John Williams describes the indignation Wordsworth then felt toward the British government:

He had seen the second great revolutionary upheaval of August 1792 in France effectively flatten Girondin opposition, and he believed his own country was in no small way to blame. Had France been allowed to put its own affairs in order, all would have been well; but the British government, in concert with France's European neighbours, had shown open hostility towards the Revolution, creating an atmosphere ripe for a mounting campaign of extremist purges. The declaration of war on France thus came very much as a last straw. There was virtually nothing left to believe in; the Jacobin revolution in France was plunging the country into anarchy, the political situation at home was unredeemed, the forces of reaction seeming to be essentially secure. ("Salisbury Plain" 168)

In Book 10 of *The Prelude* (1805) Wordsworth describes his intense reaction to Britain's decision to oppose France,¹¹ which was made after he had returned from his second trip to that nation, leaving his daughter and her mother, Annette Vallon, there:

And now the strength of Britain was put forth  
In league with the [confederated] Host,  
Not in my single self alone I found,  
But in the minds of all ingenuous Youth,  
Change and subversion from this hour. No shock  
Given to my moral nature had I known  
Down to that very moment; neither lapse  
Nor turn of sentiment that might be named  
A revolution, save at this one time,  
All else was progress on the self-same path  
On which with a diversity of pace  
I had been travelling; this a stride at once  
Into another region. (229-41)¹²

¹¹Liu points out that France first declared war on Britain, a point that Wordsworth's account of the events in *The Prelude* omits (194). The British, however, should not be perceived as acting simply in defense; as Blanning points out, the British held the Dutch Republic to be vital to their national interests, and the French victory at Jemappes in 1792 and the subsequent French advance to the Dutch frontier spurred British hostility. Another factor was British belief "that the new French Republic was on the verge of imploding and that consequently there was more to be gained from going to war than staying at peace" (93).
This other region was a place of isolation from the home and people he held dear, a place
distanced from the British nation:

I who with the breeze
Had play'd, a green leaf on the blessed tree
Of my beloved Country, nor had wish'd
For happier fortune than to wither there,
Now from my pleasant station was cut off
And toss'd about in whirlwinds. I rejoiced,
Yea, afterwards, truth painful to record!
Exulted in the triumph of my soul
When Englishmen by thousands were o'erthrown,
Left without glory on the Field, or driven,
Brave hearts, to shameful flight. (253-63)

While Wordsworth's growing loyalist sympathies are evident in this recollection's
reference to British soldiers as "Brave hearts" and to his former emotional state as a
"truth most painful to record," he here clearly describes a time when his political
sympathies prevented his supporting Britain's martial forces. It was, as he states, a time
when patriotic love
Did of itself in modesty give way
Like the Precursor when the Deity
Is come, whose Harbinger he is, a time
In which apostacy from ancient faith
Seem'd but conversion to a higher creed. . . . (280-85)

Wordsworth's eventual movement from rejecting to adopting this "patriotic love" is
evident in his portrayals of British martial heroes: poetic figures who, we should
remember, could convey immediate political connotations.13 Wordsworth, whom

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12Here and elsewhere I quote from the thirteen-book Prelude, AB-Stage Reading Text (1805-06). I chose
it over the other version Reed presents, the C-Stage Text of 1818-20, because it better represents
Wordsworth's thought during the conflict with France.

13See the discussion of cultural contexts in Chapter One. Due to the efforts of such critics as Butler,
Nicholas Roe, and James Chandler, I need not spend a great deal of time establishing the political nature
of the Wordsworthian poetic corpus. The poet himself recognized the political dimensions of his verse--
writing in a letter to Charles James Fox (accompanying a presentation copy of the 1800 Lyrical Ballads)
that they were working toward similar ends (Gill 190), stating in Book XII of The Prelude that he hoped in
the future to write so that "justice may be done, obeisance paid / Where it is due" (236-37), and titling a
poetic series that first appeared in Poems, in Two Volumes (1807) "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty." As
Woodring describes as being in 1793 "a reader saturated in recent humanitarian verse" (85), began portraying British martial heroes in the manner of oppositionist poetry, but later embraced the goals and some of the tendencies of loyalist poets. His celebrations of British martial heroism, however, are unlike much loyalist verse in their refusal to praise contemporary, individual British martial heroes such as Nelson and Wellington; this feature of his loyalist verse reveals an ambivalence toward the power of the martial hero.

Nicholas Roe provides a detailed account of Wordsworth's radical years, tracing his experiences among French and British radicals and describing his movement in the 1790s from advocating revolution, to seeking social amelioration through Godwinian theories of progress, to joining Coleridge in seeking the "regenerative possibility in mind and nature" (62). While some of the most intriguing questions that he raises have not been definitively answered--such as the degree to which Wordsworth was active in the Blois revolutionary club "Les Amis de la Constitution" (49-50)--it is certain that the young Wordsworth did not celebrate the British martial hero then enjoying significant cultural currency. Indeed, in the early to mid-1790s he was presenting British military figures clearly in accordance with the conventions of contemporary anti-war verse. This poetry, as Roe reminds us, was linked to oppositionist concerns regarding poverty and social disruption (126-29), a relationship evident in Wordsworth's description of British pro-war sentiment in A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff as "an infatuation which is now giving up to the sword so large a portion of the poor and consigning the rest to the more slow and more painful consumption of want" (49). Working within the idiom of anti-war poetry thus allowed Wordsworth both to draw attention to such basic humanitarian

Jared Curtis notes, in some later collections the title was altered to "Political Sonnets" and "Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty" (153).

14Unless otherwise noted, references to Roe are to his Wordsworth and Coleridge: The Radical Years.
concerns as hunger and homelessness and to combat loyalist efforts to promote war with Revolutionary France.

Wordsworth published An Evening Walk in 1793, the same year that Britain joined Austria, Prussia, and others in an alliance against revolutionary France. This loco-descriptive work features a description of a homeless widow and her children that, like much oppositionist verse, emphasizes war's cost to families, not its glories, and that, as Woodring asserts, contemporary readers would have recognized as an expression of "ill-will toward the King" (86-87). Unaware that her soldier-husband had been killed on "Bunker's charnel hill" (l. 254), the widow "bids her soldier come her woes to share" (253). Far from glorious, the soldier's death is unknown by even his family—a painful irony has the eldest child ask if his father sees the same stars that they do (261-66)—and he can do nothing to prevent his children from freezing, "coffin'd in [their mother's] arms" (300). The soldier is killed and buried across the Atlantic in a war that the British lost and that faced a fair amount of opposition, most notably from Edmund Burke, at home. The soldier lacks victory, glory, and, according to anti-war petitioners in England, even thoroughgoing nationalistic support. Significantly, Wordsworth originally had the soldier die on "Minden's charnel plain," a reference to a battle in the Seven Years' War that he amended to "Bunker's charnel hill" in the "Errata" of the poem's first edition (Averill, An Evening Walk 62). This shift of battle sites is

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15 The poem's full title is An Evening Walk, An Epistle: in Verse, Addressed to a Young Lady, from the Lakes of the North of England.
16 Among the other nations in the 1793 alliance were Sardinia-Piedmont, the Dutch Republic, Spain, and the Holy Roman Empire (Blanning 95).
17 Liu insists that "An Evening Walk may be read for the most part as if it subsumed locodescription wholly within the picturesque" (61). For his corresponding reading of the poem's politics, see his third chapter, "The Politics of the Picturesque: An Evening Walk."
18 For full treatment of British opinions regarding the American Revolutionary War, see Bradley, who concludes that while "George III could legitimately claim that the nation was genuinely supportive of his measures" (214), "[i]t seems reasonable to conclude that as much as a third of the political nation opposed the government's American policy. Though a minority, the extent of this opposition would nevertheless warrant classifying the American conflict as England's least popular modern war" (210).
rhetorically significant; as Alan Liu asks: "Why did it make sense in early 1793 to delete the rout of the French armies in 1759 and introduce the famous resistance and eventual victory of the American rebels in 1775-76 . . .?" (135). A possible answer is that by invoking a failed British effort to suppress a republican revolution, Wordsworth is better able to portray the soldier as a powerless, marginal figure whose inglorious death could counter the enthusiasm of contemporary British call-to-arms poetry. While this is not a possibility that Liu explores, it is in keeping with his reading of the poem as essentially picturesque, a genre he describes as "a political platform whose declaration of British constitutional freedom gravitated increasingly leftward [in the late eighteenth century] toward an idea of revolution cognate with the American or very early French Revolution" (113); it also reflects John Williams's assertion that the American Revolution rejuvenated the dissident strain in English politics ("Salisbury Plain" 169). A victim of his government's opposition to the rise of a republic, the widow's dead husband typifies oppositionist portrayals of British martial figures and emphasizes the pain brought to British families by their nation's war efforts.

The implicit critique of British martial activity evident in An Evening Walk is extended and made more explicit in the Salisbury Plain poems. The earliest of these, Salisbury Plain, features a politically-charged opening, absent from the work's later versions, that describes "how many thousands weep / Beset with foes more fierce than e'er assail / The savage without home in winter's keenest gale" (ll. 34-36). Civilized people suffer more than the savage because they have an awareness of social injustice

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19This poetic project resulted in a number of versions of a poem set on Salisbury Plain and focused at least partially on a female vagrant. Williams states that "Salisbury Plain is, in effect, a perpetual fragment; something that Wordsworth only ever managed to tidy up rather than complete when he was an old man, seeking to present his entire poetic achievement as a closely interrelated whole" ("Salisbury Plain" 166). He describes the various versions: "There is a Salisbury Plain of 1793-94, and Adventures on Salisbury Plain of 1795-99 . . .; there is an Incidents upon Salisbury Plain of 1841, and finally, probably still the best known variant, Guilt and Sorrow, published in Poems, Chiefly of Early and Late Years in 1842" ("Salisbury Plain" 165).
(23-27), a point J.F. Turner calls "a familiar one in radical thought: whilst savage life may be full of pain, only civilization--by the betrayal of the ideals it fosters--causes tragedy" (260). Explicit political commentary continues at the poem's end. Also absent from the work's later versions, it asks with regard to realms, even those, presumably like Britain, which "least the cup of Misery taste" (434):

For want how many men and children die?
How many at Oppression's portal placed
Receive the scanty dole she cannot waste,
And bless, as she has taught, her hand benign?
How many by inhuman toil debased,
Abject, obscure, and brute to earth incline
Unrespitid, forlorn of every spark divine? (435-41)

Then the critique moves to the national level:

Nor only is the walk of private life
Unblessed by Justice and the kindly train
Of Peace and Truth while Injury and Strife,
Outrage and deadly Hate usurp their reign;
From the pale line to either frozen main
The nations, though at home in bonds they drink
The dregs of wretchedness, for empire strain,
And crushed by their own fetters helpless sink,
Move their galled limbs in fear and eye each silent link. (442-500)

Such humanitarian and political concerns pervade the Salisbury Plain poems, revealing their oppositionist bent and confirming the relationship that existed between oppositionist thought and anti-war sentiment.20

The stories of these poems' two main characters, a widow and a former sailor who meet in "a lonely Spital" (123) on Salisbury Plain when seeking shelter from a storm, assert the pain of war and question the power of the British military man. British readers first encountered the woman's story in the 1798 Lyrical Ballads, for a portion of

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20Gill considers Salisbury Plain a complement to A Letter to the Bishop of Llandaff ("Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest" 50). I should note that the work's much later, but first published version, Guilt and Sorrow, is less oppositionist in tone; Gill mentions its "more generally optimistic spirit" (The Salisbury Plain Poems 269).
**Adventures on Salisbury Plain** appeared there as "The Female Vagrant." Her story has remarkable similarities to that of the woman of *An Evening Walk* but the widow on the plain is well aware of her husband's war experiences and shares with the sailor her thoughts regarding them. Suffering in an "evil time" (91) that had reduced their ability to feed their three children, her husband, despite her tears and prayers, had responded to the recruiters' drum, and he and his family had joined the "miserable men" shipping out to fight in the American Revolutionary War (93-99). Less an enthusiastic defender of his nation's claim to the American colonies as a victim of its socio-economic conditions, the husband leads his family to quick and painful destruction. His wife relates:

> The pains and plagues that on our heads came down,  
> Disease and famine, agony and fear,  
> In wood or wilderness, in camp or town,

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21 Williams relates that "The Female Vagrant" "was culled" from *Adventures on Salisbury Plain" in a slightly altered form" ("Salisbury Plain" 165). Because it is the text from which this early published section came, and because it gives a fuller treatment of the sailor than the other early version, **Salisbury Plain**. I quote from *Adventures* unless otherwise noted.

22 Liu describes the woman from *An Evening Walk* as "[a] clear predecessor of the Female Vagrant in *Salisbury Plain*" (123).

23 Gill notes: "it should be stressed that this is a realistic account. [Wordsworth] claimed, 'All that relates to her [the Female Vagrant's] sufferings ... were faithfully taken from the report made to me of her own case by a friend' ([The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth, ed. Ernest de Selincourt and Helen Darbishire (5 vols.; Oxford, 1940-58)] , I, 330), and he felt confident enough to quote some lines from it when arguing against the real effects of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1835 (Poetical Works, II, 448)"

(The Salisbury Plain Poems 6).

24 The woman's father had lost his property to the oppression of a local landowner (II, 300-24), and her husband falls victim to an economic downturn (347-53).

25 Colley writes of the role music played in the recruitment of servicemen: "With the bogy of Bonaparte hanging over them, Britons who were poor, more so perhaps even than the prosperous, were drawn into military service not just by apprehension but by the excitement of it all, by a pleasurable sense of risk and imminent drama, by the lure of a free, brightly coloured uniform and by the powerful seduction exerted by martial music. It is easy to forget how limited a range of sound was normally available to the mass of people at this time. Music lessons, concerts and assembly-room orchestras were confined to the affluent few, and most men and women had to make do with the human voice, church bells and perhaps a stray fiddler at fairs and weddings. So when recruiting parties brought their wind instruments, drums, and cymbals into small villages, the effect was immediate and powerful. Joseph Mayett, a desperately sad and intelligent farm servant from Buckinghamshire, enlisted in his county's militia in 1803 because he was taken out of himself for once by the recruiting party's brass band, led to his doom by music quite as much as the children who followed the Pied Piper of Hamelin" (306-07).
It would thy brain unsettle even to hear.
All perished—all, in one remorseless year,
Husband and children! one by one, by sword
And ravenous plague, all perished. . . . (127-33)

While we do not learn of the husband's or any of his colleagues' war experiences, the wife's memories make it clear that horror, not glory, characterized the conflict. She remembers

The breathing pestilence that rose like smoke!
The shriek that from the distant battle broke!
The mine's dire earthquake, and the pallid host
Driven by the bomb's incessant thunder-stroke
To loathsome vaults, where heart-sick anguish toss'd,
Hope died, and fear itself in agony was lost . . . (148-53),

and she recounts it as a time

When the dark streets appeared to heave and gape,
While like a sea the storming army came,
And Fire from Hell reared his gigantic shape,
And Murder, by the ghastly gleam, and Rape
Seized their joint prey, the mother and the child! (155-59)

Like his counterpart in An Evening Walk, the husband is far removed from the heroic. Not only is his death not glorious, it has little meaning except in the pain it brings to his wife. He saves neither his family nor Britain's governance of the American colonies, and like his wife and children, he is a victim of the injustices described at the beginning and end of Salisbury Plain.26

The story of the poem's other main character, the sailor, provides a look at the experiences not of a serviceman's family, but of a serviceman himself, and the change in

26John Rieder also points out that the female vagrant suffers the type of social injustice described in the opening of Salisbury Plain (328-29), and Williams states with regard to Salisbury Plain: "In Wordsworth's poem, it is the unnatural war with the colonies, waged by a Government motivated by greed, which has destroyed a demi-Paradise; and this in turn has reduced the woman to her present state" ("Salisbury Plain" 177). Turner contends that Salisbury Plain presents war as "both reckless speculation and a cynical means of defusing revolutionary potential at home, the ultimate act of governmental treachery against the international brotherhood of man," and he quotes Paine to support his view: "'War is the Faro table of governments,' wrote Paine, 'it is the art of conquering at home'" (263).
perspective confirms the pain and ingratitude that such men and their families suffered. Like the widow’s husband, the sailor does not serve Britain from a sense of patriotism; indeed, he does not choose to fight at all, but is forced into battle by “the ruffian press gang dire” (80-81). After “two full years of labour hard,” impressment denies him the chance to return home to his family, and he is instead sent to fight in a war, which, while finally unspecified, seems most likely again to be the American Revolutionary War, an assumption that is in keeping with the widow’s story as well as Wordsworth’s statement in the “Advertisement” to Guilt and Sorrow (the first published version of the poems) that when he first began composing this material “The American war was still fresh in memory” (215). The sailor’s experiences during and after that war are much like those of the British veterans in Southey’s “Botany Bay Eclogues,” for despite hard service, he is left poor when his fighting ends.\(^2\) The description of the sailor’s experiences in battle is brief and void of glorification: “For years the work of carnage did not cease, / And Death’s worst aspect daily he survey’d / Death’s minister: then came his glad release” (82-84). Regardless of whether “Death’s minister” refers to the sailor himself or to that which he “survey’d,” it is clear that he was deeply involved with “the work of carnage,” that he engaged war in a way that, according to contemporary loyalist writing, should have brought him if not glory, at least a strong sense of personal satisfaction. It does neither, however, and after his “glad release” the sailor simply wants to do that which his impressment had prevented: return home to his wife.

An important difference marks these two returns, for on the second he looks forward to sharing with his wife the spoils of his service, the “bloody prize of victory” that would allow her to forget “her years of woe / In the long joy and comfort from that

\(^2\)The “Botany Bay Eclogues” examine the lives of convicts who had been shipped to Australia. Three of them had previously served in the British military. Gill also notes the connection with this work (“Wordsworth’s Poetry of Protest” 53).
wealth to flow” (86-90). The government, however, refuses to provide his compensation, and his response to this act is tragic:

He urged his claim; the slaves of Office spurn'd\textsuperscript{28}
The unfriended claimant; at their door he stood
In vain, and now towards his home return'd,
Bearing to those he loved nor warmth nor food,
In sight of his own house, in such a mood
That from his view his children might have run,
He met a traveller, rob'd him, shed his blood;
And when the miserable work was done
He fled, a vagrant since, the murderer's fate to shun. (91-99)

Like Humphrey from Southey's "Botany Bay Eclogues," he makes himself a criminal, but his war experiences and his government's subsequent ingratitude are clearly catalysts for his behavior. And again like Humphrey, as well as his fellow Botany Bay dwellers Samuel and John, the sailor's service to Britain only gains him separation from his family and social marginalization. The inglorious, indeed often destitute, life that awaited British war veterans such as the sailor is further evident in the description of the former soldier that he meets at the poem's start:

an aged Man with feet half bare:
Propp'd on a trembling staff he crept with pain,
His legs from slow disease distended were;
His temples just betrayed their silver hair
Beneath a kerchief's edge, that wrapp'd his head
To fence from off his face the breathing air,
Struck miserably o'er with patch and shred
His ragged coat scarce showed the Soldier's faded red. (2-9)

While the older veteran had fared better than the sailor--"one who knew him well / A house to his old age had lately given" (21-22)--he too had suffered as a result of his service: "Nor of long absence failed he soon to tell / And how he with the Soldier's life had striven / And Soldier's wrongs" (19-21). Unlike the sailor, the soldier is not wholly

\textsuperscript{28}In Guilt and Sorrow, written long after Wordsworth had himself taken a government office, he changes the wording of this line to "Vain hope! for fraud took all that he had earned" (stanza VIII).
separated from his family, for a daughter has asked for his help, but he recognizes her precarious position and the limits of his ability to provide aid: "his heart was riven / At the bare thought: the creature that had need / Of any aid from him most wretched was indeed" (25-27). Considered together, and along with the soldier of An Evening Walk, these figures send a message unlikely to rally support for martial opposition to France: British military service will bring disaster to your family and leave you dead or poor.29

Notably, during his self-imposed exile, the sailor behaves in an exemplary way. Not only does he find a ride for the decrepit soldier (37-45), he also restores peace to a family whose father was beating his son (608-66). He there acts as a moral arbiter, ultimately advising the family regarding the need to love one another in the face of a merciless, competitive world (658-64). And later, when he by chance comes across his dying wife, we learn that, contrary to strong circumstantial evidence, she does not believe that he had committed the murder, for, as she states, her husband "'was kind and good; / Never on earth was milder creature seen; / He'd not have robbed the raven of its food'" (761-63). The tragedy of the sailor is thus deepened, for it becomes clear that the noble behavior he exhibits on the plain is in keeping with his actions before his military service; that service and its lack of reward, it seems, made him briefly capable of murder. His final actions then confirm his worthy nature. After hearing his wife speak he makes his identity clear to her by asking her blessing, an act which allows her to die in peace (766-83), and then he turns himself in for the murder, which leads to his execution but also ends his guilty suffering (811-19).30 The intervention of the press gang had denied his return home, and the ingratitude of the British government had spurred him to

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29 Gill contends that "[t]he narrative of [the sailor's] tortured life protests, point by unanswerable point, against the brutalities of the Pitt era and the destruction of family life in the pursuit of national glory" ("Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest" 53).

30 As part of the more "optimistic spirit" that Gill attributes to Guilt and Sorrow, the sailor is not executed at its end.

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murder, an act Gill calls an "irrevocable but isolated event in the life of an otherwise good man" ("Wordsworth's Poetry of Protest" 57).

In the "Advertisement" to Guilt and Sorrow, Wordsworth makes clear the relationship between the Salisbury Plain poems and British opposition to Revolutionary France:

During the latter part of the summer of 1793, having passed a month in the Isle of Wight, in view of the fleet which was then preparing for sea off Portsmouth at the commencement of the war, I left the place with melancholy forebodings. The American war was still fresh in memory. The struggle which was beginning, and which many thought would be brought to a speedy close by the irresistible arms of Great Britain being added to those of the allies, I was assured in my own mind would be of long continuance, and productive of distress and misery beyond all possible calculation. This conviction was pressed upon me by having been a witness, during a long residence in revolutionary France, of the spirit which prevailed in that country. (217)

This memory, published nearly fifty years after his first work on Salisbury Plain, shows Wordsworth uneasy concerning British martial action against France because of the pain it would bring on the British people, not because he felt an ideological connection with the Revolution itself. As we have seen, though, Book 10 of The Prelude shows that his belief in the tenets of the Revolution were a factor in his opposition, and the closing stanzas of Salisbury Plain confirm that his general concerns about war as well as his support of the Revolution contributed to his early oppositionist stance. The anti-war message implicit in the poem's narrative is made explicit in lines 507-09, which ask: "Say, rulers of the nations, from the sword / Can ought but murder, pain, and tears proceed? / Oh! what can war but endless war still breed?" The answer to a nation's ills lies not in conflict, but in thought; not with the soldier, but with the philosopher:

whence but from the labours of the sage
Can poor beknighted mortals gain the meed

[^31^To see the fragmentary poem he composed concerning this occasion, see Roe p. 271.}
Of happiness and virtue, how assuage
But by his gentle words their self-consuming rage? (510-13)

Accordingly, the poem ends with a "call-to-arms" for philosophers:

    Heroes of Truth pursue your march, uptear
    Th' Oppressor's dungeon from its deepest base;
    High o'er the towers of Pride undaunted rear
    Resistless in your might the herculean mace
    Of reason; let foul Error's monster race
    Dragged from their dens start at the light with pain
    And die; pursue your toils, till not a trace
    Be left on earth of Superstition's reign,
    Save that eternal pile which frowns on Sarum's plain. (541-49)

These lines indicate that the type of sage desired advances the Revolution's principles of reason and equality and endorses revolutionary activity; note the verbs "uptear," "rear," and "pursue." As I show below, and as the "Advertisement" to Guilt and Sorrow partially indicates, with the increase in Wordsworth's loyalist sympathies, he maintains the humanitarian principles that contributed to his opposition to British involvement in the French Revolutionary Wars, and he continues to advocate the rise of "Heroes of Truth." But he abandons the revolutionary principles evident in the soon-deleted conclusion to Salisbury Plain.

More problematic in its treatment of British martial heroism is Descriptive Sketches, which Wordsworth published simultaneously with An Evening Walk. Like its companion-piece, Descriptive Sketches is loco-descriptive, though the scene is the Alps, not England's lake country, and it is presented as the observations of a tour, not of a single day. As many readers have noticed, it is also more explicitly political than An Evening Walk. Eric Birdsall argues that "Descriptive Sketches is fundamentally

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32Williams contends that these lines do not show Wordsworth following "the vanguard of political radicalism in England or France" ("Salisbury Plain" 178), and T.J. Gillcrist insists that they call for figurative, not literal, violence. Liu, however, argues that they are an endorsement of the Revolution itself (185-86).

33The work's full title is Descriptive Sketches, in Verse. Taken During a Pedestrian Tour in the Italian, Grisson, Swiss, and Savoyard Alps.
political, and only incidentally concerns itself with the mind of the narrator or the Swiss landscape" ("Nature and Society" 41, his emph.); Steven Sharp contends that the poem was "the vehicle through which [Wordsworth] publicly expressed his support of and commitment to the French Revolution and the cause of liberty" (26); and Woodring holds that "[t]o the extent that the sketches have unity, the unity comes from clear commitments to the French soil and the French Revolution" (86). Important to the poem's politics is the apostrophe to France near its end (ll. 740-91), which, as Birdsall notes, speaks of the promise of the Revolution but not its certain success ("Preface" x). A similarly vital passage features a brief catalog of martial heroes inspired by the chapel of William Tell:34

But lo! the boatman, over-aw'd, before
The picture'd fane of Tell suspends his oar;
Confused the Marathonian tale appears,
While burn in his full eyes the glorious tears.
And who but feels a power of strong controul,
Felt only there, oppress his labouring soul,
Who walks, where honour'd men of ancient days
Have wrought with god-like arm the deeds of praise?
Say who, by thinking on Canadian hills,
Or wild Aosta lull'd by Alpine rills,
On Zutphen's plain; or where with soften'd gaze
The old grey stones the plaided chief surveys,
Can guess the high resolve, the cherish'd pain
Of him whom passion rivets to the plain,
Where breath'd the gale that caught Wolfe's happiest sigh,
And the last sun-beam fell on Bayard's eye,
Where bleeding Sydney from the cup retir'd,
And glad Dundee in "faint huzzas" expir'd. (348-65)

Liu points out the similarities in the heroes invoked, stating that "[a]t the sight of the pictures in Tell's chapel, landscape fills with icons of battle each suggesting that violence against external enemies opens inwardly into martyrdom or self-sacrifice" (174). Indeed,

34The Fodor's travel series says that the chapel contains four frescoes, each portraying significant moments from the Tell legend (Cussans 172).
the passage endorses self-sacrifice and thus clearly runs counter to the strong anti-war messages of *An Evening Walk* and the *Salisbury Plain* poems. Here, the deaths are glorious and the men are happy to die, and in these ways the passage is in keeping with the celebrations of martial heroism common in loyalist verse. But the variety of the passage's heroes complicates its political connotations.

Two of the men--Sir Philip Sidney and General James Wolfe--are noted English martial heroes. Sidney, a renowned Elizabethan courtier, died in arms against Spain and in his last moments famously refused water, insisting that another needed it more than he; Wolfe, who died leading the British capture of Quebec from the French in the Seven Years War, was famously depicted as a martyr for his nation in West's painting *The Death of General Wolfe*. Wordsworth's equating these men with those who "wrought with god-like arm the deeds of praise" is in keeping with the tendency of loyalist poetry to revere British martial heroes and is anomalous within his own work, which, as I argue below, comes to celebrate British martial heroism but usually in the aggregate, not as exhibited by individuals. The question then arises as to why Wordsworth included these heroes in a work known for its radical sympathies and published simultaneously with *An Evening Walk*, which emphasizes that pain and futility attend service in the British martial forces. It is tempting to speculate that they are included to placate readers who might have been interested in enforcing the government proclamation of May 1792 against seditious writings, but that, I suspect, will have to remain speculation, especially since Wordsworth's admiration for Sidney is later confirmed in the *Convention of Cintra* (256-57, 339). Liu's noting that the passage generally emphasizes self-sacrifice seems a more fruitful consideration and asks us to examine these figures more carefully, especially in light of the Wordsworthian skepticism regarding such self-sacrifice evident in *An Evening Walk* and the *Salisbury Plain* poems.
It is immediately clear that neither Sidney nor Wolfe died while suppressing a
government of the United States. Neither of the Servicemen from this other work do. Sidney died aiding
the Dutch in their struggle against Spanish conquerors, and Wolfe's death came in an
imperial clash between monarchies. His victory was over the French, but they were
monarchial, not Revolutionary forces. By choosing heroes who predate the American
and French revolutions, Wordsworth could invoke British martial heroes without
specifically supporting his nation's efforts against these burgeoning republics; indeed, the
passage's other heroes, along with the poem's greater pro-republican thrust, indicate that
Sidney's battle against foreign aggression was superior to Wolfe's quest for colonial
supremacy. In 1792, when working on this poem, Wordsworth was anxious because a
superior Austrian force was threatening to invade France (Birdsall, "Nature and Society"
46), and the passage's other heroes are associated with defending against foreign
cultural encroachment or maintaining national liberty. Dundee was a Jacobite who opposed
William of Orange, William Tell's legendary efforts were directed toward Swiss
independence, the Battle of Marathon saw the Athenians repel the first Persian invasion
of Greece, and Bayard was essential to driving the forces of the Holy Roman emperor
Charles V out of France. Bayard is a particularly engaging figure to appear alongside
Sidney and Wolfe. Known as the "chevalier sans peur et sans reproche," he was most
celebrated in his time for leading some fifteen hundred largely inexperienced troops in a
successful defense of Mezieres, a fortress on the French frontier, from attack by thirty

35 Interestingly, Colley notes that West's portrayal of Wolfe's death "was in content a splendid fraud"; not
only was he not surrounded by admiring officers, but also was a "neurotic" and "highly controversial"
commander (178). It is also worth noting that Sidney's descendant, Algernon Sidney, was executed for
allegedly plotting to assassinate Charles II and was highly regarded by oppositionist thinkers, including
Wordsworth, who mentions him in "Great Men have been among us; hands that penned."
36 See also the discussion of "October, 1803 ['Six Thousand Veterans practis'd in War's game']" below.
37 Other Wordsworthian poems that invoke Tell include "[Composed at Cora Linn, in Sight of Wallace's
Tower]," "Hoffer," and The Excursion; I discuss the second and third of these below.
38 "The knight without fear and without reproach." One of the legends attached to him holds that he
single-handedly defended a bridge against two hundred Spanish troops (Shellabarger 14).
thousand well armed imperial warriors (Shellabarger 300-13). So, while Wordsworth celebrates British martial heroes in this passage, he also emphasizes national independence and invokes the consummate French warrior. Interestingly, in September of 1792, as Wordsworth was completing most of the drafting for the poem (Birdsall, Descriptive Sketches 8), the French Revolutionary forces enjoyed their first significant victory: the successful repulsion of Prussian forces from Valmy, a victory Goethe said would begin "a new epic in the history of the world" and the Prussian Colonel von Massenbach said constituted "the most important day of the century" (both quoted in Blanning 78). While the presence of Sidney and Wolfe is striking in the context of the poem’s oppositionist leanings, it does not fully counter the poem’s, or even the passage’s, oppositionist stance. Nor does the description of these figures’ glory and joy in death refute the experiences of the British servicemen in An Evening Walk and Salisbury Plain. Sidney and Wolfe were not common soldiers, but leaders, and they therefore did not suffer and die in anonymity. Wordsworth in this passage celebrates British martial courage, but he does so in the context of advocating republican virtues; he does not invite support for that courage to be used in the suppression of French revolutionary efforts.

Significantly, the poem presents Swiss, not British, warriors as best embodying the republican virtues it extols. Tell, whose efforts against oppression would be celebrated by Schiller in his 1804 drama Wilhelm Tell, exemplified a sense of hardy independence that Wordsworth attributes to the Swiss throughout Descriptive Sketches. He speaks of them as maintaining elements of a Rousseauian freedom that all humankind once enjoyed and as willing to defend their liberty:

Once Man entirely free, alone and wild,  
Was bless’d as free--for he was Nature’s child.  
He, all superior but his God disdain’d,
Walk'd none restraining, and by none restrain'd,
Confess'd no law but what his reason taught,
Did all he wish'd, and wish'd but what he ought.
As man in his primaeval dower array'd
The image of his glorious sire display'd,
Ev'n so, by vestal Nature guarded, here
The traces of Primaeval Man appear.
The native dignity no forms debase,
The eye sublime, and surly lion-grace.
The slave of none, of beasts alone the lord,
He marches with his flute, his book, and sword,
Well taught by that to feel his rights, prepar'd
With this "the blessings he enjoys to guard." (520-35)

This idealized portrait of Swiss warriors—enlightened, free, and brave—is then immediately buttressed by a recollection of the Battle at Nafels, where, according to Wordsworth's note, in 1388 a group of 330 Swiss soldiers defeated between fifteen and twenty thousand Austrians; as a result of their efforts "Oppression shriek'd, and flew" (536-41). The Swiss and their remarkable victory embody the brand of martial heroism that the poem most fully endorses.40

Both Liu and Birdsall, though, rightly insist that the poem recognizes this to be an idealized portrayal of the Swiss. Liu states that Wordsworth "reveals a myth of Swiss independence" (175, my emph.), a myth Birdsall traces to William Coxe's 1779 Sketches of the Natural, Civil, and Political State of Swisserland, a book Wordsworth very likely knew ("Introduction" 5-6). Birdsall states:

Coxe echoes the belief of Rousseau that the Swiss embody the romantic ideal of free men living harmoniously in a free society: close to nature, the Swiss are equals of any man and remain uncorrupted by modern decadence. As a republican, Wordsworth surely wanted to see at firsthand a society in which free men could live together happily without oppression by a greedy aristocracy. As his letters and Descriptive Sketches itself reveal, his vision of the Swiss was too ideal to be borne out by reality. . . . ("Introduction" 6)

40For an indication of Wordsworth's response to Napoleon's 1802 invasion of Switzerland, see "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland."
He further claims that the poem's "central point is that this putative golden age has passed" ("Nature and Society" 45) and asserts that "Wordsworth's narrator seeks political freedom and social justice--conditions that he discovers do not exist in that time and those places. Ironically but consistently, the narrator finds tyranny and oppression in locations of great beauty" ("Nature and Society" 43). Both critics also highlight an important point to which the poem alludes (624-31 and Wordsworth's note): the rigors of Swiss life led many men to leave their homes to serve as mercenaries (Liu 177; Birdsal, "Nature and Society" 45); as Liu points out, the massacre of the Swiss troops guarding Louis XVI at Tuileries occurred during the poem's composition (176). The resulting tension between idealized and actual martial heroes becomes central to Wordsworth's loyalist portrayals of British martial heroism, but it does not annul this poem's essentially oppositionist stance. Despite its embrace of Sidney and Wolfe, Descriptive Sketches, like An Evening Walk and the Salisbury Plain poems, contests loyalist portrayals of a just British opposition to France.

Wordsworth, though, did not maintain his opposition long after the turn of the century. Near the beginning of the Convention of Cintra (1809), he describes how he and his nation had come to support British war with Napoleonic France and contends that his advocacy of British martial efforts does not represent a betrayal of his earlier principles:

This just and necessary war, as we have been accustomed to hear it styled from the beginning of the contest in the year 1793, had, some time before the Treaty of Amiens, viz. after the subjugation of Switzerland, and not till then, begun to be regarded by the body of the people, as indeed both just and necessary; and this justice and necessity were by none more clearly perceived, or more feelingly bewailed, than by those who had most eagerly opposed the war in its commencement, and who continued most bitterly to regret that this nation had ever borne a part in it. Their conduct was herein consistent: they proved that they kept their eyes steadily fixed
upon principles; for, though there was a shifting or transfer of hostility in
their minds as far as regarded persons, they only combated the same
enemy opposed to them under a different shape; and that enemy was the
spirit of selfish tyranny and lawless ambition. (226)

Simon Bainbridge shows the high degree to which this account simplifies Wordsworth's
changing attitude toward the war (106-07), and the tract as a whole has been cited as
evidence of both Wordsworth's "apostasy" and his continued radicalism (Thomas 154-65).
Its ambivalence, Deirdre Coleman asserts, lies in its emphasizing the virtue and
power of the people but using Burkean rhetoric in speaking of revolution. The
disagreement as to the politics of this tract is emblematic of the disagreement that
surrounds the larger issue of Wordsworth's political development. Gill rightly insists that
we should not fully rely on the poet's accounts of his life (7), accounts that David Riede
shows he uses to establish his poetic authority. Critics find a great deal to disagree
about, but the predominant critical view of Wordsworth's development is one of
radicalism followed by apostasy or withdrawal—a position advanced with various
emphases by M.H. Abrams, Geoffrey Hartman, and James Chandler, and supported by
Gill's biography, which shows the older Wordsworth presenting himself at the Queen's
Ball of April 25, 1845 (412) and arguing in 1844 against a railroad line extending into
the Lake Country; he feared it would give the urban poor access to that area (413-14).
Roe expresses a desire to challenge "the reductive paradigm in which radical
commitment is succeeded by 'withdrawal' or 'apostasy'" (ix), and he succeeds in showing
the complexity of the poet's radical years and indicates that those years are central to

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41 For a summary of Wordsworth's attitudes toward French invasions of Switzerland, see J.C. Maxwell's
"Wordsworth and the Subjugation of Switzerland."
42 See, for example, his assertion when describing the political condition of Spain when compelled to
confront Napoleon: while it had thrown off its oppressive monarchical government, the afflictions under
which it labored "made it impossible that the emancipated nation could abuse its new-born strength to any
substantial injury of itself" (298).
43 See his second chapter: "The Oracular Self: The Authority of Wordsworth."
44 These are certainly not all of the critics who advance this position, but some of the more notable. See
Chapter Six of Abrams's Natural Supernaturalism: "Revelation, Revolution, Imagination, and Cognition,"
even the later writing. But his contention that Wordsworth's early failure in effecting political change led to his becoming a poet is finally not that different from Abrams's assertion that Wordsworth internalized the revolutionary project. Williams also problematizes the dominant account, contending that the poet maintained a dissident political stance that he inherited from eighteenth-century thinkers even after he abandoned a more radical position, but he too sees further, significant modification of Wordsworth's position during the latter years of the war with Napoleonic France.

As this brief and admittedly incomplete summary indicates, it is difficult to ignore Wordsworth's eventual abandonment of radical principles. While he claims in 1809 to have maintained his opposition to "the spirit of selfish tyranny and lawless ambition," it is clear that he grew increasingly cautious regarding the act of revolution, especially within Britain. However, the period extending roughly from the late 1790s through the end of the war with France is, as Coleman argues with regard to the Convention of Cintra, one of political ambivalence for the poet. He does not wholly abandon his republican ideals, but developments in France force him to turn to Britain as the preserver of "liberty," despite serious misgivings regarding its own socio-political stance. It is also the time when his verse first seems to internalize its political concerns. During this time he again describes the human costs of war by showing the plight of soldiers and their families, but he begins to emphasize the intellectual and imaginative value that such figures have for others. The discharged soldier of The Prelude, Margaret of The Ruined Cottage, and the father of "Old Man Travelling; Animal Tranquillity and Decay, A Sketch" not only represent the human costs of British war policy, but also can lead enlightened observers, such as Wordsworth himself, to recognition of human or even transcendental truths. Such presentations show Wordsworth's continued humanitarian interests but also support assertions of his movement away from political concerns; Roe asserts that they show Wordsworth moving from being a "poet of protest
to [a] poet of human suffering" (137, 135-44). Clearly, though, his Poems, in Two Volumes (1807) and the Convention of Cintra exhibit his continued willingness to comment explicitly on political events, and critics such as Bainbridge and Willard Spiegelman rightly insist that Wordsworth’s work does not abandon the political realm. Instead, such works show him willing to support Britain and its military, albeit with important reservations. While he criticizes the state of British society in “London, 1802” and “Written in London, September, 1802”; questions Britain’s fitness as a world leader in “England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean”; and rages against Britain’s involvement in the Convention of Cintra scandal; he also embraces state patriotism and rallies support for the British military in the face of threatened French invasion. He is still capable of asserting radical principles, especially when discussing other nations, and of opposing the British government, but Wordsworth in these years at times accepts the political status quo and celebrates British martial strength.

While the opening lines of “I travell’d among unknown Men” are not strictly autobiographical, they do speak of a personal political change that other poems in the 1807 volume reflect:

I travell’d among unknown Men,
In Lands beyond the Sea;
Nor England! did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

’Tis past, that melancholy dream!
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time; for still I seem
To love thee more and more. (ll. 1-8)

Here, the speaker’s growing love for England and disenchantment with foreign lands are involved with his love for Lucy, who “turn’d her wheel / Beside an English fire” (11-12),

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45 This is clear because by the time of composition, which Curtis estimates as late April 1801 (103), Wordsworth had already been to the continent “a second time.”
but other pieces disregard such personal connections and express a more distinctly nationalistic sense of patriotism. Numerous examples occur in the "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty," a subtitle whose significance is clear in its relation to the ambivalently pro-Britain but enthusiastically anti-France poetry that it represents: as Napoleon's power increased and French aggression continued, Wordsworth came to consider Britain a preserver of, not a threat to, "liberty." His very choice of the sonnet form is related to the poet's changing political agenda. The second half of the "Prefatory Sonnet," which appears at the front of the collection's section simply titled "Sonnets" reads:

In truth, the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence to me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground:
Pleas'd if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find short solace there, as I have found.

The sonnet form reflects Wordsworth's growing concerns regarding "too much liberty," which, as the example of France had by then demonstrated, could become tyrannous in its turn.

The poet's changed attitudes toward the two nations are evident in the first poem of the "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty": "Composed by the Sea-Side near Calais, August, 1802." Associating England with the Evening Star that he observes above it as he gazes west, Wordsworth experiences a sense of alienation precisely opposite to that which he felt in England at the onset of its military involvement against Revolutionary France. While on that occasion he felt isolated in England due to his sympathies for the French,
this time he feels isolated in France due to his sympathies for England. He says to the star:

There! that dusky spot
Beneath thee, it is England; there it lies.
Blessings be on you both! one hope, one lot,
One life, one glory! I, with many a fear
For my dear Country, many heartfelt sighs,
Among Men who do not love her linger here. (ll. 9-14)

He revisits and extends these sentiments in a poem describing his feelings on returning to Britain, "Composed in the Valley, near Dover, On the Day of landing," where he rejoices in not only England's beauty but also its independence:

Dear fellow-Traveller! here we are once more.
The Cock that crows, the Smoke that curls, that sound
Of Bells, those Boys that in yon meadow-ground
In white-sleeved shirts are playing by the score,
And even this little River's gentle roar,
All, all are English. Oft have I look'd round
With joy in Kent's green vales; but never found
Myself so satisfied in heart before.
Europe is yet in Bonds; but let that pass,
Thought for another moment. Thou are free
My Country! and 'tis joy enough and pride
For one hour's perfect bliss, to tread the grass
Of England once again, and hear and see,
With such a dear companion by my side.

While other poems in the series reflect Wordsworth's concerns regarding Napoleonic power and aggression, his willingness here to celebrate the relative freedom of Britain's constitutional monarchy and leave for another time thought regarding developments on the Continent is emblematic of his abandonment of the revolutionary stance evident in

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48 This traveler is Dorothy, who accompanied Wordsworth on this trip (Gill 208); Curtis notes that the poem was probably composed on August 30, 1802 (162).
49 These include "Calais, August, 1802," "To a Friend, Composed Near Calais, On the Road Leading to Ardres, August 7th, 1802," "I grieve'd for Buonaparte, with a vain," "Calais, August 15th, 1802," "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland," "There is a bondage which is worse to bear," and "October, 1803 [When, looking on the present face of things]"; discussion of Wordsworth's attitude toward and treatment of Napoleon appears below.

126
the closing of Salisbury Plain.50 "[S]atisfied in heart," Wordsworth has begun to find value in Britain's political status quo, and he accordingly begins to attach value to its defenders, the British army and navy.

This is not to say that he grew wholly complacent regarding British politics; indeed, as the Convention of Cintra shows, he maintained a willingness to criticize sharply his nation's government and military. He wrote the last sonnet of the series, "November, 1806," after the fall of Prussia, and in the course of arguing that Britain's recognition of then being alone to fight Napoleon would serve it well, he states that the British

shall exult, if They who rule the land
Be Men who hold its many blessings dear,
Wise, upright, valiant; not a venal Band,
Who are to judge of danger which they fear,
And honour which they do not understand. (ll. 10-14, my emph.)

After the deaths of Pitt in January 1806 and Fox in September, Lord Grenville became Prime Minister and Lord Howick became Foreign Secretary (Curtis 414). By November, Wordsworth clearly was not yet confident in their abilities, no doubt in part due to the shortcomings he had seen in Pitt, but he recognized the power of their offices, asserting that they are central to British triumph. He was generally more confident, though, in the abilities of the common British soldier and sailor, whom he began to call to arms with his verse. In the face of threatened French invasion,51 and in contrast to the tendency in his earlier poetry to downplay the glory and agency of British servicemen, Wordsworth

50Geoffrey Hartman contends that Wordsworth adopts a position of political "gradualism" (318).
51Colley speaks of "the invasion threats of 1779-82" (151), and says this of the threat of invasion generally: "As it turned out, war did not cross the Channel into Great Britain itself, but those living between 1793 and 1815 could not know that. Napoleon's Army of England was by far the most formidable invasion force assembled against Great Britain up to that time, the threat it represented was a protracted one, and it came very close to succeeding. There was a major but abortive invasion against Ireland in 1796, and a more successful French landing there two years later. In 1797, a small expeditionary force landed in Wales. From 1798 to 1805, the conquest of Britain was Napoleon's primary strategic objective" (286). See also 306.
began to rally and glorify his nation's soldiers and sailors. While he immediately published few of the series' earlier occasional sonnets, his primary aim in writing them was, as Woodring states, "to goad all persons who were in any way capable of flagging in the contest against Napoleon" (125).

Three consecutive poems in the series (numbers 23-25) show Wordsworth using rhetoric common to loyalist verse to inspire martial valor. "To the Men of Kent. October, 1803" invokes a tradition holding that "the inhabitants of Kent, east of the Medway, were not conquered by the Normans, but received from them a confirmation of their characters" (Curtis 414). Despite its echoes of the Norman Yoke often alluded to in oppositionist writing, and despite undeniable French martial prowess under William as well as Napoleon, the poem asserts the native British martial superiority consistently claimed in loyalist poetry. It addresses the men of Kent as "Vanguard of Liberty" (l. 1) and "Ye Children of a Soil that doth advance / It's [sic] haughty brow against the coast of France" (2-3), and it describes the British forces as eager and intimidating:

To France be words of invitation sent!  
They from their Fields can see the countenance  
Of your fierce war, may ken the glittering lance,  
And hear you shouting forth your brave intent. (5-8)

With the use of "ken" and the anachronistic reference to the "glittering lance" highlighting the poem's invocation of a glorious past, it describes a remarkable British unity in which the entire nation could find the strength of Kent--"In Britain is one breath; / We all are with you now from Shore to Shore" (12-13); it then closes with the quintessential call-to-arms sentiment: "Ye Men of Kent, 'tis Victory or Death!" (14).

The next poem, "October, 1803 ['Six Thousand Veterans practis'd in War's game']," is also regional in its emphasis and recalls an English loss in order to rally British strength. It describes the victory of Jacobite Scottish Highlanders, "Shepherds and Herdsmen" (1.

52 The fourth, and last, of the series to have the title "October, 1803."
This sonnet calls for the renowned Scottish martial valor—specifically that of Viscount Dundee, the Highland leader in that battle—to surface in the British conflict with France:

Oh! for a single hour of that Dundee
Who on that day the word of onset gave!
Like conquest would the Men of England see;
And her Foes find a like inglorious Grave. (ll. 11-14)

Wordsworth, like many other writers who promoted the British military, draws on the Scottish martial tradition to inspire British, and in this case specifically English, troops. The last of these call-to-arms poems looks not to the past, but to the future as a means of inspiring resistance. "Anticipation. October, 1803" describes the celebratory scene that would follow a divinely inspired British victory:

Shout, for a mighty Victory is won!
On British ground the Invaders are laid low;
The breath of Heaven has drifted them like snow,
And left them lying in the silent sun.
Never to rise again!—the work is done.
Come forth, ye Old Men, now in peaceful show
And greet your Sons! drums beat, and trumpets blow!
Make merry, Wives! ye little Children stun
Your Grandame's ears with pleasure of your noise!
Clap, Infants, clap your hands! Divine must be
That triumph, when the very worst, the pain,
And even the prospect of our Brethren slain,
Hath something in it which the heart enjoys:—
In glory will they sleep and endless sanctity.

Wordsworth draws on a number of commonplaces of British call-to-arms poetry: God's endorsement of the British cause, widespread gratitude toward those who fought and

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53 It is interesting that Wordsworth's estimation of the government forces—"Six thousand Veterans practis'd in War's game, / Tried men" (1-2)—far exceeds that of the twentieth-century historian Rosalind Mitchison, who describes them as "half-trained troops" (281) composed of "clumsy musketeers" (282). In a note, Wordsworth directs readers to "an anecdote in Mr. Scott's Border Minstrelsy" (Curtis 414).
54 See, for example, "Song, for the Tweedale Volunteers" (Bennett 321-22) and "The Spirit of the Volunteers. A New Song" (Bennett 324-25).
55 This poem was first published in The Courier on October 28, 1803 (Curtis 173).
lived, and glory for those who fought and died. Of the three sonnets here discussed, this one most clearly shows the degree to which the poet's attitude toward the British military had changed, for it most directly contradicts the experiences of the British soldiers and sailors described in An Evening's Walk and the Salisbury Plain poems, where veterans, if they are able to survive, experience neither glory nor gratitude, and where families suffer profound pain, not enjoyment, as a result of the men's war experiences. War is here celebrated, not mourned, by British families. Note that in calling his countrymen to arms and anticipating victory and glory, Wordsworth ceases to describe the plight of contemporary individuals and instead turns to the realms of the collective, the traditional, and the historic. Instead of refuting the individual pain he earlier associated with service in the British military, Wordsworth distances himself from it by shifting his focus. While this turn allows him to ignore the individual destruction that war can breed and is thus conducive to the production of these pro-military poems, it does not allow for the celebration of individual, contemporary British martial heroes, a shift of focus that remains a significant feature of Wordsworth's loyalist verse.

Since a large-scale French invasion of Britain never materialized, the victory Wordsworth envisions in "Anticipation. October, 1803" never occurred; of course, Waterloo provided a triumph comparable to that which Wordsworth had imagined, and he responded by joining Southey and others in a celebration on Skiddaw where they danced around a bonfire singing "God save the King" (Bainbridge 153). He also wrote celebratory verse. One such poem, "Inscription for a National Monument in Commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo,"56 appeared in The Champion in February, 1816.57 Opening with "Intrepid Sons of Albion!" it proceeds to describe the British

56 Ketcham notes: "There seems to be no evidence that this poem was intended for an actual monument on the battlefield of Waterloo" (533).
57 Two other such poems, "Occasioned by the Same Battle. February 1816" and "February 1816" also appeared in that periodical.
warriors as men who value their lives but are willing to lose them in the service of their nation:

Ye slight not life— to God and Nature true;  
But death, becoming death, is dearer far,  
When duty bids you bleed in open war:  
Hence hath your prowess quelled that impious crew.  
Heroes, for instant sacrifice prepared,  
Yet filled with ardour, and on triumph bent,  
Mid direst shocks of mortal accident. . . . (ll. 5-11)

Here again Wordsworth glorifies dying for one's nation, and here again he asserts British superiority, though this time he attributes it to the British environs as well as its people: "the spacious earth / Ne'er saw a race who held, by right of birth, / So many objects to which love is due" (2-4).

His desire to protect those people and environs is perhaps most explicitly expressed in the "Advertisement" to an 1816 collection which focuses on Waterloo, Thanksgiving Ode, January 18, 1816. With Other Short Pieces, Chiefly Referring to Recent Public Events. Beginning with an assertion that "the present publication owes its existence to a patriotism, anxious to exert itself in commemorating that course of action, by which Great Britain has, for some time past, distinguished herself above all other countries" (177), the "Advertisement" shows that Wordsworth became an accomplished apologist for the British military at a time when some were arguing that its maintenance was too expensive and its power potentially threatening to Britain itself. He asserts that British military men "transcend all praise" (178-79) and indicates that in this volume he has "given vent to feelings tending to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of his countrymen, at a time when there is a general outcry against the prevalence of these dispositions" (178). Wordsworth recognizes the reality of the post-war economic depression, but asserts that the "body of the nation" saw it as "in a great degree unavoidable" and even "a consecration of their noble efforts," and he contends that "the
cup of our wealth will be gradually replenished" (178). He then turns his attention to those who felt the British military was in danger of becoming too powerful, with some even implying that "a design exists to subvert that civil character of the English people by unconstitutional applications and unnecessary increase of military power" (179). He argues: "The nation would err grievously, if she suffered the abuse which other states have made of military power, to prevent her from perceiving that no people ever was, or can be, independent, free, or secure, much less great, in any sane application of the word, without martial propensities, and an assiduous cultivation of military virtues" (179). He then points out that Britain's "insular position . . . enables her to rely, for her defence against foreign foes, chiefly upon a species of armed force from which her own liberties have nothing to fear" (179), and proposes a program for fostering a potent but responsible military force that includes "adequate rewards, and permanent honours, conferred upon the deserving"; the encouragement of "athletic exercises and manly sports among the peasantry of the country"; and "sufficient Institutions, in which, during a time of peace, a reasonable proportion of the youth of the country may be instructed in military science" (179-80). No longer alienated by his nation's martial activities, Wordsworth has come to support and even attempt to direct them.

His celebration of the victory at Waterloo in the volume's titular "Thanksgiving Ode," though, attributes Britain's martial success not to such a systematic program of national defense but to the less tangible causes of Britain's honor and its merited

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58 This was not a new British fear; Williams notes that an intense debate followed the Glorious Revolution when William III proposed a standing army ("Salisbury Plain" 170). For Coleridge's opposition to a standing army, see the section of Chapter Four subtitled "Soldiers, the Nation, and the Nation-State."

59 See also the Convention of Cintra, where he writes: "nature herself, by encircling with the ocean the country we inhabit, has proclaimed that this mighty nation is for ever [sic] to be her own ruler, and that the land is set apart for the home of immortal independence" (280). Note also that in stating that Britain can be defended without encroaching on its citizens' liberty he ignores the impressment that he describes in the Salisbury Plain poems.

60 Wordsworth also shows a willingness to give military advice in the Convention of Cintra (231, 311, 315).
enjoyment of divine favor. Not published in any periodical, the ode features a tone more humble and reverent than that of the "Inscription." It is not, however, short on feelings of state patriotism. Wordsworth proposes that Westminster Abbey house observances for British military men, living and dead (ll. 230-59), and recounts his own life as one of uninterrupted patriotic sympathy:

Land of our fathers! precious unto me
Since the first joys of thinking infancy;
When of thy gallant chivalry I read,
And hugged the volume on my sleepless bed!
O, England!—dearer far than life is dear,
If I forget thy prowess, never more
Be thy ungrateful son allowed to hear
Thy green leaves rustle, or thy torrents roar! (137-44)

Wordsworth here omits the description in the still unpublished Prelude of the "triumph" he felt in his soul when learning of British military losses; instead, he gives an extended and idealized portrait of how Britain achieved victory:

Have we not conquered?—By the vengeful sword?
Ah no, by dint of Magnanimity;
That curbed the baser passions, and left free
A loyal band to follow their liege Lord,
Clear-sighted Honour— and his staid Compeers,
Along a track of most unnatural years,
In execution of heroic deeds;
Whose memory, spotless as the crystal beads
Of morning dew upon the untrodden meads,
Shall live enrolled above the starry spheres. (57-66)

Britain is one "whose spirit no reverse could quell" (70) and "that mid the failing never failed" (71). Laboring "with an eye / Of circumspect humanity" (73-74), Britain is

clothed with strength and skill,
All martial duties to fulfil;
Firm as a rock in stationary fight;

61 After its initial publication in 1816, it later appeared in collective anthologies, though, like many other Wordsworthian works, it underwent some change through the years (Ketcham 180, 190, 196).
In motion rapid as the lightning's gleam;
Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night
To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream. . . . (75-80)

By here describing Britain's power in terms of natural objects and phenomena, Wordsworth not only attributes to it an undeniable strength but also associates it with forces that, according at least to this ode, act independently of politics but in accordance with divine justice ("Fierce as a flood-gate bursting in the night / To rouse the wicked from their giddy dream").

Indeed, the ode clearly asserts that Britain's triumph was the result of God's favor. While it does not describe divine participation on the order of such classical works as The Iliad and The Aeneid, it ascribes to God a significant role that merits mortal humility:

The very humblest are too proud of heart:
And one brief day is rightly set apart
To Him that lifteth up and layeth low;
For that Almighty God to whom we owe,
Say not that we have vanquished—but that we survive. (87-91)

God, Wordsworth notes, is a violent entity with an arsenal of, among other things, pestilence, drought, earthquakes and tornadoes (262-74). While God can use such natural phenomena to influence wars ("— The fierce Tornado sleeps within thy [God's] courts— / He hears the word—he flies— / And navies perish in their ports" [271-73]), humankind is ultimately more effective in carrying out divine intention:

But thy most dreaded instrument,
In working out a pure intent,
Is Man—arrayed for mutual slaughter.—
Yea, Carnage is thy daughter! (279-82)

And the intention at Waterloo was the punishment of the French, "the impure" (92), "That Soul of Evil—which, from Hell let loose, / Had filled the astonished world with such abuse, / as boundless patience only could endure" (95-97). Wordsworth recognizes that this line of reasoning implies divine endorsement of French victories as well, and
quickly and vaguely also attributes them to divine justice: "Thou cloth'st the wicked in
their dazzling mail, / And by thy just permission they prevail" (283-84). The reasons
behind the eventual British triumph, though, are readily discernible. To England62 "the
terminating sword is given" (160, his emph.) because it is the more godly nation:
"Thine arm from peril guards the coasts / Of them who in thy laws delight" (285-86). Its
receiving the sword is a "Dread mark of approbation, justly gained! / Exalted office,
worthily sustained!" (161-62). War is no longer simply an evil, as Wordsworth
described it when he opposed British war with France; it is now a divinely inspired,
necessary evil that ultimately allows the triumph of British forces due to Britain's moral
integrity. Wordsworth has thus come to support British martial heroism, and has
thoroughly involved it with morality. As we saw with Southey's, these martial heroes
counter the idea of the hero as Hegel conceives it, as one acting wholly from internal
desires and oblivious to issues of moral principles; instead, their morality is essential to
obtaining the divine favor necessary for martial success.

This emphasis on morality is a likely cause behind what is perhaps the most
striking element of Wordsworth's poetry celebrating the victory at Waterloo: its absence
of praise for Wellington. Bainbridge points out the homogeneity of the vast amount of
poetry written in celebration of the British victory: "a poem on Waterloo was clearly
expected to be a 'celebration' and a 'tribute,' its martial tones perhaps softened by a note
of elegy. By its very nature it would be an expression of a 'patriotic impulse.' The
majority of works on the subject shared certain features; features that were expected by
the reading public" (157). Among the standard features of these poems, what Bainbridge
calls "'the matter of Waterloo,'" are condemnation of Napoleon, praise for Wellington,
and a description of the battle itself (158). While Wordsworth's Waterloo verse is
certainly patriotic, and while the "Advertisement" to the "Thanksgiving Ode" calls for

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62In a later version "Britain" (see line 139 of Ketcham's "Reading Text 2").
other poets "to give the merited applause to PERSONS as well as to THINGS" (180), his celebratory poetry ignores Wellington and focuses instead on the British military as a whole. Bainbridge rightly insists that the ode's broad focus and emphasis on the divine do not "conflict or counter the more detailed accounts provided elsewhere" (172); at the same time, though, they do not add to those accounts. Wordsworth refuses to celebrate Wellington as a hero.

Wordsworth's focus on the British military as a whole allows him to emphasize the morality of the British troops, since it is more readily assigned to a fighting force as an aggregate than to any one warrior. Individuals, after all, are visibly fallible, but their moral indiscretions can be obscured in a larger picture of collective martial triumph, and Wellington was a key figure in the Convention of Cintra scandal that so inflamed Wordsworth. Bainbridge, who sees a republican strand surviving in Wordsworth even after his embrace of the British military in response to the invasion scare, writes that the Spanish and Portuguese insurrection that provided the context for the scandal initially enabled Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge to simplify and clarify their ambivalence toward British martial involvement on the Continent:

In May 1808, the rising of the Spanish people against Napoleon's army of invasion had made possible a new and attractively simple formulation of international affairs. These spontaneous shows of resistance to Napoleon's imperialism . . . enabled the Lakers to reinterpret the war as a battle conducted on behalf of liberty and freedom and against tyranny and oppression. Moreover, the British government's military support of the Spanish and Portuguese enabled the three writers to realign themselves with their countrymen, their government and 'Liberty,' and so to close, at last, the schism that had been opened by the outbreak of the war in 1793.

63 Gill contends that this practice cost Wordsworth aesthetically: "in attempting a generalizing utterance Wordsworth forsook the very ground of the success of most of his poems, which is that they are realized in and through the matter-of-fact, the everyday, the human" (319). As I argue, though, a simultaneous need for and lack of extraordinary individuals led to the generalizing evident here.
However, when the British general signed the Convention of Cintra, which allowed "the French Marshall Junot to evacuate his defeated army from Portugal in British ships, complete with stolen booty," the schism between these poets' "natural sympathy for Liberty" and British war policy was reopened (97-98). While in the Convention of Cintra tract Wordsworth recognizes the strategic problems attending this agreement (Convention of Cintra 253-54), he there describes it primarily as a moral failure, speaking of "the political injustice and moral depravity which are stamped upon the front of this agreement, and pervade every regulation which it contains" (264) and asserting that royal ministers had publicly approved of the agreement "against the dictates of conscience, and from selfishness and cowardice" (283). Wellington's role in the scandal proved him to lack the morality necessary for genuine heroism, so, despite the tendency for British poets writing of the victory at Waterloo to celebrate Wellington as a hero, it is not surprising to see Wordsworth fail to do so. Indeed, as Bainbridge asserts, the "Thanksgiving Ode" discredits "the whole 'heroic,' action-based, approach to Waterloo" (173).

The difficulty of finding a sufficiently moral martial hero is further demonstrated in Wordsworth's guarded treatment of another revered British military figure, Admiral Nelson. Wordsworth wrote "Character of the Happy Warrior" shortly after the October 21, 1805 Battle of Trafalgar and published it in Poems, in Two Volumes (1807). The poem stresses the morality, learning, and courage of the ideal warrior, and the poet

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64Published in 1809, and little read— it never sold out its first edition of five hundred copies and sold only 238 copies in its first year (Thomas 133-34)—the tract's full title is Concerning the Relations of Great Britain, Spain, and Portugal, To Each Other, and to the Common Enemy; at this Crisis; and Specifically as Affected by The Convention of Cintra: The whole brought to the test of those Principles, by which alone the Independence and Freedom of Nations can be Preserved or Recovered.

65Speaking of the Waterloo verse, Woodring writes: "Wordsworth wished to advocate thanksgiving to God, but he remembered the Convention of Cintra too resolutely to pay direct tribute to Wellington as a divine champion" (124). Thomas relates that "[t]he later successes of Wellesley, by then Duke of Wellington, seem . . . to have been accompanied, at least in Wordsworth's mind, by a genuine moral regeneration. The poet did not forget the Convention of Cintra, but he came to admire the general" (162). He then shows how Wordsworth refused to reprint the tract out of respect to Wellington (162-63).
tentatively and humbly associates Nelson with that figure in a note at the poem's end: "The above Verses were written soon after tidings had been received of the Death of Lord Nelson, which event directed the Author's thoughts to the subject. His respect for the memory of his great fellow-countryman induces him to mention this; though he is well aware that the verses must suffer from any connection in the Reader's mind with a Name so illustrious." However, he is significantly less generous in the Fenwick Notes in his description of why he did not associate Nelson more thoroughly with the ideal warrior the poem describes. He recalled to Isabella Fenwick in 1843:

Who is the happy Warrior. The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellence in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the ideas of what a warrior ought to be.

(36)

Morality is so important to the Wordsworthian ideal of a genuine warrior that it disqualifies even Nelson from being one.

As Wordsworth mentions above, though, Nelson did meet some of the criteria of the "happy warrior." Southey's biography confirms that Nelson met Wordsworth's ideal in being one "Who, doom'd to go in company with Pain, / And Fear, and Bloodshed, miserable train! / Turns his necessity to glorious gain" (ll. 12-14) as well as one "Who, if he rise to station of command, / Rises by open means; and there will stand / On honourable terms, or else retire" (35-37). Most notably, he was also certainly one who, if he be called upon to face

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66See the discussion of Southey's Life of Nelson in the second chapter.
Some awful moment to which Heaven has join'd
Great issues, good or bad for human-kind,
Is happy as a Lover; and attired
With sudden brightness like a Man inspired;
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need. . . . (48-56)

Just as certainly, however, his intense concern with being duly recognized for his duties disqualified him as one who does "[not] lie in wait / For wealth, or honors, or for worldly state" (41-42), and his affair with Lady Emma Hamilton is inconsistent with the domestic devotion of

--He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a Soul whose master bias leans
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes;
Sweet images! which, whereso'er he be,
Are at his heart; and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love. . . . (57-64)

The assertion at the end of this passage that the happy warrior is more courageous because of his devotion to his family is, we remember, echoed by Southey in the Life of Nelson, where he contends that "domestic love and duty" inspire "the mind of true heroic stamp" (48). Both authors associate heroism with devotion to the domestic sphere, and both indict Nelson for betraying his first family. Though glorious in battle, his domestic troubles made Nelson a tainted hero.

Significantly, Wordsworth's brother John, who died as a captain in the service of the East-India Company but was never a naval sailor, fulfilled many of the criteria of the "Happy Warrior." Wordsworth continues in the Fenwick Note regarding that poem:

For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note, I will add that many elements of the character here pourtrayed were found in my brother John who perished by shipwreck. . . . His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and
dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval instead of the East-India Service to which his family connexion had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. (40-41)

The "Character of the Happy Warrior" is so distinguished and rare that Wordsworth is unable to find British soldiers or sailors to fulfill it. He implies that, had his brother been in the navy, he might have met the criteria, and wrote of him in a letter to Sir George Beaumont:

my departed Brother . . . walked all his life pure among the impure. Except a little hastiness of temper when any thing [sic] was done in a clumsy or bungling way, or when improperly contradicted upon occasions of not much importance, he had not one vice of his profession. I never heard an oath or even an indelicate expression or allusion from him in my life, his modesty was equal to that of the purest Women. In prudence, in meekness, in self-denial, in fortitude, in just desires, and elegant and refined enjoyments, with an entire simplicity of manners, life and habit, he was all that could be wished for in man. . . . (quoted in Gill 240)

John did not have the moral shortcomings that Wordsworth saw in Wellington and Nelson, but as readers of the younger Wordsworth's poetry know, actual war could corrupt even its best-intentioned participants. Untried in battles, John finally does not qualify as a "happy warrior." 68

In The Excursion--published in 1814, between Trafalgar and Waterloo--Wordsworth presents a fictional "Happy Warrior" who never sees military action. The history of Oswald, 69 who has characteristics of both his brother John and Admiral

67Gill relates that when John's ship, the Earl of Abergavenny, broke up on the Shambles off Portland Bill on February 5, 1804, he stayed at his command until the sea swept him away (239-40).
68While I find much to admire in Spiegelman's Wordsworth's Heroes, I cannot wholly agree with his assertion that the warrior of "Character of the Happy Warrior" "is not necessarily a military man" (4). Not only does Wordsworth mention Nelson as inspiring the work, it begins with "Who is the happy Warrior? Who is he / Whom every Man in arms should wish to be?" and closes with "This is the happy Warrior; this is He / Whom every Man in arms should wish to be." Such emphasis on men in arms seems to focus the poem's scope more than Spiegelman acknowledges.
69Interestingly, this ideal character shares the name of the villain in the later version of The Borderers.
Nelson, is told by the pastor of The Excursion as he surveys his church’s graveyard. He states that as a youth Oswald had remarkable heroic promise:

"As old Bards
Tell in their idle songs of wandering Gods,
Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form;
Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the shade,
Discovered in their own despite to sense
Of Mortals, (if such fables without blame
May find chance-mention on this sacred ground)
So, through a simple rustic garb’s disguise,
And through the impediment of rural cares,
In him revealed a Scholar’s genius shone;
And so, not wholly hidden from men’s sight,
In him the spirit of a Hero walked
Our unpretending valley.” (p. 343)

The genius of a scholar is here associated with the spirit of a hero. Like the poet’s brother John, Oswald is something of a philosopher, and this contributes to his heroic status. He is not, however, lacking the traditionally heroic strength of body. The pastor continues the above description by relating that Oswald was an accomplished athlete and a skillful, persistent hunter who nevertheless had too much respect for the eagle’s majesty to hunt it (343-44). And when Napoleon threatened to invade Britain, Oswald, like Wordsworth himself, and without the influence of the illegal or dubious recruiting practices exhibited in earlier Wordsworthian verse, joined the local volunteers. One of ten young soldiers from the Pastor’s valley, Oswald assumed a position of leadership among them and

"like a Chief
And yet a modest Comrade, led them forth
From their shy solitude, to face the world,
With a gay confidence and seemly pride...." (345)
He would also in his spare time instruct them in European geography and the history of the war, criticizing German defeat and praising Swiss resisters and their sublime surroundings (345-46). Like Nelson, he enthusiastically served his country and led his men. He then died young, though, notably, not as a result of martial service, but from performing a domestic chore: helping to wash his father’s sheep in a cold stream after he had spent the day hunting (348-49). While his helping with this chore was, as the Pastor indicates, a generous act (349), and while he appears to be a rare and effective leader, Oswald’s actions do not seem to merit the lavish, martially involved praise the Pastor bestows on the young man while relating the tale. After describing Oswald as the leader and educator of his fellow volunteers, the Pastor says of him:

"—And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,  
Was a true Patriot, hopeful as the best  
Of that young Peasantry, who, in our days,  
Have fought and perished for Helvetia’s rights,  
Ah not in vain!—or those who, in old time,  
For work of happier issue, to the side  
Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts,  
When he had risen alone! No braver Youth  
Descended from Judea’s heights, to march  
With righteous Joshua; or appeared in arms  
When grove was felled, and altar was cast down,  
And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-enflamed,  
And strong in hatred of Idolatry.” (346)

These are powerful comparisons for a young man who never saw military action; the Pastor portrays him as a righteous defender of freedom. But the Pastor was not alone in his perception of Oswald, for at his funeral “his Comrades paid / A Soldier’s honours,” and the “distant mountains echoed with a sound / Of lamentation, never heard before” (349, 350). His neighbors, it seems, also perceived him as heroic. An apparent

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71Helvetia is another name for Switzerland; here again Wordsworth is willing to celebrate Swiss freedom, even in a work with obvious loyalist leanings.
willingness to fight, coupled with his integrity, genius, and domestic devotion, qualified Oswald as a hero in the eyes of those who knew him.

It also seems to have made him a hero to Wordsworth. Readers have long associated the Pastor—as well as the Poet, Wanderer, and Solitary—with Wordsworth, and the figure most obviously associated with him, the Poet, describes Oswald's capacities as "[m]ore than heroic" (347). And it is clear that Oswald meets many of the criteria of the "Happy Warrior," especially those of learning and domestic devotion. It is also clear, though, that because it does not describe him as an active warrior, the Pastor's depiction of Oswald is not meant simply "to encourage a martial spirit in the bosoms of [Wordsworth's] countrymen." While it celebrates a British soldier, it does not glorify a British war, but national and domestic devotion. Indeed, the story of Margaret, which was originally told in The Ruined Cottage but first published as Book One of The Excursion, warns that when a man's service to the nation takes him away from home, it can disrupt, even destroy, the domestic sphere. While Wordsworth praises in Oswald a single, contemporary British martial hero, the hero is fictional, and Wordsworth does not expose him to battle, a decision that exemplifies the poet's willingness to promote British martial heroism as well as his reluctance to forget war's domestic costs or glorify the power of any single warrior.

In sum, Wordsworth's treatment of British soldiers and naval sailors is initially in line with the oppositionist tradition of discounting their agency and efficacy while focusing on the pain they and their families experienced. As he began to adopt an increasingly loyalist stance toward Britain and its governance, his portrayals of these

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72 Spiegelman writes that all these characters "are versions of their creator" (215) and that "Wordsworth divides himself into four spokesmen . . . who together make the one full man" (206), and he notes Hazlitt's statement that "[t]he recluse, the pastor, and the pedlar are three persons in one poet" (245).

73 The next life that the Pastor examines is of a knight from Elizabeth's era who retired to the North; while this knight is described as having been an active warrior, the Pastor calls him a "mild-hearted Champion" and focuses on his paternal, not his martial, activities (351-54).
figures accordingly became more positive, though they did not become wholly uniform.
In the poetry explicitly responding to specific events, usually written as sonnets or odes, he was willing to sing of British martial triumph as a way of engendering a sense of "martial spirit" in his fellow Britons, but at other times he took a more ambivalent, though still often positive, attitude toward those figures. Martial glory was an acceptable subject for call-to-arms poetry and the celebration of British victory, but the ideal soldier-hero of The Excursion never sees action and dies washing sheep, phenomena that stress Wordsworth's interest in extra-martial elements of heroism. Regardless, Wordsworth almost always avoided glorifying the martial accomplishments of any single, contemporary British martial hero. Cognizant of the shortfalls of Wellington and Nelson, and fully aware of the power gained by Napoleon, he seems wary of promoting any one British martial hero.

Napoleon and the Threat of the Martial Hero

Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth held a complex array of opinions of Napoleon over the course of the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. Liu asserts that "[w]hile general British reaction to Bonaparte fluctuated from uncertainty before his usurpation in 1800 to enthusiasm during the Peace of Amiens in 1802 and finally to a renewed sense of hostility, one species of reaction was constant, if officially inadmissible: admiration of the 'genius,' 'sublimity,' and 'imagination' represented by Napoleon" (30 his emph.). While, in accordance with the admiration Liu mentions, Napoleon was at times portrayed in the British press as the greatest of men, it also portrayed him as the meanest (Bainbridge 4-11). Bainbridge provides a detailed examination of how Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, Landor, Byron, and Hazlitt represented Napoleon, showing the ambivalent but ultimately negative representations of

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74See Chapter Five for further discussion of non-martial heroes.
the first four writers as opposed to the again ambivalent but nonetheless more enduring support of the last two. He relates that while the first group came to see Napoleon's ascendancy as dangerous, and the three "lakers" embraced the victory at Waterloo as an end to his dominance over contemporary "imagination," Byron and Hazlitt maintained an insistence on Napoleon's status as a heroic resistor to monarchical, and in Byron's case specifically Bourbon, dominance.

In the 1790s Coleridge and Southey clearly shared in the admiration of Napoleon that Liu describes. Bainbridge shows the approval, public and private, that they then conveyed. Southey, for example, wrote to his wife in 1799 that "Buonaparte is making a home for us in Syria, and we may perhaps enjoy freedom under the suns of the East, in a land flowing with milk and honey" (20), and Coleridge exclaimed that same year in a letter to Southey: "Buonaparte--! Buonaparte! dear dear DEAR Buonaparte" (22). But Napoleon's sustained aggression and assumption of despotic power led them both eventually to join Wordsworth in adopting confrontational stances toward him, especially in response to his rejection of common moral standards.75

As Bainbridge makes clear, Coleridge, Southey, and Wordsworth came to voice their opposition to Napoleon by presenting him as a figure much like Milton's Satan. In 1809 Coleridge asserted in The Courier that Bonaparte shared Satan's philosophy of "evil be thou my good" (EOT 2.83), and in 1812 he claimed that Napoleon had proven even more diabolical than Milton's sublime creation (Bainbridge 130). Southey concurred with Coleridge's characterization, calling the Peninsular War "a business of natural life and death, a war of virtue against vice, light against darkness, the good principle against the evil one" (125). Southey's comment is to a degree representative of the three poets' later opinion of Napoleon, for the Peninsular War inspired no small percentage of their

75 For further treatment of Coleridge's and Southey's opinions of Napoleon during 1798-1802, see Bainbridge 20-27; for Bainbridge's argument that Wordsworth developed his poetics in response to Napoleon's ascendancy, see his second chapter.
criticism. Coleridge referred to that war as a "holy war of man against the enemy of human nature" (EOT 2.178), and Wordsworth, of course, wrote at length on the nature of that conflict in his Convention of Cintra tract.

In that piece Wordsworth speaks of

the splendid qualities of courage and enthusiasm, which, being the frequent companions, and, in given circumstances, the necessary agents of virtue, are too often themselves hailed as virtues by their own title. But courage and enthusiasm have equally characterised the best and worst beings, a Satan, equally with an Abdiel—a Bonaparte equally with a Leonidas. (235-36)76

Though, as Coleridge noted in 1800, Napoleon may have achieved "the splendor of a hero in romance" (EOT 1.71), Wordsworth insists that courage and enthusiasm are not in themselves sufficient heroic criteria, nor are they alone sufficient for martial triumph. The tract repeatedly insists that morality is central to martial success and that the Spanish are Napoleon's moral superiors. The Spanish, he contends, should place additional reliance on their superior morality:

but yet the professional excellencies of the soldier must be contemplated according to their due place and relation. Nothing is done, or worse than nothing, unless something higher be taught, as higher, something more fundamental, as more fundamental. In the moral virtues and qualities of passion, which belong to a people, must the ultimate salvation of a people be sought for. Moral qualities of a high order, and vehement passions, and virtuous as vehement, the Spaniards have already displayed; nor is it to be anticipated, that the conduct of their enemies will suffer the heat and glow to remit and languish. They may be trusted to themselves, and to the provocations of the merciless Invader. They must now be taught, that their strength chiefly lies in moral qualities, more silent in their operation, more permanent in their nature; in the virtues of perseverance, constancy, fortitude, and watchfulness, in a long memory and a quick feeling, to rise upon a favourable summons, a texture of life which, though cut through (as hath been feigned of the bodies of the Angels) unites again—these are

76Owen and Smyser note that Leonidas was the "commander of the Spartans against Xerxes at Thermopylae, 480 B.C." (375).
the virtues and qualities on which the Spanish People must be taught mainly to depend. (235 his emph.)

Wordsworth places little value on courage without morality, such as that which he associated with Napoleon, who confirmed all too plainly a realization that initially had helped spur the poet's revolutionary fervor: "How much the destiny of man had still / Hung upon single persons" (The Prelude X.137-38). Napoleon showed the poet the danger of the martial genius; he wrote in 1803: "When, looking on the present face of things, / I see one man, of Men the meanest too!" ("October 1803" ["When looking on the present face of things"] ll. 1-2). Indeed, shortly after recognizing the power of "single persons" in The Prelude, he asserts "truths" that he considers so basic as to be "the common-places of the Schools, / A theme for Boys, too trite even to be felt" (X.158-60):

that tyrannic Power is weak,
Hath neither gratitude, nor faith, nor love,
Nor the support of good or evil men
To trust in, that the Godhead which is ours
Can never utterly be charm'd or still'd,
That nothing hath a natural right to last
But equity and reason, that all else
Meets foes irreconcilable, and at best
Doth live but by variety of disease. (X.167-75)

Wordsworth invokes the power of the individual but not without raising the specter of tyranny.

The Convention of Cintra tract also makes it clear that Wordsworth grew to abhor Bonaparte. He here states that while Napoleon sees himself as godlike (330), he is characterized by "Satanic pride" and "false glory" (272); he is the "Enemy of mankind" (313), the "adversary of all good" (275), the "ravenous lion" (275), the "wanton

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77Curtis notes that the poem was probably composed "between October 14, 1803, and early January 1804, possibly by October 31, 1803" (170). Wordsworth's response to Robespierre was also strong; he states in Book X of The Prelude: "few happier moments have been mine / Through my whole life than that when first I heard / That this foul Tribe of Moloch was o'erthrown, / And their chief Regent levell'd with the dust" (ll. 466-69).
oppressor" (322), and "the present barbarian Ravager of Europe" (291). His troops display "perverse loyalty" (272) and constitute "a banded multitude of perfidious oppressors, of robbers and assassins, who had outlawed themselves from society in the wantonness of power; who were abominable for their own crimes, and on account of the crimes of him whom they served" (289). Significantly, the source of Napoleon's success is not his courage but his "wickedness": his "utter rejection of the restraints of morality" (312) and his "steady adherence" to the "abominable doctrine" that "power is the measure of right" (265-66). He "has outlawed himself from society by proclaiming, with word and act, that he acknowledges no mastery but power" (341). Throughout this tract Wordsworth's language and imagery portray Napoleon as a figure analogous to Milton's Satan: evil, proud, and unaware of his pending defeat (Bainbridge 108-19).

Wordsworth further declared his disdain for Bonaparte in a number of sonnets. The poems are generally critical of Napoleon's military aggression and his being named first consul for life in 1802, but one, written to contrast Napoleon with his staunch opponent, the Swedish King Gustavus IV, is particularly focused on his moral shortcomings. Untitled, the poem follows a sonnet praising Gustavus and reads:

Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid
His vows to Fortune; who, in cruel slight
Of virtuous hope, of liberty, and right,
Hath followed wheresoe'er a way was made
By the blind Goddess;—ruthless, undismayed;

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78 Coleridge similarly remarks on the power that can be gained by foregoing the demands of conscience; see EOT 2.84 and Friend 1.120.

79 See, for example, "Calais, August, 1802," "To a Friend, Composed Near Calais, On the Road Leading to Ardres, August 7th, 1802," "I griev'd for Buonaparte, with a vain," "Calais, August 15th, 1802," "Thought of a Briton on the Subjugation of Switzerland," "There is a bondage which is worse to bear," and "October, 1803 ['When, looking on the present face of things']."

80 A discussion of Wordsworth's portrayal of Gustavus IV appears later in this chapter.

81 Based on the assertion of the first two lines, the "blind Goddess" is likely Fortuna: "The Roman goddess of fortune and good luck: identified with the more obscure Greek Tyche. Most often she is represented standing on a globe or ball (later a wheel), indicating the mutability of her favors, and with a cornucopia in one hand from which she strews luck with the other... Fortuna is often veiled or blindfolded" (Leach 412).
And so hath gained at length a prosperous Height,
Round which the Elements of worldly might
Beneath his haughty feet, like clouds, are laid.
O joyless power that stands by lawless force!
Curses are his dire portion, scorn, and hate,
Internal darkness and unquiet breath;
And, if old judgments keep their sacred course,
Him from that Height shall Heaven precipitate
By violent and ignominious death. (his emph.)

Heaven itself should be opposed to Napoleon, who, it is clear, has followed the course of egocentric heroism described by Hegel and whom Wordsworth again represents as a corollary to Milton's Satan (Bainbridge 116-19). In another poem Wordsworth implies that Napoleon's moral failings are due to his immersion in war and his lack of domestic and community involvement. One of the "Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty"—"I griev'd for Buonaparte, with a vain"—contends:

'Tis not in battles that from youth we train
The Governor who must be wise and good,
And temper with the sternness of the brain
Thoughts motherly, and meek as womanhood.
Wisdom doth live with children round her knees:
Books, leisure, perfect freedom, and the talk
Man holds with week-day man in the hourly walk
Of the mind's business: these are the degrees
By which true Sway doth mount; this is the stalk
True Power doth grow on; and her rights are these. (ll. 5-14)

Unlike the power of Napoleon and ancient hero-types, "True Power" is characterized by morality, wisdom, meekness, and the motherly; it does not stand apart or aloof, but stems from involvement with others, the domestic, and the everyday. It could reside in such ideal figures as the "Happy Warrior" and The Excursion's Oswald, but not in Wellington.

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82 The poem was composed between March 30, 1809 and December 10, 1810; it was first published in the 1815 collected poems (Ketcham 55).
83 Bainbridge argues that Wordsworth's grieving here is a result of his fallen hopes for France and Napoleon (72-73). The poem was probably composed May 21, 1802 and was first published in The Morning Post on September 16, 1802 (Curtis 157).
84 Bainbridge claims that the poem implicitly endorses Wordsworth's life as appropriate preparation for governorship (86-89). See the discussion of the poet-hero in Chapter Five.
Nelson, or Napoleon. The martial heroes of Wordsworth's time, especially Napoleon, fall short of the moral standards he held central to genuine heroism and thus constitute a threat to his nation and the world.\textsuperscript{85}

Napoleon epitomized what Wordsworth, as well as Coleridge, and Southey, recognized as the dangers of the martial hero: such a figure could wage vain wars and pursue despotic power. We have seen that Wordsworth expressed some caution in his celebrations of British martial heroism, and when we consider the extraordinary degree to which Napoleon performed the part of the conqueror-hero, it seems safe to assume that his presence contributed to that caution. As the dominant martial figure of his time, Napoleon bought to bear on contemporary events the will to power of Milton's Satan; we should not be surprised that Wordsworth, as well as Southey and Coleridge, sought to counter the idea that he was heroic in so doing.

**Containing the Hero**

Notably, Wordsworth did not counter Napoleon's ascendancy by celebrating a British martial hero as being Bonaparte's equal. Instead, as we have already begun to see, Wordsworth's portrayals of British martial heroism display a caution that, though partially concealed by the enthusiastic patriotism of such poems as "Inscription for a National Monument in Commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo" and the "Thanksgiving Ode," refuses to ascribe the power of Napoleon to a British warrior. Even after he comes to accept British soldiers and sailors as necessary checks to French aggression and preservers of British "liberty," Wordsworth does not celebrate their leaders as heroic; instead, his work regulates heroism, limiting and distancing the power of the individual hero.

\textsuperscript{85}The "Thanksgiving Ode" holds that the French themselves were happy to be released from Napoleon's power (ll. 199-204).
The poet's concern as to the parameters of heroism can be seen in a work begun shortly after Napoleon's first famous victory, at Lodi on May 10, 1796.® The Borderers has long been a center of controversy as to how and to what degree it constitutes an indictment of Godwinian rationalism,® which we know Wordsworth embraced but then rejected as a means of dealing with the political and personal disappointments he had experienced upon and after leaving France in 1792.® More relevant here, though, is the ultimately broader concern as to what type of heroism the drama's characters display and to what effect. Clearly, the lies, mistakes, and false assumptions evident throughout the play highlight the limits of rationalism, and clearly Rivers is villainous in his lago-like seduction of Mortimer.® But we need not definitively address the work's relationship to Godwinian thought in order to ascertain the core immorality of Rivers's willfully and surreptitiously serving as a catalyst to murder. Butler, for example, says of Wordsworth's characterization of Rivers: "It is an unfavourable portrait of the self-reliant modern individualist, in terms similar to those in which he was drawn by Burke, the great apologist for the counter-revolution" (65), and Geoffrey Hartman calls him both a "modern villain" and a "lucifer" figure, stating that he "is probably the first explicit proponent in literature of intellectual murder: of a murder planned by the intellect for an ostensibly intellectual result" (125).

®Robert Osborn argues that Wordsworth began work on the play in the latter part of 1796 (3). For a description of the significance of Lodi, see Blanning 145-46. Note that in describing the simultaneity of Napoleon's victory and Wordsworth's beginning to work on The Borderers, I am not arguing that the work is a response to Napoleon, whose Italian campaign of 1796-97 was perceived by many British oppositionists as a revolutionary campaign fought to liberate Italy from Austrian domination (Bainbridge 33). Osborn provides two reading texts of the drama, a manuscript version of 1797-99 and the first published version of 1842; I consider the first version, since it better represents Wordsworth's thinking during the period with which I am most concerned.

®®®For useful summaries of the criticism see Peiffer (18-19) and Liu (301-02).

®®For a thorough discussion of Wordsworth's relationship with Godwin and Godwinian thought, see Roe, especially 176-98.

®®®The names of these and other characters are changed in the later version of the drama, published in 1842. I consistently use the names from the early version, even when the critics I consider use the later names.
Butler and Hartman are right to emphasize Rivers's status as a modern character; he is a proponent of a post-Enlightenment reliance on rationality, and, as Hartman relates, he "betrays [Mortimer] for the specific purpose of planting in him an irremediable self-awareness" (125). But he also has characteristics of the ancient heroes described by Hegel, for he acts according to his own impulses without regard for the society that Mortimer's band is said to protect. This is the source of Rivers's immorality and that which connects him not only to ancient heroes and Milton's Satan, but also to heroic figures who come to prominence shortly after Rivers's conception: the Byronic hero and Napoleon. We learn in the drama's first scene that Rivers harbors resentment toward Mortimer because Mortimer had saved his life; Rivers does not cherish having to feel gratitude, an emotion that Wilfred contends is "a heavy burthen / To a proud Soul" (I.i.9-10). And we later learn of Rivers's history: how he too was tricked into committing murder, and how he eventually came to view that act as allowing him to transcend the limitations of society (IV.ii.150-57). Ultimately misanthropic, Rivers is like Manfred in his disdain for those who accept societal strictures (III.v.44-54) and like Milton's Satan in his desire to foist his illusory separate superiority on another.

Central to his success in influencing Mortimer is the drama's setting, the thirteenth-century borderlands of England and Scotland. Due to the political instability of that time and place, Mortimer and his band act as the arbiters of justice, a state of affairs that relegates to Mortimer a good deal of power. Liu is especially struck by

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90It is also, according to Barbara Peiffer, that which disqualifies him as a Godwinian character, for he abandons Godwin's emphasis on benevolence (18-22).
91See II.iii.220-22.
92Osborn also relates Rivers to Milton's Satan (29-30). See also Wordsworth's prose description of Rivers in the "Essay Prefaced to the Early Version" (pp. 62-68).
93Osborn notes: "The Borderers is set in the period of the barons' wars; the reference in II.iii.330-334 to Henry III's dissolution of the 'Barons' League' implies that the action takes place shortly after the Battle of Evesham, August 1265. This period provides an absence of established government. ." (17). Liu states that the drama is "[s]et in a land that owns, as Rivers says, 'no law but what each man makes for himself' (II.i.53), and that acknowledges only the 'immediate law / Flashed from the light of circumstances / Upon an independent intellect' (III.v.31-33) . ." (225).
Mortimer's role in the borderlands: "Mortimer . . . normally rules the Borders with an armory of condescension, ruthlessness, and contempt able to erect within no-man's-land an essential moral and social border" (271). Already invested with a high degree of self-directed power, Mortimer is susceptible to Rivers's program of self-will. And when he is separated from his band, Mortimer loses the influence of people like Wilfred, who had warned him to beware the man whom he had saved (I.i.1-15). While Mortimer ultimately does not murder Herbert in as direct a fashion as Rivers had expected--instead sending him out into the elements to allow nature to decide his fate but inadvertently forgetting to provide him with food and water— he foregoes his previous plan of having Herbert stand trial by the band. This bungled attempt to achieve justice stresses the dangers involved in an individual's seeking to achieve it outside the bounds of social regulation. Herbert wrongly dies, Mortimer becomes a Cain-like wanderer, and the band kills Rivers. Moreover, while Matilda and Herbert's was not an exemplary father-daughter relationship, she loses him as well as her beloved, Mortimer. Mortimer and Rivers's actions are thus devastating to a representative societal unit, the family, and Rivers's death and Mortimer's exile are emblematic of Wordsworth's resistance to would-be heroes who seek to operate above or otherwise outside of society--figures like Manfred, and like Napoleon, who transformed Revolutionary France into a despotic empire.

The setting of *The Borderers* typifies one Wordsworthian strategy for guarding his society against the potential dangers of a hero: he locates heroic figures outside of contemporary Britain. "Rob Roy's Grave" is something of an exception to this practice,

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94Reeve Parker reads this act as subconsciously deliberate (313).
95Robert's wrongful imprisonment further shows the difficulty of thus attempting to achieve justice; he too was presumed guilty (IV.iii.11-15).
96For a reading of the drama based on their relationship, see Parker.
97See Liu's sixth chapter, "The Tragedy of the Family: *The Borderers,*" for discussion of contemporary attitudes toward the nuclear family and how they figure into the drama.
for it focuses on a near contemporary; but, significantly, it ultimately undermines that figure's heroism. An anomalous Wordsworthian poem in that it advocates the very type of heroism that the poet condemns in Napoleon, it does so only to express desire for British triumph over Napoleonic ascendancy. Wordworth describes Robert MacGregor, or Rob Roy, as a "Hero brave" (l. 8), saying of him in the work's second stanza:

Heaven gave Rob Roy a dauntless heart,
And wondrous length and strength of arm:
Nor craved he more to quell his Foes,
Or keep his Friends from harm. (9-12)

He is both powerful and connected to his community, but his philosophy toward justice plainly runs counter to Wordsworth's conception of virtuous heroism. Rob Roy endorses "the good old Rule" (37) that he has seen exhibited in nature: "That they should take who have the power, / And they should keep who can" (39-40). He claims that this code prevents cruelty by the strong and maintains orderly social hierarchies (41-48), and he feels it ultimately ascribes power to God:

"All Kinds, and Creatures, stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit:
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit." (49-52)

This association of divine will with human strength or wit stands in contrast to Wordsworth's assertion in the "Thanksgiving Ode" that virtue is necessary for obtaining God's favor, and the "good old Rule" conflicts with his insistence in the Convention of Cintra that morality is central to military success. Instead, the rule is of a kind with the "abominable doctrine" that Wordsworth ascribes to Napoleon in that tract: "power is the measure of right" (265-66). Notably, the sentiments of the "Thanksgiving Ode" and the

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98 The dates for Robert MacGregor, or Rob Roy, are 1671-1734.
99 Curtis notes that it was composed "probably between early September 1805 and February 21, 1806." It was first published in the 1815 Poems (179).
Convention of Cintra are expressed in Wordsworth's voice, but "the good old Rule" is spoken by MacGregor; and while this is Wordsworth's version of the Scottish hero, it is clear that the poet does not want the chieftain's thoughts confused with his own.

Immediately following the stanza describing Rob Roy's "length and strength of arm" are these lines:

Yet was Rob Roy as wise as brave;  
Forgive me if the phrase be strong;--  
A Poet worthy of Rob Roy  
Must scorn a timid song.

Say, then, that he was wise as brave,  
As wise in thought as bold in deed:  
For in the principles of things  
He sought his moral creed. (13-20, his emph.)

Emphasizing MacGregor's otherness by italicizing "He," Wordsworth exhibits for readers his need to convince himself of the chieftain's wisdom, which he contends would have made Rob Roy, in effect, Napoleonic:

And to his Sword [MacGregor] would have said,  
"Do Thou my sovereign will enact  
From land to land through half the earth!  
Judge thou of law and fact!" (77-80)

Ultimately asserting that Rob Roy exhibits "some wild thoughts" (101), Wordsworth nevertheless contends that the Scotsman "Hadst this to boast of; [he] didst love / The liberty of Man" (103-04, his emph.). Because he loved liberty and because he served the oppressed (109-112), Rob Roy would have fought against Napoleon, and might have been his match: "France would have had her present Boast; / And we our brave Rob Roy!" (95-96). As soon as he compares these two figures, though, Wordsworth asserts it is an insult to MacGregor: "Oh! say not so; compare them not; / I would not wrong thee, Champion brave!" (97-98). Wordsworth rejects the comparison, but that does not annul its validity. Though he helps the oppressed, Rob Roy advocates the primacy of
raw power, a stance with profound implications in 1805-06. If, as according to "the good
old Rule," power alone signifies divine favor, then Napoleon's successes would have
made him an agent of God. It comes as no surprise, then, that Wordsworth was careful
not to describe contemporary British soldiers as heroic adherents to "the good old Rule."

"Rob Roy's Grave" exhibits the difficult nature of Wordsworth's political and
rhetorical stance: he recognized a need for staunch opposition to Napoleon, but he was
wary of advocating a British hero with Napoleonic powers. His corpus indicates that
part of his solution was, as we have seen, to attribute heroism to groups, not individuals;
another approach he exhibits is to celebrate heroes of the past and of other nations.
These strategies allowed for the celebration of martial heroism, including British martial
heroism, but without the danger of endorsing a potentially immoral, or even destructive,
hero in contemporary Britain.100

Among the non-British contemporary warriors whom Wordsworth presents as
heroic is the Tyrolean Andreas Hofer, who, as Carl Ketcham notes:

led the peasants of the Tyrol against the French and their ally, Bavaria, in
1809, and achieved a series of victories that were negated when Austria
ceded the Tyrol to Bavaria in October. The peasants were finally
outnumbered and defeated; Hofer, who hid in the mountains, was
betrayed by a neighbor in January 1810 and taken to Mantua, where he
was shot on Napoleon's orders on February 20. (502)

It is fair to say that Wordsworth's sonnet honoring Hofer,101 composed in the same month
that Austria ceded the Tyrol (Ketcham 59), is enthusiastically heroic:

Of mortal Parents is the Hero born
By whom the undaunted Tyrolese are led?
Or is it Tell's great Spirit, from the dead
Returned to animate an age forlorn?
He comes like Phoebus through the gates of morn

100 For Wordsworth's heroic treatment of another figure from the British past, see "[Composed at Cora
Linn, in Sight of Wallace's Tower]." 101 "Hoffer" was written October 10, 1809 and first published in The Friend on October 26 of that year
(Ketcham 59).
When dreary darkness is discomfited:
Yet mark his modest state!—upon his head,
That simple crest—a heron's plume—is worn.
O Liberty! they stagger at the shock;
The Murderers are aghast; they strive to flee
And half their Host if buried:—rock on rock
Descends:—beneath this godlike Warrior, see!
Hills, Torrents, Woods, embodied to bemock
The Tyrant and confound his cruelty.

Not only does Wordsworth celebrate "this godlike Warrior," he also associates him with Tell and the populist Alpine resistance as presented in Descriptive Sketches.

Wordsworth is here willing to celebrate a martial hero and allude to republicanism, but does so in a work not focused on Britain. And even at this geographical remove he insists on the morality of Hofer's cause, stating in a sonnet titled "On the Final Subjection of the Tyrolese": 102

It was a moral end for which they fought;
Else how, when mighty Thrones were put to shame,
Could they, poor Shepherds, have preserved an aim,
A resolution, or enlivening thought? (ll. 1-4, his emph.)

Wordsworth similarly celebrates the Swedish King Gustavus IV, who was crowned in 1792 at age fourteen and "adamantly resisted Napoleon until 1809, when Gustavus was dethroned" (Curtis 413). Wordsworth presents Gustavus as a foil to Napoleon's immorality; the sonnet "Call not the royal Swede unfortunate" is a companion-piece to the sonnet describing Napoleon's ruthlessness, "Look now on that Adventurer who hath paid" (Ketcham 501). Written shortly after Gustavus was dethroned, 103 "Call not the royal Swede unfortunate" says of him: "wherever virtue is

102Ketcham notes that this poem was composed "probably after mid-November 1809, by about December 16, 1809" (60).

103Ketcham notes that Gustavus was "deposed by a group of army officers" because he had obviously become insane. Wordsworth responded to these events in a letter of February 1816: "In verse I celebrated the King of Sweden—he proved I believe a Madman—what matters that—he stood forth at that time as the only Royal Advocate of the only truths by which, if judiciously applied, Europe could be delivered from Bondage. I seized on him as an outstanding object in which to embody certain principles.
revered, / He sits a more exalted Potentate, / Throned in the hearts of men” (II. 7-9). And in an earlier sonnet, written before the king’s fall from power, Wordsworth describes both Gustavus’s virtue and his heroic status:

the illustrious Swede hath done
    The thing which ought to be: He stands above
All consequences: work he hath begun
Of fortitude, and piety, and love,
    Which all his glorious Ancestors approve:
The Heroes bless him, him their rightful Son.
(“The King of Sweden” ll. 9-14, his emph.)

Unlike the tyrant that he is opposing, Gustavus is a virtuous hero; he stands above consequences because he does not stand outside of society. Blending fortitude with piety and love, he advances a righteous cause, and endorsed by his ancestors, he is a true hero. Wordsworth also ascribes genuine heroism to the Prussian Ferdinand von Schill and the Spaniard Jose de Palafox y Melzi, both of whom resisted Napoleon. Wordsworth consistently presents opposing Bonaparte as heroic but only describes individual heroic resisters as existing outside of contemporary Britain.

Wordsworth’s disinclination to celebrate contemporary British warriors as heroic is exemplified in his treatment in Benjamin the Waggoner of the sailor who had served with Nelson at the Battle of the Nile. Along with his wife and child, the sailor is picked up by Benjamin in a storm, and the veteran persuades the wagonner, who is trying to avoid repeating previous irresponsible behavior, to stop at the Cherry Tree tavern. Their subsequent rowdiness results in Benjamin’s late return and the loss of his job.

of action which human nature has thousands of times proved herself capable of being governed by” (500-01).

104 “The King of Sweden” is one of the “Sonnets Dedicated to Liberty” and was probably composed between late 1804 and February 1807 (Curtis 159).

105 See “Brave Schill! by death delivered, take thy flight” and “1810 [Ah! where is Palafox? Nor tongue nor pen].”

106 Paul Betz presents two reading texts of the poem, one based on an 1806 manuscript and the other relying on the first published edition of 1819; because it represents Wordsworth’s vision during the war years, I cite the first of these.
Citing its parody of "certain patterns in Paradise Lost and its source in Genesis, and in classical tragedy and epic," Paul Betz asserts that the poem is Wordsworth's most sustained effort in the mock-heroic vein (4), and Williams moves from that assumption to contend that the piece shows Wordsworth's continued opposition to the British conflict with France. He sees the sailor as a dissolute tempter who epitomizes the immorality of British opposition: "It mattered not if the British Government's army defeated the French, here would be no lasting guarantee of liberty, for the war was still being waged for the basest material motives, as had been the case in America where, against all odds, the British were defeated" (Wordsworth 170).\textsuperscript{107} In making this argument, though, he ignores the fact that by 1806, when Wordsworth began to work on the piece in earnest (Betz 5), the poet had already volunteered his services to the British military, written call-to-arms poetry in support of the British war effort, published one such poem in The Courier,\textsuperscript{108} and would publish several more the following year in Poems, in Two Volumes. While, as the Convention of Cintra makes clear, Wordsworth considered elements of the British war policy immoral, his attitude toward British involvement against France was not then as wholly negative as Williams asserts. As a result, we need to reconsider his assertions regarding the sailor's significance.

That Wordsworth had grown more tolerant toward Britain's involvement against France can be seen in the very existence of the sailor and his family. While he is lame and they are not prospering, and while his willingness to carouse with Benjamin while his wife and child sleep in the wagon indicates that theirs is not a model family, they are alive and together. This is a subtle but important change from the poetry of the previous decade and is indicative of Wordsworth's reduced opposition to the war; he no longer presents British military efforts as wholly destructive to their participants. Clearly,

\textsuperscript{107}For the sailor as a tempter see 171.
\textsuperscript{108}"Anticipation. October, 1803" appeared in The Courier on October 28, 1803 (Curtis 173).
though, the sailor does not fit the ideal of the "happy warrior." Indeed, his flaws are further evidence as to Wordsworth's need to focus on collective heroism in his call-to-arms poetry in order to ignore the individual inadequacies of the British troops. And the sailor's possession of a miniature model of Nelson's flagship, the Vanguard, works to counter excessive valorization of that British hero. The model is

    a Ship of lusty size,
    A Vessel following at his heels
    Upon a frame that goes by wheels,
    A gallant stately Man of War
    Sliding on a sliding car . . . . (ll. 373-77)

It is an impressive model, capable of gaining the attention of the tavern crowd (404-07), but it literally shrinks the scene of Nelson's glory:

    "This," cries the Sailor, "a first rate is;
    Stand back and you shall see her gratis:
    This was the Flag Ship at the Nile,
    The Vanguard; you may smirk and smile,
    But, pretty Maid! if you look near
    You'll find you've much in little here!
    A nobler Ship did never swim,
    And you shall have her in full trim;
    I'll set, my Friends, to do you honour,
    Set every inch of sail upon her."
    So said, so done, and masts, sails, yards
    He names them all and interlards
    His speech, with uncouth terms of art,
    Accomplish'd in the Showman's part,
    And then as from a sudden check,
    Cries out, "'tis there the Quarter deck
    On which brave Admiral Nelson stood--
    A sight that would have done you good.
    One eye he had as bright as ten
    Burnt like a fire among his men.
    Here lay the French and thus came we." (382-402)

The model reduces the Vanguard to tavern entertainment, and the sailor, in promoting the model's assets, becomes a huckster. Williams speaks of the "virtual beatification" of
Nelson that followed his death and argues that the presence of the ship is evidence of Wordsworth's opposition to the war effort that Nelson epitomized: "The argument was not, as it had been over the colonies and in the early 1790s—that war was 'unnatural,' but that the war, Nelson's war, was being waged out of an unhealthy lust for power; men were going to their deaths unworthily" (Wordsworth 172). While I agree that the sailor and his ship do in part challenge the morality of Britain's approach to the Napoleonic wars, I contend that instead of constituting outright opposition to British war efforts they qualify the support for British involvement that Wordsworth had already voiced elsewhere and exemplify the poet's desire to check the valorization of men like Nelson. The sailor reminds readers of both the ordinary men on whom Nelson depended and the Admiral's own domestic problems, and the model ship literally reduces Nelson's heroic stature and, by extension, the dimensions of the martial hero. By 1806 Wordsworth could support British war with France, but not without recognizing its dangers, one of which was the valorization of morally suspect British heroes.

Hybrid Heroes

Wordsworth's insistence on the centrality of morality to heroism is further evident in his creation of hybrid heroes: warrior figures who not only transcend the moral limitations of Nelson, Wellington, and Napoleon, but also, like Southey's non-aiming soldier, devote themselves to the pursuit and preservation of moral truth. The ideal "Happy Warrior" and The Excursion's Oswald are figures of this type, and they are

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109 Williams notes that Theresa Kelley also has discussed the work's diminishment of the hero: "both versions minimize the value of the heroic sublime by having a drunken sailor and waggoner claim an heroic stature that neither exhibits" (Wordsworth 177). The idea that the poem reduces the dimensions of heroism is in keeping with the assertion in The New Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics that mock-heroic forms are generally used for "deflationary purposes" (Falk and Brogan 791).
joined in Wordsworthian verse by Francis Norton of *The White Doe of Rylstone* and, more famously, by the French revolutionary Michel Beaupuy.

*The White Doe* is centered on the 1569 Northern Insurrection, in which the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland led an uprising against Elizabeth that sought "to restore the ancient Religion, to get the succession of the crown firmly settled, and to prevent the destruction of the ancient nobility . . ." (151). While their forces enjoyed some early success, entering Durham where "they tore the Bible . . . and caused mass to be said there" (151), English forces soon dispelled them with minimal bloodshed but then "put vast numbers to death by martial law, without any regular trial" (152). An "ancient gentleman," Richard Norton, carried the insurgents' common banner, which featured the cross and the five wounds of Christ, and he and his sons are noted for their valorous actions in conflicts that formed part of this insurrection (151). Wordsworth's poem focuses on the Nortons, though not primarily on those who opposed the crown. Instead, and in keeping with Wordsworth's growing loyalist leanings, it valorizes the Norton daughter, Emily, and the eldest son, Francis, both of whom oppose their family's involvement in the insurrection.112

The second of two poems in the work's "Advertisement" focuses on Emily Norton, implicitly comparing her with Spenser's Una and asserting that the "tragic story . . . speaks / Of female patience winning firm repose" ("In trellis'd shed with clustering roses gay" ll. 49-50). Wordsworth calls her the poem's "heroine" (Fenwick Notes 33),

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110 The work's full title is *The White Doe of Rylstone: or the Fate of the Nortons. A Poem* (Dugas 75). Kristine Dugas relates that Wordsworth began work on the poem in 1807 and delivered it to be printed in 1808, but, as a result of reactions to the piece at private readings, did not publish it until 1815 (ix). In typical Wordsworthian fashion, he revised it significantly (see Dugas 31-56).

111 The historical information regarding these events is taken from Wordsworth's notes to the poem (Dugas 150-52). Dugas relates that the material in Wordsworth's note describing the Insurrection was "[t]aken verbatim from Bishop Percy's notes, in *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*" and that "Wordsworth's acknowledgment of the borrowing was never printed" (150).

112 The local tradition and ballad on which Wordsworth based the work make no mention of a Norton daughter, though the ballad does describe a son named Francis who refuses to join the fight (see Wordsworth' note 150-56).
and she is the work's central character. She has the most meaningful relationship with the titular white doe,113 and the poem's seventh, and final, canto is devoted to describing the pious endurance that characterizes her life after the death of her father and brothers. The poem presents her as a virtuous figure whose "female patience" preserves the purity of her faith and the dignity of the Norton name. Francis, though, is more relevant to our concerns, for he is directly involved with the poem's presentation of martial activity.

Evan Radcliffe notes while arguing that the poem endorses "total passivity and withdrawal from the world" (159) that "Emily turns out to be a special case: as a woman she has in the poem no martial role, no clear avenue for action. Her choice does not present itself as a choice between two equally troublesome alternatives; if she chooses passivity she is not being disloyal or shirking any responsibility" (176).114 Francis, on the other hand, is expected to fight, and in his decision not to join the revolt against the British nation-state he exhibits the Wordsworthian ideal of virtuous heroism.

Francis clearly shares Emily's piety more fully than his father or any of his eight brothers do.115 This is evident when he speaks of their relationship and similarities while counseling Emily to forego hope that the conflict will somehow have a positive result and instead to steel herself for the certain destruction of her family:

"thou, my Sister, doomed to be
The last leaf which by heaven's decree
Must hang upon a blasted tree;
If not in vain we have breathed the breath
Together of a purer faith--
If hand in hand we have been led
And thou, (O happy thought this day!)
Not seldom foremost in the way--

113For the doe as Emily's companion see ll. 339-46 and 1658-1769. Barbara Gates insists that the doe is not linked with Emily alone, but that it "is a symbol variable in meaning according to the minds of its several perceivers, and Wordsworth used it as a touchstone by which to measure and to some extent reveal all of his characters" (237).
114Spiegelman similarly argues that Emily does not face the choice that Francis does (169).
115Brian Cosgrove speaks of their "spiritual kinship" (36).
If on one thought our minds have fed,
And we have in one meaning read--
If, when at home our private weal
Hath suffered from the shock of zeal,
Together have we learned to prize
Forebearance, and self-sacrifice--
If we like combatants have fared,
And for this issue been prepared--
If thou art beautiful, and youth
And thought endue thee with all truth--
Be strong;--be worthy of the grace
Of God, and fill thy destined place:
A soul, by force of sorrows high,
Uplifted to the purest sky
Of undisturbed humanity!" (570-92)

He speaks of himself and his sister as though they lead a separate, superior existence from that of their family, as though they have endured in spite of knowing that their less enlightened brethren ultimately would lead the family to destruction. The primary source of their distinction seems to be their Protestantism, which Emily remembers learning from her mother, since long dead:

an Image faint--
And yet not faint--a presence bright
Returns to her;--'tis that bless'd Saint
Who with mild looks and language mild
Instructed here her darling Child,
While yet a prattler on the knee,
To worship in simplicity
The invisible God, and take for guide
The faith reformed and purified. (1036-44)

Their sense of separateness, though, prevents neither of them from being devoted to their larger family; despite their opposition to the insurrection, Emily obeys her father's insistence that she sew the banner that he carries into battle, and Francis ultimately agrees to convey it to Bolton Priory after his brothers and father are captured.

Francis reveals his devotion to Protestantism, as well as to both his family and the crown, when he confronts his father regarding his decision to join the insurrection:
"O Father! rise not in this fray—
The hairs are white upon your head;
Dear Father, hear me when I say
It is for you too late a day!
Bethink you of your own good name;
A just and gracious queen have we,
A pure religion, and the claim,
Of peace on our humanity.
Tis meet that I endure your scorn.—
I am your son, your eldest born;
But not for lordship or for land,
My Father, do I clasp your knees—
The Banner touch not, stay your hand.—
This multitude of men disband,
And live at home in blissful ease;
For these my brethren's sake, for me;
And, most of all, for Emily!" (381-98)

Francis is a conscientious objector, opposed to both the motives for conflict and its likely effect on his family, especially his sister. The only one of his father's nine sons not to join him in the uprising, Francis instead ventures out unarmed, following the armies at a distance and seizing the opportunity of a retreat to renew his attempts at preserving the family. He is like the Excursion's Oswald in his domestic devotion and in being associated with, though not directly involved in, battle. It is not that he fears armed conflict, but that, in this case, his awareness of its motives and likely results obligates him to refuse participating in it. His commitment to truth—a domestically involved, royalist, Protestant truth—sends him out unarmed, where he must, as Spiegelman states, "unite action with composure, strength with restraint" (169).

Ultimately, though, he must defend himself, and his death in so doing epitomizes the cruel nature of immoral war and further distinguishes him from its participants.

Confronted with hostile English troops as he nears fulfilling the promise he had made to his father of returning to Bolton Priory the banner that Emily had sewn, and the Northern forces had adopted, Francis snatches a soldier's spear and stands "In self-defense with a Warrior's brow" (1496). As he advances to ward off his first attacker, though, he is
killed from behind, and his body is "left on the ground where it lay" (1515). Francis is courageous enough to defend his life (like the soldiers at Waterloo he "slight[s] not life--to God and nature true"116), but he is quickly vulnerable to surreptitious attack and suffers a "treacherous wound" (1508). His heightened sense of morality seems to have made him a naive, and therefore quickly dead, soldier, but his English attacker, who lacks the moral sensibility of Southey's virtuous soldier, acts more as a murderer than a combatant. Francis's virtuous heroism leads him to behave in ways that distinguish him from both the misdirected insurgents and the brutal royal soldiers. His heroism is not based solely on martial criteria, which, as the English response to the actual insurgency shows, could lead to cruelty; instead, he exhibits a virtuous approach to combat that reflects Wordsworth's wariness regarding martial heroes and his willingness to support British martial prowess, but not its abuse.

Despite Francis's first opposing and then very quickly dying in battle, he displays power and is praised for his efforts. He exhibits his power when he moves to obtain the banner that "cruel Sussex" had ordered to be paraded in front of the Norton prisoners as they marched to their execution (1338-45):

The unhappy Banner Francis saw,  
And, with a look of calm command  
Inspiring universal awe,  
He took it from a soldier's hand;  
And all the People that were round  
Confirmed the deed in peace profound. (1346-51)

Francis's integrity enables him to foil Sussex's plan without so much as a struggle.117

And the heroic nature of his approach to the conflict is established by a longtime friend

116"Inscription for a Monument in Commemoration of the Battle of Waterloo" (l. 5).
117Radcliffe sees a Godwinian connection here: "(The incident recalls a story Godwin tells in Political Justice to show that truth has a greater power than physical force: 'Marius said, with a stern look, and a commanding countenance, to the soldier, that was sent down to his dungeon to assassinate him, 'Wretch, have you the temerity to kill Marius!' and with these few words drove him to flight')" (166).
of his father's, who, unaware that Francis was being pursued by English troops, says to
Emily when relating the fate of her family:

"Your noble Brother hath been spared,
To take his life they have not dared.
On him and on his high endeavour
The light of praise shall shine for ever [sic]!
Nor did he (such heaven's will) in vain
His solitary course maintain;
Not vainly struggled in the might
Of duty seeing with clear sight;
He was their comfort to the last,
Their joy till every pang was past." (1228-37)

Francis's mostly unarmed role in the struggle reveals a simultaneous devotion to his
family and state that both conflicting sides lack: the insurgents are not loyal to England,
and the English soldiers, in their cruelty, ignore the bonds of family. "[S]eeing with
clear sight," he has the requisite morality of a genuine hero, a point echoed in the mind of
his father's friend, who considers Francis to be as "wise as brave" (1114). This phrasing
recalls that of "Rob Roy's Grave," but the tone here is sincere. We remember that in the
earlier poem the phrase focuses attention on Roy's problematic world view due to the
uncertainty with which the poet declares Roy's wisdom. Here, though, the assertion is
confidently expressed and is consistent with the poet's morality. Radcliffe notes that the
"Stoic self-reliance" evident in Francis's advice to Emily--to accept and endure the events
of the Insurrection without so much as hoping for a positive outcome--is criticized by her
in the poem's 1836 edition, where she calls it "'that most lamentable snare, / The self-
reliance of despair'" (167). I agree with his assertion that Francis does not receive as full
of a poetic endorsement as Emily, but I contend that he too exemplifies the spirit of the
following comments Wordsworth makes in the Fenwick Notes:

Everything that is attempted by the principal personages in 'the White
Doe' fails, so far as its object is external and substantial. So far as it is
moral and spiritual it succeeds. . . . How insignificant a thing . . . does
personal prowess appear compared with the fortitude of patience & heroic martyrdom, in other words with struggles for the sake of principle, in preference to victory gloried in for its own sake. (33)

Emily best exemplifies "the fortitude of patience and heroic martyrdom," but Francis's approach to the conflict that arose around him shows him to have the qualities of a virtuous warrior.

Another virtuous heroic figure is Michel Beaupuy, the French aristocrat-turned-revolutionary whom Wordsworth knew in Blois in 1792. Like Francis, he is portrayed by Wordsworth as dying in conflict with his countrymen, but he too is primarily described not in terms of his courage but of his morality. Roe provides a brief and useful description of his upbringing and martial career:

Michel-Amaud Bacharetie de Beaupuy was born in 1755, and was therefore 37 when Wordsworth met him in 1792. His family belonged among the aristocracy of Périgord, he had enjoyed a privileged childhood, and had been educated in the liberal tradition of the French enlightenment: the family apparently possessed "an immense library" dominated by the Encyclopédie. Following the example of four elder brothers, Beaupuy entered the army in 1771, transferring two years later to the 32nd Bassigny regiment. Promotion was slow and when garrisoned at Blois in 1791 he had only reached the rank of captain. After this his bravery and revolutionary zeal—and the vacancies left by emigrating officers—contributed to his swift rise to Général in January 1795. (55)

At the start of the Revolution Beaupuy criticized the court, but without stating that the monarchy should be abolished; by the time of his death, though, he had become a republican (55-56). His obituary in the Moniteur, written, Roe suggests, under the mistaken assumption that he would have been satisfied with the limited monarchy established in France in 1791, describes Beaupuy in glowing terms, calling him "'l'esprit religieux de la Révolution" and "'le Nestor et l'Achille de notre armée'" (55-56). Like the obituary, Wordsworth treats the French officer as a hero, but focuses on him more as a Nestor-figure than as an Achilles, emphasizing his embodiment of the spirit of the Revolution more than his role as a military officer. Indeed, despite presenting Beaupuy's
death as clearly meeting the heroic standard of dying for a noble cause. Wordsworth, in Book IX of *The Prelude*, only briefly and prosaically describes it:

He perish'd fighting in supreme command
Upon the Borders of the unhappy Loire
For Liberty against deluded Men,
His Fellow-countrymen. . . . (ll. 431-34)

For Wordsworth, Beaupuy's value lay not in his dying in battle--vast numbers of people could and did do that--but in his insights regarding and approach toward the Revolution. Beaupuy influenced Wordsworth more as a teacher than as a warrior.

While it seems safe to assume, based on the obituary's other comments, that the *Moniteur* did not seek to invoke negative connotations by comparing Beaupuy to Achilles, Wordsworth leaves no doubt that his friend did not act according to the egocentric principles of that ancient hero. Opposed to the renowned hubris of Achilles is Beaupuy's meekness:

A meeker Man
Than this lived never, or a more benign,
Meek though enthusiastic to the height
Of highest expectations. Injuries
Made him more gracious, and his nature then
Did breathe its sweetness out most sensibly
As aromatic flowers on alpine turf
When foot hath crush'd them. (298-305)

Implicit in the assertion that "Injuries / Made him more gracious" is a rebuttal to Achilles's response to Agamemnon's insistence that he surrender Briseis to appease the gods: Beaupuy would not have shared the devastating indignation that led Achilles to leave the field of battle and thus weaken the Greek forces. Beaupuy fought not for his own honor, but in the interests of others; his motives were far less self-involved than those of the ancient warrior.

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118 As I discuss below, Wordsworth misrepresents the nature of Beaupuy's death.
Indeed, Beaupuy's primary commitment was to social justice. Despite his aristocratic roots, he was devoted to the poor and to the Revolution:

By birth he rank'd
With the most noble, but unto the poor
Among mankind he was in service bound
As by some tie invisible, oaths profess'd
To a religious Order. Man he lov'd
As Man; and to the mean and the obscure
And all the homely in their homely works
Transferr'd a courtesy which had no air
Of condescension; but did rather seem
A passion and a gallantry. . . . (309-18)

He describes his motives for supporting the Revolution in the famous statement he makes to Wordsworth when they

chanced
One day to meet a hunger-bitten Girl
Who crept along, fitting her languid self
Unto a Heifer's motion, by a cord
Tied to her arm, and picking thus from the lane
Its sustenance, while the Girl with her two hands
Was busy knitting, in a heartless mood
Of solitude. . . . (511-18)

At this sight Beaupuy says to Wordsworth: "'Tis against that / Which we are fighting'" (518-19). An embodiment of the morality of the early Revolution, Beaupuy ranks with "the worthiest of Antiquity" (426-27), especially the philosophers. Notably, Wordsworth does not compare Beaupuy with Achilles, or even Nestor, but with Dion, Eudemus, and Timonides (415-24); Beaupuy is not simply at war, but, like them, fights a "philosophic war / Led by philosophers" (423-24),¹¹⁹ and he inspires Wordsworth to believe

Devoutly that a spirit was abroad
Which could not be withstood, that poverty,

¹¹⁹Mark L. Reed notes that "Dion (408-353 B.C.), a disciple of Plato, deposed the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius the Younger," and that "Eudemus and Timonides were fellow philosophers and companions in Dion's expedition against Dionysius the Younger . . . . which embarked from the Aegean island of Zacynthus (Zante) in 357 B.C." (242 notes).
At least like [the "hunger-bitten" girl's], would in a little time
Be found no more, that we should see the earth
Unthwarted in her wish to recompense
The industrious and the lowly Child of Toil,
All institutes for ever [sic] blotted out
That legalized exclusion, empty pomp
Abolish'd, sensual state and cruel power
Whether by edict of the one or few,
And finally, as sum and crown of all,
Should see the People having a strong hand
In making their own Laws, whence better days
To all mankind. (521-34)

Significant differences characterize the two Wordsworthian visions of virtuous combatants that I have described. Francis Norton is an Elizabethan figure, and Beaupuy is the poet's contemporary; the former opposes an armed rebellion, and the latter leads one. They are similar, though, in that neither is a contemporary British hero, again suggesting Wordsworth's reluctance to promote such a figure, even one with a high degree of morality, and in that both are finally ideal figures. Francis inhabits a romance world where a white doe attends a human grave, and Wordsworth repeatedly associates Beaupuy with just such a fictional realm. He says that Beaupuy

thro' the events
Of that great change wander'd in perfect faith,
As through a Book, an old Romance or Tale
Of fairy, or some dream of actions wrought
Behind the summer clouds. (305-09)

And he relates that conversations he held with Beaupuy as they wandered the French countryside led him to slip in thought

And let remembrance steal to other times
When Hermits from their sheds and caves forth-stray'd
Walk'd by themselves, so met in shades like these,
And if a devious Traveller was heard
Approaching from a distance, as might chance,
With speed and echoes loud of trampling hoofs
From the hard floor reverberated, then
It was Angelica thundering through the woods
Upon her palfrey, or that gentler Maid
Erminia, fugitive as fair as She.
Sometimes I saw, methought, a pair of Knights
Joust underneath the trees, that, as in storm,
Did rock above their heads: anon the din
Of boisterous merriment and music's roar,
With sudden Proclamation! burst from haunt
Of Satyrs in some viewless glade, with dance
Rejoicing o'er a Female in the midst,
A mortal Beauty, their unhappy Thrall. . . . (447-64)

Wordsworth clearly associates Beaupuy with Romance and chivalry, and in so doing he reveals the ideal nature of his portrait. Even his account of Beaupuy's death, as Roe notes, is mistaken. While Beaupuy was "certainly involved" in the campaign to which Wordsworth attributes his death, "it is well known that he actually lived to fight another three years until killed on the eastern front at Emmendingen on 19 October 1796."

Beaupuy died in the service not of French equality but of French imperialism. A confusing report in the French Moniteur is a possible source for the poet's mistake, and Roe concludes: "If not factually correct Wordsworth's account of Beaupuy's death is imaginatively true to his memory of his patriot friend, a memorial to their months together at Blois in 1792 rather than the soldier of French imperialism Beaupuy later became" ("Wordsworth's Account"). Wordsworth presents Beaupuy and Francis as heroes of truth, but the actual details of the former's death indicate that such enlightened combatants cannot be found in reality.

Wordsworth recognizes such a state of affairs in the Convention of Cintra:

worldly distinctions and offices of command do not lie in the path—nor are they any part of the appropriate retinue—of Philosophy and Virtue. Nothing, but a strong spirit of love, can counteract the consciousness of pre-eminence which ever attends pre-eminent intellectual power with correspondent attainments: and this spirit of love is best encouraged by humility and simplicity in mind, manners, and conduct of life; virtues, to which wisdom leads. But,—though these be virtues in a Man, a Citizen, or a Sage,—they cannot be recommended to the especial culture of the

120Roe notes connections between Beaupuy and Chaucer's Knight (57-58).
Political or Military Functionary; and still less of the Civil Magistrate. Him, in the exercise of his functions, it will often become to carry himself highly and with state; in order that evil may be suppressed, and authority respected by those who have not understanding. (307)

Wordsworth held that virtuous, philosophical warriors are necessarily ideal figures because the practice of virtue and the pursuit of philosophy are incongruent with civic and martial leadership; persons in these positions cannot in reality behave in accordance with the pattern of virtuous heroism displayed by Francis Norton and Beaupuy. It is not surprising, then, that Wordsworth found Wellington and Nelson morally lacking and that he was cautious in his embrace of the British martial hero.

**War and the Poet's Mission**

During the course of Britain's wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, Wordsworth, as I have shown, revealed a guarded ambivalence toward the British martial hero. While he certainly came to feel a need for Britain to protect itself from the threat of Napoleonic aggression, he questioned the morality of the way Britain exercised its will on the Continent and showed an aversion to celebrating as heroic any one contemporary British warrior. Nelson and Wellington made clear to him the potential shortfalls of his nation's military heroes, and Napoleon provided a frightening example of the dangers that a martial hero could present to a nation and to the world. But wartime developments caused the poet to adopt the responsibility of stimulating martial enthusiasm in his countrymen, an element of his poetic project that is fundamental in ways that have not yet been fully recognized.

Wordsworth was clear in his belief that poetry could help amend the socio-political ills he saw plaguing Britain. He was deeply disturbed regarding developments involving France and highly concerned with socio-economic, as well as philosophic and psychological, trends in Britain. While his continued interest in martial and political developments—consider especially his occasional verse and the **Convention of Cintra**—
shows that he did not abandon conventionally political concerns and efforts, he also sought to amend with his poetry the less tangible causes of the social ills that he witnessed. The "Preface" to the 1800 Lyrical Ballads features a statement describing a primary effect Wordsworth hoped his verse would have on contemporary readers—to make them better people through heightening their sensibility:

the human mind is capable of excitement without the application of gross and violent stimulants; and he must have a very faint perception of its beauty and dignity who does not know this, and who does not further know that one being is elevated above another in proportion as he possesses this capability.  

It has therefore appeared to me that to endeavour to produce or enlarge this capability is one of the best services in which, in any period, a Writer can be engaged; but this service, excellent at all times, is especially so at the present day. For a multitude of causes unknown to former times are now acting with a combined force to blunt the discriminating powers of the mind, and unfitting it for all voluntary exertion to reduce it to a state of almost savage torpor. The most effective of these causes are the great national events which are daily taking place, and the increasing accumulation of men in cities, where the uniformity of their occupations produces a craving for extraordinary incident which the rapid communication of intelligence hourly gratifies.

(128)

Conditions had reduced the people to a "torpor" from which Wordsworth hoped his writing could awake them. He repeats this goal more succinctly in the 1815 "Essay, Supplementary to the Preface," where he asserts that "Of genius, in the fine arts, the only infallible sign is the widening the sphere of human sensibility, for the delight, honour, and benefit of human nature" (82), a goal he repeats and attributes to his own volume of verse a few paragraphs later. Speaking of himself in the third person, he assures his readers

that, if he were not persuaded that the contents of these Volumes, and the Work to which they are subsidiary, evince something of the 'Vision and

121Coleridge makes a similar point, though with a different criterion, in his Treatise on Logic, where he states: "In the different degrees in which this power [of abstraction] is developed, the superiority of man over man largely consists" (quoted in Riede 212).
If he did not believe his work capable of attaining the goal of bettering humankind, he would be obligated to destroy it.

Significantly, the Convention of Cintra shows that, despite Wordsworth's penchant for transcendental rhetoric and a transnational scope when discussing his poetic project, he recognized a specifically martial function for his efforts to heighten his readers' sensibility. Near this piece's end he asserts the impossibility of wholly transcending one's humanity:

The higher mode of being does not exclude, but necessarily includes, the sentient; the sentient, the animal; and the animal, the vital—to the lowest degrees. Wisdom is the hidden root which thrusts forth the stalk of prudence; and these uniting feed and uphold 'the bright consummate flower'—National Happiness—the end, the conspicuous crown, and ornament of the whole. (340-41)

Any work, even his own proposed philosophical master-work aimed at conjoining the real and the ideal, has political implications, and, notably, Wordsworth describes his broad aim of awakening human sensibility as connected to his more specific goal of encouraging "a martial spirit in the bosoms of his countrymen." While describing the negative effects that he saw the Industrial Revolution having on Europe, he asserts: "Imagination has been fading: Sensibility, which was formerly a generous nursling of rude Nature, has been chased from its ancient range in the wide domain of patriotism and religion with the weapons of derision by a shadow calling itself Good Sense . . ." (325). Sensibility, he avers, is rightly connected with state patriotism, and it follows that his

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122 Owen and Smyser note that this phrase is from The Excursion 1.79 (107).
123 Owen and Smyser note that this phrase is from Paradise Lost V.479-82 (406).
124 I discuss this work, The Recluse, in Chapter Five.
efforts to heighten sensibility in his primarily British readers would serve to heighten such patriotism in Britain as well.\(^{125}\)

This relationship between sensibility and patriotism is further evident in Wordsworth’s repetition of the imagery of torpor from the 1800 "Preface." While discussing "the burst and growth of power and virtue which may rise out of excessive national afflictions from tyranny and oppression," he states:

> Let the fire, which is never wholly to be extinguished, break out afresh; let but the human creature be roused; whether he have lain heedless and torpid in religious or civil slavery—have languished under a thraldom, domestic or foreign, or under both these alternately—or have drifted about a helpless member of a clan of disjointed and feeble barbarians; let him rise and act . . . . (294)

He here links arising from torpor with taking political action, and later in the piece he associates such rousing with martial service: "Talk not of the perishable nature of enthusiasm; and rise above a craving for perpetual manifestations of things. He is to be pitied whose eye can only be pierced by the light of a meridian sun, whose frame can only be warmed by the heat of midsummer. Let us hear no more of the little dependence to be had in war upon voluntary service" (320). Sensibility begets enthusiasm, which in turn begets volunteers. While he here continues to address Spanish and generally European concerns, Wordsworth is writing for a British audience, "carried forward by a

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\(^{125}\) That the patriotism he here speaks of is state patriotism is evident in that the previous paragraph associates patriotism with Spanish resistance to being conquered and invokes "the sword of Francis the First" (323-24); there is no indication that he here means it in the sense of those who associated patriotism with resistance to government oppression. Interestingly, in another assertion that connects The Convention of Cintra with the 1800 "Preface" to Lyrical Ballads, Wordsworth claims that peasants are more prone to patriotic sentiment because, among other things, they feel a closer connection to the soil (327-28). This recalls his assertion in the "Preface" that in "[I]low and rustic life . . . the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that situation our elementary feelings exist in a state of greater simplicity and consequently may be more accurately contemplated and more forcibly communicated; because the manners of rural life germinate from those elementary feelings; and from the necessary character of rural occupations are more easily comprehended; and are more durable; and lastly, because in that situation the passions of men are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature" (124).
strong wish to be of use in raising and steadying the minds of my countrymen” (237). In a piece condemning the acts of British military and civic leaders, he carves out a niche in martial affairs for a poet dedicated to arousing national sensibility. Wordsworth claims for the poet the power of inspiring martial enthusiasm, and the core of his poetic mission, enhancing his reader's sensibility, provides that power.
CHAPTER FOUR

COLERIDGE AND THE CITIZEN SOLDIER

"None love their country, but who love their home. . . ."

Zapolya (Part II.IV.i.393)

Coleridge too sought to influence Britain's martial affairs, but not exclusively, or even primarily, as a poet. He told Godwin in 1801 that "The Poet is dead in me" (quoted in Gill, William Wordsworth: A Life 200) and stated in the first number of The Friend (1809): "I have felt and deeply felt, that the Poet's high functions were not my proper assignment" (2.15). Though he abandoned the earnest pursuit of poetry at a relatively early age, Coleridge wrote concerning Britain's war efforts and the role of the British martial hero in both prose and verse, and like those of his fellow "lakers," his writings insist on a connection between the heroic and the domestic. While, unlike Wordsworth, Coleridge celebrated as heroic such figures as Nelson and Wellington, he insisted that the British martial hero remain meaningfully connected to home and nation. Coleridge recognized the danger of warriors serving purely as tools of the state, and his writings exhibit a dedication to the home and the British nation in the figure of the citizen-soldier.

Coleridge's political trajectory was similar to yet markedly different from that of Southey and Wordsworth. Like them, he moved from a generally oppositionist to a largely loyalist stance, first supporting the French Revolution then experiencing a

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1Coleridge's dates are 1772-1834.
marked fear of Jacobinism. And Coleridge too shifted from opposing to encouraging British war efforts against France. Like Wordsworth, he was especially horrified at the French invasions of Switzerland; indeed, Roe contends that the first such invasion (1798) was the catalyst for Coleridge’s eventual disillusionment with the French revolutionary project (2-3). But Coleridge’s political development was different in important ways from that of Wordsworth and Southey. His early thought was more religiously based than theirs, and he had a more prominent role in contemporary political debates than they did.

Coleridge’s oppositionist thought was clearly more religiously informed than that of Southey and Wordsworth. David Erdman relates that in 1797, at the age of twenty-five, Coleridge was considered by himself and others as primarily “a poet and religionist,” roles that were not alien to his political concerns, as then “the lodestone of his poetry was political Liberty; the lodestar of his religion ‘the republic of God’s own making’” (lx-lxi). Lewis Patton and Peter Mann echo Erdman’s assertion, stating that “to Coleridge reform without religion was meaningless or futile. In his view, reform, in the true sense, had to have as its goal the diffusion of illumination and a sense of awareness through the general public” (xxvi). The religious basis of Coleridge’s early political thought ultimately leads Mann to contend that a greater degree of validity

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2Woodring describes the course of Coleridge’s political development as an “irregular transit from hesitant republican to independent Tory” (Politics and Coleridge 194). For an example of his later attitude toward Jacobinism, see a Courier piece from September, 1814: “The visible organization of Jacobinism has been crushed or torn asunder; but the life, the evil principle, cannot die, as long as the soil of a half-knowledge and a proud ignorance supplies its own specific juices to the envy, ambition, and revenge, which, alas! are the indigenous growth of poor human nature. Many and strangely various are the shapes which the spirit of Jacobinism can assume. Now it is Philosophy, contending for indifference to all positive institutions, under the pretexts of liberality and toleration, and yet with all the bigotry of self-conceit, and all the diligence of bigotry, through every channel of communication, and by all the implements of annoyance, by contempt, by ridicule, by opprobrious charge or implication, persecuting all, as persecutors, who will not believe their forefathers fools and tyrants. Now it appears as refined Sensibility and Philanthropy, declaiming piteously concerning the wrongs and wretchedness of the oppressed many, and in play or novel amending the faulty and partial schemes of Providence, by assigning every vice and folly to the rich and noble, and all the virtues, with every amiable quality, to the poor and ignorant!” (EOT 2.383-84).
attends Coleridge's later denials of his early Jacobinism than many commentators have been willing to grant (lxxix-lxxx). Because of his early religious commitment, Coleridge was never as enthusiastic toward Godwinian thought as Southey and Wordsworth were (Patton and Mann lxxv-lxxvi), and he preceded the latter in turning to the concept of "one life" as a means of approaching the turmoil of revolutionary and war-plagued times (Roe 232-33). The young Coleridge embraced oppositionist thought, but he did so as a religiously focused thinker.

Another important distinction between Coleridge on the one hand and Wordsworth and Southey on the other is that, as a lecturer, independent writer and editor, and editorialist for The Morning Post and The Courier, Coleridge enjoyed a more significant place in the realm of British political thought than they held. While Woodring's 1961 assertion that "Coleridge, of the English Romantic poets, gave most thought to politics" (Politics and Coleridge 3) might finally be difficult to prove, it is generally defensible due to the amount of political writing and lecturing that Coleridge produced. In 1795 he lectured against the war and that year's repressive "Two Acts" (Patton and Mann xxi-xxii), and in 1796 he produced ten numbers of The Watchman (Patton xxii), which had as its "chief objects": "to co-operate (1) with the Whig Club in procuring a repeal of Lord Greenville's and Mr. Pitt's bills, now passed into laws, and (2) with the Patriotic Societies, for obtaining a Right of Suffrage general and frequent" (The Watchman 5). He wrote concerning socio-political issues for The Morning Post between 1797 and 1803, and for The Courier between 1804 and 1818 (Erdman xlv-lvi). He also produced the twenty-seven numbers of The Friend in 1809-10 (Erdman l-li), a project he describes in the three-volume 1818 edition as intended "To aid in the formation of fixed principles in politics, morals, and religion" (Rooke 1). And in On the

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3For a view specifically contesting this element of his argument, see Roe 11-12. This section of the volume's "Introduction" was written by Mann alone.
4These bills are the "Two Acts" described in Chapter One.
Constitution of Church and State (1829) he explored the roles of each and their relationship while considering the issue of Catholic Emancipation. The Watchman and The Friend did not meet with significant success—Coleridge lamented in the last number of the former "O Watchman! thou hast watched in vain" (quoted in Patton Iv)—but he nevertheless formed a positive, at times exaggerated, opinion of the efficacy of his political writing. He contended, not wholly without justification, that his arguments were repeated during Parliamentary sessions (Erdman clx), and perhaps less justifiably, that Fox held him personally responsible for the end of the Peace of Amiens. He also contended that Napoleon, angered at his opposition to that treaty, had ordered him arrested when he wandered into French dominions in 1806 (cxi, EOT 1.323, note). More objective commentators have found Coleridge's role in contemporary politics to be less spectacular but nonetheless important. Woodring assigns him some significance, asserting:

[Coleridge] had raised an excited voice against Pitt's invasions of English liberties, perhaps to some effect; he had brought an elevation to the policy of at least one newspaper, and some increase in its circulation and influence. Shocked from his original confidence in inevitable progress and rational reform, he had not retreated into a Nature free of political strife, but had tried for thirty years to bring that Nature to the attention of statesmen who needed to comprehend the laws of growth.

(Politics and Coleridge 222)

Critics focusing more exclusively on Coleridge's earlier years grant him a higher degree of significance: Patton and Mann emphasize the prominence he achieved as a lecturer in Bristol (xxviii), and Roe contends that by the end of 1795 he enjoyed a stature comparable to that of Godwin, Holcroft, Thelwall, Dyer, and Frend (117). Regardless of where we ultimately place him in relation to such figures, it is clear that while Coleridge produced less poetry than Southey or Wordsworth, he was, of the three, the most active

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5He would again refer to these claims in the Biographia, describing the former as "violent hyperbole" and downplaying the significance of the latter, though while further confirming its validity (1.215-16).
political commentator. Though he looked to Wordsworth as a poet-hero⁶ and consistently aborted his own efforts, Coleridge's ambition to influence his times with his words was often heroic in scope.

Significantly, Coleridge's domestic experiences were also both similar to yet markedly different from those of Wordsworth and Southey. Like them, Coleridge experienced domestic instability as a child, losing his father at the age of eight (Doughty 23). But he did not find the stable adult home life that they both did. Instead, his marriage was an unhappy one that ended in separation, and while married he spent a good deal of time away from home. His different domestic circumstances, however, did not lead him to discount the significance of the domestic sphere to the martial hero. As I will argue below, he too insisted on the relevance of the home to heroic behavior.

When considering Coleridge's political development, it is important to remember that it featured a great deal of ambivalence and tacking between various stances. Describing Coleridge's contributions to The Morning Post, Erdman finds consistency only in his willingness to approach an issue from conflicting positions:

> It is valid to recognize an overall consistency in Coleridge's thinking—if we understand that the consistency is virtual or ideal, not actual; that it is his own desideratum, so that even while he speaks boldly on one side of a question he keeps a longing (or a roving) eye on the other sides of it... It is the unity not of a straight line but of an S-curve... [H]e is in truth "ever the same" in the sense that he is never single-sided or single-minded but always both Jacobin and anti-Jacobin, Radical and Tory, poet and moralist, intermingled.⁷ (lxiv-lxv)

Despite this ambivalence and the consistent religious influence that Patton and Mann highlight, however, Coleridge's general development from "hesitant republican to

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⁶For Coleridge's interest in Wordsworth as a poet-hero, see Chapter Five.
⁷See also Woodring, who states that Coleridge "was at times during 1794-96 a republican without being an egalitarian, and at times an egalitarian in ultimate aim but no republican; he was partly both, but uneasily, with shifting reservations" (Politics and Coleridge 57), and who contends: "While absorbing much of the current revolutionary spirit, Coleridge rejected or qualified nearly all its elements when he regarded them individually" (65).
independent Tory” cannot in the end be discounted. He moved from opposing the idea of personal property and supporting general suffrage to advocating a necessary linkage of property and political power. Not surprisingly, he suffers alongside Southey and Wordsworth in Byron’s “Dedication” to Don Juan. It is clear, though, that even as Coleridge came to embrace the British military, he recognized its potential dangers, insisting that the martial hero should not be severed from the nation in order to serve the state.

Coleridge’s Anti-War Verse

Coleridge, of course, wrote in verse and prose regarding British martial efforts against France and the figure of the British martial hero. Like Wordsworth, he was not wholly removed from the experiences of the British soldier, for he too dabbled in British military service, but, significantly, under very different circumstances than those of his fellow poet. After his second year at Cambridge, debt, unrequited love, and a period of debauchery led Coleridge to volunteer as a private in the 15th Light Dragoons in December 1793. He enlisted as “Silas Tomkyn Comberbache,” but friends and family soon learned of this action, which, it was clear to them as well as to him, was wildly inappropriate for a person of Coleridge’s abilities and constitution. His months of service were less than glorious, as he cleaned stables, nursed a soldier with smallpox, and struggled as an equestrian, being thrown by his horse three times in one week. When his brothers arranged for his discharge, which involved an unofficial payment of approximately twenty-five guineas, the action was recorded by the regiment in a manner indicative of Coleridge’s incompatibility with martial service: “’discharged S.T. Comberbache, Insane; 10 April 1794’” (Holmes 51-58). This would be Coleridge’s only

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8The quoted phrase is Woodring’s; see the first note of this chapter.
9For more on Coleridge’s views on property, see the section in Chapter One subtitled “The State of the Nation,” as well as EOT 1.329.
service in the British military, for in 1804, after he had written in favor of renewing the war with France and Wordsworth had volunteered at Ambleside, Coleridge chose not to volunteer. However, he did not wholly reject the idea of so doing, writing in a letter to Sir George Beaumont that he "should not be found in my Study if the French remained even 10 days on British Ground." He then describes the reasons why he had not volunteered: "But merely to place one's self close by the Sluice-gate of the Stream, with no chance of doing any good that ten thousand cannot do better than you, 10,000 men, who can do nothing else, on whom their Country have no other call, and Posterity no claims..." (quoted in Erdman cxxi). He never concludes this statement, instead asserting his desire to avoid appearing "presumptuous" (cxxi), but it clearly reveals a personal reluctance to participate in the war effort that he had so recently championed. It seems fair to assume that memories of his experience as a dragoon contributed to his feelings of inadequacy with regard to martial service, but it is equally fair to assert that this statement of his unwillingness to volunteer reveals some ambivalence toward the war; he feels it should be fought, but not by men of his limitations and talents.

We should not be surprised that Coleridge's attitude toward the war effort was finally and characteristically complex; before coming to support it he had fervently voiced his opposition. He lectured against the war with Revolutionary France in 1795, claiming that it might have been prevented by negotiation that was never attempted, a view of events that Coleridge felt countered ministerial claims for the war being "just and necessary." He echoed oppositionist assertions that the Terror was a response to allied aggression, and he warned that war expenses could produce economic conditions conducive to a revolution in Britain (Roe 122-23). He also lectured against crimping (1795 Lectures 71), warned that war could lead to a loss of national character (60), and claimed that it was being fought against a nation of Patriots (65). He maintained this

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10For more on his opposition to the Peace of Amiens, see below.

184
anti-war stance for some three years after the 1795 lectures (Roe 123), publishing in full in The Watchman in 1796 Crowe's poem on the inappropriateness of war as a subject for poetry (179-80).  

Coleridge's own verse of the latter half of the 1790s supports his anti-war stance, often following the tradition of oppositionist verse by emphasizing war's horrors, especially its threat to the domestic sphere. For example, the 1799 "A Christmas Carol" highlights the threat war poses to a peaceful home. Mary is addressed while nursing the newly born Christ:

IV.
Thou Mother of the Prince of Peace,
Poor, simple, and of low estate!
That strife should vanish, battle cease,
O why should this thy soul elate?
Sweet Music's loudest note, the Poet's story,—
Didst thou ne'er love to hear of fame and glory?

V.
And is not War a youthful king,
A stately Hero clad in mail?
Beneath his footsteps laurels spring;
Him Earth's majestic monarchs hail
Their friend, their playmate! and his bold bright eye
Compels the maiden's love-confessing sigh. (ll. 19-30)

Implicit in this address is the traditional association of martial glory with poetic romance; the stanzas thus challenge the stance evident in Crowe's poem that poetry should not sing of war's glories. Mary's response, though, quickly counters the challenge:

VI.

"War is a ruffian, all with guilt defiled,

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This untitled poem is cited in Chapter One in the section titled "Reformist Responses."

It is not entirely clear whether the poem's narrator or the visiting shepherds address Mary, for while the questions are not enclosed in quotation marks, Mary's replies are. It seems incongruous both that her words would be enclosed in quotation marks while theirs are not and that she would voice a response to a narrator who gives no indication of actually being at the scene.
That from the aged father tears his child!

VII.
"A murderous fiend, by fiends adored,
He kills the sire and starves the son;
The husband kills, and from the board,
Steals all his widow's toil had won;
Plunders God's world of beauty; rends away
All safety from the night, all comfort from the day." (35-42)

The sacred image of the nursing Mary, of course, lends symbolic weight to these anti-war assertions, which clearly echo oppositionist concerns regarding war's effects on families. And the poem's repeated emphasis on Mary's poverty (33, 45) aligns it with oppositionist attempts to stress the disproportionate wartime burden shouldered by the poor. Her first words in response to the questions and assertions posed by the speaker indicate that the glories of war are restricted to the ruling class: "'Tell this in some more courtly scene, / To maids and youths in robes of state'" (31-32). While the glories of war are restricted to the elite, the pains of war ravage families of all classes.

Coleridge more directly contests Britain's war policy in "Religious Musings: A Desultory Poem, Written on the Christmas Eve of 1794," first published in 1796 (E.H. Coleridge 1.108), and "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter: A War Eclogue," which he probably wrote in 1796 and first published in 1798. "Religious Musings" anticipates the Christian anti-war stance of "A Christmas Carol," taking issue with the idea that the war with France was being fought over religious principles. E.H. Coleridge reports that Coleridge included as a footnote in multiple published versions of the poem relevant quotations from the Duke of Portland's and Lord Abingdon's arguments for pursuing war. Portland "'considered the war to be merely grounded on one principle--the preservation of the Christian Religion,'" and Abingdon argued: "'The best road to Peace, my Lords, is War! and War carried on in the same manner in which we are taught to

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worship our Creator, namely, with all our souls, and with all our minds, and with all our hearts, and with all our strength” (1.115). The poem responds to such assertions by directly addressing the "meek Galilean" (l. 161), emphasizing the irony of war fought in the name of Christianity as well as the costs to the families involved:

listening Treachery lurks
With pious fraud to snare a brother's life;
And childless widows o'er the groaning land
Wail numberless; and orphans weep for bread!
Thee to defend, dear Saviour of Mankind!
Thee, Lamb of God! Thee blameless Prince of Peace!
From all sides rush the thirsty brood of War!—

Thee to defend the Moloch Priest prefers
The prayer of hate, and bellows to the herd,
That Deity, Accomplice Deity
In the fierce jealousy of wakened wrath
Will go forth with our armies and our fleets
To scatter the red ruin on their foes!
O blasphemy! to mingle fiendish deeds
With blessedness! (164-92)

Coleridge here contests the idea of holy war, a concept he would endorse after coming to support the British war effort.15 "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter" is similarly pacifist but leaves the realm of the "meek Galilean" for that of dark treachery. It directly indicts Pitt as the source of Europe's contemporary war agonies, with the fiendish, anthropomorphic Fire, Famine, and Slaughter each repeatedly identifying their master with "Letters four do form his name." Here Coleridge follows the common oppositionist practice of clearly criticizing ministerial practices while reducing the threat of government retribution by not actually providing names, and he again emphasizes the threat that war poses to the home. Note the following graphic exchange between Famine and her "sisters":

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14He later returns to war's threat to the home, exclaiming: "O thou poor widow, who in dreams dost view / Thy husband's mangled corpse, and from short doze / Start'st with a shriek; or in thy half-thatched cot / Waked by the wintry night-storm, wet and cold / Cow'rst o'er thy screaming baby!" (296-300).
15See "The War not a Crusade" (1800, EOT 1.240-42).

187
Fam. ................. the men have bled
Their wives and their children faint for bread.
I stood in a swampy field of battle;
With bones and skulls I made a rattle,
To frighten the wolf and the carrion-crow
And the homeless dog—but they would not go.
So off I flew: for how could I bear
To see them gorge their dainty fare?
I heard a groan and a peevish squall,
And through the chink of a cottage-wall—
Can you guess what I saw there?

Both. Whisper it, sister! in our ear.

Fam. A baby beat its dying mother:
I had starved one and was starving the other! (28-41)

Coleridge aligns the forces of darkness with war, and Pitt with the forces of darkness. The sibling fiends destroy human families per Pitt's wishes. The stark contrast between this demonic meeting, reminiscent of the opening scene of Macbeth, and the holy image of Mary in "A Christmas Carol" is emblematic of the young Coleridge's opposition to war with Revolutionary France; but, significantly, even in anti-war verse he could concede the occasional inevitability of military conflict.

This is the case in "Fears in Solitude: Written in April 1798, During the Alarm of an Invasion." First published as a quarto pamphlet in that same year, the poem continues the anti-war thrust of Coleridge's late 1790s verse, but it also shows him for the first time rallying his nation to arms. Aware of the threat posed to Britain and to the domestic peace that he knew would be shattered by an invasion, Coleridge seeks in this poem to confirm his national loyalty. Addressing his readers with "O Britons! O my brethren!" (l. 154), he recognizes that he has been considered by some to be an internal enemy (171-75), but he quickly counters that charge, beginning even at this relatively early date to distance himself from the radical assertions of his 1795 lectures and The Watchman. It seems a thinly veiled self-reference when he uses the third person to assert that the
beauty and peace of the British countryside would be "chiefly" appreciated by "The humble man, who, in his youthful years, / Knew just so much of folly, as had made, / His early manhood more securely wise" (12-16). This particularly seems the case when considered in light of his (too) forceful protestation of his attachment to Britain:

O dear Britain! O my Mother Isle!
Needs must thou prove a name most dear and holy
To me, a son, a brother, and a friend,
A husband, and a father, who revere
All bonds of natural love, and find them all
Within the limits of thy rocky shores.
O native Britain! O my Mother Isle!
How shouldst thou prove aught else but dear and holy
To me, who from thy lakes and mountain-hills,
Thy clouds, thy quiet dales, thy rocks and seas,
Have drunk in all my intellectual life,
All sweet sensations, all ennobling thoughts,
All adoration of the God in nature,
All lovely and all honourable things,
Whatever makes this mortal spirit feel
The joy and greatness of its future being?
There lives nor form nor feeling in my soul
Unborrowed from my country! O divine
And beauteous island! thou hast been my sole
And most magnificent temple, in the which
I walk with awe, and sing my stately songs,
Loving the God that made me!-- (176-97)

Regardless of any potential punning on "stately songs," it is clear that Coleridge, when under the threat of invasion, is eager to confirm his ties with his homeland, and by extension its nation-state, despite his previous criticism of British war efforts. Notably, he again resorts to domestic imagery, metaphorically calling Britain his "Mother Isle" as well as stressing his actual familial connections. Like Southey and Wordsworth, he recognizes a connection between home and nation, and uses the domestic sphere to define and express his changing political stance.
He does not, however, cease in his criticism of the British nation-state; indeed, he argues at length that Britain itself is responsible for its precarious position due to its imperial activities, ineffective governance, uninspired religious leaders, and enthusiasm for war (41-129). He is specific in his criticism of British war enthusiasm, attributing some of the blame to readerly demand for print accounts of martial activities, of battles from which its citizens had to a degree been shielded due to Britain’s naval power and the existence of the English Channel (86-94). He describes "Boys and girls, / and women, that would groan to see a child / Pull off an insect's leg" who relish in reading of war, "[t]he best amusement for our morning meal" (104-07). He then claims that this consistent exposure of the British reading public to war writings leads it to naive conceptions of battle: "As if the soldier died without a wound; / As if the fibers of this godlike frame / Were gored without a pang" (ll. 117-19). These misperceptions, he contends, will in turn lead to the onslaught of "evil days" (l. 123) and the possibility that all-avenging Providence,
Strong and retributive, should make us know
The meaning of our words, force us to feel
The desolation and the agony
Of our fierce doings. . . . (125-29)

The threat of invasion, though, leads Coleridge to couple his criticism with a call for British martial strength. In keeping with the poem's reluctant acceptance of Britain's need for martial defense, he uses both loyalist and oppositionist poetic practices in calling his countrymen to arms. He invokes the imagery of widows and their children common to oppositionist verse in order to stress the dangers of invasion (131-34), and he calls for British men to defend their homes from the atheistic France of loyalist verse:

Sons, brothers, husbands, all
Who ever gazed with fondness on the forms
Which grew up with you round the same fire-side,
And all who ever heard the sabbath-bells
Without the infidel's scorn, make yourself pure!
Stand forth! be men! repel an impious foe.
Impious and false, a light yet cruel race,
Who laugh away all virtue, mingling mirth
With deeds of murder; and still promising
Freedom, themselves too sensual to be free,
Poison life's amities, and cheat the heart
Of faith and quiet hope, and all that soothes,
And all that lifts the spirit! Stand we forth;
Render them back upon the insulted ocean,
And let them toss as idly on its waves
As the vile sea-weed, which some mountain-blast
Swept from our shores! (134-50)

He concludes this call to arms by reasserting British culpability for its perilous state of affairs (150-53).

No such assertion of British fault, however, is included in "The British Stripling's War-Song: Imitated from Stolberg." First published in The Morning Post in August, 1799, it was reprinted several times thereafter and was "'[c]ommunicated to the Bath Herald during the Volunteer Frenzy of 1803'" (E.H. Coleridge 1.317). Coleridge here works wholly within the loyalist call-to-arms tradition, as the poem's young speaker describes his desire to kill in battle "the Hero of France" (l. 15) and twice asks to borrow the saber of an old warrior so that he can fight like his forefathers did (3-4, 27-28). Family is again important, though not as a means of conveying war's terrors. Instead, it is a source of nationalist pride. Far more committed to the British martial tradition than "Fears in Solitude," but published the same year as the anti-war "A Christmas Carol," this call-to-arms poem reflects Coleridge's changing attitude toward the war and anticipates his pro-war prose of the next two decades. At the turn of the century Coleridge was beginning to support the martial efforts of the British nation-state and promote the glory of the British martial hero.
Coleridge's "War-Whoop"  

Coleridge read Godwin's pamphlet *Thoughts Occasioned by the Perusal of Dr. Parr's Spital Sermon* in August of 1801; by the autumn of 1802 he had written in its margin: "It is with Jacobinism as with the French Empire, we made peace just at the very time, that war first became just and necessary" (EOT 1.384, note, his emph.). He would soon express his support for resuming the war effort in a more public manner. In the pages of *The Morning Post* he would refer to the Peace as "this gloomy and ominous War Peace" (EOT 1.399) and assert that its value lay in allowing the British people to ascertain the valid reasons for pursuing the war from those the ministers had originally given, and then to unite behind the former in an inevitably resumed war effort (EOT 1.385). He would chastise Fox, not for his support of the peace, which Coleridge had hoped he would reluctantly support (EOT 1.385), but for his subsequent declaration of joy at French martial successes (EOT 1.385-86) and his notorious meetings with Napoleon in Paris (EOT 1.392-99). Shortly after war was resumed Coleridge would describe the Peace as an ill fated, reluctantly received "experiment" to ascertain "whether Bonaparte, devoting his ambition and activity to the re-establishment of the trade, colonial tranquillity, and social morals of France, *would abstain from insulting, alarming, and endangering the British Empire*" (EOT 1.428, his emph.), and in 1813 he would refer to the lawmakers who were squeamish regarding Britain's 1807 siege of neutral Denmark as "hermaphrodites of goodness" (EOT 2.364). Moreover, in 1816,

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16 The phrase is from "Fears in Solitude," where Coleridge writes: "Secure from actual warfare, we have loved / To swell the war-whoop, passionate for war" (ll. 88-89). Erdman writes, "Within Coleridge's own 'sagacity' there is a struggle over the crucial difference between the merely watching eye . . . and the voice, capable, however small, of swelling the war-whoop" (cxiii).

17 See Wordsworth's assertion in the *Convention of Cintra* that the war with France first became "just and necessary" at a time "before the Treaty of Amiens, viz. after the subjugation of Switzerland" (226, cited in Chapter Three).

18 See also *The Friend* 1.570, where he refers to the Peace as "a name, under which the most terrific of all wars would be incessantly raged against us" (his emph.).

19 See also his 1816 reference to "that precious set of Politicians, who, either as boisterous railers or maudlin goodies, thro' all the trying and all the triumphant years that preceded the present Peace, alike in
after Waterloo, he would write of the war's "golden side," arguing that it was not without its economic benefits and that it had roused the nation to thought, the reading of the Bible, and an enhanced appreciation of the value of an education conducted in conjunction with the Church of England (EOT 2.429-35). Moving far from the sentiments of "Fire, Famine, and Slaughter," Coleridge came to embrace the British war effort and assume the role of advocating it in the press.

This advocacy included the celebration of British martial heroes. Like Wordsworth, Coleridge came to celebrate the courage of British martial forces in the aggregate, describing the bravery of common British soldiers (Friend 1.292-93), invoking "the valour and skilfulness [sic] of our sailors" (EOT 1.222), and stating of the Volunteer Corps: "they . . . are brave, loyal, and faithful, because they are Britons . . ." (EOT 2.21). But unlike Wordsworth, he was also willing to celebrate as heroic such individual figures as Nelson and Wellington. Indeed, Coleridge was far less likely than Wordsworth to call common servicemen "heroes" but often presented their noted superiors as epitomizing British martial heroism. These tendencies are evident in the following passage, which is part of an 1803 Morning Post piece criticizing William Windham for spawning national "despondency" regarding Britain's renewed war with France: "If our naval heroes, before each sea-fight, had addressed the crews in the spirit of that language, with which Mr. Windham has addressed the nation, would our sailors have atchieved [sic] those victories, which have emblazoned on our national coat of arms the noble motto, Safety with Glory!" (EOT 1.424, my emph.). The heroes here . . .

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20In keeping with a contemporary opinion that Coleridge was awarded his position at Malta for his published "Letters to Fox," William Taylor wrote to Southey in 1805: "How amusing that the author of 'Fire, Famine, and Slaughter' should be a commissary fattening under War and Pitt" (quoted in EOT 1.401, note).

21While Windham was a proponent of war with France, he at one time made criticized the volunteer forces; he later raised a volunteer force himself and became its colonel (DNB 21.645).
are those leading the crews, not the crews themselves. Nelson and Wellington, of course, were the premier British martial leaders during the wars with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, and in The Friend Coleridge wrote of their "glorious hardihood," which stemmed from a "Wisdom higher than Prudence" (1.118-19). And in The Courier he spoke of those in opposition to Britain's war efforts on the Peninsula as having as their only boast "to have made the native land of a Nelson and Wellington uneasy at home, and abroad contemptible!" (EOT 2.341). The latter passage shows Coleridge doing more than celebrating these figures as heroic, for he is asserting that they embody a national standard by which the behavior and thinking of others is to be judged; the implication is that Nelson and Wellington are truly British, while those who oppose Britain's martial efforts are not.

Coleridge was in relatively close contact with Nelson while serving as private secretary to Sir Alexander Ball in Malta, and Coleridge discusses him in the "Sketches of the Life of Sir Alexander Ball" that he wrote for The Friend, calling Nelson: "the heroic admiral" (1.574), "the hero and the man of genius" (1.551), "a hero so deeply and justly beloved" (1.572), "the darling of the navy, and the glory of the British empire" (1.573). He bemoans an instance where Nelson, after long service in the Mediterranean, is denied the prize of Spanish ships after war is declared (1.572-74), and while he does not condone Nelson's opinion that Malta did not hold political or naval worth to Britain, which influenced the British policy of returning Malta to the Order of St. John as part of the Treaty of Amiens, he combats the idea held by some that Nelson's policy was a result of ministerial flattery. He also points out that Nelson later reconsidered his view (1.571-72). While Coleridge defends Nelson from the charges of being susceptible to flattery, he makes no mention of the scandal surrounding Nelson's domestic life and the broken

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22A version of an 1804 report on Egypt that Coleridge first prepared for Ball was sent to Nelson (EOT 3.187).
treaty with the Neapolitan rebels. These are not surprising omissions, for Coleridge presents Nelson as purely a martial hero, "an admiral every inch of him" (1.572).

Coleridge's praise of Wellington, most of which appears in his Courier writings, similarly omits mention of the incident that had garnered him no small amount of negative national attention: the Convention of Cintra. At the time of the agreement (1808), though, Coleridge shared in Southey and Wordsworth's angry response; in fact, he worked to get Wordsworth's writings on the Convention of Cintra—which Coleridge referred to as "most masterly"—published in The Courier. He succeeded in getting two installments, the second of which he partially rewrote, published in that paper—no mean feat since one of its two proprietors, Thomas George Street, was so committed to the ministry that he supported even that widely unpopular agreement (Erdman cxxiii-cxxxv). And these efforts on behalf of Wordsworth's writings were only a portion of the response that Coleridge considered. Southey's letters of October 1808 indicate that Coleridge was to have been an integral part of a public meeting that Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge wanted to arrange in order to make a public statement regarding the Cintra affair; in one letter he describes Coleridge as a possible speaker at such a meeting, and in another he asserts that Wordsworth would be the speaker, while he and Coleridge would contribute preparatory writings to county newspapers (Owen and Smyser 1.196-97). While Coleridge finally did not explicitly criticize Wellington, then Wellesley,24 in the manner that Wordsworth did, he was clearly associated with anti-Wellesley thinking.25 Indeed, his negative reaction to the Convention of Cintra was strong enough to make Erdman wonder if, when in an April, 1811 Courier piece

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23 Wordsworth, of course, soon collected and published these writings as a pamphlet.
24 He became Viscount Wellington on September 4, 1809.
25 Daniel Stuart, formerly of The Morning Post and Coleridge's long-time associate and editor, had referred to Wellesley in a December 1808 letter to Coleridge as "a bold dashing fellow without brains" and had stated that Wellesley "might Easily be proved a weak Fellow" (Friend 2.476).
Coleridge includes Wellesley in a list of successful British martial leaders, he was seeking an ironic effect (EOT 2.113, note).

I think it likely that he was not, for in the next month Coleridge would write in support of a proclamation of thanks to Wellington in honor of victories on the Peninsula and in opposition to claims that Cintra was a blight on his record. In response to Robert Waithman, who felt that a vote of thanks was not in order and who invoked Cintra to support his views, Coleridge stated that had Wellington been allowed to advance after his victory at Vimeiro, "The Convention of Cintra would never have taken place, or have been a name of glory and national exultation" (EOT 2.137). This statement represents a remarkable change of opinion, but such a change of view was not unique to Coleridge; as Erdman notes, by 1811 views toward the Convention had changed: "when Waithman spoke of it as 'a transaction which had branded this country with lasting disgrace,' there was a cry of 'No, no'" (EOT 2.137, note). In the piece supporting the vote of thanks, Coleridge praises Wellington's leadership and calls him a "hero," taking particular umbrage at Waithman's assertion that the actions with which Wellington achieved victory on the Peninsula could not have been in keeping with a predetermined plan (EOT 2.137-38). Later that month he would invoke "the greatness of his Lordship's talents, of his promptitude in conceiving and executing plans--of that presence and quickness of mind which knows how to decide, and to decide with greatest judgment, on the instant" (EOT 2.173), and would assert:

on what rest Lord Wellington's claims on our admiration and wonder, but on the dangers which he has overcome, on the obstacles he has vaulted over, and the inconveniences which he has either warded off, or inspired his troops with the fortitude to endure? On what, but the soul-exalting facts, that in every struggle he has been opposed to superiority of

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26 The Battle of Vimeiro was fought August 21, 1808. Wellesley and 17,000 troops repulsed Junot and 14,000 (Dupuy and Dupuy 823).
27 See also his assertion from July of that year that "nothing comes unexpectedly to Lord Wellington" (EOT 2.215).
numbers, to troops disciplined and naturalised to all forms of warfare, confident in their invincibility from constant success, admirably officered, and commanded by an adopted son of victory? and yet, that in every struggle he has been a conqueror, with an army composed in part of raw and untried troops, whom, as by a charm, he and his gallant fellow-soldiers had brought to unite the enthusiasm of recruits with the steadiness of veterans?

(EOT 2.171-72)

Coleridge wrote even brighter praise in yet another piece that appeared in The Courier in May, 1811 titled "Lord Wellington Like the Sun." While praising Wellington's victories at Vimeiro and Talavera, Coleridge attributes to him the characteristics of three noted Roman generals, stating: "What can we say of such a man? who, as a Marcellus enabled himself without a murmur of distrust from his eager troops, to act with the patience and far-sighted control of a Fabius, and then unites and completes both in a Scipio?" This, of course, is remarkable praise, and he then continues, emphasizing the powerful effect that Wellington's triumphs had on the British people: "Under whose auspices a nation, long degraded, awakes as from a sleep to all its ancestral heroism—like the sun, not only bright in herself, but spreading brightness and vital energy all beneath him!" (EOT 2.158). More than a brilliant military leader, Wellington is a catalyst for British nationalism. Existing at a higher level, he is a source of national unity and energy.

Coleridge's letters qualify his praise of Wellington to some degree. He wrote to Street in October of 1811 that Wellington was "but a personification of great events" (EOT 2.174, note), and he indicated to Byron in 1815 that he was "almost compelled to write . . . on the Duke of Wellington, Mr. -------- Picture Gallery, & the Lord knows

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28The Battle of Talavera was fought July 28, 1809, with Wellesley and 54,000 allied troops repulsing an attack of 47,000. Though no clear winner emerged, it was strategically considered a British victory (Dupuy and Dupuy 835).

29Erdman's note helps explain the significance of these generals: "Of these three Roman generals, Marcus Claudius Marcellus (c 268-207 B.C.), known as the 'sword of Rome,' for his dashing conduct of the war against Hannibal, nevertheless collaborated with Quintus Fabius Maximus (d 203 B.C.), called 'the delay' and the 'shield of Rome,' in his Fabian defense of Italy, whereas Publius Cornelius Scipio Africanus (c 237-183 B.C.), perhaps Rome's most brilliant general, combined prudence with aggression in his conquest of Spain, and finally defeated Hannibal in Africa in 202 B.C."
what, in order to procure 15 [pounds]" (EOT 1.clxvi, note). Coleridge, though, may have been interested in presenting himself to Byron as less of a loyalist than he was. Dorothy Wordsworth took note of Coleridge's praise of Wellington and considered it politically driven, writing in a June 1811 letter of "poor Coleridge's late writings in the Courier" and asserting: "They are as much the work of a party-spirit, as if he were writing for a place--servile adulations of the Wellesleys" (EOT 1.clv). Even if Coleridge's praise was not wholly sincere, he clearly embraced Wellington, an individual British martial hero, as a means of expressing support for the British nation-state, and in so doing he followed a strategy that, as we have seen, Wordsworth avoided but that Southey, with his Life of Nelson, shared. Coleridge's praise of Wellington helped him convey his then loyalist political stance.

**Soldiers, the Nation, and the Nation-State**

Coleridge's celebration of notable British martial heroes, though, existed in conjunction with his consistent insistence that the armed forces remain connected to the British nation and not become simply a tool of the state. This element of Coleridge's thought is evident in his opposition to a standing army. Such opposition had existed in Britain since William III proposed such a force after the Glorious Revolution (Williams, "Salisbury Plain" 170); it continued into the 1790s and was heightened by parliamentary debates in 1796 regarding the construction of permanent barracks for troops, a move oppositionists perceived as a step toward an absolute government. The proposal was the result of a number of political factors: Tory squires felt the support of George III and hence no longer feared a standing army; innkeepers balked at the low pay and inconvenience of housing troops; and the rise of civil discontent led some to believe it necessary to house troops in such a way that they were not susceptible to oppositionist propaganda (1795 Lectures 315, note). The proposal, however, faced a powerful
tradition of opposition, well represented by the comments of Sir William Blackstone in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*:30

To prevent the executive power from being able to oppress . . . it is requisite that the armies with which it is entrusted should consist of the people. . . . Nothing . . . ought to be more guarded against in a free state, than making the military, when such a one is necessary to be kept on foot, a body too distinct from the people . . . it ought to be enlisted for a short and limited time; the soldiers also should live intermixed with the people; no separate camp, no barracks . . . should be allowed . . . and the citizen and the soldier [should] be more intimately connected together.

(quoted in 1795 Lectures 314-15, note)

Indeed, standing armies had long been opposed by people across the political spectrum (Gordon 93); both Burke and Godwin addressed the dangers of such an institution (95, 96 note).

In an April 1796 edition of The Watchman Coleridge presented an account of a parliamentary debate on the issue of permanent barracks for troops. Michael Angelo Taylor, he reported, "regarded the barracks as having been erected for two grand purposes; first, to overawe the people preparatory to the introduction of new burthens, and secondly, to extend ministerial patronage preparatory to a general election" (260-61). And Fox responded to the idea of shielding troops from oppositionist influences by emphasizing the duties of the soldier as citizen: "'Unconditional and indiscriminate obedience, is not the duty of a Soldier in a free state. He is to obey lawful commands; but so far from being bound to become a Liberticide, in case of illegal commands it is his duty at once to refuse obedience, and cease to be a Soldier, when by remaining a Soldier he would cease to be a Citizen'" (261 his emph.). Coleridge then echoes Fox's sentiments in a note responding to the argument, advanced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the government and its Mutiny Law had established a distinction

30Blackstone (1723-80) introduced the first law course in England and was appointed the first professor of English law in 1758. His *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-69) constitute the first comprehensive treatment of the principles of English law (Crystal 153).
between soldiers and other citizens. Coleridge notes: "These are necessary evils: necessary for the purposes of discipline without which an army could not be kept together. But because these evils are necessary therefore the soldier ought the more to mingle with his countrymen: that the sacred character of citizen, which he might be apt to forget in ranks, he might learn again in his quarters" (263, his emph.).

This insistence that soldiers remain citizens is an insistence that they remain part of the British nation, as it exists separately from the British state, and it shows that concern still existed that the armed forces might be used in state-sponsored oppression. Notably, Coleridge maintained his opposition to a standing army even as his attitude toward British martial efforts dramatically changed. In The Plot Discovered (1795) he counted among the four ingredients of despotism a "large military force kept separate from the people" (1795 Lectures 314); in his "Comparison of France with Rome" (1802) he wrote with regard to France: "We have had a recent proof, that when an army vote under arms, the people have no other response left, than an Amen" (EOT 1.337); and in an unpublished piece on the Duke of York (1811), he argued:

A slight acquaintance with English History is enough to impress us with the deep and long-continued aversion of the Country to a standing army; how slowly and reluctantly the fears for the integrity of the Constitution yielded to the increasing claims of national power and dignity; till they fell at once before the sudden necessities of national Independence & Self-preservation, brought on us by the Principles, the Ambition, and the stupendous Success of Revolutionary France. We are not weak enough to quarrel with the inevitable. There is, we know, a strange tranquilizing power in the stern Eye of Necessity, when it is fixed steadily either on an individual or a Nation. But there is no reason, why it should fascinate us into a stupor. We may be resigned without becoming reckless; and relax or suspend our resistance to a necessary Evil without running headlong into its Jaws. If it cannot be wholly avoided, for that very cause should it be the more anxiously watched, the more steadily counteracted.--At all events, <we should> not wantonly strengthen it, unless we hope to compliment away a Danger by beating down our Helmet & Coat Mail into a sword and spear for the Enemy. (EOT 3.223-24, his emph.)
Here, Coleridge both recognizes France as an enemy and asserts that the unnecessary maintenance of a standing army will transform British armor into enemy weapons. This is a confusing statement, for it seems contradictory to assert that maintaining a standing army will actually strengthen the enemy, but we must remember that to Coleridge strengthening a standing army meant weakening the nation, the best source of national defense. Recall his assertion that British volunteers are "brave, loyal, and faithful, because they are Britons." A standing army threatens the liberties of Britons and thus the effectiveness of British troops. As a result, France is strengthened, and a new enemy arises in the form of oppression.

Coleridge more thoroughly considered the relationship between armies and oppression in his comparisons of France and Rome (1802) and his unpublished pieces on the Duke of York (1811); in both he describes the role that armies can play in despotic states, especially those first characterized by revolutionary zeal. In the earlier writings he states that in armies "political fanaticism is soon transmuted into military passion," which can result in the crushing of a "noisy republic" and the rise of "an iron-handed empire" (EOT 1.339). In both France and Rome, he contends, "proscriptions, mad tumults, and the most shameless venality had made the very name of liberty odious, and the vices of the leaders of all parties had introduced into the minds even of good men a despair of the Republic, and a disposition to submit to the sober despotism of any individual, rather than the mad tyranny of a multitude." A similar transfer of power from the many to the few also occurred in the armies of these nations, where, Coleridge states, "the affections and duties of the soldiery were gradually weaned from the laws and free legislatures of their country, and transferred to their Generals" (EOT 1.315-16). He avers that the nature of political contests is to "begin in principles, and end in men" (EOT 1.316), a trajectory that he sees often leading to despotism.

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31EOT 2.21.
In the 1811 writings he again speaks in sweeping terms of the nature of political conflicts, specifically revolutions:

The frenzy of popular Revolution naturally subsides into military ambition. Any fanatic faith, or watch-word, acting at once thro' a whole country, any <vague> persuasion, religious or political, arising from previous Ignorance & oppression, (as in the convulsions of the East) or from the relaxation of all moral principle (as more recently in France) calls forth a restlessness, an enthusiasm, & praeternatural vigor, which after its first fury & overthrow finds its only possible Level in military Despotism, & furnishes the best materials for military Ambition. (EOT 3.230)

But military service, he argues, need not be aligned with revolution in order to pose a threat to a nation's liberty: "it is the nature of military enthusiasm to swallow up many of the principles & feelings, which the same men would have had as ordinary Subjects; and finally to engender contempt and aversion for those forms & opinions, deprived of which the British constitution would lose its best supports" (EOT 3.230). For Coleridge, though Britain was not then going through a revolution, its military, by its very nature, still constituted a threat to its constitution. Though he does not argue against the existence of a strong military, stating "[t]he Country needs a great, and an effective, military force," he opposes the Duke of York's re-appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the army: "We confess our nerves are not yet either sufficiently strong or sufficiently torpid to hear it asserted without alarm, that the Controll of the whole military force of the Empire, immense as it is becoming, ought to be vested in the second Son of the King, because he is above ministerial control and parliamentary Interest" (3.226, his emph.). Coleridge fears the royal family's having exclusive control of the army, and he further conveys his opposition to such a state of affairs through reductio ad absurdum, asking:

If this Controll of the Army & of all military appointments is to be an appendage & Heir-loom of the Son <second Son> of the King, why not the Controll of the Navy, to a third, as Lord High Admiral of the British Empire? . . . And why stop here?--The Controll of the Revenue?--of
colonial Governments? Above all, of the Church? Why should not these too be rescued from parliamentary Interest by being appropriated to the Royal Family? (3.229)

He then answers these questions himself, advocating the ancestral wisdom that provided for multiple possessors of political influence, with royal power balanced by "the rights & privileges of the two other branches, and with the charter, and customs of the Nation at large" (3.229). As Napoleon's actions had made only too clear, excessive individual power supported by potent armies could result in despotism and wholesale martial aggression. British armies, Coleridge felt, could threaten as well as defend the British nation.

It is thus not surprising that, in spite of his embrace of Nelson and Wellington, Coleridge was often cautious in his portrayals of martial heroism. Woodring is accurate in arguing that while a clear political stance is difficult to discern in the dramatic fragment The Triumph of Loyalty (1800), it reflects Coleridge's increasingly positive attitude toward the British military (Politics and Coleridge 209-10). But Coleridge also there reveals his concern regarding martial enthusiasm. Based on a summary written by Gotthold Lessing of a Spanish play about Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex (Woodring, Politics and Coleridge 209), it features a Spanish hero, Earl Henry, who has been recalled from a victorious field of battle through the machinations of his enemy the Chancellor. Also recalled is his brother, Don Curio, who had in that battle his first taste of combat. His stormy reaction toward their leaving the battlefield draws a sharp rebuke from Earl Henry, who considers Don Curio's responses "impotent Freaks of Anger, /... of boyish anger" (ll. 241-42), and who says to him: "you've not learnt the noblest part of valour, / To suffer and obey" (ll. 237-38). While this emphasis on obedience partially conflicts with Coleridge's earlier insistence that soldiers remain citizens, a position that Fox argued could at times demand disobedience, it checks the dangers that he felt could attend the fevered pursuit of military glory. While this creed of Earl Henry's could lead
to thoughtless, and hence potentially dangerous, loyalty, it counters the conception of self-glorifying military feats and advocates instead a self-sacrificial approach to martial service. Don Curio’s response to his brother’s rebuke shows the degree to which he was committed to the pursuit of martial glory:

Freaks! Freaks! But what if they have sav’d from bursting The swelling heart of one, whose Cup of Hope Was savagely dash’d down—even from his lips?— Permitted just to see the face of War, Then like a truant boy, scourged home again One Field my whole Campaign! One glorious Battle To madden one with Hope! (243-49)

But he quickly shows that he has adopted Earl Henry’s position, closing his soliloquy with "Shame on these tears!—this, too, is boyish anger!" (255). The fragment thus endorses military service, but only of a sober kind. In 1800 Coleridge can support martial activities, but warily.

Coleridge maintained caution in his portrayals of martial heroes even as the war with Napoleonic France dragged on. His five "Sketches of the Life of Sir Alexander Ball," which appeared in The Friend, constitute a sustained treatment of a martial hero and present Ball as not only a courageous sailor but also a wise and compassionate leader. Ball, a distinguished naval officer, captured Malta in 1799 and was subsequently made its chief commissioner, and then its governor. He died there in 1809. Coleridge served under Ball in Malta from July 1804 to September 1805, a time he described as "in many respects, the most memorable and instructive period of my life" (Friend 1.533). Coleridge’s admiration of Ball is evident in his praise of the Captain’s prowess as a naval warrior. He describes Ball as exhibiting in the long siege of Malta character, talent, and

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32 For a brief but valuable discussion of how the work’s military heroes represent a change in Coleridge’s attitude toward martial activities, see Woodring, Politics and Coleridge, 210.
33 A footnote of Coleridge’s explains that while Ball was generally known as the governor of Malta, he was never actually given that title, a state of affairs that Coleridge considered an injustice (544).
sagacity (1.554), as well as "patience, forbearance, and inflexible constancy" (1.560). Notably, these are characteristics conducive to responsible military behavior, and not to a "boyish" enthusiasm that could lead to waste of life or martial despotism. But Coleridge is careful not to emphasize these characteristics to the exclusion of Ball's courage, describing the way he saved Nelson and his sinking ship during a storm off Minorca—despite Nelson's insistence that it was so dangerous of a maneuver that it threatened both ships (1.547-48)—and detailing the role Ball played in the Battle of the Nile (1.548-50). Though Ball and Nelson's relationship did not begin positively (1.547), their experiences in the storm drew them together, and Coleridge further stresses Ball's naval capacities by revealing the admiration Nelson felt toward Ball (1.548) and comparing Ball to the famed Admiral. He states:

If it had pleased Providence to preserve his life, and to place him on the same course on which Nelson ran his race of glory, there are two points in which Ball would most closely have resembled his illustrious friend. The first is, that in his enterprizes and engagement he would have thought nothing done, till all had been done that was possible. . . . The second, that he would have called forth all the talent and virtue that existed within his sphere of influence, and created a band of heroes, a gradation of officers, strong in head and strong in heart, worthy to have been his companions and his successors in fame and public usefulness. (1.554) Even as he insists on Ball's martial heroism, though, Coleridge stresses his humane tendencies. While describing Ball's participation in the Battle of the Nile, Coleridge first tells how a member of Ball's crew came to destroy the French ship L'Orient with combustibles, an event that had "been justly deemed the sublimest war incident recorded in history." After that, Coleridge relates, occurred an incident "scarcely less impressive": after becoming engaged with another French ship, whose firing had temporarily slackened, Ball responded affirmatively to a request from his senior lieutenant that the men be allowed briefly to lie down by their guns. After they had slept for some twenty

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34 The siege lasted from 1798-1800 (Rooke 560, note).
minutes, he had them roused, and they subsequently forced the enemy ship to surrender in very short order. Thereafter they discovered that the French crew had also been sleeping during the short cessation of fire (1.549-50). Coleridge presents Ball as a naval officer of Nelson's caliber, but one with an admirably restrained approach to the business of battle.

Coleridge also makes it clear that his admiration for Ball extends beyond his capacities as an officer. The epigraph Coleridge presents to the second of these sketches shows his belief that Ball was far more than a warrior. Coleridge presents a passage from Claudius Claudianus's De consolatu Stilichonis, then translates it as: "If I desire to pass over a part in silence, whatever I omit, will seem the most worthy to have been recorded. . . . Shall I dwell on his justice? The glory of the warrior rises before me resplendent. Shall I relate his strength in arms? He performed yet greater things unarmed" (1.539). Coleridge saw Ball as succeeding in both martial and civic capacities, and considered him "really the abstract of a wise & Good governor" (Rooke 533, note). Far removed from the despotism that, as we have seen, Coleridge knew could accompany military success, Ball, according to Coleridge, was the liberator of Malta (1.537) and an advocate of education for people of all classes (1.540). His dedication to learning, however, was not an attempt to level society, but to preserve the status quo; he felt the education of only a few members of the lower classes led to their desire for advancement (1.540). Ball was thus pro-education and anti-revolution, a stance that Coleridge could certainly endorse in 1810.36

Perhaps Coleridge's strongest endorsement of Ball, though, appears in one of his footnotes:

35Coleridge's epigraph is a variation of the original (Rooke 539, note).
36Though I have quoted from the three-volume 1818 edition, the original sketches of Ball appeared in 1810.
It was the Governor's custom to visit every casal throughout the island once, if not twice, in the course of each summer; and during my residence there, I had the honor of being his constant, and most often, his only companion in these rides. . . . In the poorest house of the most distant casal two rude paintings were sure to be found: A picture of the Virgin and Child; and a portrait of Sir Alexander Ball. (1.566)

Ball was so important to the people of Malta that they honored him as they did Christ and Mary; the man humane enough to allow his crew to sleep in battle also had the admiration of the people he governed. Given Coleridge's presentation of Ball as an enlightened warrior and capable governor, it is not surprising to note that he twice turns to Wordsworth's "Character of the Happy Warrior" as a source for epigraphs to these sketches (1.547, 1.551). We remember that a note at the end of that poem connects Nelson with its titular figure, but that Wordsworth finally considered even Nelson to fall short of the ideal that the poem presents. Coleridge's use of the poem as a source for epigraphs to these sketches furthers the comparisons he makes between Nelson and Ball, and enhances his presentation of Ball as more than a successful warrior. The final lines of the second of these epigraphs--"And through the heat of conflict keeps the law / In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw"--again show that Ball is not subject to the potentially dangerous military enthusiasm that, as we have seen, Coleridge recognized and feared. It is as a more-than-warrior, as one whose "purity and strict propriety of . . . conduct" contributed to the moral life of the Maltese (1.535), that Coleridge celebrates Ball. He recognizes Ball's military capabilities, but he praises them as adequately restrained and existing in conjunction with other, less volatile skills.

Even the British triumph at Waterloo did not spur Coleridge to abandon a wary approach to the presentation of martial heroism. He offered Zapolya: A Christmas Tale in Two Parts to the Committee of Management of Drury Lane Theatre in March of 1816; it was rejected, but published in 1817 (E.H. Coleridge 2.883, note). Despite its being a

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37 Here, as with the passage from Claudius Claudianus, Coleridge presents slight variations (Rooke 547, 551, notes).
post-Waterloo production, it is a cautionary, not a celebratory, tale. Deemed by
Woodring a "romance of statesmanship" (Politics and Coleridge 212), it warns against
tyrranical ambition such as that exhibited by Napoleon.\textsuperscript{38} Set in Illyria,\textsuperscript{39} it presents
Raab Kiuprili, a noted Illyrian chieftain, who, when King Andreas dies, is committed to
ensuring that the throne goes to the king's infant son, and not to Andreas's brother
Emerick, who seeks to usurp it based both on popular appeal and a claim that the child is
not the king's. Though outnumbered and even opposed by his own son, Kiuprili
manages to escape Emerick's forces and help preserve the life of the queen, Zapolya.
But Emerick wins the ensuing civil war and reigns for twenty years before being deposed
by the king's son—who had been living, unaware of his status, with a peasant—Zapolya,
and Kiuprili himself.

Kiuprili, we learn, is a dedicated and powerful warrior. When seeking to oppose
Emerick's ascension to the throne he asserts:

\begin{quote}
Have I for this
Bled for your safety, conquered for your honour?
Was it for this, Illyrians! that I forded
Your thaw-swoln torrents, when the shouldering ice
Fought with the foe, and stained its jagged points
With gore from wounds I felt not? Did the blast
Beat on this body, frost-and-famine numbed,
Till my hard flesh distinguished not itself
From the insensate mail, its fellow warrior?
And have I brought home with me Victory,
And with her, hand in hand, firm-footed Peace,
Her countenance twice lighted up with glory,
As if I had charmed a goddess down from Heaven?
But these will flee abhorrent from the throne
Of usurpation! (Prelude.i.150-64)
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{38}Woodring argues that the play conveys a "warning against tyranny . . . [drawn] from the severe error . . .
of French blindness to tyrannic ambition" (Politics and Coleridge 213).

\textsuperscript{39}The Cambridge Encyclopedia defines Illyria: "In antiquity, the E seaboard of the Adriatic and its
mountainous hinterland. It was roughly the equivalent of the W half of former Yugoslavia and NW
Albania; its inland boundaries were never precisely defined" (Crystal 556).

208
Though his pleading does not stop Emerick’s scheme, no one challenges the validity of his assertions; Kiuprili’s martial prowess is indisputable. Yet, significantly, he does not use this prowess in ways Coleridge would consider inappropriate. Loyal to the throne but not willing to promote despotism, he is driven by service, not ambition. He rejects the idea of a king being chosen by the people (Prelude.i.351-72), but his commitment to Andreas’s bloodline is a function not of blind loyalty to the royal family but to a respect for law (Woodring 217-18). He thus opposes the twin threats of revolution and despotism. And despite his martial strength, he is not susceptible to the military enthusiasm that Coleridge feared. Indeed, he is fully aware of the threat posed by an immoral fighting force. When Emerick argues that he, not the king’s son, is the chosen leader of the people, and especially of the army, Kiuprili remarks on the power of the army in state affairs:

most miserable nation,
For whom the imperial power, enormous bubble!
Is blown and kept aloft, or burst and shattered
By the bribed breath of a lewd soldiery! (Prelude.i.375-78)

His awareness of the dangers of misguided martial power is further evident when Andreas’s son, then mature, wanders near Kiuprili and Zapolya’s hiding place in search of answers regarding his mysterious parentage. When Bethlen, later Andreas, appears near the cavern where Kiuprili and Zapolya are hiding, presenting himself as an orphan who is coming to recognize the magnitude of his destiny, he represents a potentially powerful threat to Emerick’s despotic reign. While still in hiding and not yet convinced of the son’s identity, Kiuprili cautions him with “Patience! Truth! Obedience!” (Part II.II.i.199). These admonitory words are characteristic of Kiuprili and emblematic of Coleridge’s desire that force be regulated by moral standards, even when promoting a just cause. A king’s son who has been deprived his throne may use power, but not indiscriminately.
Home and the Hero

Coleridge's, then, was a cautious embrace of the British military, and *Zapolya* further shows that, like Wordsworth and Southey, Coleridge used the domestic sphere to regulate and define the parameters of heroism. Emerick's ruthless political ambitions are mirrored in his disregard for domestic peace, as he attempts to seduce Sarolta, the wife of Casimir, Kiuprili's son who had supported Emerick's usurpation. Emerick, exercising the power that Coleridge, like Wordsworth, saw accompanying the abandonment of conscience,\(^{40}\) tries to seize Sarolta much as he had seized Illyria's throne. Domestically and politically, he is a wholly self-directed hero in the tradition of what Hegel called the heroic age, a tradition against which, as we have seen, both Southey and Wordsworth also wrote. This connection between the domestic, the political, and the heroic is further evident, through negative example, in the actions of Laska, Casimir's steward who gains Emerick access to Sarolta's chamber. Not only does he aid in this attempt at domestic disruption, he also plans to wed Glycine, Sarolta's attendant, against her will, threatening to beat her once they are married because she has shown affection for Bethlen (Part II.I.1.22-32). In *Zapolya*, domestic cruelty accompanies political despotism, and villains explicitly threaten the domestic sphere.\(^{41}\)

The closing lines of the play, spoken by Sarolta and reminiscent of Wordsworth's "I griev'd for Buonaparte, with a vain," clarify the connection between home and nation-state:

\[
\text{E'en women at the distaff hence may see,} \\
\text{That bad men may rebel, but ne'er be free;} \\
\text{May whisper, when the waves of faction foam,} \\
\text{None love their country, but who love their home;} \\
\text{For freedom can with those alone abide,} \\
\text{Who wear the golden chain, with honest pride,} \\
\text{Of love and duty, at their own fire-side:}
\]

\(^{40}\)See *FOT* 2.84 and *Friend* 1.120.  
\(^{41}\)See also Woodring, *Politics and Coleridge*, 218.
While mad ambition ever doth caress
Its own sure fate, in its own restlessness! (Part II.IV.i.390-98)

Love of home leads to love of country; those who commit themselves to their families find freedom, while restless ambition leads to futility and pain. Coleridge, who experienced little domestic bliss himself, presents the home as a means to check revolution and the martial despotism that he saw consistently following in its wake.

However, as the first line of the above passage—"E'en women at the distaff hence may see"—indicates, Zapolva's insistence on the centrality of the domestic sphere to the well-being of the nation-state does not serve further to empower women. In the first act of the drama's second part, Sarolta describes her eagerness for Cassimir's return from court, and in so doing she describes women in a baldly stereotypical way: as fretful and dependent on men for their happiness. She says in response to Glycine's description of how Casimir might return:

All the long day, from yester-morn to evening,
The restless hope fluttered about my heart.
Oh we are such querulous creatures! Little less
Than all things can suffice to make us happy;
And little more than nothing is enough
To discontent us.--Were he come, then should I
Repine he had not arrived just one day earlier
To keep his birth-day here, in his own birth-place. (i.21-28)

And shortly thereafter Glycine describes a "wife's chief duty" as "To stand in awe of her husband, and obey him" (i.60-61). The drama does disrupt its presentation of women in traditional domestic roles, giving Glycine the opportunity to engage in conflict, and she proves successful, killing Laska and thus saving the younger Andreas. He later addresses her as "Thou sword that leap'dst forth from a bed of roses: / Thou falcon-hearted dove" (Part II.IV.i.375-76). But its insistence on traditional roles for women is evident in that her one moment of conflict is an effort to save the man whom she will soon thereafter marry. Indeed, after she kills Laska, an event that occurs offstage, her
first words are "And now once more a woman" (Part II.IV.i.163), and when she next speaks, it is to Bethlen as she kneels: "Accept thine hand-maid's service" (188). In Zapolya, Coleridge presents the home as a stabilizing force for the nation-state; it is clear that he does not want to endanger that stability by thoroughly challenging women's traditional domestic roles. Heroes such as Nelson and Wellington are vitally important, but Britain's stability is dependent on citizen-soldiers, their homes, and their devoted wives.

In Coleridge's turn to loyalism he changed his thinking as to how British families relate to the British state. While he first saw the two as opposed, with the government threatening the stability of the family, he came to see them as strengthening one another, with radical change in the structure of either threatening the nation-state. Coleridge, as we saw in Chapter One, wrote that the French Revolution was a result of cosmopolitan thinking, like Rousseau's, that deemphasized national and familial connections; and "The Eolian Harp: Composed at Clevedon, Somersetshire" (1795) reinforces that contention. Here the reproof of Coleridge's wife shatters his philosophical meandering, which had led to the following question:

what if all of animated nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweeps
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of All? (ll. 44-48)

Her disapproving look leads him to describe such thought as "shapings of the unregenerate mind; / Bubbles that glitter as they rise and break / On vain Philosophy's aye-bubbling spring" (ll. 55-57), and it "biddest [him] walk humbly with [his] God" (l. 52). Coleridge invests the domestic sphere with the power to check the type of "vain"

42For Coleridge's statements regarding philosophical cosmopolitanism and the French Revolution, see Chapter One.
philosophizing that he felt led to chaos in France; he implies the home can help guard against national chaos and anarchy. As I argue in the next chapter, Wordsworth describes a similar role for the domestic sphere, conceiving of it as a source of strength for the poet-hero, a figure committed to national stability.

\[\text{\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{43}}Coleridge again relates chaos with the image of bubbling in The Friend, stating: "Since my earliest manhood it had been among my fondest regrets, that a more direct and frequent reference had not been made by our historians to the books, pamphlets, and flying sheets of that momentous period [the interval from the captivity of Charles the First to the restoration of his son], during which all the possible forms of truth and error (the latter being themselves for the greater part caricatures of truth) bubbled up on the surface of the public mind, as in the ferment of a chaos" (1.410).}}\]
CHAPTER FIVE

HEROES OF TRUTH

"There exists / An higher than the warrior's excellence." 1

"farewell / All hope, which once and long was mine, to fill / The heroic trumpet with the muse's breath!" (Wordsworth, Home at Grasmere, MS. B, ll. 953-55)

We have seen that Coleridge and Wordsworth, despite their eventual embrace of British martial strength, had important reservations concerning purely military heroism, and that Southey, in his reaction to Nelson's proceedings at Naples, recognized that a martial hero could endanger Britain's integrity. In keeping with their recognition of the potential liabilities of martial heroes, these poets endorsed brands of heroism that transcend military glory but that nevertheless serve British interests. This final chapter examines such an alternative mode of heroism, that of the poet-hero, focusing on that figure's role in national affairs and the strong connection that Wordsworth as poet-hero had to his home.

Coleridge begins an 1817 letter to the editor of The Courier regarding Charles Robert Maturin's tragedy Manuel by quoting Andrew Fletcher: "'Let me but make the ballads of a nation, and I care not who makes its laws'" (EOT 2.447). 2 Implicit in this

1From Coleridge's The Piccolomini; or, The First Part of Wallenstein, A Drama Translated from the German of Schiller; the passage constitutes part of an epigraph used by Coleridge in one of the "Sketches of the Life of Sir Alexander Ball" (Friend 1.565).

2The original quotation, from Fletcher's An Account of a Conversation Concerning a Right Regulation of Governments for the Common Good of Mankind (1704), reads: "'I knew a very wise man so much of Sir
remark is an assumption that balladeers—and by implication poets, writers, and artists generally—have real political power, indeed more than legislators. Coleridge is said to have made a similar remark when lecturing on Shakespeare and Milton in 1811; John Payne Collier, who was in attendance, reports that Coleridge “dwelt for some time upon the immense advantage men of genius possessed over men of talents and men of arms” (Lectures on Literature 1.287, 2.478). This report certainly seems credible, for Coleridge’s notes for an 1819 lecture on Shakespeare’s Troilus and Cressida assert that “the subservience and vassalage of Strength and animal Courage to Intellect and Policy seem to be the Lesson most often in our Poet’s View” (Lectures on Literature 2.377), and Coleridge clearly distinguished between what he called “absolute” and “commanding” genius.

He draws this distinction in the Biographia Literaria (1817), and it stems from his ideas concerning emotion and cognition, and primarily his belief that idealizations are more conducive to feeling and thought than sensory perceptions: “the feelings and affections blend more easily and intimately with . . . ideal creations, than with the objects of the senses; the mind is affected by thoughts, rather than by things; and only then feels the requisite interest even for the most important events, and accidents, when by means of meditation they have passed into thoughts” (1.31). This premise, along with his idea that “[t]he sanity of the mind is between superstition with fanaticism on the one hand; and enthusiasm with indifference and a diseased slowness to action on the other” (1.31), led Coleridge to distinguish between the absolute and the commanding genius. For the absolute genius, “the conceptions of the mind may be so vivid and adequate, as to preclude [an] impulse to the realizing of them”; this impulse, though, “is strongest and most restless in those, who possess more than mere talent (or the faculty of appropriating

Christopher [Musgrave]’s sentiments that he believed if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation” (EOT 2.447, note).
and applying the knowledge of others) yet still want something of the creative, and self-sufficing power of absolute Genius." Such are people of commanding genius. While those of absolute genius "rest content between thought and reality, as it were in an intermundium of which their own living spirit supplies the substance, and their imagination the ever-varying form," those of commanding genius "must impress their preconceptions on the world without, in order to present them back to their own view with the satisfying degree of clearness, distinctness, and individuality" (1.31-32, his emph.).

This need of commanding geniuses to affect the world makes them potentially beneficial or ruinous to society:

in tranquil times [they] are formed to exhibit a perfect poem in palace or temple or landscape garden; or a tale of romance in canals that join sea with sea, or in walls of rock, which shouldering back the billows imitate the power, and supply the benevolence of nature to sheltered navies; or in aqueducts that arching the wide vale from mountain to mountain give a Palmyra to the desert. But alas! in times of tumult they are the men destined to come forth as the shaping spirit of Ruin, to destroy the wisdom of ages in order to substitute the fancies of a day, and to change kings and kingdoms, as the wind shifts and shapes the clouds. (1.32-33)

Commanding geniuses exercise their imaginations—it is this which separates them from people of "mere talent"—but their efforts are directed toward explicitly tangible results. Note how Coleridge describes their creative efforts in literary terms, saying that they produce "a perfect poem" or "a tale of romance," but insists that these efforts lead to results outside the linguistic realm, in such things as buildings, gardens, and civil structures. It is this need of commanding geniuses to affect "the world without" that makes them dangerous during tumultuous times; though Coleridge does not state so here, it seems clear that they then become dangerous because such times offer opportunities to alter the world in ways other than building and beautification projects. In tumultuous
times the commanding genius can work with governments and armies, not landscape and
stone.

Absolute geniuses, on the other hand, are not concerned with immediate results or
contemporary reputation. Hence, they are content to work in ways less evident to the
outside world, with "their own living spirit supply[ing] the substance, and their
imagination the ever-varying form." Not surprisingly given Coleridge's investment in
ideas and the ideal, he considers the absolute genius the superior of the two: "The men
of the greatest genius, as far as we can judge from their own works or from the accounts
of their contemporaries, appear to have been of calm and tranquil temper, in all that
related to themselves. In the outward assurance of permanent fame, they seem to have
been either indifferent or resigned, with regard to immediate reputation" (1.33). He
counts among these greater geniuses Chaucer, Shakespeare, Spenser, and Milton (1.33-36),
all literary men who had, by Coleridge's time, already established enduring reputations.

Coleridge did not, however, describe all commanding geniuses as inherently
threatening. He included General Washington among the commanding geniuses of his
time, and his opinion of Washington reveals a belief that such persons have a great
capacity for bettering their world. Rumors of the general's death on 14 December 1799
reached London on 23 January 1800 and were accepted as fact by The Morning Post on
25 January (EOT 1.131, note). Coleridge wrote an obituary for Washington that
appeared in the 27 January edition, as well as a 25 March piece praising Washington for
the wisdom with which his will disposed of his fortune. Both make clear Coleridge's
esteem. The later piece calls Washington "a christian hero" (EOT 1.231), describes his
life as "beneficial to the human race" (229), and asserts that his character featured a
balance that made his capacities for command an asset, not a danger: 

\[\text{[the will] gives}

\footnote{See The Friend 1.399-400.}
proof, that a true and solid greatness may exist, and make itself felt, without any admixture of wildness, without any obtrusive appeals to the imagination; it gives proof, consolatory and inspiriting proof, how many virtues, too often deemed incompatible with each other, a thinking and upright mind may unite in itself" (229). Washington's commanding genius was not burdened with the liabilities that Coleridge knew could accompany such a gift. The obituary similarly stresses the balance that made Washington's a beneficial genius:

Tranquil and firm he moved with one pace in one path, and neither vaulted or tottered. He possessed from his earliest years that prophetic consciousness of his future being, which both makes and marks the few great men of the world, who combine a deep sense of internal power, with imaginations capable of bodying forth lofty undertakings. His feelings, constitutionally profound and vehement (and which, if uncounteracted by the majesty of his views, would have been wild and ferocious) gave him a perpetual energy; while the necessity of counteracting and curbing these feelings gradually disciplined his soul to that austere self-command, which informed and moulded the whole man, his actions, his countenance, his every gesture. Thus, sympathising inwardly with man, as an ideal, not with men as companions, he perfected in himself that character which all are compelled to feel, though few are capable of analysing, the character of the commanding genius. (EOT 1.131-32)

Not desirous of maintaining his power at the expense of the American constitution, Washington retired after his terms as President and "became entirely the husband and the master of his family" (1.132). Coleridge emphasizes this retirement to the domestic sphere, stating that "the lines which Santeuil composed for the statue of the great Condé in the Gardens of Chantilly were yet more applicable to the Father and Hero of the American Republic"; they translate as "That prince, terrible in war, before whom rivers once turned pale and fled, now, loving peace, in cultivated leisure, decrees joyful fountains to play in gardens" (132-33 and note). Though a commanding genius, Washington was not unbalanced by overweening ambition. He could help lead his nation to freedom and then retire to his home. Significantly, Washington's commitment
to his family reflected his desire to maintain a connection with his nation. Though, as we have seen, Coleridge asserts in the piece on the will that Washington "sympathis[ed] inwardly with man, as an ideal, not with men as companions," he also insists in the obituary that Washington "sympathised with the moral and religious feelings of the great mass of his fellow-citizens," and that he "never rushed before his age and Country" (133). Washington's commanding genius was not a threat to the world because he remained committed to his nation and his home.

Coleridge's uneasiness concerning the potentially destructive nature of the commanding genius, however, is evident even in the above praise, where he twice mentions that Washington properly inhibited his power: his greatness existed "without any admixture of wildness," and his "profound and vehement" feelings would have been "wild and ferocious" if "uncounteracted by the majesty of his views." Such majestic self-countering was not common to all such geniuses. Napoleon, for example, was also considered by Coleridge to be a commanding genius (EOT 1.208), but he lacked Washington's balance and proved dangerous to his nation and the world. As we have seen, Coleridge ultimately became a staunch opponent of Napoleon and even associated him with Satan. Cognizant of the threat of commanding genius, Coleridge sought to promote a figure more aligned with absolute genius, the poet-hero, and it was Wordsworth whom he cast in that role.

The Poet-Hero

The poet-hero, as I will show, could marshal absolute genius in service to Britain. This may at first seem an unlikely proposition, since absolute genius, by Coleridge's description, engages the ideal; but by no means is the ideal realm necessarily distinct from nationalistic concerns. Indeed, if we accept Anderson's formulation of nations as imagined communities, then such a role for the absolute genius, and thus the poet-hero,
seems wholly plausible, and, as we saw in Chapter Three, Wordsworth recognized a role for the poet in Britain's martial affairs. Because it is concerned with the ideal, absolute genius is allied with the philosophical, and Coleridge argues for a connection between philosophy and heroism in *The Friend* (1818), stating that the highest of the *maxims of prudence* is "that there is a Wisdom higher than Prudence, to which Prudence stands in the same relation as the Mason and the Carpenter to the genial and scientific architect: and from the habits of thinking and feeling, that in this Wisdom had their first formation, our Nelsons and Well assetons inherit...glorious hardihood" (1.118). Nelson's and Wellington's success can be traced to their abilities to think and feel, which in turn stems from their "wisdom higher than prudence." Coleridge merely alludes to these contemporary figures, though, and instead turns to an ancient for an extended example to support his assertion that "practical heroism" stems from "previous habits of philosophical thought." He invokes Zenophon the Philosopher, whose story he quotes from Bacon. Briefly paraphrased, Bacon's account relates that Zenophon left Socrates's school in Asia to join the army of Cyrus the Younger, which was attacking Cyrus's elder brother Emperor Artaxerxes II of Persia. Though he had no military experience and went on the expedition only to pursue conversation with his friend Proxenus, it was Zenophon who advised against surrender despite great Grecian losses and who ultimately and miraculously led the remaining Grecian troops safely home from Babylon (1.119-20). A philosopher who performed a military marvel, Zenophon combined elements of the absolute and commanding genius; he was thus a more appropriate example of the connection between philosophy and heroism than Nelson or Wellington, who were not known to be philosophers as well as commanders.

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4Coleridge contends that Bacon himself could also serve as such an example if he had "an equal commentator" (1.119).
Zenophon could also serve as a dramatic example of a figure described by Woodring as "Coleridge's Cantabrigian heroic ideal": the patriot-sage. " Twice-capable," the patriot-sage considers national and international issues through a philosophic or scientific lens and is thus engaged on a national, international, and transnational level (Politics and Coleridge 86-87). Woodring counts among those whom Coleridge at various times considered patriot-sages William Frend, Benjamin Franklin, and Joseph Priestley (86), and he contends that Coleridge treats Burke as a "shrunken Patriot Sage" in his sonnet on Burke in the "Eminent Characters" series (95-98). Clearly the portrait of Burke in that sonnet is critical, but it is an early poem (1794), and we must not discount Burke's role in contemporary politics or his influence on Coleridge and Wordsworth. Coleridge would write in the Biographia: "In Mr. Burke's writings indeed the germs of almost all political truths may be found" (1.217) and "Edmund Burke possessed and had sedulously sharpened that eye, which sees all things, actions, and events, in relation to the laws that determine their existence and circumscribe their possibility. He referred habitually to principles. He was a scientific statesman; and therefore a seer" (1.191). The Burke described by the older Coleridge does not seem shrunken at all, and, as Chandler has argued, Burke was also a significant influence on Wordsworth. A political writer and aesthetic theorist, Burke sought to influence national and international events. He was perhaps the epitome of the contemporary patriot-sage.

Burke, though, was a statesman, not a poet. As we will see, the role of the patriot-sage and that of the poet-hero are similar, but the poet-hero enjoys an artistic efficacy that leads to greater potential cultural influence. Like the patriot-sage, the poet-hero has transnational, international, and national interests, and seeks to influence national and world affairs. The medium of poetry, though, affords such a figure potentially enhanced cultural potency, which, significantly, Wordsworth describes using martial terminology. He compares the poet-hero to a conqueror in the 1815 "Essay,
Supplementary to the Preface," asserting that a poet seeking to create an appropriate taste in readers "will be in the condition of Hannibal among the Alps" (80) and stating with regard to poetic genius: "Genius is the introduction of a new element into the intellectual universe: or, if that be not allowed, it is the application of powers to objects on which they had not before been exercised, or the employment of them in such manner as to produce effects hitherto unknown. What is all this but an advance, or a conquest, made by the soul of the poet?" (82). These images not only show Wordsworth to conceive of the poet's task in martial terms, but also imply the dual transnational and national scope of poetic work. The "intellectual universe" may be a transcendental realm, but battle lines are drawn there, and, as I will show, they are often nationalistic in nature.

Of the three poets we have been considering, Wordsworth most fully fulfilled the role of the poet-hero; indeed, he was the only one of the three earnestly to write verse throughout his career. Roe notes that while in Blois Wordsworth was Beaupuy's disciple (55-63), and in Book X of The Prelude Wordsworth writes that had he not returned to England in 1792 he "doubtless should have made a common cause / With some who perish'd" (ll. 194-95). But he did return, and, with the exception of his short-lived tenure as a Grasmere Volunteer, he forsook such martial ambitions and began to fulfill the role of the poet-hero. He clearly recognized such a role, writing in 1815 that creative art "Demands the service of a mind and heart / Though sensitive, yet in their weakest part, / Heroically fashioned" ("To R.B. Haydon, Esq.," ll. 4-6) and contending in 1819 that "they like Demi-gods are strong / On whom the Muses smile" ("Upon the Same Occasion" ll. 26-27).

And, significantly, he sought to produce a work of heroic scope. Wordsworth considered the 1815 collection subsidiary to The Recluse, which both Wordsworth and Coleridge hoped would represent the culmination of Wordsworth's poetic powers. While a sense of humility attends Wordsworth's claim in the "Preface" to The Excursion that he
hoped *The Recluse* would be "a literary Work that might live" (viii), his announcement in the "Prospectus to *The Recluse*" that he intends the poem to "arouse the sensual from their sleep / Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain / To noble raptures" (xii) recalls his desire to awake British society from its torpor and gives some indication of the height of his poetic ambition. Its subjects no less than "Man," "Nature," and "Human Life," the poem is to rival *Paradise Lost* (x-xii) and far exceed his own autobiographical poem--*The Prelude*--which was to have the same relation to *The Recluse* as an ante-chapel has to a gothic church (ix). Wordsworth announced to Thomas DeQuincey that "'[t]o this work I mean to devote the Prime of my life and the chief force of my mind'" (Darlington 4). As we have seen, however, he often wrote poetry marginally related to this especially daunting poetic task, a practice that angered Coleridge, who once stated: "'of nothing but *The Recluse* can I hear patiently'" (Darlington 5). While, in an extension of his "The Recluse as gothic church" analogy, Wordsworth claimed that "his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little Cells, Oratories, and sepulchral Recesses, ordinarily included in those Edifices" (ix), he saw a distinction between work on *The Recluse* and on other poetry, experiencing a sense of failure into old age due to his inability to complete the larger work (Gill 145).

Coleridge also was highly invested in *The Recluse*, for it was to be a poetic representation of his own philosophical insights. As Riede shows, Coleridge perceived Wordsworth's poetic genius as able to lend his ideas the authority that they would lack if he conveyed them himself (193). Coleridge, Riede asserts, "lacked confidence in the health or integrity of his inner self. He felt himself so diseased in will as almost to lack a core self" (175). So, while he was willing to claim critical authority, he located poetic authority in others (171-72), and among his contemporaries especially in Wordsworth.
Coleridge's comments regarding what he considered to be the poem's potential further reflect the redemptive motive behind its composition and the scale the two hoped it would assume. It was to combat "the philosophy of mechanism which in every thing [sic] that is most worthy of the human Intellect strikes Death" (his emph.) and, in short, to present "Facts elevated into Theory--Theory into Laws--& Laws into living and intelligent Powers--true Idealism necessarily perfecting itself in Realism, & Realism refining itself into Idealism" (quoted in Darlington 7). It was to inspire an ideal reality. Late in his life Coleridge would recall what he considered to be the poem's aims and structure in a statement that further highlights the remarkable hopes he held for the work:

The plan laid out, and, I believe, partly suggested by me, was, that Wordsworth should assume the station of a man in mental repose, one whose principles were made up, and so prepared to deliver upon authority a system of philosophy. He was to treat man as man,--a subject of eye, ear, touch, and taste, in contact with external nature, and informing the senses from the mind, and not compounding a mind out of the senses; then he was to describe the pastoral and other states of society, assuming something of a Juvenalian spirit as he approached the high civilizations of cities and towns, and opening a melancholy picture of the present state of degeneracy and vice; thence he was to infer and reveal the proof of, and necessity for, the whole state of man and society being subject to, and illustrative of, a redemptive process in operation, showing how this idea reconciled all the anomalies, and promised future glory and restoration. (quoted in Darlington 3)

This statement shows that Wordsworth and Coleridge agreed that the former's verse was to have a positive, rejuvenating effect on society. It was to exist for the "benefit of human nature," to combat "the present state of degeneracy and vice," and, as Coleridge elsewhere states, to inspire "those, who, in consequence of the complete failure of the French Revolution, have thrown up all hopes of the amelioration of mankind, and are sinking into an almost epicurean selfishness . . ." (quoted in Riede 145). Thus, while they often presented their statements regarding its purpose in philosophic or religious
terms, the ultimate aim of *The Recluse* was profoundly political: it was to make the world a better place.

But Wordsworth's poetic mission was not political only, or even primarily, on a global scale; it ultimately sought to preserve the status and structure of the British nation-state. Language, of course, is a vital element of nationalism and nationalist movements, and Wordsworth and Coleridge recognized its power and sought to preserve and celebrate the integrity of the English language. An 1811 comment of Coleridge's regarding a French-led multinational naval force is telling in its commentary on the relationship between language and national unity. He wrote in *The Courier*:

> It will be no easy matter, we should think, to make these subjects of all nations act with unanimity and concert. Each must be addressed in his own language, and the officer must indeed have had his head broken by a brick from the Tower of Babel, who is able to make himself understood by all. What a confusion of tongues would there be in a naval fight? the German crossing the Dane, and the Russian mixing with the Swede--the chattering Frenchman attempting to make himself understood by the tardy Spaniard, and the phlegmatic Dutchman receiving orders from the cunning Italian--And, to complete the scene, let our readers conceive this motley mixture engaged against the Lords of the Ocean upon their own element, against Britons speaking one language, and consummate Masters of their Art!! (EOT 2.279)

Their shared language would help unify "Britons" and give them a tactical advantage in naval warfare. Not surprisingly, Coleridge was loath to surrender the advantage of this unity. While he recognized a common European culture--surprising in light of the passage just quoted--he was not willing to sacrifice British nationalism. He wrote in his 1802 "Comparison of France with Rome":

> To all the grand purposes of civilization and science, Europe, and European America, are already one people, beyond the most boastful dream of Roman pride. What would mankind gain, by turning this brotherhood in science and manners, into a political amalgamation? We should exchange national wars for civil wars. We should sink into barbarism from slavery, into discord from barbarism; and thus, sacrifice our close union, as men, to an appearance of alliance, as citizens.
And, to Coleridge, central to preserving British national integrity was warding off French cultural and political imperialism. He wrote in the same piece:

We must be jealous of the progress of their [the French] truly slavish language among us; we must be detectors and detesters of their mock philosophy, of their false and boastful pretensions in science and literature, equally as in politics. In war, whenever it becomes inevitable, we will be, as ever, their controlling and thwarting genius; in peace their monitor, and outward conscience. All this our national fear, equally with our national pride, demands of us. (EOT 1.324)

Britain must be defended in the field and on the page; the latter task demands a poet-hero.

Wordsworth shared Coleridge's perception of the centrality of the English language to British nationalism, repeatedly invoking Milton as a British poet-hero. In "London, 1802" he calls on Milton to rescue England from its cultural malaise, and in "Great Men have been among us; hands that penn'd" he counts Milton as central to a group of writers—"The Later Sidney, Marvel, Harrington, / Young Vane, and others who call'd Milton friend" (ll. 3-4)—who successfully rallied the nation:

These Moralists could act and comprehend:
They knew how genuine glory was put on;
Taught us how rightfully a nation shone
In splendour: what strength was, that would not bend
But in magnaminous meekness. . . . (ll. 5-9)

Wordsworth asserts in these works the centrality to national health of the poet-hero and, by extension, the English language. Moreover, at the end of "Great Men Have Been Among Us" he contradistinguishes France's cultural legacy:

France, 'tis strange,
Hath brought forth no such souls as we had then.
Perpetual emptiness! unceasing change!
No single Volume paramount, no code,
No master spirit, no determined road;
But equally a want of Books and Men! (ll. 9-14)
The implication is clear: France's inferiority to Britain is evident in its not producing such a poet-hero as Milton. British superiority is tied to its poets.

Evident in the above passages is a sense that the French Revolution lacked the moral validity of the Puritan Revolution. Coleridge echoed that sentiment in The Friend, citing Wordsworth's line above describing France's lack of both books and men, and asserting that while "[i]t would be difficult to conceive a notion or a fancy, in politics, ethics, theology, or even in physics and physiology, which had not been anticipated by the men of [the English Revolution]," the French Revolution was characterized by "sanguinary and sensual abominations" (1.410). Both Wordsworth and Coleridge invoke the Puritan Revolution as a time when England acted with moral rectitude, led by morally driven writers. It provided them with a counter to oppose to the contemporary problems they saw plaguing Britain and France as well as an opportunity to describe the power of the poet-hero.

But France was not the only threat against which the British poet-hero, as conceived by Wordsworth and Coleridge, was to protect. Despite their invocation of the Puritan Revolution, it is clear that their conception of the poet came to include defending against the threat of internal revolution, especially the rise of the lower classes. Coleridge's vision of Wordsworth as the authoritative conveyor of Coleridgean truths implies that Wordsworth would be at the forefront of the clerisy, or learned class, of what Coleridge, in On the Constitution of Church and State (1829), calls the "national church." Riede explains that Coleridge conceived of this ideal of the "national church" as "an estate of the realm"; its clerisy would not only constitute academic faculties (234) but also, in Coleridge's words:

be distributed throughout the country, so as not to leave even the smallest integral part or division without a resident guide, guardian, and instructor; the objects and final intention of the whole order being these--to preserve the stores, to guard the treasures of past civilization, and thus to bind the
present with the past; to perfect and add to the same, and thus to connect the present with the future; but especially to diffuse through the whole community, and to every native entitled to its laws and rights, that quantity and quality of knowledge which was indispensable both for the understanding of those rights, and for the performance of the duties correspondent. (quoted in Riede 234-35)

The emphasis here is on "the traditional national heritage" (235), which must be guarded and preserved. Coleridge's notion of the clerisy's function is fundamentally conservative in that it exists to resist change. Though he describes it as a forward-looking institution, connecting the present with the future, he insists that it first bind the present to the past, a structure, of course, that gives the national heritage influence over the future. The clerisy was to have been a regulating body seeking to protect what Coleridge perceived as Britain's national integrity. In Riede's words, the clerisy would have constituted a "virtual thought police," a "vast ideological machine for the dissemination of a state-approved knowledge" (235).

The clerisy's is an educational mission, and Coleridge elsewhere makes it clear that education is to serve the state. He asserts in The Friend that instruction is one of the ends of government (1.253) and that the production of general information, along with general moral and religious principles, leads to "paramount genius and heroic power in a sufficient number of . . . citizens" (1.262). Despite placing a premium on education, though, and despite his belief that people of all classes should be educated, Coleridge held that only the upper classes should receive full educations, while the lower classes should experience only religious instruction and the benefit of whatever contact they might have with their social superiors (Riede 231-33). Such an educational system, of course, would have made it difficult for the poor to learn the principles of revolution, as they had in France and America. Indeed, Coleridge intended the system to "maintain the state of the world" (quoted in Riede 232). Notably, Southey reveals a similar desire that education work to repress revolution in "Colloquy XIII," though he speaks not of formal
schooling, but of other popular means of conveying information and opinions. He has
Sir Thomas More assert: "it is the duty of those to whom the pulpit or the press is open,
if they feel as they ought to do for their fellow-creatures, to awaken [compassion and
tenderness], and direct into useful channels the enthusiasm which too often runs wild and
goes to waste" (2.320). He too wants education to counter revolutionary behavior.

Wordsworth similarly opposed the revolutionary impulse; he advocated
passiveness, specifically "wise passiveness," describing it as a necessary quality of the
poet-hero. Such an approach in keeping with his abandonment of revolutionary politics,
and it is conducive to the insight he held necessary for appropriate action. Roe relates
that Wordsworth adopted the position of sage as he envisioned The Philanthropist in
1794 (210), and he thereafter maintained a belief in the importance of "vision" to poetic
and socio-political success. A number of the Lyrical Ballads stress that repose, or
idleness, leads to such moral insight. For example, in "Lines Written at a Small Distance
from my House, and Sent by My Little Boy to the Person to Whom They Are
Addressed," Wordsworth asks Dorothy to join him in savoring the "first mild day of
March" (l. 1), twice asserting: "for this one day / We'll give to idleness" (15-16, 39-40).
Their enjoyment of the first signs of spring, he contends, will lead them to insights that
will make them more loving people:

Love, now an universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth,
--It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than fifty years of reason;

---Roe contends that Wordsworth's emphasis on passivity can likely be traced in part to Godwinian thought (167-68).
---For further discussion of Wordsworth's attitude toward activity and passivity, see Spiegelman, especially pp. 16-21, Chapter 5: "The Autobiographical Hero in The Prelude," and Chapter Six: "The Mysterious Heroic World of The White Doe of Rylstone"; Williams (Romantic Poetry) p. 40; Bainbridge p. 86; and Riede pp. 98-99

229
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts may make,
Which they shall long obey;
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above;
We'll frame the measure of our souls,
They shall be tuned to love. (21-35)

Their idleness will be conducive to the heightened morality he considered necessary for
genuine heroism. The benefits of repose in nature are echoed in "Expostulation and
Reply" and its companion-poem, "The Tables Turned; An Evening Scene, on the Same
Subject." In the former Wordsworth states that powers exist "Which of themselves our
minds impress" (l. 21-22) and "That we can feed this mind of ours, / In a wise
passiveness" (23-24), and in the latter he asserts:

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man;
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can. (ll. 21-24)

And, notably, Wordsworth's virtuous warriors know the value of inaction. Francis
Norton takes time to bask in the sun like a "Herdsman" as he follows at a distance the
insurrection's action (ll. 777-84), and Beaupuy spends no small amount of time
wandering the countryside with Wordsworth (IX.437-44). Heroes, including poet-
heroes, are called to action, but they are most likely to act morally if they have sought the
insight that attends repose.

Wordsworth's insistence on the importance of insight to moral heroism is further
evident in his description of one of the shortcomings Wellington (then Wellesley)
exhibited in the Convention of Cintra scandal. Among the criticisms the poet levels at

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7See also "Inscription for the House (an Out-house) on the Island at Grasmere" and "A Poet's Epitaph."
Wellesley is referring to the French general Junot as the "Duc D'Abrantes" in a dispatch describing the British victory. Wordsworth argues that these are "words necessarily implying that Bonaparte, who had taken upon himself to confer upon General Junot this Portugueze title with Portugueze domains to support it, was lawful Sovereign of that Country, and that consequently the Portugueze Nation were rebels, and the British Army, and he himself [Wellesley] at the head of it, aiders and abettors of that rebellion" (251). Wordsworth's response to Wellesley's use of this title is remarkable not only for its criticism of his lack of vision but also for the depth of anger that it displays:

It would be absurd to suppose, that Sir Arthur Wellesley, at the time when he used these words, was aware of the meaning really involved in them: let them be deemed an oversight. But the capability of such an oversight affords too strong suspicion of a deadness to the moral interests of the cause in which he was engaged, and of such a want of sympathy with the just feelings of his injured Ally as could exist only in a mind narrowed by exclusive and overweening attention to the military character, led astray by vanity or hardened by general habits of contemptuousness. These words, "Duke of Abrantes in person," were indeed words of bad omen: and thinking men trembled for the consequences. They saw plainly, that . . . [Wellesley] must appear utterly unworthy of the station in which he had been placed. He had been sent as a deliverer— as an assertor and avenger of the rights of human nature. But these words would carry with them every where [sic] the conviction, that Portugal and Spain, yea, all which was good in England, or iniquitous in France or in Frenchmen, was forgotten, and his head full only of himself, miserably conceiting that he swelled the importance of his conquered antagonist by sounding titles and phrases, come from what quarter they might; and that, in proportion as this was done, he magnified himself and his atchievements [sic]. It was plain, then, that here was a man, who, having not any fellow-feeling with the people whom he had been commissioned to aid, could not know where their strength lay, and therefore could not turn it to account, nor by his example call it forth and cherish it; but that, if his future conduct should be in the same spirit, he must be a blighting wind wherever his influence was carried: for he had neither felt the wrongs of his allies nor been induced by common worldly prudence to affect to feel them, or at least to disguise his insensitivity; and therefore what could follow, but, in despite of victory and outward demonstrations of joy, inward disgust and depression? (251-52, his emph.)
Wordsworth insists that, despite his martial triumph, Wellesley lacks the insight and sensibility necessary for effective leadership and virtuous heroism. Dead to the moral cause with which he is involved, Wellesley should not devote "exclusive and overweening attention to [his] military character"—he needs to step away from his role as a martial commander in order see more clearly, and therefore achieve more effectively, Britain's goals on the Peninsula.

Wellington clearly did not meet the Wordsworthian criterion of heroic insight, a characteristic that the poet ascribes to himself. The Prelude, beginning with accounts of Wordsworth's active childhood and ending with his vision on Snowdon, recounts how Wordsworth came to recognize his poetic powers. The development of his imagination—which "Is but another name for absolute strength / And clearest insight, amplitude of mind, / And reason in her most exalted mood" (13.168-70)—allows him to experience in Nature "The Soul, the Imagination of the whole" (13.65). It allows him to comprehend the infinite, the eternal. This process, as Gill argues, is writ small in "Tintern Abbey" (152-55), where the poet in repose describes his development in nature, which culminates in mature and powerful perception:

For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
A motion and a spirit, that impels

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8The idea that Wellesley's immersion in military matters has hindered his morality recalls the sonnet "I griev'd for Buonaparte, with a vain."
All thinking things, all objects of all thought, 
And rolls through all things. (ll. 89-103)

By claiming to have knowledge of the infinite, Wordsworth assumes the stance of what Carlyle would later identify as the "Hero as Poet": that of Vates, or poet-prophet. He speaks of himself in Book One of The Prelude as a "favor'd Being" (362-71) as well as one involved with the "Wisdom and Spirit of the universe" (428-41), and in Book Thirteen he says that "higher minds" (90), such as his, "are truly from the Deity, / For they are Powers" (106-07). While, as I have argued, he hoped his poetry could affect worldly affairs, as the poet-hero he assumed a stance above society, speaking "as though from the mountaintop" (Riede 20).

Wordsworth attributes to figures with real insight, and hence to himself, an active, but not overpowering, sensibility:

```plaintext
ever on the watch,  
Willing to work and to be wrought upon,  
They need not extraordinary calls  
To rouze them, in a world of life they live  
By sensible impressions not enthralld,  
But quicken'd, rouz'd, and made thereby more fit  
To hold communion with the invisible world. (13.99-105)
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He also ascribes to them characteristics that, in "I griev'd for Buonaparte, with a vain," he denies to Napoleon and describes as constitutive of "True Power":

```plaintext
he whose soul hath risen  
Up to the height of feeling intellect  
Shall want no humbler tenderness, his heart  
Be tender as a nursing Mother's heart;  
Of female softness shall his life be full,  
Of little loves and delicate desires,  
Mild interests and gentlest sympathies. (13.204-10)
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Unlike Wellington and Napoleon, whom Wordsworth considers to be too obsessed with the military character to achieve true vision, the poet-hero has a "feeling intellect" that values the domestic and embraces the "feminine." The poet-hero may speak as though
from the mountaintop, but doing so does not entail the abandonment of the domestic sphere.

Wordsworth, then, assumed a heroic role that valued the home and complemented the function of Coleridge's clerisy. Not only did such later works as *The Excursion* and *Ecclesiastical Sonnets* explicitly promote loyalist politics, Wordsworth himself adopted a poetic personae characterized by repose, introspection, and observation, a stance opposed to the revolutionary impulse and the active hero. This is not to say, however, that Wordsworth's imagination was inactive. Bainbridge convincingly argues that Wordsworth's imagination played an active, indeed combative role, especially in its efforts to resist Napoleon. He asserts:

> Wordsworth's "Imagination" . . . is a militant, active and political force that both evolves out of and is directly engaged in Wordsworth's contest with Napoleon. Even while seeking to transcend—to see beyond the "One Man," beyond the "soulless image on the eye" to the "invisible world"—the "Imagination" continues to operate in "the very world which is the world / Of all of us" ([Prelude] X, 725-6), fighting the "tyranny" both of the eye and of Napoleon. (94)

His remarks are in keeping with a critical tradition of describing Wordsworth's imagination as imperialist, and, as we have seen, he certainly attempted to influence persons and events, to help determine political outcomes, with his verse. In this regard he sought to be a conqueror-hero, but part of his poetic mission was, as we have seen, to regulate heroism. As Wordsworth notes in the *Convention of Cintra*, the imagination,

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9Interestingly, Liu, as part of a very different argument contending that Wordsworth's poetry suppresses history, makes a similar claim with regard to the *Prelude's* description of the Snowdon experience: "Snowdon . . . is a vision of poetic Imagination that has 'surpered' upon the world in which actual usurpers rise to power. It is the coronation of the *Poet-Bonaparte*" (447, his emph.). See also Riede's assertion that the Romantic poets sought to extend their "poetic empires" (14).

10This line of thought usually focuses on Wordworth's relationship with nature. Mellor, for example, writes that Wordsworth represents himself in the Snowdon episode of *The Prelude* "as the weary but nonetheless heroic conqueror of a Nature whose Soul, 'the imagination of the whole,' is not his own" (18). See also Margaret Homans's assertions that Romantic poetry represents the culmination of a tradition "[w]here the masculine self dominates and internalizes otherness" and that the "other is frequently identified as feminine, whether she is nature, the representation of a human woman, or some phantom of desire" (12).
like martial force, must be used with discretion; it is "prone to err" (295). Assuming the role of poet-hero meant that Wordsworth could determine and convey the appropriate use of imagination. He could exercise "intellectual courage" in an attempt to influence the morality, and hence the political and martial development, of his nation. Like Milton, he could marshal absolute genius in service to Britain.

The Poet-Hero at Home

It is a telling feature of Wordsworth's poetic project that the lines known as the "Prospectus to The Recluse" first appeared at the end of a work devoted to the domestic sphere, Home at Grasmere. Unpublished in his lifetime, Home at Grasmere was to have comprised the first part of the first book of The Recluse. That the lines describing his poetic ambition first appeared here highlights the centrality of domesticity to Wordsworth's poetic vision and the importance of home to the poet-hero. In Home at Grasmere Wordsworth makes it clear that the power of the poet-hero begins at home.

The lines immediately preceding those that became the "Prospectus to The Recluse" describe Wordsworth's fascination with but ultimate rejection of physical and martial heroism. He describes his childhood penchant, also treated in The Prelude, for courting nature's dangers as well as his love for tales of martial feats (MS. B, ll. 915-27), and he admits to still finding more value in such tales than he believes he should:

I cannot at this moment read a tale  
Of two brave Vessels matched in deadly fight  
And fighting to the death, but I am pleased  
More than a wise Man ought to be; I wish,  
I burn, I struggle, and in soul am there. (ll. 929-33)

11The phrase "intellectual courage" is from the Convention of Cintra p. 256.

12Darlington gives an approximate completion date of 1806 for MS. B and of 1831-32 for MS. D (19, 28-29); because it was completed during the years on which this study focuses, I will cite the former.

235
Immediately thereafter, though, in a moment reminiscent of his description of his evolving relationship with nature in "Tintern Abbey," Wordsworth describes the more sober struggles to which he has chosen to devote his efforts:

But me hath Nature tamed and bade me seek
For other agitations or be calm,
Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent stream--
Some Nurseling of the Mountains which leads
Through quiet meadows after it has learned
Its strength and had its triumph and its joy,
Its desperate course of tumult and of glee.
That which in stealth by nature was performed
Hath Reason sanctioned. Her deliberate Voice
Hath said, "Be mild and love all gentle things;
Thy glory and thy happiness be there.
Yet fear (though thou confide in me) no want
Of aspirations which have been--of foes
To wrestle with and victory to complete,
Bounds to be leapt and darkness to explore.
That which enflamed thy infant heart--the love,
The longing, the contempt, the undaunted quest--
These shall survive, though changed their office, these
Shall live; it is not in their power to die." (ll. 934-52)

Nature and reason have called Wordsworth to be a poet-hero, and he accordingly adjusts his poetic ambition: "farewell / All hope, which once and long was mine, to fill / The heroic trumpet with the muse's breath!" (ll. 953-55). He abandons a desire to engage traditionally heroic themes to pursue his proposed master-work; from the "peaceful Vale" of Grasmere, "A Voice shall speak" (ll. 956-58).

Wordsworth attributes to the place, the "peaceful Vale," a key role in his proposed poetic project. Though in the lines that would become the "Prospectus to The Recluse" he calls for the help of the "prophetic Spirit" that has its "metropolitan Temple in the hearts / Of mighty Poets" (ll. 1026-29, my emph.), he makes it clear that he will draw strength from his native land. He says of Grasmere:
Though this passage's parenthetical elements indicate that Wordsworth lacks a complete understanding of how Grasmere affects him, it is clear that he draws from the spot both inspiration and stability. As the connection we have seen existing in his work between the domestic and political spheres indicates, his vision of and reliance on his home has important political implications. While Wordsworth insists that his vision of Grasmere is not utopian, his insistence on its separate superiority gives the work a nationalist thrust. His description of Grasmere constitutes a political commentary on issues facing Britain, and the desire for seclusion that he expresses reflects his growing allegiance to the British nation-state.

Notably, Wordsworth thrice insists that his vision of the people of Grasmere is objective. In lines 398-404 he states:

But not betrayed by tenderness of mind
That feared or wholly overlooked the truth
Did we come hither, with romantic hope
To find in midst of so much loveliness
Love, perfect love, of so much majesty
A like majestic frame of mind in those
Who here abide, the persons like the place . . . ,

13 These elements also recall "Tintern Abbey," where Wordsworth also questions the certainty of his understanding of the experiences he describes: "If this / Be but a vain belief . . . " (ll. 49-50).
and he quickly reiterates this point some thirty lines later:

I look for man,  
The common creature of the brotherhood,  
But little differing from the man elsewhere  
For selfishness and envy and revenge. . . . (433-36)

He later asserts yet again that he sees Grasmere with unclouded vision:

Dismissing . . . all Arcadian dreams,  
All golden fancies of the golden age,  
The bright array of shadowy thoughts from times  
That were before all time, or are to be  
When time is not, the pageantry that stirs  
And will be stirring when our eyes are fixed  
On lovely objects and we wish to part  
With all remembrance of a jarring world--  
Give entrance to the sober truth; avow  
That Nature to this favourite Spot of ours  
Yields no exemption, but her awful rights,  
Enforces to the utmost and exacts  
Her tribute of inevitable pain,  
And that the sting is added, man himself  
For ever busy to inflict himself. (ll. 829-43)

Wordsworth seems eager to ward off charges of romanticizing his home, charges that would challenge the integrity of the work's domestically driven political vision. Of course, these passages indicate that the poet may protest too much, and his description of Grasmere is certainly romanticized, despite his insistence to the contrary. In lines 439-64 Wordsworth insists that in the vale "extreme penury" is unknown, that labor is performed primarily by free men who own their land, and that because the need for neighborly help is not constant, neighbors readily aid the less fortunate. We need look no further than Dorothy's Grasmere journals to recognize the inaccuracy of this description,14 but its

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14See, for example, the first entry of The Grasmere Journals (May 14, 1800), which mentions two beggars, as well as the assertion of one John Fisher, who on chancing to meet Dorothy on one of her walks, "talked much about the alteration in the times, and observed that in a short time there would be only two ranks of people, the very rich and the very poor, for those who have small estates says he are forced to sell, and all the land goes into one hand" (19). For some additional examples of economic distress in the area, see 25, 26-27, 28, 42.

238
factual shortcomings do not hinder its significance, which is best evident in the lines that summarize his description of the idyllic life at Grasmere: "In this enclosure many of the old / Substantial virtues have a firmer tone / Than in the base and ordinary world" (ll. 466-68). Wordsworth's description of an idealized society at Grasmere betrays his increasingly loyalist political vision; he comes, like Burke, to seek stability in the "[s]ubstantial virtues" of land-owning British society.

While Wordsworth asserts that the benefits of Grasmere are also available to "other solitudes" that feature "noble privilege," places "where he who tills the field, / He, happy Man! is Master of the field / And treads the mountain which his Father trod" (457-64), he clearly marks Grasmere as superior to them. We remember the passage above where he describes the vale as a "Centre," a "Whole without dependence or defect," and to that we should add the following remarkable passage, which reveals Wordsworth's simultaneous desire for connection with and separation from the world at large:

Society is here:
The true community, the noblest Frame
Of many into one incorporate;
That must be looked for here; paternal sway,
One Household under God for high and low,
One family and one mansion; to themselves
Appropriate and divided from the world
As if it were a cave, a multitude
Human and brute, possessors undisturbed
Of this recess, their legislative Hall,
Their Temple, and their glorious dwelling-place. (881-28)

The description here of the society at Grasmere as "many into one" and "One Household under God" is at odds with the assertion that that society is "divided from the world."

The passage invokes transnational imagery to describe separate and local political efficacy; it recognizes that it is a poet's duty to consider universals, but it stresses the desire of this poet to be sheltered from the world at large. Wordsworth writes earlier in the poem:

239
as these lofty barriers break the force
Of winds—this deep vale as it doth in part
Conceal us from the storm—so here there is
A Power and a protection for the mind. . . . (ll. 455-58)

The poet is safer and more effective in the relative seclusion of Grasmere.

Underlying these passages is a Burkean vision of political stability, a belief in the political value of "paternal sway." Wordsworth envisions the community at Grasmere as an extended family gloriously sharing laws, beliefs, and the heritage of its predecessors, and he presents this social structure as combating the feelings of isolation wrought by Britain's socio-economic development. The lines preceding those asserting that the society at Grasmere is "One Household under God" describe such isolation:

he truly is alone,
He of the multitude, whose eyes are doomed
To hold a vacant commerce day by day
With that which he can neither know nor love—
Dead things, to him thrice dead—or worse than this,
With swarms of life, and worse than all, of men,
His fellow men, that are to him no more
Than to the Forest Hermit are the leaves
That hang aloft in myriads—nay, far less,
Far less for aught that comforts or defends
Or lulls or cheats. (ll. 808-18)

The extended family of Grasmere is a remedy for such isolation, and while Wordsworth advocates such a social structure in this poem, he does not imply that it could be extended throughout Britain. He insists, though, that it provides an appropriate place from which a poet may speak.

Wordsworth, then, insists on the relevancy of the domestic sphere to not only the martial hero but also the poet-hero. The poet should speak to the nation from the home, where there are "[a] power and a protection for the mind" and where the vision necessary for the poet-hero can be nurtured. Safe from the world's chaos, such as that exhibited at times during the French revolutionary movement, the poet-hero can attend to the
business of inspiring and instructing the nation. Of course, we know full well the high degree to which Wordsworth's poetry was a product of his home. The domestic labor of others gave him time to work, he read lines to his family, and Dorothy and Mary transcribed his verse. Kurt Heinzelman writes that "William's daydream" was "a labor-intensive, task-specific view of domestic activity as an infrastructure of support for creativity" (55), and it is clear that Wordsworth's home supported his poetic efforts. Coleridge criticized those who, after the failure of the French Revolution, merely sought escape from the political realm in the form of "domestic attachment" (quoted in Riede 145), but this is not what Wordsworth was doing. Instead, he relied on the home as a center from which to speak. Though the young Wordsworth endorsed the revolutionary activity Mellor describes as characteristic of masculine Romanticism, and though he later benefited from a household that privileged him and his work as a poet, the process and product of his poetry reveal a commitment to the home that she associates with feminine Romanticism. Indeed, as we have seen, his work, along with that of Southey and Coleridge, insists on the relevance of the domestic sphere to genuine heroism even as his political stance fundamentally changed. For each of these writers, heroes, including poet-heroes, must know the value of the family to the nation and the nation-state.

Legacy of the Poet-Hero

Of course, Wordsworth never finished The Recluse, so on at least one level he failed as a poet-hero. When he became the Poet Laureate in 1843, however, he became Britain's poet, the sanctioned voice of his nation, and the poet's laurels replaced the uniform he had donned forty years earlier at Ambleside. While Wordsworth enjoyed a longer and more productive poetic career than both Southey and Coleridge, his attempt to serve as a poet-hero is emblematic of their authorial efforts. Southey, of course, preceded Wordsworth as the Laureate, and Coleridge widely wrote on national and state
affairs. Each of them attempted to influence Britain's destiny in the roles of poet and author: passively active, removed but involved. In this sense all three sought to be poet-heroes, and, as we have seen, all three ultimately sought to promote political stability, to ward off the threat of revolution.

I will conclude by briefly examining how this function of the poet-hero was considered by three later writers: Percy Shelley, Thomas Carlyle, and Matthew Arnold. While Carlyle was the only one of the three explicitly to consider the poet as hero, each of them attributed to the figure of the poet the power to maintain social order, a testament to the strength of that conception. In his A Defence of Poetry, Shelley famously deems poets "the unacknowledged legislators of the world" (1087), and he there describes the social good that he believed poetry could achieve. His idea of the social role of poetry recalls that of Wordsworth and Coleridge, for he contends that "[t]he great instrument of moral good is the imagination; and poetry administers to the effect by acting upon the cause... Poetry strengthens the faculty which is the moral nature of man, in the same manner as exercise strengthens a limb" (1076). Poetry contributes to social good by stimulating individual minds. It "awakens and enlarges the mind itself," and it "lifts the veil from the hidden beauty of the world" (1076).

Part of poetry's effect on individuals is an expansion of their empathy. Shelley states:

> The great secret of morals is love; or a going out of our own nature, and an identification of ourselves with the beautiful which exists in thought, action, or person, not our own. A man, to be greatly good, must imagine intensely and comprehensively; he must put himself in the place of

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15 Composed in 1821, published 1840.
16 See also his contention that "the presence or absence of poetry in its most perfect and universal form, has been found to be connected with good or evil in conduct or habit" (1077).
17 See also his assertions that poetry "makes familiar objects be as if they were not familiar" and that it "reproduces all that it represents, and the impersonations clothed in its Elysonian light stand thenceforward in the minds of those who have once contemplated them, as memorials of that gentle and exalted content which extends itself over all thoughts and actions with which it co-exists" (1076).
another and of many others; the pains and pleasures of his species must become his own. (1076).

Poetry, he avers, stimulates such empathy, and, significantly, it in turn influences and reflects national will. Shelley argues that "an energetic development" of England's literature has always "preceded or accompanied a great and free development of the national will," and that "[t]he most unfailing herald, companion, and follower of the awakening of a great people to work a beneficial change in opinion or institution, is poetry" (1086). He thus argues that the changes poetry can effect within individuals positively affect the nation, but for him, of course, the idea of a positive national change was not loyalist in nature, as it was for the older Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. Indeed, in the Defence he indicates his disdain for loyalist poetry by including in a list of poets and their faults the fact that Spenser was a poet laureate (1085-86). But like the "lakers," he counts among poetry's virtues its ability to counter social anarchy. He writes that "the world would have fallen into utter anarchy and darkness, but that there were found poets among the authors of the Christian and chivalric systems of manners and religion, who created forms of opinion and action never before conceived" (1079-80), and he states that as a result of a contemporary "unmitigated exercise of the calculating faculty," or a neglect of the imaginative powers, the "rich have become richer, and the poor have become poorer; and the vessel of the state is driven between the Scylla and Charybdis of anarchy and despotism" (1083). Exercise of the poetic faculty, he contends, is the antidote to Britain's ills. Notably, Shelley includes an increased sense of "patriotism" among the positive products of poetic practice (1084, 1085), and while he does not explain exactly what he means by that term--whether he is using it in the sense of state patriotism or as it was used by oppositionists--it is clear that he generally means

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18 Among the other poets and their alleged faults are "that Homer was a drunkard, that Virgil was a flatterer, that Horace was a coward, that Tasso was a madman, that Lord Bacon was a peculator, that Raphael was a libertine. . . ." His larger point here is that the alleged faults of these writers have been obscured by their poetic achievements.
an attachment to nation, if not to nation-state. Like Wordsworth, he locates a role for the poet in national affairs.

He is ambiguous, however, as to the degree to which poets can willfully influence the nation. In his praise for the aforementioned Christian and chivalric poets he states that they "became as generals to the bewildered armies of their [contemporaries'] thoughts" (1080). But he also insists that "[a] poet . . . would do ill to embody his own conceptions of right and wrong, which are usually those of his place and time, in his poetical creations, which participate in neither" (1076); and that poetry "is not subject to the control of the active powers of the mind, and that its birth and recurrence have no necessary connexion with consciousness or will" (1086). Poets, he contends, can have a commanding effect on others, but they should not be didactic, and they cannot will their poetic gift into action. They must perform their task of stimulating and thus enhancing the nation when their gift allows them to, and they must go about so doing with the broad goal of provoking readers' imaginations, and thus spurring effective consideration of local and contemporary issues. Shelley allocates a powerful national role to poetry, but he denies poets the will to create.

Carlyle, on the other hand, attributes to poets a large degree of self-will, and his conception of the poetic task recalls Wordsworth's sense of the poet as hero. In his lecture "The Hero as Poet. Dante; Shakspeare" (delivered May 12, 1840),

the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King, Priest or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be all sorts of men. The Poet who would merely sit on a chair, and compose stanzas, would never make a stanza worth much. He could not sing the Heroic warrior, unless he himself were at least a Heroic Warrior too. (67-68)

19I cite from the collection of these lectures: On Heroes, Hero-Worship, & the Heroic in History.
He later makes a similar point, stating: "You may see how a man would fight, by the way in which he sings; his courage, or want of courage, is visible in the word he utters, in the opinion he has formed, no less than in the stroke he strikes" (91). Carlyle thus compares the poet and warrior, and he finds their courage commensurate. That courage, he contends, must exist in conjunction with another characteristic he holds essential to genuine heroism: vision, or insight. He states that the poet, like the prophet, has "penetrated . . . into the sacred mystery of the Universe," into the "divine mystery, which lies everywhere in all Beings, . . . of which all Appearance, from the starry sky to the grass of the field, but especially the Appearance of Man and his work, is but the vesture, the embodiment that renders it visible" (69); and he declares: "To the Poet, as to every other, we say first of all. See. If you cannot do that, it is of no use to keep stringing rhymes together, jingling sensibilities against each other, and name yourself a Poet; there is no hope for you" (90).

Carlyle associates this insight with morality, contending that sight, or knowledge, is dependent on an ability to empathize much like that which Shelley described:

>a thoroughly immoral man could not know anything at all! To know a thing, what we can call knowing, a man must first love the thing, sympathize with it: that is, be virtuously related to it. If he have not the justice to put down his selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous-true at every turn, how shall he know? His virtues, all of them, will lie recorded in his knowledge. Nature with her truth remains to the bad, to the selfish and pusillanimous, forever a sealed book: what such can know of Nature is mean, superficial, small; for the uses of the day merely. (91)

The poet-hero, and for Carlyle any hero, must see, a task that requires marked empathetic powers. Carlyle insists that the vision requisite for heroism entails connecting with others, so like the "lakers" before him, he rejects the individualism of the Byronic Hero.

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20See also his statement: "The great heart, the clear deep-seeing eye: there it lies; no man whatever, in what province soever, can prosper at all without these" (68).
And he too contends that the poet-hero can ward off anarchy. He states that the task of the poet-hero, like that of the prophet, is to perceive "the sacred mystery of the Universe," that which Goethe calls the "open secret," and to share it with the rest of the world (69). That secret is ordered, not chaotic, and the poet’s task accordingly counters anarchy. The orderly nature of the "sacred mystery" is best evident in Carlyle’s associating it with song, the poetic product. He states:

A musical thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inmost heart of the thing; detected the inmost mystery of it, namely the melody that lies hidden in it; the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists, and has a right to be, here in this world. All inmost things, we may say, are melodious; naturally utter themselves in Song. (71)

The sacred mystery is melodious, and "[a]ll deep things are song" (71). The poet-hero perceives and conveys the deep melodies of the universe, and is heroic in so doing, for song is "the Heroic of Speech" (77).

The poet-hero, though, is not heroic only on a universal, or transnational, level. Carlyle argues that such a figure also has a role to play in national and international affairs. While he does not ascribe to the poet a specifically military role, as Wordsworth does, he charges the poet with the task of unifying the nation. At the close of the lecture, after he has discussed Dante and Shakespeare, he asserts: "truly, it is a great thing for a Nation that it get an articulate voice; that it produce a man who will speak forth melodiously what the heart of it means!" (97). Such a figure, he attests, was Dante, and as a result of Dante’s work, he argues, "Italy is actually one," despite its then lying "dismembered, scattered asunder, not appearing in any protocol or treaty as a unity at all" (97, his emph.). He makes a similar claim for Shakespeare, but instead of claiming that he unifies England, or Britain, Carlyle contends that Shakespeare unifies Saxondom. He states: "England, before long, this Island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of the English: in America, in New Holland, east and west to the very Antipodes, there will be
a Saxondom covering great spaces of the Globe”; then he asks: "And now, what is it that can keep all of these together into virtually one Nation, so that they do not fall out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse, helping one another?” (96). The answer, he avers, is Shakespeare, whom he pictures "radiant aloft over all the Nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence,” and of whom he imagines men and women of English descent everywhere stating to one another: "'Yes, this Shakespeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and one kind with him'” (97). Shakespeare can do what politicians and soldiers cannot—maintain Saxon unity—and Carlyle imagines him as an indestructible "rallying-sign," as "King Shakspeare," whom "no time or chance, Parliament or combination of Parliaments, can dethrone" (97).

A dual national and transnational focus, like that exhibited in Carlyle's views on poetry, is evident in Matthew Arnold's thought regarding the role of criticism in society. He argues at the end of "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time" that Europe is "for intellectual and spiritual purposes, one great confederation, bound to a joint action and working to a common result; and whose members have, for their proper outfit, a knowledge of Greek, Roman, and Eastern antiquity, and of one another.”21 This view, however, does not preclude national interests; he immediately adds: "Special, local, and temporary advantages being put out of account, that modern nation will in the intellectual and spiritual sphere make the most progress, which most thoroughly carries out this program [his program of criticism]” (258). He argues that criticism, which he vaguely defines as seeing "the object as in itself it really is” (239), as trying "to know the best that is known and thought in the world" (245), prompts periods of creativity (246), and that exercise of the critical faculty is necessary for the maintenance of "a nation's spirit" (245).

21First delivered as a lecture at Oxford on October 29, 1864, it was then published in the National Review in November of that year and subsequently in the first series of Essays in Criticism (1865) (Culler 571).
Arnold explores a similar connection in *Culture and Anarchy*, which he wrote in the midst of the agitation surrounding the passage of the Second Reform Bill in August, 1867.\(^2\) He here examines the relationship between culture—which he defines as "*a study of perfection*" motivated by both "the scientific passion for pure knowledge" and "the moral and social passion for doing good" (pp. 409-10)--and the state, which he describes as "the nation in its collective and corporate character controlling, as government, the free swing of this or that one of its members in the name of the higher reason of them all" (433). A key concern of the piece is how to prevent anarchic behavior, such as that displayed in the Hyde Park riots, and he contends that culture can function in that capacity, especially when it manifests itself in the state. Arnold writes that in its pursuit of perfection culture seeks to promote "sweetness and light," to make "reason and the will of God" prevail. It seeks to do so not only for the privileged classes but also for "the raw and unkindled masses"; it thus aims to produce a "*national* glow" of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive" (426). In its insistence on "sweetness and light," or "beauty and intelligence" (416), culture counters the threat of anarchy that Arnold perceived in contemporary Britain. He states:

> Now, if culture ... brings us light, and if light shows us that there is nothing so very blessed in merely doing as one likes, that the worship of the mere freedom to do as one likes is worship of machinery, that the really blessed thing is to like what right reason ordains, and to follow her authority, then we have got a practical benefit out of culture. We have got a much wanted principle, a principle of authority, to counteract the tendency to anarchy which seems to be threatening us. (434)

Arnold argues that the best way for culture to function in this capacity is through the state, but he insists that the state is a proper seat of authority only when under the influence of culture: "We want an authority, and we find nothing but jealous classes,

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\(^2\)First published in the *Comhill* in 1867-67, it was published as a book in 1869 (Culler 577-78).
checks, and a deadlock; culture suggests the idea of the State. We find no basis for a firm State-power in our ordinary selves; culture suggest one to us in our best self" (443). Ordinary selves may constitute a tyrannical or class-driven state, but a state composed of cultured selves could contain anarchy without threatening tyranny; it could function as "the organ of our collective best self, or our national right reason" (444), and as "the nation in its collective and corporate character, entrusted with stringent powers for the general advantage, and controlling individual wills in the name of an interest wider than that of individuals" (429). The opportunity for dramatic societal change would still exist--and Arnold recognized a need for such change--but the risk of anarchy would be eliminated. Instead, society would change via what Wellington called "revolution by due course of law" (444).

Arnold contended that criticism, culture, and the state produce national health and order, and he saw martial service and poetry as contributing to their so doing. In Culture and Anarchy he states that military service, even via conscription, contributes to national unity and commitment to the state (416), and he there also asserts that poetry shares culture's pursuit of "sweetness and light." He attributes to poetry a role tantamount to that of religion, even contending that poetry has the power to transform religious practice:

the idea of beauty and of a human nature perfect on all its sides, which is a dominant idea of poetry, is a true and invaluable idea, though it has not yet had the success that the idea of conquering the obvious faults of our animality, and of a human nature perfect on the moral side,--which is the dominant idea of religion,--has been enabled to have; and it is destined, adding to itself the religious idea of a devout energy, to transform and govern the other. (416)\(^2\)

Poetry's pursuit of perfect human nature is at one with culture's; both seek to make prevail within an individual not the ordinary self, but what Arnold calls "a commanding

\(^2\)See also "The Study of Poetry" (306-07).
best self, or right reason, recognised" (453). Such a self, his work argues, would not yield to the vagaries of anarchy.

In claiming pivotal roles for culture, and hence for poetry, in national affairs, Arnold asserts that they promote behavior and characteristics that, as we have seen, are exhibited by heroes in the works of Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. First, he contends that the personal perfection that culture pursues is characteristically well-rounded, that it "is a harmonious expansion of all the powers, which make the beauty and worth of human nature, and is not consistent with the over-development of any one power at the expense of the rest" (412). This statement recalls Wordsworth's criticism of Wellesley as exclusively focused on military affairs, Southey's critique of Nelson as failing in the domestic sphere, and Coleridge's praise of Washington's ability and willingness to retire to his home. These writers insist that martial heroism be combined with commitments to the home and to morality, and, as we have seen, Wordsworth's notion of the poet-hero similarly demands multiple commitments and concerns. Arnold's notion of perfection also insists that individuals not isolate themselves:

Perfection, as culture conceives it, is not possible while the individual remains isolated. The individual is required, under pain of being stunted and enfeebled in his own development if he disobeys, to carry others along with him in his march towards perfection, to be continually doing all he can to enlarge and increase the volume of the human stream sweeping thitherward. (412)

This assertion, of course, recalls the insistence of Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge that heroism demands meaningful connection with family and nation, that it cannot exist in isolation.

The idea of Shelley, Carlyle, and Arnold that the poet has social functions, including countering anarchy, echoes Wordsworth and Coleridge's thinking regarding the role of the poet-hero. Though Wordsworth and Coleridge conceived of the poet as seeing and speaking from a distance, in repose, they did not promote utter isolation.
Indeed, they insisted on the importance of domestic attachments to the validity of poetic insight and claimed for the poet-hero a vital role in national affairs. Their vision of heroism, along with that of Southey, ran counter to Byronic and Romantic hero-types, who were certainly powerful cultural figures but who are by no means representative of the variety of Romantic-era conceptions of heroism. Such conceptions, as we have seen, were many and were politically charged, and, in the case of the Romantic writers we examined, were meaningfully engaged with home and nation.
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257


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259


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262


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266


