‘To Take a Manly Part’: Constructions of masculinity in the East Anglian elite,1750-1835

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Abstract

This thesis offers a study of elite masculinity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It focuses on the life and experience of four men: The Right Honourable William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread II and Edward Harbord, 3rd Lord Suffield. Utilising personal correspondence, including diaries and travel journals, this thesis explores how men in positions of power and authority responded to and shaped contemporary constructs of masculinity and how these constructs were evident as both an interiorised sense of identity and lived out experience.

The research demonstrates how each of these men consciously adapted their masculine selves to maximise opportunity and success. William Windham displays a multi-layered example of elite masculinity which was complex and idiosyncratic revealing a man whose own view of himself differed greatly from his public persona. John Patteson represents a man whose masculinity was deliberately shaped by his mother with the intention that he acquire the manly accomplishments required for recognition and respect in elite society. Samuel Whitbread was a man whose gendered experience of political 'celebrity' was based on a distinctively 'English' masculinity emphasising physical appeal, plain-speaking and truthfulness but which resulted in ostracism and decline. Edward Harbord's commitment to political 'independence' and humanitarian notions of reform highlight a brand of masculinity characterised by faith, determination and an obligation to serve others.

Building on the work of Dror Wahrman, Mark Rothery, Henry French and Matthew McCormack the thesis puts forward the idea that elite men and their families paid very close attention to the rehearsal, reinforcement and reproduction of traditional constructs of 'English' masculinity as essential markers of manliness. In doing so, they showed a greater sense of themselves as 'active' individuals - men who were able to secure both personal and political reputation at a time of acute national stress.

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Introduction

This thesis explores the subject of elite masculinity during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It focuses on the personal experiences of four prominent men from the East of England - The Right Honourable William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread II and Edward Harbord, 3rd Lord Suffield, whose lives spanned the period 1750-1835. The period is well known to historians as a time of high population growth, increased economic activity, prolonged warfare and an explosion in print culture. These developments impacted the ways in which men at the highest levels of society considered their masculinity and coincided with a political instability following the loss of the American colonies which engendered negative feelings against the elite. 'Condemnation of their incompetence', argues M. Roberts, and mistrust of their 'ability to put public good before private gain, nation before faction, and personal probity before corruption and waste of state resources' contributed to the ways in which elite men considered themselves *as men*.[1] It is against this background that the subjects of this thesis found themselves, not only defending the existence of the elite group to which they belonged but also self-consciously reassessing the masculine values which they considered important in both their public and private lives. In essence, these four men were part of a key group who directed political events and change at the turn of the nineteenth century and whose masculine lives are comparatively little understood.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the extent to which Windham, Patteson, Whitbread and Harbord were aware of their masculine selves, and how they responded to contemporary circumstances in shaping their own male personas as they acquired both status and power. In specific terms, it will consider those interiorised masculine values which were believed to be important not only to their public images but also to their intimate selves. This thesis argues that their experiences can offer a greater understanding of how masculine values and behaviour affected political power, ideology and action at a significant moment for gender identities. The primary source material for this research diverges from the official and formal and focuses on ego documents such as personal letters, diaries, notebooks and travel journals, all of which offer a fresh angle on the perceived and

[1] M. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge, 2004), p.31.

practised interpretations of masculinity prevalent during the period.[2] In exploring these sources, this study aims to make a dynamic and thoughtful intervention to the historical study of masculinity and to the relatively unexplored study of elite men and their own personal interpretations of what it meant to be a man at this time.

This introduction will review the development of the literature relating to the study of masculinity from its historiographical and sociological roots to its present state. It will establish to what extent the subject of men and masculinities has been addressed by historians and put forward new ways of creating a meaningful contribution to the field.

A Review of the Literature on Historical Masculinity

The historical study of masculinity and its place within the history of gender has emerged tentatively over the last thirty to forty years and has developed out of the search for balance in understanding the experience of both men and women in the past. The American social scientist Joan Scott, explains Michael Roper, was amongst the first to offer meaningful insight into broadening 'the concept of gender in a way that gave it a purchase in areas of ''mainstream'' historical study, such as military history, diplomatic history and political history'. 'These arenas', Scott argued, 'remained largely impervious to gender analysis because their concerns were with men's activities, public institutions and power', and not with women who were largely confined to the home or 'private sphere'. As a result, women's history tended to focus on the evidence of subjective, personal material ignoring the fact that 'discourses of the public sphere often rested on gendered meanings' which held relevance for both sexes.[3] The point of gender history, according to Scott, should be to seek out and reveal the sexual difference present within the discourses of government, the nation-state, war, business and so on. However, where Scott concentrated on redressing the imbalance of women's representation in history, the idea that the study of men, *as men*, should be included in this context remained unvoiced. Where women's history struggled to expand beyond analysis of the private sphere, the subject of masculinity and men's domination of public life had, notes John Beynon, been 'taken for granted and … passed largely unquestioned'.[4]

[2] The term 'ego document' refers to autobiographical writing, such as memoirs, diaries, letters and travel accounts. It was coined around 1955 by the historian Jacques Presser, who defined these sources as writing where the 'I', the writer is continuously present in the text.
[3] M. Roper, 'Slipping out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal,* 59 (spring, 2005), pp. 60. Roper references Scott's essay, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *American Historical Review,* 91.5 (1986), pp. 1053-1075.
[4] J. Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture* (Buckingham and Philadelphia, 2002), p.58.

In effect, concludes Roper, the place of men in history continued with a '"curiously detached" feel' which failed to address subjectivity in either a cultural or privately emotional sense.[5] Only over recent decades have historians 'embraced the fact that masculinity … has a history, [and] one which reveals a complex interweaving of both imagined and lived masculinities' and that the understanding of these two states is crucial.[6]

Almost thirty years ago, historian John Tosh led the challenge in encouraging academics to provide a balance to women's history and the historical treatment of gender. In his now well-known *History Workshop Journal* article 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity?' Tosh derided the fact that in the history books masculinity was 'everywhere but nowhere'.[7] Drawing on the call of early modern historian Natalie Zemon Davis, he emphasised 'the need to understand a system of social relations *as a whole* - class in the first instance, gender in the second'.[8] Just as the working classes could not be understood in isolation, so women could not be understood without reference to the experience of their male contemporaries.[9] In order to fully understand women's experience over periods of economic and political transformation the study of gender must necessarily include the history of men and an assessment of different constructs of masculinity over time. One of the first and most influential gender studies to do this was Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall's *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*.[10] Utilising the rich archival material of provincial middle-class families in the Midlands and Essex, Davidoff and Hall described the importance to industrialising society of the rising English middle classes in this period and the relative position of the sexes. The essence of their original argument, state Tim Hitchcock and Michele Cohen, is that 'from the middle of the eighteenth century, women were increasingly restricted to a domestic and ''private'' sphere of the home while men monopolised the ''public'' spheres of business and politics'.[11]

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[5] Roper, '*Slipping out of View',* p.61.
[6] Beynon, *Masculinities and Culture,* p.59.
[7] J. Tosh, 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth Century Britain' in *History Workshop Journal,* 38 (1994), p.180.
[8] In 1975 Natalie Zemon Davis addressed a feminist audience about encouraging the study of masculinities. The content of her speech is recorded in 'Women's History in Transition: the European Case', *Feminist Studies* 3 (1975).
[9] J. Tosh, 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity?', p.179.
[10] L. Davidoff and C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1750-1850* (London, 1987). A revised edition, responding to some of the questions raised in the original work was published in 2002.
[11] T. Hitchcock and M. Cohen (Eds.), *English Masculinities 1660-1800* (London, 1999), p.18.

The notion of 'separate spheres' however was not intended to be a closed argument and following lively academic debate was revisited by the authors in 2002. 'Family Fortunes', stress Davidoff and Hall, 'is a story of exclusion and contestation, of boundaries which could never fully be fixed, yet had to be dismantled. Central to [the] argument is the language of public and private spheres, a language which comes from the tracts, poems, letters and diaries of the men and women whose stories provide the thrust for analysis'.[12] Focusing on both men and women the book is still the subject of interest to historians of both class and gender and remains a definitive work on the period.[13] It shows that the history of masculinity has developed 'within the new gender history', and confirms the necessity of studying 'both men *and* women in the past if we are to understand either'.[14]

The work of the earlier group of historians led by Tosh, Roper and Hitchcock has been key to the development of this belief and provided the impetus for the undertaking of research projects into constructions of masculinities. For Tosh, the importance of 'dispos[ing] once and for all the argument that masculinity is ''natural'' and thus beyond history', or that men should remain the unanalysed norm with women the exception which merited specific mention, should set the standard.[15] 'Historians', agreed Robert Shoemaker, 'had failed to analyse masculinity *per se,* in the sense that they had failed to identify the ways in which definitions of suitable behaviour for men, as men, had changed over time.'[16] How could the patriarchal restrictions of the present be understood without looking at the 'alternative conceptions of masculinity' found in the past?[17] Their focus on the two centuries between 1650 and 1850 emphasised a period of immense social, economic, political and cultural change in England which is especially relevant to our understanding of men's experience as much as women's. This period, stresses

[12] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes* (revised edition, 2002), p. xv.
[13] In his study *A Man's Place : Masculinity and the Middle class home in Victorian England* (London, 1999) John Tosh challenges Davidoff and Hall's assumption arguing that in the nineteenth century men increasingly invested their self-identity in their public performance of a masculine role tied to a strong authoritarian position within the family. In addition, Amanda Vickery makes the point that the existence of 'separate spheres' in eighteenth century Britain was not a specific feature of this period, but merely a 'rough division' which could 'be applied to almost any century and any culture'. 'Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the categories and chronology of English women's history', *Historical Journal,* 36 (1993), p.413.
[14] M. McCormack, 'Men, 'the Public' and Political History' in M. McCormack (Ed.), Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain (Basingstoke, 2007), p.23.
[15] Tosh, 'What Should Historians do with Masculinity?', p.190.
[16] R. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society, 1650-1850: The emergence of separate spheres?* (London, 1998), p.2.
[17] Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society,* p.2.

Shoemaker, 'experienced industrialisation and considerable population growth; the emergence of a class society, with an increasingly prominent middle class; the breakdown of the religious monopoly held by the Church of England; the emergence of popular participation as a significant feature in political life, and a major reduction in the powers of the monarchy; and the advent of mass literacy and widespread access to books, pamphlets, and periodicals.'[18] In addition, given the fact that constructs of gender often change very slowly, one needs to look at such long and turbulent periods of time in order to uncover significant changes, a synthetic perspective consistently advocated by Matthew McCormack.[19]

In order to better understand how the field has developed up to the present state, it is useful to consider the key works which have driven the literature on gender and have influenced the now established interest in historical masculinities. The publication of *Family Fortunes* proved vital to the expansion of the study of masculinities, particularly in developing the history of men's ambiguous relationship between domesticity and manliness which emerged from the early modern period. In his key work *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800,* Anthony Fletcher has emphasised the important intellectual, cultural and economic changes which shaped gender between preindustrial and industrial England, caused by the dramatic upheavals of the Interregnum.[20] Studies of gender and masculinities in earlier periods have helped to explain constructs such as 'honour' and 'reputation' which defined men and women's relationship to one another and their relevance to wider analyses of society or political events. In addition, Elizabeth Foyster has demonstrated the importance of the late medieval biological interpretation in defining the sexes, in particular the belief that whilst the physical human body was believed to be identical regardless of sex, differences in temperature caused distinct behaviour differences.[21] The study of honour and reputation which features strongly

[18] Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society,* pp.5-6.

[19] McCormack pursues a synthetic approach in *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2005), 'A Man's Sphere? British Politics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' in C. Fletcher et al (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of* Masculinity *and Political Culture in Europe* (London, 2018) and more recently in *Citizenship and Gender in Britain, 1688-1928* (Abingdon, 2019).

[20] Anthony Fletcher's *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (Yale, 1995).

[21] Elizabeth Foyster explains that the 'one-sex model' was made up of 'four humours – blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile - and it was their relative heat or moistness which determined maleness or femaleness'. Men had the 'propensity to be hot and dry; women cold and moist'. She also discusses the 'two key male characteristics of 'reason and strength'' which were frequently at odds with the female susceptibility to 'passion, lust and temptation'. In this way, men and women were defined in relation to each other's qualities and it was just as important for a man to define himself by rejecting unsuitable female qualities as pursuing and asserting the more 'desirable' male

in the work of Fletcher, Foyster and also Anna Bryson has formed an attempt to understand masculine roles in the context of elite political society which contributed to the violent events of the mid-seventeenth century.[22] Awareness of these earlier markers is therefore important as they continued to have resonance for men well in to the eighteenth century and remind us that over time a man's reputation rested less on his ability to be master of his own household and more on his public and commercial standing as a moral, upright and trustworthy gentleman. Tosh refers to this as, 'a shift from masculinity as social reputation to masculinity as an interiorised sense of personal identity', a theme which is given further weight by Karen Harvey.[23] Drawing on the work of Anthony Fletcher, Harvey explains that where early modern ideas of manhood were 'based upon honour, a quality made externally and constituted by '"reputation in the eyes of others"', masculinity became an '"internalised identity– an interiority of the mind and emotions – as opposed to a sense of role- playing"'.[24] These considerations had important ramifications for the study of men as individuals beyond the home and family – into the public sphere.

During the final decades of the twentieth century the contribution of two significant sociological works provided the impetus to further develop the historical subject of masculinities into the world of power and politics. The translation into English of Jurgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* constituted a direct challenge to Davidoff and Hall's premise fuelling keen debate on the limitations of strictly gendered 'separate spheres' in the eighteenth century.[25] Movement by men and women between public and private spaces, according to Habermas created a new refined location, the 'authentic public sphere' – coffee

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characteristics. *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (London, 1999), pp.28-29, 31.

[22] Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998) discusses the 'late medieval noble household' where both the 'lineage and rank' of men was expressed in the 'preservation of large and highly visible hierarchies of service and in which gender, race and classical military values were still predominant', but in ''gradual decline''. p.280. Foyster analyses the importance of reputation, the fear of gossip and the ignominy of a man being branded a cuckold. *Manhood in Early Modern England,* pp.67-72.

[23] J. Tosh, 'The Old Adam and the New Man: Emerging Themes in the History of Masculinities, 1750-1850' in T. Hitchcock and M. Cohen (Eds.), *English Masculinities 1660-1800* (London, 1999), p. 219.

[24] K. Harvey, 'The History of Masculinity, circa 165-1800', *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (April ,2005), p.303. Harvey adds that 'the term "masculinity" was first recorded in 1748 perhaps to emphasise the "more rounded concept of the complete man"'.

[25] J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, 1992). In response to Habermas, Hitchcock and Cohen argue - because the 'public' is a space generally occupied by men, 'their presence in that space has been taken for granted and the dangers which mixed conversation, with its refining and civilising functions and its female company, held for eighteenth century masculinity have, according to Hitchcock and Cohen, generally been overlooked'. Hitchcock and Cohen (Eds.), *English Masculinities,* p. 20.

houses, places of entertainment as well the domestic salon which were inhabited by both men *and* women alike. Habermas' development of the debate created interest for historians of masculinity as refined sociability, intellectual vigour and appealing conversation were recognised as vital new skills for men both as private free-thinking individuals and independent public figures.[26]

Almost a decade after Habermas, the publication of sociologist Robert Connell's *Masculinities* also attracted the attention of historians. Connell's concept of 'masculinities' as a plurality confirmed views that many competing forms of masculinity were at play during the eighteenth century, and before.[27] However, his appropriation of Antonio Gramsci's concept of a 'hegemonic form of masculinity – a set of normative ideas … that is culturally dominant at any given time [and] against which other forms of masculinity stand in relations of subordination, marginalisation and complicity' has proved problematic, particularly with reference to other structures of power such as 'class or denominational affiliation'.[28] McCormack argues that historical 'notions of masculinity have been far from monolithic or stable, and alternative forms should be considered on their own terms rather than defined in relation to a static '"hegemonic" model'.[29] Central to his thinking is the belief that political events *can* drive gender change and that this change can be felt both at a personal level and on the public stage. Henry French and Mark Rothery pursue this

[26] Significant contributions to the debate of the 'public sphere' include D. Castiglione and L. Sharpe (Eds.), *Shifting the Boundaries: Transformations of the Language of Public and Private in the Eighteenth Century (*Exeter, 1995*),* B. Robbins (Ed.), *The Phantom Public Sphere* (London, 1993) and D. Goodman, 'Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime', *History and Theory,* 31 (1992), p.1-20. Amongst historians, Lawrence Klein has raised questions regarding the setting of rigid analytical meaning to 'public' and 'private' in 'Gender and the Public/Private Distinction in the Eighteenth Century: Some questions about Evidence and Analytic Procedure', *Eighteenth century Studies,* 29.1 (1996), pp.97-109.

[27] R. Connell, *Masculinities* (Los Angeles, 1995). For further discussion of Connell's interpretation of 'masculinities' see H. French and M. Rothery, 'Hegemonic Masculinities? Assessing Change and Processes of Change in Elite Masculinity, 1700-1900' in J. Arnold and S. Brady (Eds.), *What is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World* (London, 2011), pp.139-166 and B. Griffin, 'Hegemonic Masculinity as a Historical Problem', *Gender and History,* 30.2 (July 2018) pp.377-400

[28] Connell, *Masculinities*, pp.185-204. Despite its limitations Connell's work stands alone in tackling a broad chronological view of the history of men between 1450 and the present and his ideas continue to stimulate debate. B. Griffin, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain: Masculinity, Political Culture and the Struggle for Women's Rights* (Cambridge, 2012), p.168.

[29] Matthew McCormack's edited collection of essays *Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain* acknowledges Connell's writing in assisting us in our understanding of 'the links between the political power of the state and the place of gender in society, a society that is structured by an unequal power relationship between men, women and other men', p.17. McCormack extends this debate in 'A Man's Sphere? British Politics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries' in Fletcher et al (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Masculinity and Political Culture in Europe* (London, 2018), pp.247-264.

theme, explaining that ‘elite men in this period conceived their gender identity by reference to a number of competing stereotypes, ‘rather than in relation to a single ‘’hegemonic’’ form’ and that these were ‘created, reproduced and actively modified over time’.[30]

The issues of masculine diversity *and* individuality are therefore at the heart of our search to understand more about the experience of men of the past. Hitchcock has warned against the temptation to use a model of simple transition from a single ‘early modern’ masculinity based on social reputation to a ‘modern’ version in which men defined themselves through sexual behaviour (both heterosexual and homosexual) and through their control of women (newly confined to the domestic sphere). ‘Such a model’, argue Hitchcock and Cohen, ‘assumes that the main problems with which masculinity engages are sexual and patriarchal in nature and that there exists a single unified masculinity available for historical analysis.’[31] New and different ways of constructing masculinity are clearly required and according to Roper and Tosh, because masculinity is never *fully* possessed, men have constantly sought to achieve, assert and renegotiate their own version of it over time. For those in the public eye this was particularly the case, and even at the most generalised level of explaining ‘social mores’ we still require greater understanding into why the ‘uninhibited ‘’Georgian’’ libertine’ bore scant resemblance to his ‘sober frock coated ‘’Victorian’’ grandson’.[32]

Recent historians of masculinity have sought to pursue the debate by looking deeper into non- conformity in behaviour as much as established models. The colourful array of male types seen throughout the eighteenth century, including the Georgian libertine, shows that men were adept at adopting different personas in different situations. Philip Carter has discussed the range of possible identities within the cultural constructs of ‘politeness’ and ‘sensibility’ emphasising the potential for slippage and reassessment in the gendered lives of eighteenth- century men. Carter punctuates his argument with case studies including the intriguing multivalent identity of James Boswell, a man known to switch from restrained and sophisticated coffee house discourse one minute to sexually assaulting a prostitute

[30] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man’s Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660-1900* (Oxford, 2012), p.15.
[31] Hitchcock and Cohen, *English Masculinities,* p.21.
[32] Tosh, ‘New Adam’, p.218.

the next.[33] However, the reasons behind the existence of such varied approaches to masculinity are far from obvious and suggest that when faced with a bewildering array of role models men often made their own personalised choices in a way which moved well away from earlier stereotypes of male 'honour' and 'reason'. 'These personas', notes McCormack, 'did not necessarily define who you were … private morality was not always regarded as having a bearing on public life.'[34] In addition, 'a preoccupation with cultural representation', argues McCormack, has had the effect of 'reducing the topic to a plurality of contested meanings in the texts and images of the past', thus removing all sense of development or change. Crucially, he concludes, 'it threaten[s] to remove the question of *power* from historical explanation', surely a central dynamic for all gender relations.[35] We should now consider whether influential men such as Boswell were not only aware of those masculine behaviours which were denounced in the public sphere, but were increasingly conscious of those elements of their private masculine selves which were best firmly rejected, adapted or even hidden from view. In this way, suggests Roper, 'cultural histories have made us much more sensitive to the gaps and dissonance that may exist between experiences and their apprehension'. An awareness of 'this kind of sensitivity' is therefore vital in any new study where male 'emotional impulses' were 'capable of having profound social consequences.[36]

Debates around gender and masculinity have not tended to feature in the historiography of political history. Whether certain masculine characteristics and behaviours enabled men to become effective leaders or more likely to champion a particular cause has not been questioned or analysed, and argues McCormack, the 'question of *what it means to be a man* ha[s] generally been overlooked'.[37] The problem is rooted in men's accepted presence in the political histories of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The use of terms such as 'electorate, 'government' and 'minister' all resonate with the assumed masculinity of those involved resulting in issues of gender being consistently disregarded. This has encouraged a disembodied, depersonalised political history which has focused on

[33] P. Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800,* (Oxford, 2001), p.183-208. Focusing on the nature of polite gentlemanly society, Carter's work is a study of 'elite' men from both the aristocratic and aspiring classes.

[34] McCormack, 'A Man's Sphere?', p.251. A range of masculine identities were available, such as the libertine, the polite man or the *homo religious,* and men were adept at performing different personas in different situations. 'Masculinities were relatively fluid', argues McCormack, 'within a scheme of sex difference which was on a sliding scale'. p.251.

[35] McCormack, 'Men, 'the Public' and Political History', p.24.

[36] Roper, 'Slipping out of View, pp. 69-70.

[37] M. McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender in Britain, 1688-1928* (Abingdon, 2019), p.36.

structure rather than participant and has failed to fully recognise or explore the influence or experience of 'gendered' individuality or character. Historians of politics have preferred to analyse historical events, actions and achievements in isolation with only discussion of oratory and rhetoric getting closer to ideas of masculine character usually connected with debates on political power and leadership born out of 'personality cult'.[38] A separate body of work has however grown exploring men's experience of the wider political sphere: John Tosh's study of male middle-class domesticity in early Victorian England, Anna Clark's research into the masculinity of working- class men and Ben Griffin's study on men's role in the extension of female suffrage have all expanded our knowledge of men's lives beyond their assumed presence in the public sphere. They have shown that men as individuals have a story which contributes to our understanding of political power and decision-making at many different levels.[39] More specifically, Matthew McCormack's work on independence, citizenship and gender has demonstrated the connection between virtuous masculinity and political activity in Georgian England and emphasised the need for greater understanding of the fact that 'political virtue, political conduct and political legitimacy were all commonly thought about in terms of masculinity'.[40] The aim of *this* thesis therefore is to make a useful contribution to the field of political masculinities by showing that the late eighteenth century *was* an important moment for elite men's gendered experience in the political arena. The selection of specific masculine values and behaviours was not only key to their own acceptance and success but was also directly relevant to the advancement of new political ideas and change.

In conclusion, the field of historical masculinities currently flourishes with lively debate on the question of *what it actually means to be a man* in both historic and contemporary times.[41] The varied and pioneering work of John Tosh, Michael

[38] Well-known subjects such as Mao Zedong, Josef Stalin and Adolf Hitler are obvious examples, but there is currently similar interest in the gendered behaviour of twenty-first century political leaders such as Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin whose own individual masculine styles have driven the political momentum. Recent articles on this theme are J. Cassidy and E. Johnson, 'Putin, Putiniana and the Question of a Post-Soviet Cult of Personality', *The Slavonic & East European Review,* 88.4 (2010), pp.681-707 and A. Reeves, 'I, Trump: The Cult of personality, anti-intellectualism and the post-Truth era', *Journal of Language & Politics,* 19.6 (2020), pp. 869-892.

[39] K. Harvey and A. Shepard, 'What have historians done with masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950', *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (April 2005), p.275. See the attached Bibliography for full references to publications by Tosh, Clark, Griffin and McCormack.

[40] McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender,* p.35.

[41] The recent success of popular social commentaries such as Grayson Perry's *The Descent of Man* (London, 2016) and Robert Webb's *How Not to Be a Boy* (London, 2018) has shown that there is a keen popular readership of ideas and experiences of masculinity in the twenty-first century.

Roper, Tim Hitchcock, Michele Cohen and Philip Carter has given focus and weight to the subject and set the tone demonstrating that 'masculinity has a history, that it is subject to change and is varied in its forms'.[42] Important work such as Hitchcock and Cohen's *English Masculinities* which covers a diverse range of subjects on historical masculinity during this period has opened the way for academics such as Matthew McCormack, Mark Rothery, Henry French and Joanne Begiato to actively pursue and establish the study of masculinities as an academic field in its own right.[43] All show that the historical study of masculinities is not only gaining strength but also revealing gaps in our knowledge of how men's lives were played out during the period, particularly in our understanding of political masculinities. As Catherine Hall has recently confirmed, 'working on men as well as women' is no longer the 'novel approach': scholars now accept the importance of gender and the need to understand its influence in virtually every sphere of political, social and economic life.[44]

Opportunities for further research

The varied literature on the historical study of masculinities is established to the extent that it is possible to discern significant opportunities for further research. The overarching questions posed by Tosh act as a useful point of departure, in particular his insistence that greater attention to the period 1750-1850 is necessary if we are to understand whether there was indeed 'a shift in masculinity commensurate with the contemporary transformations in economy and politics'.[45] In this way, a closer inspection is required of the generation of men caught between Tosh's two stereotypes, one the epitome of frivolous irresponsibility, the other a model of sense and sobriety, and discover how those men responded to the many masculine 'models' on offer. The term ''gender panic'', used by Dror Wahrman in his study *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* has generated interest from historians regarding change in perceptions of gender and masculinity following the American Wars. Wahrman argues that 'former perceptions

[42] M. Roper and J. Tosh (Eds.), *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London, 1991), p.1.

[43] See the attached bibliography for full references to the work of these historians' contribution to the field of masculinities. Elsewhere, historian of emotions Thomas Dixon, whose analysis of tears and histrionics in the mid to late eighteenth century, has encouraged both academic and media interest in the psychological and emotional behaviour of men across longer periods. French and Rothery's study of male anxiety amongst the younger sons of the landed gentry is an example of this kind of work.

[44] C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and women of the English middle class 1780-1850,* Introduction to 3rd edition (London, 2018), p. xv.

[45] Tosh, 'New Adam', p.218.

of gender became socially unacceptable and culturally unintelligible': the free-flowing ambiguous identities of the earlier eighteenth century were seen as inappropriately effeminate and anathema to a country at war where a return to traditional moral codes was sought.[46] This 'crisis of identity', suggests McCormack, occurred when 'the fluid and playful identities of the early modern world were closed down and replaced with modern notions of self' with 'social being' now a reflection not only of gender but also the categories of race and class.[47] However, for the elite classes, whose leadership credentials were suddenly thrown into sharp focus, their individual 'performances' as men were placed centre stage. It is therefore the primary objective of this thesis to gain further understanding into whether elite men were predominantly influenced by 'modern binary notions of gender difference' or if they recognised this as a moment for creating and expressing a self-styled version of their own masculinity.[48]

This thesis engages with the debate at a time when the study of elite and aristocratic men has lacked enthusiasm, perhaps concomitant with the fear of returning to the biographical study of 'great men', or the notion that a preoccupation with the privileged classes is irrelevant to the main arguments of social and economic change in the language of 'industrial revolution'. Attention to elite life has however gained some momentum largely due to the work of eighteenth- century historians Amanda Foreman, Amanda Vickery, Jeremy Black, and Hannah Greig all of whom have encouraged engagement with the period across a range of media, both popular and academic.[49] A sense of balance in giving greater credence to the experience of elite groups is therefore now recognised as useful in aiding comparison between both periods and classes. Moreover, Mark Rothery and Henry French argue that, 'the omission of studies of powerful and dominant social elites' and a lack of interest in theoretical tools such as '"hegemony" [which] hinge on

[46] D. Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth- Century England* (New Haven and London, 2004), pp.21,41.
[47] McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender,* p.46. Historians of gender Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard have emphasised that the field of historical masculinities needs to be expanded in order to include a fuller analysis of interactions with 'other determinants of status such as age, sexuality, ethnicity and class', all defining features of behaviour and influence. K. Harvey and A. Shepard, 'What have Historians done with Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History circa 1500-1950', *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (2005), p.275.
[48] McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender,* p.46.
[49] In 1998, historian Amanda Forman's biography *Georgiana: Duchess of Devonshire* (London, 1998) won the Whitbread Biography prize. It brought to life the personal experiences of an elite woman in Georgian high society. The success of this work ignited interest in a period largely out of favour with modern historians. The attached bibliography details the work of Amanda Vickery, Jeremy Black, Donna Andrew and Hannah Greig whose work has been influential in bringing eighteenth century history to the fore.

concepts such as ‘’power’’ and ‘’authority’’’ are heavily linked to the male elite and political history.[50] A space in the literature therefore persists beyond formal political biography, inviting attention to the personal lives and experiences of those characters as *men* and the ways in which they constructed their own masculinity in accordance with their own lives not only publicly declared but also privately interiorised. Addressing this need is potentially significant in order to gain a fuller understanding of the changing influences and expectations placed on elite men and those around them and can help us understand how these men coped at the interface between private and public life. Harvey and Shepard have shown that by focusing on men whose superior social position was highly visible in society, and therefore subject to comment, it is possible through closer attention to personal documents, to understand how such men related to broad social codes in ‘groups and cohorts (generational as well as socio-structural)’, and also show how their own ‘subjective experience’ of their position was influential on wider male society.[51] Rothery and French suggest that certain types of sources, in particular private letters, ‘have been under-represented’ in elite studies due to historians focusing on published primary sources of cultural representation such as conduct books, works of fiction or journal publications.[52] What is now required is a greater focus on the content of private correspondence and discourse which has the potential to reveal how constructed expectations of masculinity were personally interpreted and influenced decisions that ‘’the right path’’ was being taken.[53] Such material, argues Roper, offers an understanding of ‘human experience formed through emotional relationships with others’ and reveals the ‘precariousness of masculinity at the level of lived experience’.[54]

A review of the literature therefore reveals a tentatively worked field in studies of elite masculinity, particularly during the sub-period of 1780-1830, the years of war and economic distress when men’s involvement in the national effort was crucial and the competency of the ruling elite increasingly under scrutiny. ‘As the century wore on’, asserts McCormack, ‘those excluded from the centre of power became more assertive in their criticism of the establishment…accusations of ‘’effeminacy’’ - not femininity or homosexuality as such, but a failure of the moral

[50] M. Rothery and H. French, *Making Men: The Formation of Elite Male Identities in England, c.1660-1900: A Sourcebook* ((Basingstoke, 2012), p.8.
[51] Harvey and Shepard, ‘What have historians done with masculinity?’, p.277.
[52] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* p.5.
[53] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* p.3.
[54] Roper, ‘Slipping Out of View, pp 62, 63.

qualities associated with virtuous masculinity' were levelled at a narrow ruling elite.[55] In this sense the specific time frame in which this thesis is located is crucial to a greater understanding of its inhabitants and why ideas of masculinity are of such interest and importance. Consistent with the voice of Tosh and recently reiterated by McCormack, agreement exists that the period 1750-1850 represents a period of far-reaching change in the structure of industry and economy. However, much less significance has been attached to the specifically difficult and turbulent time of war, scarcity and political unrest in the closing decades of the eighteenth century up until the death of George III when the actions of government prompted riot and dissent amongst the population and the position of the male ruling elite was pressurised, uncertain and frequently the target of criticism by an unforgiving press.[56] 'Political events', Arthur Burns and Joanna Innes have argued, 'demanded a focus on the desired restructuring of the relationship between parliament and public' and also directed criticism at the unrelenting elite stranglehold on power and it's very right to be there.[57] Thus, at the end of the eighteenth century the British elite faced a serious crisis of confidence and even a question of legitimacy. The humiliating loss of the American colonies, an event which Wahrman proposes as the 'real' turning point of the period and not merely an entrée to the dramatic events of the French Revolution, was blamed on an incompetent army officer class whose actions reflected directly on national pride and imperial reputation: the miserable fate of the French aristocracy a stark reminder of what might transpire for the arrogant and dissolute.[58] Against this background, Davidoff and Hall make the point that 'bearing in mind that religious, cultural, social and political values are often formed during adolescence, a particularly influential cohort … came to adulthood during the radicalising period of the French Revolution. It was their generation which would

[55] McCormack, 'A Man's Sphere?', p.251.

[56] Boyd Hilton has drawn attention to a specific 'mood' beginning at the end of the eighteenth century when 'the passionate debate launched by Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine around the events of the French Revolution, a prolonged period of recurrent disorder linked to food shortages and high prices and the doomsday prophesying of Thomas Malthus during a time of endless war produced an underlying and persistent mood of dread and fear: Fear of revolution, of the masses, of crime and poverty, disorder and instability, and for many people fear even of pleasure'. B. Hilton, *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846* (London, 2006), p.31.

[57] A. Burns and J. Innes (Eds.), *Rethinking the Age of Reform: Britain 1780-1850* (Cambridge, 2003), p.7.

[58] Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self*, p.221. Hilton goes further in suggesting that these events prompted a profound change in British attitudes and culture during the last two decades of the eighteenth century. *Mad, Bad and Dangerous People,* p.24.

play a leading role through the first half of the nineteenth century', the precise position the case studies of this thesis were to find themselves in.[59]

The outbreak of war against Revolutionary France in 1793 followed by long years of conflict against Napoleon's armies created even more serious circumstances where the established elite were forced to consider their very survival and question the type of masculine authority they were exhibiting to an increasingly critical nation. Circumstances demanded that the British elite must not only perform better than before but must also develop manly characteristics of its own which would be superior to those of the French enemy. This was no easy matter- the exalted reputation and example of Napoleon was very apparent to the British elite. 'I cannot shut my eyes to the superiority of his talents,' declared George Canning, 'to the amazing ascendant of his genius. Tell me not of his measures and his policy. It is his genius, his character, that keeps the world in awe.'[60] In 1805, the public response to the death of Lord Nelson drew attention to an expectation for an effective male elite. When the royal barge of Charles II brought Nelson's body to its final place of rest at St Paul's, thousands of emotional mourners praised the qualities of their hero who was perceived as both tough, fair and open but was also admired for his risk taking, even in matters of the heart.[61] In both life and death, Nelson – brave, authentic and loyal was universally acknowledged as the consummate man.

There is therefore real scope to explore the lives of elite men whose personal expression of their own masculine behaviour and manliness developed as a response to the specific demands of the time. This thesis will demonstrate how personal interpretations and reinventions in masculine values set example and meaning to those around them during the long period of warfare lasting from the loss of the American colonies to the aftermath of Waterloo and that these represented a 'fluidity' of a different and individual nature.

Research Questions

The idea that the events and mood of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries prompted a noticeable change in the masculine behaviour of elite men has been given clear significance by Linda Colley and provides useful direction for new research into how men in positions of influence self-consciously constructed

[59] Davidoff and Hall, *Family Fortunes* (third edition, 2018), p. xxxiv.
[60] J. Uglow, *In These Times: Living in Britain Through Napoleon's Wars 1793-1815* (London, 2014), p.337.
[61] Uglow, *In These Times,* pp. 397, 405.

their own masculine selves. Stressing the importance of the American war together with the expanding volume and diversity of domestic and imperial government, Colley emphasises how the demands of the time imposed a 'massive strain on the lives, nerves and confidence of the British elite'.[62] The pressure felt by these men was not only of the moment in dealing with the never- ending quantity and complexity of business and legislation related to war, trade and commerce but was also created by the growing demand for representational change and the need for individual accountability. In high political circles the result of this mood was catastrophic. Recalling the premature collapses of Pitt and Canning, the suicides of Lord Castlereagh, Samuel Whitbread and Samuel Romilly and the histrionics of Fox and Burke, Colley presents a picture of a highly strung, erratic elite struggling with the relentless demands of public office in a fast moving, hedonistic society.[63] The reasons behind this chaotic outpouring of *Sturm und Drang* violence have, says Colley, 'never been fully investigated', however the evidence clearly suggests that not only was this a time of intense introspection and reflection for some unfortunate men but that there are unexplored elements of the personal lives, mentalities and conduct of *all* men at the highest levels of society which have not yet been fully grasped.[64] In particular, argues Joanne Begiato, there is a clear need to move away from 'disembodied, dematerialised history' and engage with the social, psychological and emotional elements of an individual's 'material, embodied experience and their interiority'.[65]

In essence, Colley's description of events is significant in that it prompts a need for much greater understanding into how these men as 'reluctant celebrities' managed their lives at the interface between public and private and how they crafted their responses as individual *men.* Christopher Fletcher offers the view that if 'the shocks of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, from political

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[62] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London, 1992), p.151.

[63] Colley, *Britons,* p.151-152 cites R. Thorne, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790-1820, 5 Volumes* (London, 1986), p.329-332 and a section entitled 'Rogues, Lunatics and Suicides'. In all, writes Colley, nineteen Members of Parliament are known to have committed suicide between 1790 and 1820 and more than twenty lapsed into what seemed like insanity, as did their monarch George III.

[64] The *Sturm und Drang* literary movement originated in Germany in the 1770's bringing together the work of a group of male writers led by Johann von Goethe. These writers, reacting against the rationalism of the Enlightenment urged raw emotion over reason and personal liberty over morality. The 1779 English translation of Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* (The Sorrows of Young Werther) is said to have contributed to a manic atmosphere of copycat sympathy with the doomed suicidal hero. His exclusion from aristocratic society was key. Earnest 'Wertherism' was supplanted in due course by the less fatalistic Romantic energy of Byronism.

[65] J. Begiato, *Parenting in England 1760-1830: Emotion, Identity and Generation* (Oxford, 2012), p.7.

revolutions to industrialisation, could provoke a critique of traditional gender values, they could also equally lead to their reassertion.'[66] It was these shocks which resonated throughout the lives of men, affecting them both privately and publicly. If a minority chose the 'disgrace' of suicide as a solution to the demands of excessive responsibility, personal failure or public opprobrium, then it is possible to suggest that a greater majority of that class found encouragement in the events of the day, seeing an opportunity to reassess their masculinity and redefine themselves as men worthy of leadership and acclaim. Grappling with either ambitious self-promotion, calm business-like fortitude or episodic displays of passion these men recognised a priority in reasserting their position and in developing manly characteristics which would allow them to 'take a manly part' at a time of acute national stress.

Developing these ideas, this thesis puts forward the hypothesis that elite men of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, far from experiencing a gender 'crisis', seized the opportunity to shape their own masculine identities in a way which suited their own individual purposes and style. As privileged members of British society, they were able to adapt not only as a class, but crucially as individuals increasingly conscious of the kind of men they wished to be viewed as in a changing world. This involved identifying the type of masculine behaviour best suited to both public and private settings and recognising the importance of their contribution to the greater good. No longer was it acceptable for men with public responsibility to oscillate between dubious stereotypes or 'let the side down' through dissolute behaviours: the notion of adopting a personal 'bespoke' masculinity which was not only useful but also admirable was now seen as essential for the continued existence of their class.[67] Such men could set themselves apart, be confident and responsible transcending the petty codes of polite society and fashion. In contrast to the officers who had lost America, or the French aristocracy who had lost their heads, these elite men intended to be forward thinking, impressive and successful both publicly *and* privately. Where Wahrman and Colley have described ways in which elite men adapted as a social class to the changing demands of the political

[66] Fletcher, *Handbook of Masculinity,* p.10.

[67] Historians of masculinity such as Philip Carter and Michele Cohen have debated the existence of a 'crisis of masculinity' in the eighteenth century where men, 'victims' of an over-polite society or the cult of sensibility, were perceived as 'narcissistic, idle, superficial and exhibitionist'. P. Carter, 'Men about town: representations of foppery and masculinity' in H. Barker and E. Chalus (Eds.), *Gender in Eighteenth-Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibility* (London, 1997), p.41. If there was 'anxiety about masculinity', argues Cohen, 'it was because the defining ''other'' was neither … femininity, nor homosexuality, but *effeminacy'* – embodied in 'French fashions, French manners and French smatterings'. M. Cohen, F*ashioning Masculinity: national identity and language in the eighteenth century* (London, 1996), pp.8,9.

and economic landscape, this thesis will put forward the idea that it was this generation of men who realised that it was not just their collective ability to manage the big questions of war, economy and reform which was under scrutiny, but also their personal responsibility to recognise and adopt those masculine characteristics which would allow them to shine and be worthy, admirable men in their own right, comfortable in their own skin.[68] Fundamentally, this thesis argues that we cannot understand masculinity without studying the elite and we cannot understand the elite without studying masculinity and that this is key to our understanding of political history.

Focus, Methodology and Structure

In order to extend our knowledge of elite masculinity we must look to the lives of elite men whose development from youth to maturity coincided with the period identified by historians and discover the extent to which their masculine selves were shaped and defined by personal experience. The research and analysis presented in this thesis focuses on four elite men from the East of England - William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread II and Edward Harbord. These were men whose lives were played out from the mid eighteenth century and who were strongly influenced by the political climate of the significant sub-period 1780-1820. They were all well-known and well connected in the East of England, were accepted as members of a significant elite community and possessed the power and position to influence others, demonstrating how an elite man should conduct himself. These are men whose lives have not been considered from the historical perspective of gender and, except for Whitbread, are not known as key players of the period. This offers an opportunity to not only engage with four men whose thoughts and experiences are little known, but crucially promises to enrich our understanding of how elite men considered their masculine selves at this time and the ramifications this had on every aspect of their status, image and success.

Each of these men possessed lifelong connections with the East of England. Windham, Patteson and Harbord belonged to families whose home was the East Anglian region now known as the County of Norfolk and they displayed strong roots through land, property, business and political interests. Knowledge and understanding of the region gave weight to Windham and Patteson's parliamentary representation of Norwich over a long period, and for Harbord the seat of Yarmouth.

[68] Linda Colley details the 'cultural reconstruction of the elite' at the end of the eighteenth century in her chapter *Dominance. Britons,* pp.147-193.

The Whitbread family was seated in the Bedfordshire estate of Southill, located in the wider province recognised as Eastern England, much as it is today. Significant landowner, Justice of the Peace and Member of Parliament, a study of Whitbread's extraordinary public profile both in Bedfordshire and London has much to tell us about the connection between elite masculinity and status. Indeed, as prominent public figures all these men were aware that the display of masculine identity was key to influence and success both locally and nationally and each of their lives were affected by changing cultural trends in education, travel and family life. The significance of the elite in the east of England therefore was grounded in both vast estates and earned wealth and created an expectation that it was they who were best placed to represent local interests thus creating a legacy of family involvement in political activity and decision-making. For those in the public eye, a display of status and masculinity either through land ownership and the presentation and constant improvement of their grand houses or the development of successful business was key to their success. However, whilst the tangible trappings of status were vital to public image and frequently the subject of family letters, it was the contribution which the male elite made to local and national public life which afforded the prestige, self-respect and influence of a superior elite masculinity. Striving to live up to those ideals entailed at least some degree of failure and disappointment as much as satisfaction and success and these experiences are intrinsically linked to interiorised notions of being comfortable in their own masculinity. The case studies presented in this thesis allow us to examine elite masculinity from the experiences of four men living in a particular region over the eighty-five- year period 1750-1835. This method enables us to understand how elite men chose and presented very different masculine personas whilst experiencing similar lifestyles during a time of political and economic dislocation. However, whilst this tells us a great deal about elite men's involvement in East Anglian society at the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this thesis does not make definitive conclusions about East Anglian masculinity *per se*. Rather, the thesis offers a close examination of elite masculinity which historians might apply more broadly elsewhere.

The choice of subjects is consciously influenced by the paucity of scholarly attention to their lives. None has received significant biographical treatment by scholars, and a rich local archive of family documents exists for each which is

relatively unexplored.[69] This gap in the literature allows an innovative approach to the analysis of elite masculinity using material which has not been considered in the context of gender and opens the possibility of understanding the nature of masculinity around individual lifecycles, experiences and personal opinions. Inevitably, the choice of case study subjects draws attention to the use of the term 'elite' in the context of the period with each man born into a different sphere of advantaged society in eastern England. In this context, the term is useful in the language of the late eighteenth century as it takes into account the changing nature of a body of people in positions of power who could no longer be purely identified as 'aristocrats'. Wahrman reminds us that by the end of the eighteenth century the 'meaning of ''aristocracy'' had shifted to denote primarily a social group rather than a political system' and this group was increasingly under attack for their perceived vices and behaviour.[70] In addition, 'a shift of emphasis in social categories 'was 'observable in the decades around the turn of the century: the metamorphosis of ''aristocracy'' (or government) versus ''people'' to ''rich'' versus ''poor'''.[71] In this way, the term 'elite' encompasses not only the traditional aristocracy but also the 'rich and great' - Windham and Harbord were of well-regarded landed families in Norfolk, whilst Whitbread and Patteson benefitted from recently amassed commercial wealth and the prestige which came with it both locally and further afield. This is significant as it lends itself to a greater understanding of the fluidity of traditional upper- class fortunes and also allows us to witness the advancement of an aspiring upper middle class whose social mobility was reflective of the economic and cultural mood of the period.[72] Without doubt, each of these men held societal positions which delivered a different life to the majority of British people and were characterised by, what Rothery describes as the historical 'privileges of transgression and exceptionalism'.[73]

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[69] Roger Fulford's *Samuel Whitbread: A Study in Opposition 1764-1815* (London, 1967) presents a somewhat dated resumé of Whitbread's political career. Samuel Whitbread II, William Windham and Edward Harbord are featured in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

[70] Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* p.151.

[71] Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* p.152.

[72] Professor Anthony Howe of the University of East Anglia makes the useful distinction between a *gentleman* who owned land of up to around 3,000 acres and a *landed magnate* who possessed large estates in excess of this (25 April 2017). Nationally, 'the nobility was a peculiar minority'. At the time of the Glorious Revolution in England and Wales, 'there were only 160 peers, a mere 220 by 1780 and still just 350 by 1832, in a population of around 14 million'. A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2009) p.130.

[73] M. Rothery, 'The Elites are Cummings', *University of Northampton Blog* (26 May 2020).

This research for this thesis will focus primarily on 'ego documents': the letters, diaries, notebooks and journals produced by the men themselves during their lifespan. The decision to utilise these varied sources is based on the belief that they offer rich detail of qualitative personal experience, opinion and belief and it is through the interpretation of this material that a greater understanding of each man's conscious and unconscious responses to ideas of masculinity is possible. This approach contrasts with the 'event driven' treatment given to public men in the form of historical narrative or formal biography which has dominated political history but produced a somewhat two-dimensional version of those involved. Where these types of histories have concentrated on men's contribution to public life through the contents of speeches, legislation or treaties, 'ego documents' have the potential to uncover the character and motivations of subjects, what they thought and why they acted. However, this tantalising prospect does not come without the exercise of caution. As a genre, letter-writing is recognised as epistolatory, that is an 'informal' source written to tell stories, make a statement, bare the soul or even conceal the truth. The source material therefore is approached with a 'literary hat' and responded to both critically and creatively to determine how purpose, intention and emotion interact. Similarly, personal diaries and journals present further creative challenges in understanding whether those revelations and descriptions written 'by the self for the self' were intended as merely private musing or destined for a wider audience. These considerations are key to our understanding of constructs of elite masculinity, not just for the individual but also across families, cohorts and groups.

Historians concur on the validity of these types of sources, acknowledging that there will always be gaps in correspondence, omissions in journals, missing diaries and so on. However, the proliferation of 'self-writing' amongst the elite classes in the second half of the eighteenth century offers a rich seam for the historian 'in the form of diaries, journals, day books and memoranda', which, notes Carter, [has become] 'a valuable mechanism for the detailing of character, and more importantly, for its alteration by way of self-regulation, reflection and improvement'.[74] Owen Brittan has developed this idea, insisting that personal source material which reveals 'identity [as] both psychic and social, subjective and contingent … must take into account … normative discourse, elucidated experience and self-analysis' emphasising how this type of writing encouraged a greater interest in self-

[74] P. Carter, 'Polite 'Persons': Character, Biography and The Gentleman,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 12 (2002), pp.341-342.

exploration and reflection.[75] Such ''self-examination'' could be either secret and unseen in the form of a personal diary or notebook or sociable and familiar as often seen in letters which were used to provide anecdote and opinion specifically aimed at a known readership such as friends or relations.[76]

Awareness of interpretation is therefore key to our understanding of this archive material providing an opportunity to see the world from our case studies and others' viewpoints with surprising clarity. Fact may merge with fiction, but in the absence of interviews or conversations this approach gives us the best indication of how daily life and close family relationships shaped and moulded masculinities over formative years and beyond. Psychologists refer to this methodological practice as the 'idiographic' approach: one which focuses on the individual, avoids making general laws and theories and uses qualitative methods to analyse its findings. Whilst this approach undoubtedly lacks precision it has the advantage of opening the possibility of actually 'getting to know' these men on a much deeper and personal level and grasping shifts in character over time. The documents utilised in this research promise to uncover key themes and opinions related to those facets of manliness which were important to the way these men conducted their lives, as much as highlighting those elements of behaviour which were anathema to their own personal self- image and therefore rejected. In this sense, the thesis ventures into the realm of recovering lost mentalities through the understanding of lived experience. Malcolm Gaskill describes this approach as 'making dynamic connections between perceptions, cognition, motivation and action: what men saw, thought, wanted and did' and embraces mentalities such as 'attitudes, ideas, values, sensibilities, identities, passions, emotions, moods and anxieties'.[77] This thesis aims to show how the content of personal papers *can* offer a new perspective on the ways in which elite men of the late eighteenth century regarded their masculinity which has not previously been considered and provide evidence in support of the notion that men at the highest levels of society were actively engaged in responding to Wahrman's ''gender panic'' both publicly and in private.[78]

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[75] O. Brittan, 'Subjective Experience and Military Masculinity at the Beginning of the Long Eighteenth Century, 1688-1714,' *Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies,* 40.2 (2017), p.286.
[76] J. Brewer, 'This, that and the other: Public, Social and Private in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' in D. Castiglione and L. Sharpe (Eds.), *Shifting the Boundaries,* p.10.
[77] M. Gaskill, *Crime and Mentalities in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2000), pp.6,8. Gaskill quotes Robert Darnton who describes the personal written record as 'faint sounds which barely disturb … ''the vast silence that has swallowed up most of mankind's thinking'''. R. Darnton, 'Intellectual and cultural history', in M. Kammen (Ed.), *The past before us* (London, 1980), p.343.
[78] Wahrman, *Making of the Modern Self,* p.21.

This thesis will consider its case studies chronologically looking for what was most valued to these men, as much as what wasn't, and how subtle facets of masculinity were learned, adopted and practised. Chapter 1 examines the life of William Windham. The opening section discusses the contribution and importance of Windham's formal public- school education in the shaping of an elite masculine character destined for success in public life. Section 2 explores the effect of an illicit relationship on Windham's perception of himself as a man. His internalised mental instability is compared to the way in which he appeared to others as an accomplished conversationalist and 'consummate elite man'. Section 3 addresses the significance of both intellectual scholarship and an interest in male sports and how those pursuits affected both self-image and acceptance in elite male circles. The final section shows how Windham conducted himself as a man occupying high public office, the masculine attributes he brought to that arena and how a negative preoccupation with his own performance bore little resemblance to the image he portrayed to others.

Chapter 2 considers John Patteson, the eldest son of a prominent and aspirational Norwich family whose wealth was built on trade. The case study is significant as it demonstrates how his mother, Martha Patteson, deliberately set about shaping her son's masculine character in order that he should excel in elite society. Section 1 demonstrates the educational rationale of the *tabula rasa* as the basis of Martha's project to ensure that Patteson learnt 'how to be a man'. Section 2 considers the ways in which a bespoke education set out both the qualities and accomplishments which were deemed desirable as well as those which were not. Section 3 shows how Patteson's experience of a Grand Tour finally allowed him the freedom to express his own ideas of how an elite man should be, highlighting the difference between his own views and those of his mother.

Chapter 3 addresses the personal experience of Samuel Whitbread II whose privileged background in commerce and high-profile public campaigning created a celebrity status which epitomised the straightforward 'English' masculinity of a country at war. Section 1 explores the impact of a Grand Tour on Whitbread's developing sense of masculine values as a young man. It considers how exposure to new lands and diverse peoples impacted his thoughts on both acceptable and unacceptable forms of male behaviour. Section 2 reveals the 'emotional masculinity' of Whitbread as a young suitor and how he chose to present himself as a future husband. It also examines the changing dynamic between father and son. Sections 3 and 4 examine Whitbread's adoption of a high- profile public facing masculinity

based on an agenda for justice and reform. An analysis of Whitbread's 'celebrity' status as the archetypal Englishman reveals his uneasy experience with public attention. The final section offers a deeper understanding of Whitbread's preoccupation with his own masculine image and how a decline in physical and mental health profoundly affected the way he saw himself, resulting in eventual suicide.

Chapter 4 explores the life of Edward Harbord, younger son of a landed family and later 3rd Lord Suffield. The source material for this case study represents the most complete overview of a young elite man's character development and the masculine values which were important to him at different points of his life. Section 1 shows how as a younger son, Harbord was prepared for entry into elite society. An Eton education and Grand Tour provided him with the knowledge, contacts and experience to operate as an elite man, but also tested his self-control and sense of honour. Section 2 addresses Harbord's approach to public life, in particular his keenness for 'independence', which strongly influenced his masculine character, conduct and opinions. Section 3 examines Harbord's transition from private gentleman to peer of the realm, a role which demanded greater masculine authority, the respect of others and the setting of example to his sons. The final section shows how Harbord utilised both influence and experience to effect change on a much wider scale. Masculine values, associated with the ideals of chivalry, such as truthfulness, courtesy and honour became increasingly important to Harbord in his commitment to support the weak and oppressed.

This thesis concludes by evaluating how constructs of masculinity were played out in the gendered lives of William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread and Edward Harbord at the turn of the nineteenth century. It will identify those ideas and questions which resonate from the research findings and suggest ways in which historians across disciplines might further develop our understanding of elite masculinity beyond those themes.

Chapter One: Case Study - The Right Honourable William Windham (1750-1810)

What a pity it is that a man cannot, for a while, stand at a distance from himself, and behold his own person, manner, behaviour, and character, with the eyes of a stranger! What a pity that no one can see himself as he is seen by everyone else![1]

The words of William Windham exemplify the concerns and emotional self-restraint of a successful elite man who whilst operating at the apex of government and society exhibited a deep sense of self-awareness and a keenness to understand the impression he was making on those around him. The introspective tone of Windham's words demonstrates a need to discern how others might have perceived him as a man, and points to the uncertainty he felt about those elements of his masculinity and manliness he felt unable to discuss with others. This opening case study establishes the importance men such as Windham attached to their masculine image and the ways in which particular values were learned, assimilated and reassessed throughout their lives. The chapter is presented in four parts. The first section addresses the influence of a public -school education on Windham's youthful masculinity, the second documents the impact of a love affair on his masculine self-worth, and the third examines the role of Windham's scholarly and sporting pursuits in shaping perceptions of his masculinity. The final part discusses Windham's performance as a leading statesman and his reputation in society as the 'perfect gentleman'. In this way, the chapter explores different aspects of Windham's life focusing on those manly attributes which were important to him as a young man entering high society and how his friendships, interests and public career influenced his approach to how he felt he should be *as a man*.

A central argument this first case study seeks to advance is that William Windham's preoccupation with his own masculine self was indicative of a vibrant discourse on acceptable elite masculine values at the end of the eighteenth century. The study provides a fascinating example of one man's struggle in achieving the model of masculinity commensurate with the expectations of his class. Moreover, his concerns and actions reveal the importance he attached to the way he was seen

[1] C. Baring, *The Diary of the Right Honourable William Windham, 1784 – 1810* (London, 1866). This quotation appears in an article of Windham's *Adversaria* which is referred to by G. Ellis in his Preface to the *Diary.* p.xxi.

and judged as a 'public' man and that these concerns were rooted in very private and emotional considerations.

Despite the absence of a formal biography, academic interest in William Windham has grown. In a recent essay, Henry French has addressed the matter of Windham's unique reflections on his performance as an elite man, drawing attention to the fact that during Windham's lifetime the extreme anxiety he felt regarding his own masculine character was unknown to most of his contemporaries.[2] It was not until the 1866 publication of his diaries that the troubled disposition of Windham was first disclosed, his reputation as both statesman and gentleman reassessed. French, explains Christopher Fletcher, focuses his argument on the changing nature of Windham's political reputation which 'during his lifetime and in the immediate aftermath of his death was high', his public career celebrated for its intelligent vision. 'With the publication of his personal diary in the mid-nineteenth century', argues Fletcher, this reputation was re-examined 'with the revelation of his vigorous self-examination, hypochondria and doubts about his own abilities'. French's essay reconsiders Windham's posthumous fortunes to portray a man, whose own personal record of himself, exemplified the changing focus of nineteenth-century ideals of masculinity away from authenticity and towards self-control.[3] This case study supports French's work on Windham's reputation, but differs in its approach by focusing on how earlier life influences, values and events in the last decades of the eighteenth century shaped the positive elite masculine image for which he was later considered *par exemplar.* In addition, it seeks to provide further knowledge and understanding of those very aspects of Windham's masculine behaviour which in adulthood he chose to keep hidden, relying on the stylised persona which he felt was more compatible with public life.

Contemporary admiration of Windham was virtually unanimous. Consensus among the leaders of his time agreed that nature had given him more than the average share of abilities; his mind was brilliant and this was manifested in the concise thinking of his speeches. I. Ruddy notes that Windham possessed a 'grace of manner which was outstanding'.[4] Yet, as this chapter will set out, Windham's own

[2] H. French, ''I Tremble Lest My Powers of Thought are not What They Ought to Be': Reputation and the Masculine Anxieties of an Eighteenth- Century Statesman' in C. Fletcher, S. Brady, R. Moss and L. Riall (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Masculinity and Political Culture in Europe,* (London, 2018).
[3] C. Fletcher, 'Introduction: Masculinity and *Politik'* in Fletcher et al, *Palgrave Handbook for Masculinity,* p.10.
[4] I. Ruddy, *William Windham: A Political Biography, 1760-1801* PhD Dissertation (Saint Louis University), p.45.

words suggest that he felt mentally adrift from this positive public persona and suffered from a paralysis of motivation which he consistently struggled to overcome. That he concealed these concerns from his family and friends suggests that he considered such anxieties as 'unmanly' and preferred to confide in his journals and diaries rather than to those who were close to him. In this sense, both Windham's public and private discourse form a complex source by which to analyse facets of his masculinity which he considered suitable for general consumption and those which he endeavoured to keep separate and unseen. In doing so, it is possible to gain a clearer understanding of Windham's career as a leading politician and his perception of how constructs of masculinity affected opportunity and acceptance in public life.

A Most Exalted Youth

This section discusses the contribution and importance of Windham's formal education in the shaping of an elite masculinity designed for success in public life. A glance at the family background is a useful starting point for understanding the early influences on the development of Windham's masculine character. Born in London in 1750, Windham was the only son of William Windham II (1717-1761) and Sarah Lukin (1710-1792), a widow with three young children. Descended from a Norfolk family of conservative tradition, his grandfather Ashe Windham (1672-1749), a country gentleman, briefly represented the County of Norfolk during the reign of Queen Anne. The family boasted neither riches nor title but having occupied the vast Felbrigg estate since Medieval times they were held in high esteem by the local populace.[5] Considered an attractive man, Windham's father was a man of 'superior intellect, energy and adventure' and spent many years abroad developing his scholarly interests, forging new intellectual friendships and exploring uncharted terrain. 'Distinguished and dashing' in the military mould, the elder Windham not only displayed 'considerable versatility as an accomplished linguist, scholar and swordsman', but was also a respected 'patron of the arts, in particular the theatre which he enjoyed through a lifelong friendship with David Garrick'.[6] For both men, the standard of elite gentlemanly conduct was high. Robert Ketton-Cremer records: 'Garrick had an eminent and generous friend; that was Mr Windham, of Norfolk, a gentleman of the most polished manners and an excellent scholar' indicating that

[5] S. Wade Martins, *Coke of Norfolk 1754-1842: A Biography* (Woodbridge, 2009), p.28.
[6] C. Davies, *William Windham and the Age of Revolution* (MA Dissertation, University of East Anglia, 2006), pp.27-28.

both figures were a strong influence on the young Windham as he grew up.[7] On the death of Ashe Windham in 1749, Windham senior returned to the family home of Felbrigg Hall near Cromer, Norfolk and married Sarah Lukin, formerly Hicks, with whom he had been living in London for several years and was expecting a child. The Windham household at this time was an unconventional *ménage.* Not only had Sarah brought two young sons and a daughter with her, but her new husband was also father to a daughter, the product of a relationship with a previous mistress. The head of a ready-made family and finally free from his father's disapproving eye, the elder Windham now devoted himself to a complete reconstruction and redecoration of his ancestral home which he achieved with modern taste.[8] It was this stimulating and scholarly environment which influenced the young Windham as he grew up, keen to emulate his father's excellent accomplishments and gentlemanly reputation.

As the youngest member of a thriving family Windham enjoyed a fortunate childhood, spending the first years of his life cared for by doting parents and playing happily with his many siblings. The Windham household appeared the epitome of family harmony and David Garrick recalled being '"most happy at Windham's. All was Mirth, Joy, Elegance and What not"'.[9] The receipt of an elite education was the crucial next step in his preparation for male adulthood. In the spring of 1757, seven-year-old William was entered at Eton at the cost of nine guineas per annum and remained there until the age of seventeen. It is likely that Windham did not commence his schooling until the following September, but the intention was definite that the time had come for him to be removed from the comforts and security of the family home and mix with boys from similar backgrounds. Since the early seventeenth century, the underlying function of an exclusively male education was to prepare upper-class boys for their future responsible adult roles as members of national government and perpetuate the social dominance of the gentry.[10] The focus now lay firmly on William's education to facilitate the planned transformation from child (the mother's domain) to boy (the father's realm) and assume his role as both heir apparent and young man of stature. The supposedly tender and indulgent influence of mothers, Anthony Fletcher has shown, was considered anathema to the

[7] R. Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg: the story of a house* (London, 1962), p.123. The quotation is given without reference from Garrick's biographer Arthur Murphy.
[8] Ashe Windham's careful management had ensured that the estate was in good order: it did however need considerable updating.
[9] Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg,* p.145.
[10] During his Eton education Windham became great friends with Charles James Fox, later Whig Opposition leader.

brand of tough masculinity encouraged in public schools.[11] Deposited far from the family home, notes Fletcher, young boys were subjected to the 'fierce inculcation of the classical curriculum … the core of an overall process of hardening, the teaching of self-control and endurance as the basis of a particular sophisticated form of manhood' which was designed as a preparation for future high office.[12] Studying the classics encouraged 'rhetorical and histrionic skills' together with a linguistic flair which would be useful in public life.[13] In this way, concepts of manhood as part of an elite education purposefully converged with preparation for public roles and political leadership. More explicitly, such schools offered a ''crash course'' in manly fortitude, releasing fathers of home discipline and removing any concerns that their sons were too much in the 'feminine' company of mothers and sisters which might soften the emotions.[14] This elite training, confirms Fletcher, prioritised 'in the first place ''religious and moral principles'', secondly ''gentlemanly conduct'' and thirdly ''intellectual ability'''.[15]

On arriving at Eton, William was fortunate to be near his step- brother Billy Lukin. However, the need for a watchful eye was soon rendered superfluous, as from the earliest days he showed himself to be a 'tough, active and pugnacious' boy happy in the use of his fists to secure superiority in 'three engagements'.[16] 'Fighting', explains Richard Ollard, 'was both the great test of social acceptability and an approved form of physical recreation.'[17] Seen as an essential mechanism for self-defence in an age where street violence was common, the culture of fighting at Eton frequently exceeded acceptable limits when contests resulted in serious injury or even death.[18] In his second year at the school Windham's involvement in a 'contest' resulted in a formal enquiry and a temporary suspension before being exonerated and reinstated. Dampier and Sarah Windham stood by their boy: 'You tell me (and I well understand it) that you never doubted of his conduct … My

[11] A. Fletcher, *Growing Up in England: The Experience of Childhood 1660-1914* (Yale, 2010), p.173.
[12] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), p.303.
[13] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination*, p.305. Boys spent around twenty-one hours a week on their Latin and Greek. Much less frequently lessons in geography, algebra, French, drawing, dancing and fencing were given.
[14] Fletcher, *Growing Up,* p.49.
[15] Fletcher, *Growing Up,* p.20. Classical languages were considered the 'male elite's secret language, a language that could be displayed as a mark of learning, of superiority and of difference'. p.5.
[16] Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg,* p.160. William Windham senior had been known in London as 'Boxing Windham'. His son at Eton received the nickname 'Fighting Windham'.
[17] R. Ollard, *An English Education: A Perspective of Eton* (London, 1982), p.40.
[18] Two deaths are recorded by Ollard. In 1784 a fight resulted in one boy being seriously injured and his combatant pronounced dead. Ollard, *English Education,* p.41.

honour was engaged before for his Welfare & Service, and now my Affections also are.'[19] Such incidents were rare. His father's lawyer, a Mr Field, was satisfied that the boy distinguished himself by 'a most exalted Character from many of his School-fellows that have fallen in my Way'.[20]

In October 1761 this fortitude was put to the test when the eleven-year old Windham suffered the death of his father. Immediately placed under the care of his mother and three guardians David Garrick, Benjamin Stillingfleet and Thomas Dampier, Windham continued his studies at Eton.[21] With Garrick a busy actor/manager and Stillingfleet an elderly scholar, the practicalities of guardianship fell to Dampier who proved to be assiduous in his support of both mother and son. In one of his regular missives to Mrs Windham, Dampier reassured her of her son's welfare: 'For I know of no boy, that is blessed with such Sense for his age and more good [spirit?] than your Son is.'[22] Recommending a short period of unemotional mourning, he added:

> The sooner it is done, the better: For I think his concern will wear off the quicker, when he is among his School- Fellows, and engaged again in the general course of business … I assure you your Son is perfectly well under his loss, which he bears as he ought, with tenderness and a manly behaviour.

No aspect of young William's welfare and education was beyond Dampier's remit in *loco parentis* and he corresponded the details frequently to Mrs Windham:

> You will be glad to hear as I am to assure you that Billy goes on very well here in all respects. He tells me … that he is pleased with the house he boards at, and with his Dame and the Boies there. In short all is right that I could wish it; and none could be better friends than your Son and I are.[23]

Dampier even took pains to ensure suitable sleeping accommodation and companions for his charge, 'but not in the same chamber as De Grey; but with two

[19] Norfolk Record Office (NRO), WKC 7/61/11 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 10 September 1762.
[20] R. Ketton-Cremer, *The Early Life and Diaries of William Windham* (London, 1930), p.50.
[21] Details of the lives of all three guardians can be found in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.*
[22] NRO, WKC 7/61/5 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 8 November 1761.
[23] NRO, WKC 7/61/1 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 5 March 1762.

other boies, who have excellent characters for good temper, abilities and regularity.'[24] He also considered the suitability of newcomers as possible friends and connections for William:

> Your Son here goes on much to my satisfaction: His behaviour is Sensible & amiable, and promises much Comfort in our Endeavours for his Service – Mr Elwin lately brought his Brother and Son to school here out of Norfolk. Do you know the Gentleman? He appears a well-bred sensible man, & by his discourse an acquaintance of Mr Windham's.[25]

Dampier's devotion to his charge's development was indeed touching: 'He continues to be an Excellent Good Boy, which gives me a Satisfaction, that only you & a few others are capable of feeling.'[26] During an outbreak of fever at Eton, Dampier urged William to send reassurance to his mother. His failure to do so indicated early warning signs of Windham's later tendency to procrastinate: 'I desired Billy to write a report to you but find he has neglected doing it, which I am sorry for, as you have suffered from it, tho' I must say that you ought to have calmed your apprehensions, as you need not doubt of my attention to your Son.'[27] The recollection of friend Edmund Malone is testimony to Dampier's exemplary supervision and Windham's vast accomplishments in all that Eton had to offer:

> He was very generally acknowledged to surpass all his fellows in whatever he undertook to perform: in addition to his superiority in classical attainments, he was the best cricketer, the best leaper, swimmer, rower, skaiter; the best fencer, the best boxer, the best runner and the best horseman, of his time.[28]

In 1766, Windham's exuberant behaviour found a channel which risked bringing disgrace to the family name. Following the arrival of a new Headmaster Dr John Foster, the mood amongst the boys became discontented and belligerent.[29]

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[24] NRO, WKC 7/61/3-4 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 3 December 1761.
[25] NRO, WKC 7/61/12 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 26 January 1763.
[26] NRO, WKC 7/61/6 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham [undated].
[27] NRO, WKC 7/61/24 Thomas Dampier to Sarah Windham, 6 October 1763.
[28] E. Malone, *A Biographical Memoir of the late Right Honourable William Windham* (London, 1810), p.8.
[29] In 1765, popular Headmaster Dr Edward Barnard was replaced by John Foster, 'a tactless and undignified pedant', who finding himself in charge of five hundred unruly boys, was unequal to the task. Rebellions began in 1766 and in 1768 the small numbers of Masters found themselves unable to discipline the violent anarchy and destruction of College property. Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p. 59.

Windham, who pronounced Foster to be his ''declared enemy'', became a key perpetrator of large numbers of rebellious young men ranging in age from eight to nearly twenty.[30] Dampier wrote to Sarah Windham: 'There have been great disturbances amongst the boys here, and I am sorry, that your Son is accused of having a large concern in them.'[31] The specifics of Windham's hasty removal from the scene are unknown, but it would seem that both Dampier and Mrs Windham were agreed that rather than suffer the ignominy of a permanent and public expulsion it was better that the boy should never set foot at Eton again. Instead, at the age of sixteen, William was despatched on a twelve-month academic sabbatical to Glasgow University where it was hoped the stern and exacting rigours of an alternative curriculum would provide a calming effect on his excitable mood. His charge now resembling more man than boy, Dampier was no doubt relieved to be divested of his responsibility.

FIGURE 1 THE RT. HON WILLIAM WINDHAM (1750-1810), MIXED COPPER ENGRAVING WITH ACQUATINT BY LUIGI RADOS (NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES)

At Glasgow a plan was devised that Windham should diversify his knowledge by studying science and mathematics, having already attained an

[30] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p.59.
[31] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* pp.59-60.

excellent grounding in the classics at Eton. Tutored by the esteemed Dr Robert Simson, Windham developed an all-consuming interest in the elucidation of mathematical theory. As a student his enthusiasm led to 'such bewildering pastimes as the multiplication of six figures by three figures in his head'.[32] In 1767, he was entered as a gentleman commoner at University College, Oxford, under the tutelage of Sir Robert Chambers, a man who 'combined personality and social charm with the profoundest of learning'.[33] The Oxford experience suited Windham, allowing him to fully indulge his passion for classical study and engage in brilliant conversation. Later, frustrated with the business demands of London or the boredom of Felbrigg, Windham would look back on his Oxford days with particular fondness, a place where he was 'able to combine solitary reading and social intercourse, study and conversation, to the exact degree that he required'.[34] At this point, no idea of a political career was conceived, his enthusiasm for academic study at Oxford being so intense that it prompted his contemporaries to joke that 'Windham would never know who was Prime Minister'.[35] Those close to him did however see potential, in particular the ever watchful Dampier who recognised in his charge those masculine qualities nurtured by his education which were suited for success in high public office: '"He is, indeed … a very extraordinary young gentleman, and if please God, he enjoys his health, he cannot fail of making a very considerable figure in the world"'.'[36] Completing an exemplary education, Windham's masculine style was perfectly suited to a political career, qualities Paul Langford describes as 'gravity combined with modesty, unpretentiousness with dignity' and 'manly reserve with gentlemanlike bearing'.[37]

In May 1771, Windham celebrated his twenty first birthday and was the recipient of a large and unchallenged inheritance. As he entered the world, he represented the epitome of male achievement and refinement, ready to move in those circles for which he was both well placed and highly qualified. Dampier's

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[32] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p.61.
[33] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p.61.
[34] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p.64.
[35] R. Walsh, *Select Speeches of the Right Honourable William Windham and Right Honourable William Huskisson with Preliminary Biographical Sketches* (Philadelphia, 1837), p.vi.
[36] *The Windham Papers: The Life and Correspondence of the Right Honourable William Windham 1750-1810 a member of William Pitt's First Cabinet and The Ministry of "All the Talents" including hitherto unpublished letters from George III, the Dukes of York and Gloucester, Pitt, Fox, Burke, Canning, Lords Grenville, Minto, Castlereagh and Nelson, Malone, Cobbett, Dr Johnson, Dr Burney etc,* Vol I, (London, 1913), pp.10-11.
[37] P. Langford, 'Politics and Manners from Sir Robert Walpole to Sir Robert Peel', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 94 (1997), p.123.

expectations for his protege's success were entirely appropriate, but did not anticipate a yet unknown aspect of Windham's character which was soon to become apparent. Hidden behind the brilliant mind and charming demeanour lay a propensity to procrastinate, self-torment and shrink away from opportunity. These peculiarities of temperament and the difficulties Windham experienced in managing his mental health were a persistent challenge for him and his masculine persona, the episodes he referred to as 'feel' dominating his adult life and paralysing his spirits to a debilitating degree. In the absence of a Grand Tour or other diverting engagement, a period of directionless wandering ensued combined with an emotional dissonance dominated by self-pity, frustration and a chaos brought on by obsessive love.

A Man of Feeling

This section explores the effect of an illicit relationship on William Windham's mental stability, his perception of himself as a man and how his frequently erratic demeanour was perceived by others. Specifically, it shows the effect of such behaviour on Windham's failure to fulfil his potential in public life. In addition, it considers Windham's reputation as a conversationalist and his popularity within London society as a ladies' favourite. It will also show how Windham developed an inclination to over reflect on aspects of his masculinity and deliberately conceal many facets of his manliness and true self.

Windham's relationship with Bridget Byng, a married woman, was an overwhelming feature of his life as a young man. Shortly after leaving Oxford, Windham became acquainted with Mrs Julia Forrest, the widow of naval officer Commodore Forrest and daughter of a wealthy plantation owner in the Caribbean. She lived in some splendour with her daughters at a residence in St James and was known for her lavish parties and extravagant tastes. Bridget, the eldest, was married to John Byng, later Viscount Torrington and lived at Ickleford, Hertfordshire close to the Torrington family seat of Southill. The liaison between Windham and Mrs Byng illustrates how it was possible for a man of privilege and sense to spend years in the throes of emotional turmoil and in doing so both denied himself key opportunities and put his masculine reputation at risk.[38] In eighteenth-century Britain the matter of adultery was viewed less pejoratively than it is today. Despite the obvious risk of scandal, as Donna Andrew has shown, there was tacit acceptance amongst the

[38] Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg,* p.164.

elite that extra-marital relations were an inevitable part of life. With separation, let alone divorce difficult to access, the alternative of adultery became viewed as neither a crime nor sin and was treated 'gently' under the familiar banner of ''gallantry''.[39] One contemporary interpretation of such 'gallantry', adds Philip Carter, included the perfection of 'polite arts' such as dancing in order to provide a means of acquiring 'a manly confidence [suited to] sensitivity, courtesy and gracefulness drawn out through men's involvement with the opposite sex'.[40] Jenny Davidson concludes that by the later eighteenth century the criticism that such 'politeness [was] a euphemism for something more insidious and in fact equated to deceitfulness' was more prevalent with an awareness that the polite arts merely provided the smokescreen of a 'gallantry' which was in fact adultery.[41]

For almost ten years, Windham's infatuation with Bridget Byng was overwhelming, affecting his character and masculinity to the point of being virtually unrecognisable from the behaviour of the promising Oxford graduate. Crucially, it highlighted a mentality of depressive self-analysis and immoderate behaviour. Moreover, his incessant travel between the Byng household and his own London base seriously hampered any chance of the gainful employment he might have enjoyed during that time: his involvement in the running of the Felbrigg estate becoming devolved and distant.[42] In October 1779, an agitated correspondence occurred between Sarah Windham and her son regarding his preoccupation with Bridget Byng. Motherly words of advice on the matter produced a frosty filial response to which Mrs Windham rebuked:

> Son Windham, I received your letter … but if you had not put your name to it, I should not have believed that you could have been capable of writing such an abusive letter to your Mother, and [who] is entitled to every kind, and affectionate indulgence from you, as I have never in the least deviated from being a tender, fond and affectionate Parent to you, and is my

[39] D. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery and Gambling in the Eighteenth Century* (Yale, 2013), p.128.
[40] P. Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society. Britain 1660-1800* (Oxford, 2001) p.73-74 Carter references David Hume's definition of gallantry, p.68.
[41] J. Davidson, *Hypocrisy and the Politics of Politeness: Manners and Morals from Locke to Austen* (Cambridge, 2004), p.46.
[42] The management of the Felbrigg estate was left in the capable hands of Nathaniel Kent, a professional agent and agricultural improver well known at the time. His manual *Hints to Gentlemen of Landed Property* was published in 1775, shortly after he took responsibility for the running of the estate. Ketton- Cremer, *Felbrigg,* pp.173-175.

> consolation under this heavy affliction which I now feel, from your extraordinary and unparalleled behaviour to me.[43]

Mrs Windham's letter perfectly indicated her son's lack of judgement on how the matter was affecting his masculine image. Between 1772 and 1775, Windham's diaries, a jumble of hastily written notes reveal the highs and lows of a troubled state of mind wholly dependent on the feelings and whims of others, especially Bridget Byng. From Felbrigg, Windham wrote:

> Being the first time of B's and Mrs B's and Julia's having ever been down here … consists of scenes and passages of happiness not capable of being exhibited in a journal, is better committed entirely to my memory and heart, and theirs, where it is in no danger of being lost.[44]

A few months later:

> Got to Ickleford between three and four: in bad spirits, and made more so, when I saw Mrs B, by feeling then more, that my resolutions had not been preserved in my absence. What followed made me melancholy indeed, and the consequences of it destroyed the spirits in which I had found Mrs B.[45]

These early diary entries, asserts Ketton-Cremer, show that Windham conducted himself 'in a very characteristic manner – ardour and hesitation, doubt and rapture, triumph and self-reproach following in rapid succession week after week'.[46] Such erratic behaviour, Sally Holloway suggests, was 'characterised by several distinct traits, including mood swings, emotional dependence on a person, sexual possessiveness and obsessive thoughts'.[47]

[43] NRO, WKC 7/84/2 Sarah Windham to William Windham, October 1779.
[44] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/ 6 Journal 1773-1775, 27 December 1773.
[45] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/15 Journal 1773-1775, 10 June 1774.
[46] Ketton- Cremer, *Early Life,* p.68.
[47] S. Holloway, *The Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford, 2019), p.6.

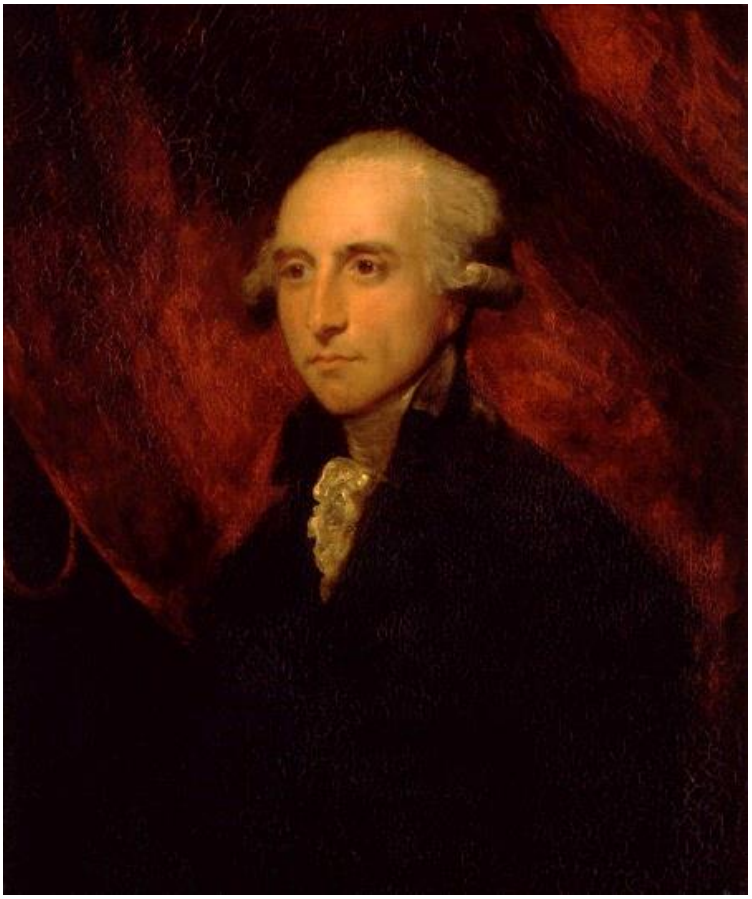

FIGURE 2 THE RT HON WILLIAM WINDHAM MP (1750-1810), OIL ON CANVAS BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, 1787 (NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY)

The extent of the illicit relationship is difficult to map, particularly as the most revealing passages appear in a peculiar coded language devised by Windham. His descendant insists that despite the intense levels of passionate feeling the relationship remained innocent. However, a re-examination of the evidence indicates other possibilities. It is certain that Windham made no secret of his love for Bridget and she in turn encouraged his attentions both in full view of her husband and also during private assignations. The power she held over Windham and his willingness to meet her at a moment's notice, often at considerable inconvenience, is very evident and suggests a man who was aware that his emotions and actions were out of control but could do little about it. He recorded: 'This evening, about two hours ago, Mrs B … stopt in the coach at my door, being just come down to town and had met them at Barnet. Mrs B comes this night to my house.'[48]

[48] NRO, WKC 6/464,464X4 *Journal 1772-1774,* 14 February 1773 [?].

On another occasion:

> Saturday, dined at the monthly meeting of the club of University College while I was at my lodgings about nine, received the message … to come [to meet] in a hackney coach. The reflection of the *feel* with which this left me all that night & the next day; the intensification it gave to all my thoughts, and the enjoyments it deprived me of; the effect which it had for a week or ten days afterwards make this instance certainly distinguished to be placed upon record & a boundary for such folly.[49]

Windham's susceptibility to what he refers to as *feel* is a recurring theme in his personal writing. French describes this as the presence or absence of 'mental and physical confidence' with Windham's constant struggles at finding an equilibrium in this respect indicating extreme volatility of self-confidence.[50] Yet, he was not a man who shed tears 'in different places with different physical props' or drew any reference to the culture of sensibility with its focus on melodrama and emotion.[51] Windham's outward appearance rarely betrayed the troubles within, so he was not in this sense an 'emotional' man where emotions represented the ''external'' signs of inward passions and affections'.[52] His outward demeanour was confident and firm, and when circumstances became unbearable his reaction was to retire to solitary contemplation rather than risk public exposure. On one occasion, from the solitude of Felbrigg, Windham's desperate efforts to occupy himself and improve his state of *feel* resulted in dissatisfaction and restlessness. Windham's journal recalls a particularly erratic day:

> Sat down to the *loci pleni* immediately after washing myself, without shaving or combing my hair, and continued so employed till half past ten. Went to breakfast, and … proceeded in getting by heart, the 15th set of *Juvenal.* By the time I returned to my own room, I imagine, it full half past eleven. From that time, till within a quarter of two, continued at the same employment, but

[49] NRO, WKC 6/466, 464X4 *Journal 1773-1775*, 27 November 1774, p.51.
[50] French, 'I Tremble Lest My Powers of Thought', p.271.
[51] T. Dixon, 'History in British Tears: Some Reflections on the Anatomy of Modern Emotions', *A lecture delivered at the annual conference of the Netherlands Historical Association, Koninklijke Bibliotheek Den Haag,* 4 November 2011*,* pp.3-4.
[52] Dixon, 'History in British Tears', p.8.

> not in a way that quite satisfied me. At a quarter before two, ceased reading, and soon after went out, firing with the pistols and riding till just after four.[53]

Such episodes were typical of Windham's behaviour. The tendency to hide himself away suggests an awareness of the fact that whilst it was acceptable for men to acknowledge the fact that they were in love, it was not regarded as manly to be reduced to a state of infirmity.[54] Evidently, with plenty of time at his disposal, Windham the bachelor, was free to indulge his romantic notions and wallow in such bouts of all-consuming *feel*. A double standard persisted where it was more acceptable for a married gentleman to keep a mistress than a married lady to entertain a lover and as a result Mrs Byng's position and reputation were much more precarious and wholly dependent on her husband's reactions. John Byng, for his part, appears to have born his wife's flirtatious nature and the annoyance of Windham's constant fawning with remarkable patience. Windham's mother, caught up in a tangle of gossip on the matter, was however not sympathetic:

> You might have saved yourself the trouble of threatening me … if you ever heard that I mentioned the business of Mr and Mrs Bing [sic] for not withstanding your unkindness to me, I most certainly for your sake should not have talked of it, however, you have my consent to read the letter to whom you please. I am perfectly at ease about it; in regard to myself, on your account indeed, I should be sorry, as every line of it reflects dishonour upon you, as a Gentleman and as a Man.[55]

Sarah Windham's letter indicates that not only did she disapprove of her son's pursuit of a married woman but was particularly concerned that this cast him as both a disreputable figure and dishonourable man. Windham himself was unconcerned that his rakish behaviour was damaging his own masculine reputation, nor that this was casting husband John Byng in the role of ridiculed cuckold. 'Cuckolds', argues David Turner, 'were described in satirical literature as incomplete men' in the sense that marriage represented ''parts of the same body and the same flesh'' and was essentially threatened in the sense that the husband's own body was now 'metaphorically surrendered to another man'. Publicly mortified, such men

[53] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/2 Journal 1773-1775, January 1773. The term *loci pleni* refers to the mathematical process of identifying a set of points with the same problematic property used for constructing lines and shapes: literally 'points complete'.
[54] Holloway, *Game of Love,* pp.33-34. 'Consumed by their fantasies … languishing women [could publicly] sink into a profound languor.'
[55] NRO, WKC 7/84/2 Sarah Windham to William Windham, October 1779.

were considered to possess no control over their wives and as a result themselves.[56] Incredibly, the two gentlemen appear to have remained on cordial if not friendly terms despite Windham's constant presence in the Byng household, even venturing on a tour of northern England together in the summer of 1774. Seemingly oblivious to the farcical nature of the situation, Windham wrote: 'At night B and I lay in the same room, which in furniture and situation in the house, gave one much the idea of a nice bedchamber such as one conceives in reading stories of twenty years ago.'[57] That Windham was during the tour maintaining a constant correspondence with Mrs Byng, collecting and depositing intimate notes at various stops appears incredible and it is worth noting that the two men never appear as repeat companions in Byng's further travels.[58] There is no record of Byng's attitude to his wife's friendship with Windham and the countless awkward situations he endured, however it is likely that he would have been aware of the negative way husbands of errant wives were regarded in society, described by Turner, as one of 'humiliation and degradation'.[59] There is no evidence that either man was so emotionally affected as to engage in the ultimate confrontation of a duel over Bridget Byng's honour. However, Windham's journal of 1774 contains a very agitated entry suggesting an impending confrontation between the two men:

> The interval from my rising this morning at quarter before nine, to now, has been as bad as any I can remember for a great while. That is passed as contrarily to resolution: for in *feel* and effect, not so bad as many others, though still bad. This was occasioned very much by the intention of writing this morning, the letter to B... I have determined only to write a few lines, and desire to meet him at Stevenage.[60]

The key message from these encounters indicates Windham's self-obsessed disregard for others' feelings and a sense that his reputation as a ladies' man was adversely affecting his worthiness as a man.[61] Windham's journal at this

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[56] D. Turner, *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740 (*Cambridge, 2002*),* p.85.
[57] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/30 Journal 1773-1775, July 1774, p.30.
[58] *The Torrington Diaries* were published in 1934 and revealed the character of the previously shadowy figure of John Byng. Ketton-Cremer describes him as a 'diffident and rather melancholy man, disappointed yet never embittered by his lot in life.' Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg,* p.165.
[59] Turner, *Fashioning Adultery,* p.85.
[60] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/50 Journal 1773-1775, 14 November 1774, p.50.
[61] Gatherings at Ickleford presented a highly charged tableau of emotions worthy of Jane Austen's imagination. Whilst Mrs Byng held Windham in her thrall, his friend George Cholmondeley shamelessly toyed with the affections of the youngest Forrest girl Cecilia, who later became Mrs William Windham.

time contains many references to being in female company and very little mention of his male friends: 'I went with Mrs B and Miss Hickey from Ridley Street to Argyle Street and hence with Mrs B to take up Julia; & that we called at Mrs Reynolds's, & Lady Knowles's I think, & finally at Miss Beauclerk's.'[62]

At this time Windham was regarded in society as something of a flirt and his days were idly spent either socialising with women, writing to them or thinking about them – collectively described by C. Andrews as 'introspective philandering'.[63] Such behaviour with the opposite sex, explains Holloway, was an important signifier of masculinity within patriarchal society and was increasingly required of men 'in order to demonstrate their "normality"'.[64] Despite Windham's frequent struggles at capturing the mood on paper, his ability to converse engagingly in polite society never failed him and this skill was the hallmark of the refined masculinity for which he was much admired. An ode composed by a friend and made public in 1810, effused: '*Again in social circles gay, Unrivalled talents you'll display, While brilliant fancy glows; And language, splendid and refin'd, O'er you luxuriant, vivid mind A double lustre throws.'* [65] According to his friends, the secret of Windham's popularity lay in the 'grace and happiness of his manner [which] gave an irresistible charm to his conversation'.[66] In addition, commends the Earl of Rosebery, 'he had the faculty, which is perhaps the most attractive of all, of appearing to give his very best to the person with whom he was conversing.'[67] Malone described Windham's address to the ladies as:

> Inimitably elegant and engaging, [demonstrating] his dignity of sentiment, his various knowledge, his quickness of conception, his love of discussion, his clear and distinct enunciation, his urbanity and gentleness, (for he was never loud or intemperate in discourse), [all of which] formed so rare a union, as never failed to make a vivid impression on those with whom he associated.[68]

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[62] NRO, WKC 6/466,464X4/61 Journal 1773-1775, 10 May 1775, p.61.
[63] 'At one time,' reports Andrews, 'it was Mary Hickey; in 1788 it was Penelope Loveday; at another time the unknown giver of the beautiful little salmon velvet beaded case in the British Museum.' C. Andrews (Ed.), The *Torrington Diaries: A Selection from the Tours of the Hon. John Byng (later Fifth Viscount Torrington) between the years 1781 and 1794* (London, 1954) p.14.
[64] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.11.
[65] NHC, Coleman Collection, *An ode addressed to the Right Honourable William Windham in 1778,* (London, 1810).
[66] Malone, *Memoir,* p.17.
[67] Earl of Rosebery, *Windham Papers: Introduction,* p. xiv.
[68] Malone, *Memoir,* p.17.

Even Dr Johnson during a period of ill health was joyful at the chance to enjoy a day with his young friend: 'Such conversation … I shall not have again until I come back to the regions of literature; and there Windham is *inter stellas Luna minores* [a moon amongst lesser stars]*'.*[69]

In June 1773, after a particularly complicated episode with Mrs Byng, Windham absented himself by joining an expedition of Arctic discovery to discover the Northwest passage organised by his friend John Phipps, later Lord Mulgrave, and which also included a fifteen-year-old midshipman Horatio Nelson. Voluntary participation in such activities, argues Ben Griffin, gave men the opportunity to exhibit a 'hard-won state of self-mastery' through physical exertion.[70] This was Windham's moment to show that he was a man in control of his emotions. It soon became apparent however that the experience of being at sea was too much for his fragile sensibilities. Rather than immerse himself in the masculine teamwork of manning a ship, Windham lapsed into a state of lovelorn inertia and after only three weeks abandoned his voyage, forced to make his own way home with only his servant Cawston for company. Leaving the manly world of seafaring behind, Windham retreated into a notebook of 'feminine' sentimental musing:

> Secret and separate. This is my confidential book. In this will be contained all those thoughts, memorandums, notes, reflexions, &c which no eye must see but my own. To Thee, my ever-adorable friend do I dedicate it, with whose name it will be chiefly filled. May God grant that we may meet again, and enjoy together the recollection of the times, when these were written![71]

Having realised that 'the state of a person's mind is not materially altered by change of place', Windham admitted:

> How have I fulfilled my resolution? Instead of exerting myself to preserve a lively recollection of things past or absent, instead of thought and vigilance, and exertion, which I fancied would be exerted by the newness of the situation, my mind has been occupied only with melancholy reflexions on the business I had undertaken, and a comparison of my present state, with the enjoyments of *Ickleford parlour.* Not one purpose which I proposed in the voyage has been answered. On the contrary, my powers of reflexion have

[69] Rosebery, *Windham Papers, Introduction* p. xiv.
[70] B. Griffin, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain: Masculinity, Political Culture and the Struggle for Women's Rights* (Cambridge, 2012), p.173.
[71] NRO, WKC 6/465,464X4 *Journal & Commonplace book of trip to Norway 1773.* A full transcript of the travel diary appears in Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* pp.93-124.

> been weakened; and my thoughts been less active, and my perceptions less lively than they would have been at Felbrigg or Oxford.[72]

His part in the expedition aborted, Windham spent the next month making his way through Norway and Denmark before finally crossing from Copenhagen to England in August 1773. He returned to the Ickleford parlour shortly thereafter.

There is a sense in which the arctic fiasco marked the beginning of a period of acute mental stress for William Windham and marked a turning point in his own internalised view of himself as a man and a determination to reassess his life. An anxious exchange with Sarah Windham revealed a fresh interpretation on the 'outrageousness of [his] behaviour':

> Ask me whether I believe the existence of God, and I suppose that I do not … but how is it to be remedied? Why, I have taken the only remedy in power which is to keep me out of the way. This is the whole of the extraordinary and unparalleled behaviour.[73]

His mother's response was laced with emotional blackmail, but ultimately held no sway:

> I cannot bear the thought of your Leaving England without my seeing you. At my time of life it is probable we may never see each other again. I give you my word of honour, I <u>never</u> will mention anything to you relating to what is past.[74]

Her entreaty disregarded, Windham travelled to Italy in the late autumn of 1779, where he stayed for almost a year.[75] In the future, he would look back on his years of youthful manhood as a wasted, fruitless decade during which his reputation as a man was adversely affected by a propensity for foolish inertia and humiliating spectacle. A return to scholarly endeavour and the pleasures of stimulating company were to be crucial factors in aiding Windham's launch into public life and rescuing both the self-belief and self-respect he needed to succeed.

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[72] NRO, WKC 6/465,464X4 *Journal & Commonplace book of trip to Norway 1773.*
[73] NRO, WKC 7/84/404X4/3 William Windham to Mrs Sarah Windham, October 1779.
[74] NRO, WKC 7/84/404X4/5 Mrs Sarah Windham to William Windham, 10 October 1779.
[75] J. Ingamells records Windham departing England for Italy in November 1779 spending the following Spring and Summer visiting Florence, Rome, Venice and Milan before returning in September 1780. His journals for this period have not survived. J. Ingamells (Ed.), *A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy 1701-1800 compiled from the Brinsley Ford Archive* (New Haven and London, 1997), pp.1011-1012.

Scholar and Sportsman

This section addresses the importance of both intellectual stimulation and the championing of male sports in William Windham's presentation of himself as a sociable elite man energetic in both mind and body. If the 1770's represented a period of mental struggle and private frustration for Windham, the years following his return from Italy featured an active uptake of those interests, a more forcible presence in the elite male circles of London society and the forging of strong friendships with Samuel Johnson and Edmund Burke.

In the eighteenth century, scholarship, discovery and the honing of intellect were widely accepted as the preserve of men whose superiority lay in their possession of *reason.* Women, by contrast held no such power, being more passionate by nature. Moreover, 'the world of the Enlightenment', argues Roy Porter, 'was a man's world … Scripture, the law and other authorities jointly confirmed male superiority and the subordination of women.'[76] Only men were considered capable of assimilating and interpreting known facts with the ability to push the boundaries of knowledge and discovery for the benefit of all. In polite company, men provided 'gravity and knowledge' which was then 'sprinkled with liveliness' by women's 'natural gift of vivacity', resulting in a lively informed conversation.[77] For Windham, the attractions of manly scholarship with its demand for 'heightened powers of reason, intelligence and clarity' had to be carefully balanced with the dangers of being considered dreary and pedantic; the idea that women may also possess intellectual ability was not generally accepted.[78] At a meeting of mathematicians, Windham was both astonished and bemused to meet a Mrs Drake 'who opened today about Virgil and afterwards about Simpson's and Emerson's ''Fluxions'''. After a 'long and curious conversation' he discovered that she was 'a reader of mathematics at the highest level' and an exchange of reading matter took place.[79] Henry Brougham summed up Windham's immersion in the world of intellectual stimulus: 'His nature, perhaps owing to his hesitating disposition was to be a follower, if not a worshipper, rather than an original free thinker or actor;

[76] R. Porter, *Enlightenment: Britain and the Creation of the Modern World* (London, 2000), pp.320,322.
[77] A. Vickery, *In our Time: Politeness,* BBC Radio 4, 30 September 2004.
[78] P. Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society,* p.71.
[79] Baring, *Diary,* 12 and 16 December 1808, p.484. Later, he expressed further consternation on hearing her instructor Mr Saunderson describe her 'as one of his most diligent scholars'. Perplexed, Windham concluded: 'No great opinion of female powers in that way', *Diary,* 28 June 1809, p.492.

as if he felt some relief under the doubts which harassed him from so many quarters, in thus taking shelter under a master's wing.'[80]

An invitation to join Dr Johnson's *Literary Club* placed Windham at the epicentre of elite male intellectual debate and he soon developed a friendship with the founder who declared an interest in his protégé's intellectual abilities.[81] The bond between the two men was genuine and sincere and resembled that between a father and son. Windham was deferential to Johnson's knowledge and wisdom, and Johnson delighted in the company of a younger like-minded man.[82] The friendship with Dr Johnson and his association with a wider group of intellectuals reignited his passion for the scholarly learning which had begun so successfully at Eton. Crucially now, his abilities and achievements as a reader and scholar became fundamental to his own positive view of himself as a man of intellect and were central to his notion of what was truly masculine. 'Perhaps', surmised Ketton-Cremer, 'Johnson found in Windham the ideal disciple. He was a scholar and an admirable talker; his conversation, like his speeches, was full of illusion, and quotation, and the echoes of wide reading; and … was rich in humour.' In addition to scholarship, Windham possessed that elusive masculine quality '*bel air',* the ability to display 'perfection in manner and address so greatly envied and admired by Johnson'.[83] Johnson recommended that Windham should capture this authenticity in the writing he had abandoned years before:

> The great thing to be recorded … is the state of your own mind, and you should write everything down that you remember; for you cannot judge at first what is good or bad: and write immediately, while the impression is fresh, for it will not be the same a week afterwards.[84]

Indeed, the raw and emotional tone of Windham's later diaries demonstrates that he followed his mentor's advice to the letter. Windham's only regret was that he had not made the acquaintance of Dr Johnson earlier in life, and on speaking to him

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[80] H. Brougham, *Historical Sketches of Statesmen who flourished in The Time of George III to which is added Remarks on Party and An Appendix* (Philadelphia, 1842) pp.299-300.
[81] The Literary Club was founded in 1764 by Dr Samuel Johnson and Sir Joshua Reynolds. Members included James Boswell, Edmund Burke, David Garrick, Adam Smith and Charles James Fox.
[82] Dr Johnson possessed firm ideas regarding men's ability to converse. He praised Edmund Burke above all others: 'Burke is the only man whose common conversation corresponds with the general fame which he has in the world. Take up whatever topick you please, he is ready to meet you.' J. Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson LLD,* Vol I (London, 1791) p.329.
[83] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* pp.253-254.
[84] Baring, *Diary,* Preface by G. Ellis, p. xvii. Ellis quotes Boswell's *Life of Johnson,* Vol II (1793 edition) p.75.

for the last time declared: 'I hurried out of the room with tears in my eyes, and more affected than I had been on any former occasion.'[85] In a letter to Fanny Burney, Windham summed up his feelings:

> Had he lived longer, I am satisfied I should have taken him … to my heart! I have looked up to him, applied to him, advised with him in all essential occurrences of my life! … There is nothing for which I look back on myself with severer discipline than the time I have thrown away in other pursuits, that might have been devoted to that wonderful man![86]

In Burney's view, the friendship reflected well on Windham: 'He loved Dr Johnson – and Dr Johnson returned his affection … For a young man of fashion, such a trait towards an old, however dignified philosopher, must surely be a mark indisputable of an elevated mind and character.'[87] With some modesty, Windham conceded that Dr Johnson had 'proceeded to make a compliment to the manliness of my mind', thus emphasising the belief that scholarly excellence could only exist in the male brain and that Windham was blessed with the highest of abilities.[88] Others applauded him as a diligent scholar, including Malone who remarked that 'an excursive reader, [Windham] gathered a great variety of knowledge from different books, and from frequently mixing [with] very various classes and descriptions of men. His memory was most tenacious'.[89]

[85] Baring, *Diary,* 12 December 1784, p.31. Despite Windham's propensity to bouts of *feel,* this is the only recorded instance of Windham succumbing to tears.
[86] C. Barrett (Ed.), *Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay,* Vol II: 1785-1788 (London, 1893) p.532. Fanny Burney, after her marriage Madame D'Arblay, was an English satirical novelist, diarist and playwright. Full details of her life can be found in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.
[87] Barrett, *Madame D'Arblay,* Vol II: 1785-1788, p.486. Burney alludes to Windham's allegiance to the politics of the Whig Party.
[88] Baring. *Diary,* 7 December 1784, p.29.
[89] Malone, *Memoir,* pp.13-14.

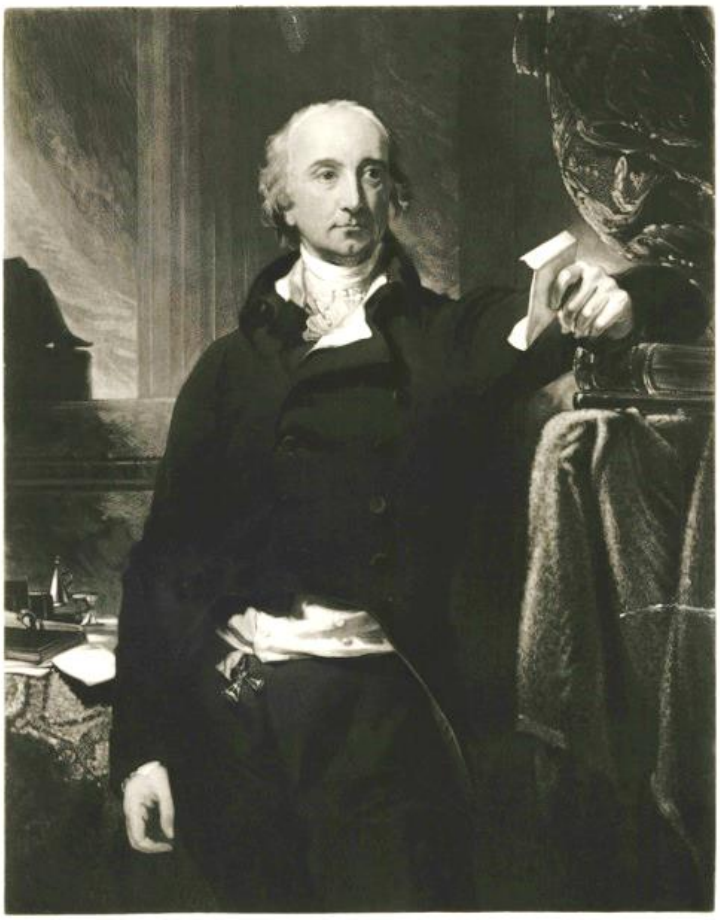

FIGURE 3 THE RT. HON. WILLIAM WINDHAM (1750-1810) BY SAMUEL REYNOLDS AFTER SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE, 1803 (NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY)

Intellectual pursuits did not however always make a positive contribution to Windham's masculine self-esteem. In 1783, on the suggestion of Dr Johnson, Windham embarked on an ambitious semantic project to translate from the original Latin the entire history by Jacques Auguste de Thoux, alternatively known as *Thuanus.* The project was enormous and Windham worked on it only intermittently during visits to Felbrigg and later Oxford. Inevitably the labour became a byword for self-reproach and personal dissatisfaction. To offset his loneliness and inertia, Windham preferred to fill his days with the resolution of obscure mathematical problems or touring the neighbourhood in search of congenial company. Almost from the outset the translation represented a depressing burden for Windham and drew attention to what he perceived to be his own inadequacies in self-improvement and the increasingly unfavourable view he held of himself as a man of learning. On one occasion, considering *Thuanus*:

> Where I have had no prospect of leisure, I have purposed to go on with this undertaking, but have as uniformly suffered it to be deferred from day to day,

> till the opportunity was passed. If the work is ever to be executed, it must be now.[90]

In many ways, Windham was a victim of his own intellectual versatility and was hindered by a tendency for over analysis: 'As opportunities of study are multiplied, the incentives to it are often in the same proportion withdrawn. I found certainly, according to Dr Johnson's expression, a very great and sudden refrigeration of application.'[91] On more rare occasions, he exclaimed:

> Rose at twelve and continued at home till dinner, with the *feel* that sufficiently proved the importance of exertion to happiness. My mind was so light, and my powers so active and vigorous, that no undertaking appeared difficult. The activity of the mental powers awakened the feelings also, and made me susceptible of enjoyment, to which I am in general a stranger.[92]

Ultimately, Windham's analysis of his scholarly efforts was harsh, constantly castigating himself for not achieving more. He remained his own severest critic: 'What an amazing difference would take place in my mind had I employed the years of my leisure which had lapsed through my life in making myself master of the subjects then before me.'[93] Whilst Windham wrestled with his own idea of himself as a man of serious learning, his acquaintances considered him in quite a different light. Malone particularly admired his friend's enthusiasm for physical sports and 'robust and manly exercises' and in this sense, Windham represented the quintessential elite Englishman – active and involved.[94] His diary contains numerous accounts and references to his involvement in sporting activity – ice skating, rowing, 'galloping' and fencing. Characteristically, he often judged his own performance; a morning spent skating on 'ice … so clear and the weather so pleasant, that all the pleasures which solitary skating can give' was viewed with great satisfaction.[95] The physical pursuits about which Windham was most enthusiastic were those he regarded as traditionally English, originated in promoting a manly physicality in the male population as a whole and required his own patronage. Describing his friend 'as a true English gentleman', Malone wrote:

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[90] Baring, *Diary,* 9 September 1784, pp.21-22.
[91] Baring, *Diary,* 16 June 1789, p.179.
[92] Baring*, Diary,* 10 February 1785, p.44.
[93] Baring, *Diary,* 15 December 1784, p.34.
[94] Malone, *Memoir,* p.22.
[95] Baring*, Diary,* 18 January 1786, p.72.

> He [Windham] wished that, in their hours of leisure and recreation, they [the People] should practise those athletick exercises, which had been the delight of their forefathers, time out of mind; and they should thus become hardy, and vigorous, and able to defend their own rights and liberties, when assailed either by domestick or foreign foes.[96]

Windham's two passions in this respect were a commitment to upholding the tradition of 'camping' in rural Norfolk, and a lifelong support of the art of pugilism, an interest passed down from his father 'Boxing Windham'. Camping was the name given to the game of football practised by village men since the medieval period. 'A football match', explains Jim Sharpe, 'might be a contest spread over two miles of countryside, played by two teams of indeterminate (and often very large) numbers drawn from neighbouring parishes or from rival parts of the same village.'[97] In the park at Felbrigg, Windham held regular matches which were 'ferocious', completely lacking in rules and very popular with local men who had grown up with the sport. In Windham's view camping '"combined all athletic excellence; that to excel in it, a man must be a good boxer, runner and wrestler"', the skilful use of fists a particular requirement.[98]

Male fisticuffs in the form of boxing was a lifelong passion for Windham and spanned the sport's trajectory from spontaneous alehouse brawl to the crowd-pulling theatrics it became in the early nineteenth century. By 1809, Windham's enthusiasm for pugilism was so strong he compared the bravery and manliness displayed in the boxing ring to 'the native valour of our troops as shewn at Talavera, at Vimeira, and at Maida'.[99]Joanne Begiato stresses the importance of the masculine image of competitive boxing at this time which, from the later eighteenth century, defined 'new sought-after models of male stance emphasising appearance and body shape'. The appeal of the 'gentleman' boxer's body was its ability to 'simultaneously convey strength, refinement, and self-control' discarding all sense of the effete in fulfilling the essential display of manliness and courage.[100] Venetia

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[96] Malone, *Memoir,* p.15.
[97] J. Sharpe, *Early Modern England; A Social History 1550-1760* (London, 1997), p.291.
[98] Ketton-Cremer, *Felbrigg,* p.208.
[99] *Windham Papers,* Vol II, Letter from William Windham to A. Hudson, 17 August 1809, p.351. Windham referred to several celebrated victories over the French during the Peninsular Wars.
[100] J. Begiato, 'Between Poise and Power: Embodied Manliness in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century British Culture', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 26 (2016), p.140. Begiato quotes K. Downing, 'The Gentleman Boxer: Boxing, Manners and Masculinity in Eighteenth Century England,' *Men and Masculinities*, 12.3 (2010), p.343. This view, explains Begiato, contrasts with earlier notions of physical exercise as merely 'exertion or recreation' to creating a 'nimble manly body'. p.7.

Murray argues that not only did boxing replicate the violence and power of field combat, it also provided thrilling entertainment and the lure of competing celebrities.[101] Convinced that the witnessing of a brave contest instilled in the hearts of men a strength and fortitude which was transferrable to the theatre of war, Windham wrote: 'The courage does not arise from mere boxing, from the mere beating or being beat; - but from the sentiments excited of such practices.'[102]

The increased popularity of boxing ran concurrently with changing ideas about men's bodies and manly activity. Begiato notes that 'changing practices in war, empire and labour, understandings of science, sports and aesthetic fashions all influenced the relationship between physiques, minds and gender identities'.[103] The Greek model of the Georgian male as slim, graceful and athletic gave way to the notion that in the face of prolonged battle and likely invasion a more solid, rugged and less obviously aesthete male was required. Furthermore, Karen Downing stresses that the "State of the Nation" was a topic of concern. Effeminate men, with no capacity or interest in defending their country could not be relied on at a time of conflict and stress, thereby rendering the nation impotent and vulnerable to attack. 'It almost seemed', argues Downing, 'that a ''new man''' was needed for the job.'[104] The elevation of the muscular body type to the most desired form and a questioning that previous models of masculine behaviour, such as politeness and sensibility, were now not only unsuited to the demands of war but also detrimental to the national character contributed to the growing popularity of pugilism, a sporting activity ideally placed as both male and British.[105] This idea had particular resonance for the elite classes who were widely considered to have become unsuited to their leadership role, as evidenced in the embarrassing loss of the American colonies. The new muscular ideal therefore, looked back to military successes of the past and to revived notions of chivalry which provided both a framework of 'generosity, justice and courage' and a physical manliness designed to protect others. The chivalric system with its emphasis on 'affability, courtesy, generosity and veracity' was a way of producing men who were not 'Frenchified and

[101] V. Murray, *High Society in the Regency Period 1788-1830* (London, 1998), p.19.
[102] *Windham Papers,* Vol II, Letter from William Windham to A. Hudson, 17 August 1809, p.352.
[103] Begiato, 'Between Poise and Power', p.131.
[104] Downing, 'The Gentleman Boxer', p.334.
[105] 'Politeness' as a code of male behaviour had, since the middle of the eighteenth century, been vulnerable to charges of hypocrisy and insincerity. The cult of sensibility allowed men more licence in expressing their emotions, but the events of the American Wars followed by the fallout of the French Revolution called for men to adopt a more responsible mode of behaviour, compatible with the upholding of masculine national character and the winning of wars.

effeminate fops' but were better suited to the difficult circumstances of the late eighteenth century.[106] These ideas had the additional benefit of appealing to the wider classes, and concludes Cohen, refashioned the gentleman as 'masculine, integrating national identity with enlightenment notions of progress and civilisation'.[107]

In 1785, Windham embarked on a remarkable sporting adventure – to become one of the very first civilian amateurs to take to the skies in a hot-air balloon. Ketton-Cremer suggests that Windham involved himself in this venture 'partly as a test of his own courage and partly from scientific curiosity'.[108] He was also no doubt excited by the mood of 'pleasure-taking' which was prevalent in the 1780s, a society which Porter describes as 'transformed by changes in material culture - the built environment, the availability of urban pleasure sites, resorts indoor and outdoor and the ''pleasure machines'' through which discriminating customers might find pastime and amusement.[109] For about a year prior to the ascent Windham developed an obsession with the craze of ballooning and mentioned it frequently in his diaries: 'Did not rise till past nine; from that time till about eleven, did little more than indulge in idle reveries about balloons.'[110] A chance meeting in Oxford with amateur aeronaut James Sadler encouraged him to make the dream a reality, and much to the incredulity of his friends, in early May 1785 a successful flight was made over London and Kent.[111] Edmund Burke captured the mood:

> What time will you receive the congratulations of your Terrestrial Friends on your return to Mortality? … I really long to converse with you on this Voyage, as I think you are the first rational being that has taken flight.[112]

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[106] M. Cohen, '"Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750- 1830, *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (2005), p.323.
[107] Cohen, '"Manners" Make the Man', p.315.
[108] Ketton-Cremer, *Early Life,* p.282. A craze for hot air ballooning began in Paris during 1783 with the experimental activities of the Montgolfier brothers. The first untethered free flight took place on 21 November 1783, only eighteen months before Windham's ascent.
[109] Porter, *Enlightenment*, p.266.
[110] Baring, *Diary,* 7 February 1784, p.3.
[111] James Sadler (1753-1828) was the first Englishman to fly. Poorly educated and raised to be a pastry cook, Sadler 'mastered not only the mechanics of constructing complicated, innovative equipment, but also comprehended a science understood by only a handful of individuals at this time – that of generating, capturing and using hot air and hydrogen?' M. Davies, 'James Sadler: From pastry cook to first English aeronaut', *History Extra,* published online 2 February 2017, p.2.
[112] *Windham Papers,* Vol I, Edmund Burke to William Windham, 7 May 1785, pp.80-81.

Yet, despite the success of the venture and the admiration of his friends for the display of such physical courage, Windham's spirits did not rally and a developing sense of panic, wasted time and hypochondria took hold. In despair, he wrote:

> This habit of indecision, if some means are not found to stop its progress and abate its malignity, will corrupt and eat away my understanding to the very core; it wastes my time, consumes my strength, converts comfort into vexation and distress, deprives me of various pleasures and involves me in innumerable difficulties.[113]

At this time, Windham also became increasingly worried about his health and mortality.[114] Following a pleasant evening with family at the Felbrigg Parsonage, he recalled:

> I came into my room … thinking with great intentness till past eleven, when the effect of thought, so long and so earnestly continued brought me into a state different … from what I have frequently experienced from the same cause … seemed to me a natural precursor of that which … will be my end – a paralytic stroke.[115]

Windham's preoccupation with the possibility persisted:

> I was so exhausted, that I was fain to lie down and sleep, and was unable to that without many of those convulsive shocks with which I have some time past …been so much annoyed, and which I fear are the forerunners of a paralytic stroke. A night now not very often passes without my experiencing some of these seizures, in a way to make me apprehend that the event is actually taking place.[116]

No such stroke ever took place but a super sensitivity to all manner of ailments was a recurrent theme of the diaries and also a feature of his correspondence with friend Edmund Malone. Recurrent colds, hoarseness and indeterminate problems often required a sudden absence from society and reveal not only an unmanly fussiness but also suggest a degree of attention seeking. On

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[113] Baring, *Diary,* 6 April 1785, p.48.

[114] Windham would have been aware of the physician George Cheyne and his work *The English Malady* (1733) which put forward the view that 'tension or laxity of the nervous system produced anxiety, the horrors, sleeplessness, nightmares, and the fear of death'. R. Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason: How the Enlightenment Transformed the Way See Our Bodies and Souls* (London, 2003), p.238.

[115] Baring, *Diary,* 15 June 1787, pp.117-118.

[116] Baring, *Diary,* 7 September 1792, pp.259-260.

one occasion, Windham announced: 'I think upon the whole that it will be more prudent for me to stay where I am. With a Lady and a strange Lady it will not do for me to throw up my legs, and lye all along, as I may possibly have occasion to do so.'[117]

Compounding these fears was another more tangible concern. Despite the universal admiration and praise he received for his sporting, scholarly and social accomplishments, the fact remained that at the age of forty Windham remained unmarried.[118] 'Marriage and the production of children', write French and Rothery, 'were regarded as normal, and highly desirable, elements of the life-course' and in remaining celibate, Windham's situation was highly unusual. On a practical household level there were 'obligations that elite men looked to their wives to perform' with the assumption that 'marital ''settlement'' would also bring emotional ''comfort''' and 'the benefit of a supportive, capable and to some degree subservient spouse'.[119] In addition, 'in a patriarchal society sexual intercourse with the "opposite" sex', stresses Holloway, 'was an important signifier of masculinity', and marriage was the only legitimate scenario for that to take place.[120] Confiding in his diary, Windham wrote:

> I feel a strong sense of the unhappiness of my own celibacy – that lively conception of pleasure I had lost, clouding all my prospects, relaxing all my motives and in one especial manner destroying all enjoyment, that I might ever have in residence here.

Although thoughts of Mrs Byng were now better contained, a candidate for the role of Mrs Windham was not immediately apparent. Windham, therefore, resolved 'manfully to fight against such images' he perceived of his lonely situation and resolved to bide his time.[121] Besides, the trajectory of Windham's life was rapidly veering away from the private world of the parlour to the public arena of

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[117] Bodleian, MS Malone 39/349, William Windham to Edmund Malone [undated].
[118] Windham's life at Felbrigg 'brought home to him the loneliness of his bachelor life. His half-brother George Lukin, the Dean of Wells, lived nearby with his large and affectionate family'. Ruddy, *William Windham,* p.84.
[119] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities 1660-1914* (Oxford, 2012), pp.191,193.
[120] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.11. Holloway adds: 'The cultural obsession with heteronormative sex was bound up with a 'crisis of effeminacy' from the mid eighteenth century, manifested by growing social anxiety about and hostility toward effeminate men, who were categorised alongside 'anarchists, papists and foreigners as social deviants'.
[121] Baring, *Diary,* August 1790, p.205.

Parliament and it would be some years before Windham finally enjoyed the comforts of the married state.[122]

Gentleman, Orator and Statesman

The following section examines the ways in which William Windham conducted himself as a man in the public sphere, the masculine attributes he brought to that arena and how a private preoccupation with his own performance bore little resemblance to the views of those around him. The detail of William Windham's political career as Minister at War at the turn of the nineteenth century is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, his experience of office does give valuable insight into the tensions which existed between his own private views of himself as an elite man at the centre of business and the ways in which that performance was viewed in public.

Windham's election as Member for Norwich in 1784 marked the beginning of a swift rise in career fortune and a high-profile presence on a public stage dominated by notables such as Charles James Fox, William Pitt, Richard Sheridan and Edmund Burke. The early predictions of career success by Dampier were finally realised, and like many of his contemporaries Windham epitomised the expensively educated, wealthy landed gentleman who it was expected would take office and serve his country.[123] Indeed, the rapidity with which Windham reached high parliamentary position was both remarkable and unusual, and, according to Rosebery, 'prove[d] a command of parliament by eloquence and character such as few men of his standing can have achieved.'[124] Described as 'the finest gentleman of his age, his form developed by every manly exercise, his face beaming with intelligence and spirit' and 'the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high souled Windham',

[122] Details of Windham's subsequent marriage to Cecilia Forrest are given on p.72 and Footnote 182.
[123] The unassailable right for the elite to represent their community was increasingly being challenged. In 1796, a Norwich Freeman aired his scepticism: 'Mr Windham tells you that you have no right to be Politicians- that belongs to those in the superior stations of life; nay his doctrine on this point excludes almost everyone but himself – the master and the servant, according to him, have neither the right, nor the means of information, to have an opinion of their own on these matters.' NHC, Coleman Collection, *Norwich Election Squibs 1796.*
[124] Rosebery, *Windham Papers, Introduction,* p. xii. For eighteen years, between 1784 and 1802, Windham represented the politically volatile city of Norwich and also occupied senior office with responsibility for war and military matters during one of the most difficult periods of British political history. Windham was one of only three Cabinet Ministers in the House of Commons together with the Prime Minister William Pitt and Secretary of State for War, Henry Dundas.

the lonely, self-scrutinising and very private man was now publicly available for all to see and hear.[125]

As a gentleman on the public stage, Windham's qualifications were impeccable. 'The term ''public men''', explains Matthew McCormack, 'suggests men of a certain station whose destiny it was to serve the public good' in an open, selfless and dutiful manner.[126] Windham's attitude to his duties as Member of Parliament was considered both dignified and conscientious. Following a successful meeting with the Norwich Wool Manufacturers, Windham wrote to John Patteson, manufacturer and Mayor of Norwich:

> I will request to you to convey to them my sincere & grateful acknowledgements for the honour they do me; to which I can pretend to no other claim, than what arises from a strong feel for the interests of the city, & an earnest desire to promote, to the utmost of my power, the wishes of my constituents.[127]

Respect in this context was generated by pedigree, status and an elegant physical presence, all of which represented the bedrock of undisputed masculine power wielded at the highest level. However, argues McCormack, 'men's political suitability was increasingly judged in terms of their personal qualities and habits … personal probity, moral character and domestic virtue'. Quite simply, 'a man's political persona was impossible to separate from the personal, and vice versa.'[128] Windham's seamless entry into public life offers a clear view into the connection between masculinity, politics and the public sphere and shows that he was fully aware of the masculine attributes which were required of him in order to be admired and respected. In Norwich, members of the electorate were well acquainted with Windham's noble credentials and public influence suggesting that there was a wide understanding of the link 'between private character and political ability'.[129] In 1802, one voter cautioned his fellows:

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[125] E. Burke, *The Correspondence of Edmund Burke,* Vol VIII (Cambridge, 1958), p.23. The words are attributed to Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859) English historian, essayist and politician.
[126] M. McCormack (Ed.), *Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain* (Basingstoke, 2007), p.3.
[127] NRO, MC 2015/16,904X9, William Windham to John Patteson, 20 July 1788.
[128] McCormack, *Public Men,* p.4.
[129] M. Morris, *Sex, Money and Personal Character in Eighteenth-Century British Politics* (New Haven and London, 2014), p.6.

> Let us not part with gold and get only brass in return. Account in no light honour for this city to be represented by Mr Windham, possessing as he does the genuine spirit of an Englishman, united with first rate talents and incorrigible integrity.[130]

The personal qualities and political promise of William Windham excited no less attention in London high society where the diversion of female company was abundant. Windham's arrival as a charming eligible bachelor caused a stir in those circles, his status as a sociable and popular member of the elite unquestioned. The enduring nature of polite ideals in the last decades of the eighteenth century and the value attached to refined conduct in urban society had clear resonance for men such as Windham. The comments of Fanny Burney resonated:

> Mr Wyndham I had seen twice before - both times at Miss Monckton's; and anywhere else I should have been much gratified by his desire of a third meeting, as he is one of the most agreeable, spirited, well-bred, and brilliant conversers I have ever spoken with … He is member for Norwich, and a man of family and fortune, with a very pleasing, though not handsome face, a very elegant figure, and an air of fashion and vivacity.[131]

Appearances and behaviour in society *did* therefore matter and it is evident that Windham was a skilled player. The remarks such as those aired by Burney illustrate how important it was for a man to be seen to be achieving those sociable ideals which had been laid down in the early modern era. 'A man's skill', argues Anna Bryson, [was to] '"put himselfe forth comely and seemely in his fashions, gestures and manners"'.[132] Moreover, a gentleman's attitude in society received attention because it highlighted his personal understanding of how best to combine refinement with manliness. In this sense, Windham attained the 'polite' goal for men, the essence of which was the ability to interact with others in a pleasing, well-judged manner. Windham's appearance, engaging manners, impressive intellect and debonair style contributed to an image of elite masculinity which was perfectly matched with the highest expectations of a man fit for political office. Windham, as a representative of his gender, class and political opinion was a figure for public consumption and therefore subject to every form of comment from both sexes.

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[130] NHC, Colman Collection, *Election Budget 1802.* Windham was not re –elected, losing narrowly to Smith, 1356 votes to 1439.
[131] Barrett, *Madame D'Arblay,* Volume II: 1785-1788, p.485.
[132] A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998), p.49.

Clearly, having lost none of the conversational allure which had served him well as a young man, Windham no doubt enjoyed the attention. Amongst gentlemen, however, opinion was circumspect. An acquaintance Mr Fairly, regarded him with some suspicion as '"a tall, thin meagre, sallow, black-eyed, penetrating, keen looking figure"'.[133] Whilst, fellow parliamentarian Thomas Creevey pondered: 'I see a great deal of Windham. He has dined with me, but my opinion of him is not at all improved by my acquaintance with him. He is, at the same time, *decidedly* the most agreeable and witty in conversation of all these great men.'[134]

The most effective way for an elite gentleman to exhibit a superior form of masculinity was through his command of address. For Windham his performances in the House of Commons were inextricably linked with his own views of himself as an effective elite man. Elite status and political authority were intertwined in the authenticity of the male voice and this, asserts Josephine Hoegaerts, communicated notions of 'control, masculinity, civilisation and power' with public confidence dependent upon 'social status, appearance, age and political affiliations'.[135] Thus, the arrival of Windham on the benches was greeted with the expectation that his was a voice likely to be worthy of attention.

On entering the Commons in 1784 Windham found himself thrust onto a stage which was both chaotic and unforgiving and was also dominated by the rich oratory of Fox, Burke, Sheridan and the Prime Minister William Pitt.[136] Moreover, although the House of Commons was an exclusive place peopled by a small elite, the galleries and the press made parliamentary practices a highly public affair. For Windham the parliamentarian, the delivery of a perfect performance on every occasion became vital to his masculine self-worth and therefore also his mental equilibrium. Faced with such illustrious example, Windham delayed his maiden speech until almost a year after election choosing to 'enter the debate on the topical subject of the scrutiny of electioneering procedures, a direct consequence of the 1785 Westminster election which Fox had won by a narrow margin'.[137] 'He was an

[133] Barrett, *Madame D'Arblay*, Volume III: 1788-1796, p.162-163.
[134] H. Maxwell, *The Creevey Papers: A Selection from the Correspondence & Diaries of the late Thomas Creevey M.P.* (London, 1903) Mr Creevey to Dr Currie, 13 March 1805, p.38.
[135] J. Hoegaerts, 'Speaking like Intelligent Men': Vocal Articulations of Authority and Identity in the House of Commons in the Nineteenth Century, *Radical History review,*121 (2015), pp.125,126.
[136] The late eighteenth century is often referred to as the 'golden age' of oratory reflecting the rhetorical brilliance of elite men such as Burke, Pitt, Sheridan and Fox. Their audiences were 'undisciplined and raucous … members often lolled on the benches, leaned against the pillars, stamped their feet, snuffled into their neck cloths, yawned, whispered, coughed and sometimes yelled like foxes at feeding time.' S. Margetson, *Regency London* (Littlehampton, 1971), p.35.
[137] Davies, *William Windham,* p.44.

immediate success as a speaker', writes Ruddy, 'no mean accomplishment in an assembly almost totally undisciplined'.[138] His diary account however is disappointingly brief: 'Went to the House and spoke for the first time. Not home till seven in the morning.'[139] A second speech, on the subject of Parliamentary reform was planned for a month later, but was again delayed when it became clear to Windham that parliamentary debate required a much swifter turnaround than the more familiar ground of academic rumination:

> I am afraid the fact is, that in no equal period my faculties were ever so much excited. Such are the advantages I have lost by delaying so long my entrance into business; and such the reasons for that superiority which men of the world are perpetually to have over men of study.[140]

The speech did not materialise, perhaps due to the pressures of over-preparation, but certainly affected by the uncongenial nature of the venue. In addition to an air of gravitas and authority, adds Hoegaerts, 'one needed quite literally the ability to speak and produce sounds that could be heard and distinguished' – often over several noisy hours.[141] Windham recorded his anxiety on the non- event with an air of chagrin:

> The heat of the House disordered my faculties and enfeebled my powers and brought on a state of inability, from which I could never sufficiently to venture to rise … I was wrong not to use greater efforts to recover myself; I was wrong … not to make the attempt, even in the state I was in.[142]

Gaining confidence, Windham delivered his speech a month later:

> Felt more possessed than on the former occasion, but thought my performance inferior, and conceived that others thought so too. I have found since that they were inclined to think well of it. They are so good as to be cheaply pleased. It was a mere effusion, and though delivered in a forcible and perhaps graceful manner, contained nothing more than anyone would have thought of in conversation.[143]

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[138] Ruddy, *William Windham,* p.54.
[139] Baring, *Diary,* 9 February 1785, p.43.
[140] Baring, *Diary,* 20 March 1785, p.45.
[141] Hoegaerts, 'Speaking Like Intelligent Men', p.126.
[142] Baring, *Diary,* 18 April 1785, p.51.
[143] Baring, *Diary,* 12 May 1785, p.53. Henry Brougham expanded, remarking that Windham's speech was 'in the easy tone of familiar conversation; but it was full of nice observation and profound remark; it was instinct with classical illusion; it was even over-informed with philosophic and with

By 1790, Windham had developed a flair for parliamentary oratory which was at once hailed as incisive, droll and captivating. In a speech on parliamentary reform his sharp response to a proposed amendment of the Representation of the People Act was that no-one would ‘’recommend you to repair your house in the hurricane season’’.[144] For this and other perfectly on cue *bon mots* he allowed himself the indulgence of further admiration, relishing in particular ‘his resistance to a hot attack from Pitt.’[145] Success, therefore came naturally to Windham not only due to the innate masculine authority which his station and character effused but also the natural talent and intellectual superiority he was able to exhibit. Praise from William Pitt himself was complimentary: ‘‘‘Nothing can be so well-meaning or so eloquent as he [Windham] is: his speeches are the finest productions possible of warm imagination and fancy.’’’[146]

FIGURE 4 THE RT. HON. WILLIAM WINDHAM MP (1750-1810) BY HUMPHREY REPTON (NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES)

learned reflection; it sparkled with the finest wit.’ Brougham, *Historical Sketches of Statesman,* p. 188.

[144] W. Windham, ‘Speech to Parliament on Parliamentary Reform, 4 March 1790, *Speeches in Parliament of the Right Honourable William Windham,* Vol I (1812), p.192.

[145] Baring, *Diary,* 27 May 1790, p.199.

[146] Baring, *Diary,* p.396. Baring quotes an undated conversation between William Pitt and Lord Malmesbury on the subject of Windham’s oratory.

Windham's natural gift in commanding the floor of the House undoubtedly contributed to the glowing admiration he received from those who witnessed him and boosted the fragility of his mental state. 'His manly figure', wrote his political assistant Thomas Amyot, 'and his fluent and graceful delivery, were important points in his favour', however his difficulties with resonance and projection sometimes meant that he was not heard in all areas of the chamber.[147] Fear of failure and the ridicule he witnessed being meted out to others was always a source of deep concern for him.[148] Fully aware that the expressions of his face, the gestures of his hands, his animation and feeling, the varying effects of the speech upon the audience as it progressed, when and why it was cheered or laughed or ironically greeted, Windham frequently found himself turning 'the colour of a lemon' at the prospect of standing up.[149] In 1793, ever mindful of his health and ability to perform in public, Windham found 'a considerable deal of that symptom, which is altogether new, and not a little alarming, of a relaxation of the organs of speech, so as perceptibly to affect my pronunciation'.[150]

Windham's occasional difficulty in enunciating his words seems to have been at its worst when an attack of nerves or negative *feel* prevailed. As Hoegaerts explains, the masculine, English voice in parliament could be produced by only an English-born body, and it was also the result of the ''management of the organs of the speech'".[151] His diary conceded: 'It is an impediment at all times, at least, whenever the thought occurs, or is recalled by the fact, by the distrust which it produces, and the disinclination which it causes to talk.'[152] On one occasion, when, quite literally, words failed him, he retired to the country thoroughly weary: 'Let me think, then how I may employ the ten days that I am come to stay here [Felbrigg], for the advancement of things for which, after all I am much more eager for than any fame or excellence to be attained in public speaking.'[153]

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[147] T. Amyot, 'Some Account of the Life of the Right Honourable William Windham'*, Speeches,* Vol I, p.134. He added: 'If it was not the most commanding that the house had ever heard, it was the most insinuating.'

[148] Lord Castlereagh was regarded as a particularly poor speaker and was frequently lampooned from the public gallery. John Bew quotes a description of Castlereagh's oracy: 'His diction was inelegant, his sentences involved, the extraordinary phraseology he sometimes employed, and the confusion of his metaphors, would sometimes provoke the laugh or the ridicule of his opponents.' Bew, *Castlereagh,* p.420.

[149] P. Langford, *William Windham,* Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

[150] Baring, *Diary,* 25 August 1793, p.289.

[151] Hoegaerts, 'Speaking like Intelligent Men'*,* p.134.

[152] Baring, *Diary,* March 1794, p.303.

[153] Baring, *Diary,* 2 April 1992, p.250.

There is no doubt that Windham was a talented speaker, but had the House not been 'so intolerably clamorous' perhaps his efforts might not have been so affected by unfortunate episodes of dread and hesitation.[154] There is evidence to suggest that despite continuous worries, Windham wholeheartedly enjoyed the satisfaction of delivering a well-honed speech and relished the competitive, masculine banter of the Chamber. Writing to his friend Malone regarding a publicity visit made by William Pitt and Henry Dundas to the Royal Navy in France, he exclaimed:

> What a ridiculous figure the Ministers have made … Dundas vapouring by embarking on a frigate! Pitt and he there as the immediate directors of the operation! It is a pity that Parliament is not sitting that we might have a little sport about it. Before the time of our meeting the subject will be stale, & I shall have forgot my images.[155]

However, despite the gift of razor- sharp wit Windham remained bemused by the praise he received from his fellow members, recognising nothing particularly noteworthy in his speaking efforts. Typically, he recorded:

> Spoke later, and when I had no reason, from my *feel* to expect that I should speak well. I did, in fact forget much of what I had intended, and of what had been made perfectly familiar to me … Such as it was, however, it was thought by some, the best of what I have ever done and even gained great credit. So easy is credit gained, with us at least, by public speaking.[156]

Nonetheless Windham's skill in oratory served him well, giving him the air of a man who spoke with principle, passion and honour and contributed greatly to the superior form of masculinity for which he was considered a model. 'If a male politician gave a powerful speech', argues McCormack, 'overcame adversity or resigned honourably, he would conventionally be commended as ''manly'''.[157] Indeed, as Griffin has emphasised, in order to assert his qualifications as a public player, men like Windham had to prove that they were indeed 'manly', not merely through 'dress, deportment and manners' but through acknowledgement by their peers that they were capable and true to their spoken word.[158] A key method of ensuring this was to emphasise superiority and prowess through an air of chivalry

[154] Baring, *Diary,* 7 May 1793, p.275.
[155] Bodleian, MS Malone 39/286-287, William Windham to Edmund Malone [undated].
[156] Baring, *Diary,* 29 February 1792, p.245.
[157] McCormack, *Public Men,* p.5.
[158] Griffin, *Politics of Gender,* p.189.

and protectiveness towards those beneath them. Cohen has argued that this reworked late eighteenth century version of the chivalric code became popular as it prioritised gentlemanly refinement, progress and civilisation above violent impulsive behaviour and created a 'new ideal of gentlemanliness' suited to challenging times where confidence and assertiveness were paramount.[159] Indeed, McCormack has shown that the revival of the 'chivalric ideal of male protectiveness' provided a model which not only underscored 'national identities and ideas of progress' but also provided the elite with a vehicle to command a superior authority in challenging times.[160]

Windham's possession of a superior intellect, physical elegance and impeccable manners not only fitted the chivalric model well but were entirely suited to a politician whose credentials were ideal for high office at a time of war where defence and protection of the weak was tantamount. Ever practical, and determined to advocate the continuation of hostilities, Windham took a keen interest in the safe protection of British shores, in particular the vulnerable Norfolk coastline, a major priority against the military encroachment of Napoleon Buonaparte, an opponent he considered to be both bullish and obtuse.[161] In fact, Windham possessed such a strong interest in matters military that during the course of the French conflict he made frequent, risky visits to those British troops and allies positioned on the line of battle – often against official advice. On arriving at Brussels in 1793, a viewing of 'a union of troops drawn from countries the most remote and considered of the first character at this time in Europe' was to Windham the most moving example of masculine splendour he had ever witnessed. 'Such a display of officers, of the highest rank, and most distinguished reputation, such splendid appearance, such variety of character, such a combination of strong interests, can hardly be imagined to have been found on any one occasion.'[162] Windham's admiration for the sacrifice given by those on the battlefield was expressed in his drive for improvements in the pay and conditions of soldiers, hitherto ignored. It is characteristic however that the experience of seeing fighting men both richly attired and actively employed induced feelings of inadequacy in himself:

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[159] Cohen, '''Manners'' Make the Man', pp.325-326.

[160] McCormack, *Public Men,* p.8. In this context masculinity is located in relation to women, children and other dependents.

[161] As a young man Windham was a Major of the Norfolk Militia and later took a leading interest in the defence of the Norfolk coastline. Following the resumption of war in 1805, Windham became involved in the establishment of a Norfolk-based military unit in collaboration with his nephew Captain William Lukin. Their correspondence on the matter can be found at NRO, WKC 7/84,404X4.

[162] Baring, *Diary,* 1 August 1793, p.286.

> I cannot help viewing myself in the character of a man, who has fallen in some measure below, what was expected of him. Though that is, I hope and trust, a false impression; yet, even if nothing has been lost, it is difficult not to regret, what might have been gained.[163]

The violent events of the French Revolution and the wars which followed dramatically shaped the course of Windham's political career, both nationally and locally. Never confident of his political affiliations, Windham's *modus operandi* became increasingly influenced by the rhetoric of Edmund Burke, a man for whom the sudden and violent events in France represented the anti-thesis to progress, threatened the centuries' long legacy of chivalry and undermined all that was desirable and tested in the *ancien regime*.[164] Mark Girouard recalls Burke's anguish at the treatment of the French Queen: '"Little did I dream that I should have lived to see disasters fallen upon her [Marie Antoinette] in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour, and of cavaliers".'[165] On hearing of the death of Marie Antoinette, Windham concurred: 'The Queen, the fate of the poor Queen, for whom I begin to justify all Mr Burke's enthusiasm, saddens even our prospects of success, so much I wish that she might have lived to enjoy them.'[166] On both sides of the Channel, he later recalled, the fault lay in 'all the gentleman-like spirit of the country being fled … that descent into Jacobinism, easy and gradual perhaps, but perfectly certain'.[167] His despair at these events and Burke's agreement, prompted Windham to embark on a political journey which would see him ostracised through his erratic choice of political allegiances, and engender deep suspicion and disappointment in those colleagues who supported him in his Norwich constituency and the County of Norfolk.

In 1794, jettisoning the Whig principles on which he had launched his career, Windham 'the Apostate' accepted Cabinet Office under William Pitt and became Secretary at War only ten years after joining Parliament.[168] In a letter to Mrs Crewe,

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[163] Baring, *Diary,* 1 August 1793, p.286.

[164] Burke's reactions and views are discussed in Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society,* p.111-112.

[165] M. Girouard*, The return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (New Haven, London 1981), p.19.

[166] William Windham to Mrs Crewe, 26 December 1793 reprinted in *Diary,* p.298-299. Mrs Crewe was a renowned political hostess and beauty who entertained the leading Whig politicians at her villa in Hampstead.

[167] Windham to Mrs Crewe, 7 December 1795, *Diary,* p.336.

[168] The publication of Burke's seminal work *Reflections on the Revolution In France,* and its response in the form of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man,* prompted a polarisation of the debate on parliamentary reform with the labels 'Jacobin' and 'Alarmist' entering common parlance. Whilst

Windham was buoyant: 'My hostility to Jacobinism and all its works, weak or wicked, is more steady and strong than ever. If Pitt is the man by whom this must be opposed, Pitt is the man whom I shall stand by.'[169] Reflecting on Windham's actions, Malone conceded that his friend:

> Was never 'what is called a thorough party man' … was never disloyal to his political associates, but was, at times rather a dangerous as well as candid friend. To all affairs … whether of public or private life, he brought a chivalrous sense of honour; and when he changed his views … no one ever doubted his sincerity.[170]

Burke was even more magnanimous: 'You are the only person who has taken a manly part; and I can truly assure you, that your enemies are so far from being exasperated, that they are rather softened by this conduct. It is the only conduct that can mitigate the animosity of enemies like yours.'[171]

Windham's propensity to waver over a spectrum of issues however was the defining feature of his political career and the root cause of the criticism he received as man. Whilst, as a Whig, Windham 'was under the charm of Fox, whose tastes he shared; but as soon as the voice of the master [Burke] was heard, clear and imperative , [he] came to his side, without further question or doubt'.[172] An idiosyncratic independence alongside unbending hostile views, often characterised by jumping from one party allegiance to another, represented a conspicuous bar to Windham's ultimate success in politics and suggests that his solitary character and particular brand of masculinity were not well suited to a political landscape based on compromise and faction. Variously labelled as 'Foxite, Pittite, Grenvillite, Greyite … or Burkeite' his reputation as an impressionable follower open to personal influence rather than forming his own opinions resulted in both an unconvincing legacy and omission from the stellar line-up of late eighteenth century politicians.[173]

Windham side with the anti-reform 'Alarmists', Norwich became known as the 'Jacobin City.' Concerned for his friend, Burke enquired whether 'the enemies of honour and common sense had made any way at Norwich; for I had much rather you were the Spectator than the victim of popular madness.' Edmund Burke to William Windham, 27 September 1789, H. Mansfield (Ed.), *Selected Letters of Edmund Burke* (Chicago and London, 1984), p.252. 'Apostate' was the word widely employed by those who criticised his actions.

[169] *Windham Papers,* Vol I, William Windham to Mrs Crewe, 5 October 1793, p.159.

[170] *Windham Papers,* Vol I, p.199.

[171] Mansfield, *Selected Letters,* Edmund Burke to William Windham, 30 March 1797, p.362.

[172] Rosebery, *Windham Papers*, p. vii.

[173] Rosebery, *Windham Papers,* pp. vi-vii.

In Norfolk, Windham's relationship with his Norwich constituents became increasingly strained during the course of his Cabinet career, the ailing textile trade suffering even further from the effects of war and naval blockade.[174] The city's attack on Windham and his role in the war campaign was vitriolic and deeply critical of his personal motivations and his worthiness as a man. His controversial step to turn his back on Whig principles earned him the dubious nickname 'Weathercock Windham'.[175] The honourable gentleman who had previously expressed disapproved of those who creamed off the profits of high office to fund a lavish lifestyle, was now rumoured to be in receipt of rewards in excess of £30,000. An enthusiastic London party goer, he was to many 'a scarlet leper cavorting in the midst of ministerial banquettings and courtly debaucheries'.[176] Accusations raged that Windham was even lining his own pockets at the expense of the poor: 'When they [starving wives and famished children] cry for bread, tell them the war destroys your trade, annihilates your comforts, murders your friends, but adds to the wealth of WILLIAM WINDHAM.'[177]

By the turn of the century Windham had lost all credibility in Norwich, his very person and manliness lampooned as a freak exhibit, who chameleon like, could 'put himself into a thousand different shapes and forms.' Handbills cruelly depicted him as an unscrupulous pedlar of human hair with teeth scavenged from the war dead.[178] His unpopular opposition to the Peace Treaty of Amiens in 1801 not only saw him alienated from the government, treated with suspicion by his former Whig friends but also firmly rejected by his constituents. Convinced that the terms of the Treaty were iniquitous and unworkable and that England 'shall never be our own man again', Windham spoke passionately to Parliament: 'By what purgations, by what ablutions shall we cleanse ourselves from this far deeper and fouler blot.'[179] Christopher Reid describes Windham's actions on the day:

> [He] abandoned his place on the Treasury Bench and took a seat on the cross benches opposite the Speaker's Chair, where his political mentor

[174] Many weavers moved away and the total population declined leaving a residue of 'emaciated, inactive wanderers amidst their empty looms, uninhabited houses and unwanted workrooms.' P. Corfield, 'From Second City to Regional Capital' in R. Wilson and C. Rawcliffe (Ed.), *Norwich Since 1550* (2004), p.160.
[175] The acerbic Norwich electorate also dubbed William Windham 'Mr Windabout' and 'Signor Windmilio'.
[176] NHC, Coleman Collection, *Squibs: Address to the Citizens of Norwich,* 23 May 1796.
[177] NHC, Coleman Collection, *Squibs: Address to the Freeman of the City of Norwich,* 21 May 1796.
[178] NHC, Coleman Collection, *Parliamentary Addresses 'To be Seen Alive',* 13 November 1806.
[179] *Speeches in Parliament,* Vol 2, 'Peace of Amiens', 4 November 1801. Also, W Windham, to Captain Lukin, 17 October 1801, *Diary,* p.436.

> Edmund Burke had once sat. It seemed to some observers that Burke now spoke through him. Some people say that Burke's ghost must have appeared to Windham and taught him the speech he delivered, for in speaking he was "so like Burke, both in language and sentiments and in the manner of delivery".[180]

The speech prompted Windham's resignation from high office and the end of his relationship with the people of Norwich, losing his seat after eighteen tumultuous years of service. Not all the Norwich Freemen were pleased to see their statesman leave office however, and one offered a gracious counter- analysis of Windham's conduct as a statesman:

> In a crisis … Mr Windham, like a wise and provident statesman, expressed himself concerning the dangers of a peace, just as strongly, as those who condemn him expressed themselves as to the dangers of war. Mr Windham, in conjunction with those men, some of whom have held the highest offices of Government in the most perilous season of our affairs, men of great experience in civil life, and imbued with the most powerful talents, has betrayed no inconsistency whatever.[181]

Newly settled in marriage to Cecilia Forrest, younger sister of Bridget Byng, the eight remaining years of Windham's life saw a return to Parliament for the pocket borough of St Mawes and a brief spell in government during 1806 where he was reunited with friend Charles James Fox in the 'Ministry of all the Talents'.[182] His parliamentary speeches on such enlightened subjects as Catholic Emancipation and Slavery were well received and consistent with his beliefs. Less edifying was Windham's continued resistance to any adjustment of the harsh criminal code, and his lone voice in support of the ancient pastime of bull-baiting, which much to others' disbelief he considered to be in keeping with the British national character. More significantly, Windham's continued hostility to the question of electoral reform now seemed embarrassingly out of step with progressive ideas. The British, by whom he

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[180] C. Reid, *Imprison'd Wranglers: The Rhetorical Culture of the House of Commons 1760-1800* (Oxford, 2012), p.41. The quotation is attributed to Lord Glenbervie.

[181] NHC, Coleman Collection, *Vindication of the Political Conduct of the Right Honourable William Windham Addressed to his Opponents at the late Election for the City of Norwich* (London, 1802).

[182] To the astonishment of his friends, Windham finally married on 10 July 1798 – to Cecilia Forrest, younger sister of Bridget Byng. The bride and groom were attended on the day by Bridget and John Byng. Windham's inclusion in The 'Ministry of All the Talents' was a short-lived experience as the administration only lasted between 1806 and 1807. It comprised a coalition of the old aristocratic Whigs (including Fox himself) and the new generation of Whigs led by Charles Grey. William Windham held the office of Minister for War and the Colonies.

meant the men, were. In his opinion 'enjoying the highest degree of freedom and felicity' and should not be persuaded to believe that they were 'all the time in misery and slavery'. According to his view, the constitution required no reform measures which 'once received, they may, like the puncture of a man's arm, bring on disorders that are dangerous to the whole body'.[183] Exasperated he wrote to Malone: 'We are all of us already, high & low, sunk deep towards a vulgar democracy.'[184]

In May 1810, following an accident whilst rescuing a neighbour's library of books from the ravages of a house fire, Windham died. Unsurprisingly, his death prompted a wave of admiring tributes from those who recognised his unrivalled qualities as a man. Thomas Amyot provided a fitting tribute to his employer – 'the true model of an English gentleman':

> If the country had been required to produce, in a trial of strength with another nation, some individual who was at once eminent for learning, taste, eloquence, wit, courage, and personal accomplishments, the choice must have fallen on Mr. Windham.'[185]

None however, surpassed the words of his late friend Charles James Fox who, years earlier, had perfectly summed up William Windham:

> He was indeed a very singular character, and that he was almost the only man he had ever known who was a thinking man without being a grave man … a meditating man with so much activity, and a reading man with so much practical knowledge.[186]

Conclusion

William Windham represents one of the most intriguing examples of late eighteenth - century elite masculinity. Accomplished in public life, settled in marriage and blessed with strong friendships, Windham was to many the apogee of manly refinement and success. However, his personal diaries, journals and correspondence form a vivid record of both the anxiety and enjoyment he experienced in dealing with the demands and delights of elite society and reveal a man who had the propensity to both shine and wither from one day to the next. His

[183] W. Windham, 'Parliamentary Reform' 4 March 1790, *Speeches in Parliament,* Vol I, p.194.
[184] Bodleian, MS Malone 39/305, William Windham to Edmund Malone, February 1810. A diary entry two months later expressed: 'Sorry to find that Lord Grey still hangs on notions of reform', *Diary,* 10 April 1810, p.503.
[185] Amyot, 'Some Account of his Life', *Speeches,* Vol I, p.139.
[186] Fox's words are quoted in Baring, *Diary,* p.53.

thoughts and actions demonstrate a multi-layered example of elite masculinity which was both complex and idiosyncratic and illustrates the tension between the deeply-held anxieties of a very private man versus the acclaim of his public-facing performances. Commentators on Windham's life such as Earl Rosebery, Celia Baring and George Ellis have remarked on the duality of Windham's nature and his tendency to submit to a 'corroding anxiety' which inhibited him in so many ways throughout his life and 'formed such a singular contrast with the gentle firmness of his manly and intrepid character'.[187] The journals, diaries and letters reveal a particularly 'precarious' type of manliness which was played out in an imbroglio of actions, opinions, feelings and emotions from which it is a challenge to draw a definite sense of Windham's person or masculinity. What is certain, is that William Windham reflected deeply on the kind of man he wanted to be seen as in public and struggled privately to contain those elements of his character his considered unmanly.

At first sight, Windham's upbringing and subsequent progress as a member of the privileged English elite classes indicates a man who not only excelled in his classic Eton education, but moved effortlessly into high-profile public life, ultimately achieving the greatest accolade of appointment to the Cabinet serving under William Pitt himself. He was the successful product of a system designed to produce men just like him – a ruling class of superior men destined for public office. The admiration he received from his political contemporaries for his elegant refinement, intellectual prowess and practical application confirmed his manly status as an accepted member of this elite club. Of this favourable assessment Windham would have been well aware, receiving many compliments of his person, such as those cited by Fanny Burney in her keen observations of elite gentlemen. The approval of others, even from those whose opinions did not align with his, was just as strong. Men and women alike were enchanted by his vital super-intelligence and his ability to charm whomever he happened to be near. Never the cliché of the pedantic scholarly bore, his conversation sparkled without fail. However, it is clear that Windham's keenness to 'see himself as he [was] seen by everyone else' did not always provide him with the reassurance he sought. The praise he received for his splendid oratory, was casually dismissed and whilst modestly acknowledging his popularity with both sexes, the effusive views of others did not mirror what he truly

[187] Ellis, *Preface to the Diary,* p. xix.

knew of his own character and masculinity. In fact, no words assisted him in his elusive quest to achieve either the scholarly or military manliness he most admired.

What is certain, is that William Windham, as a member of the elite, was acutely aware of his own behaviour (and therefore masculinity) and understood that this was a subject of significant public interest, not only to those in his own privileged world, but also in wider society – and, moreover that these opinions *did* matter. Indeed, Windham himself was a keen observer of other men's strengths and weaknesses, his diaries containing many references to the masculine qualities he found most pleasing and the shortcomings he regarded less desirable. Whilst his guardian David Garrick epitomised an easy affable sociability, many others fell short of meriting such praise.[188] A group of mathematical men were described by Windham as possessing a 'strange stiffness and slowness' on 'other subjects', and a young man returned from abroad looking 'something between a German Count and an Italian singer'.[189] The group of men he consistently respected for their manliness of character and superior demeanour were officers of the armed forces.

The most arresting facet of Windham's masculinity was the intensity of self-analysis and the frequency of references to bouts of *feel* which are found in his writing. The crude honesty of his words often makes for uncomfortable reading and even after the passage of over two hundred years invokes a sense of unwelcome intrusion on the life of a man, often acting impetuously and never far from the brink of despair. Windham's inner wrangling is never exhibited as the showy emotional display typical of the 'man of feeling' steeped in cloying sentimentality and introspection. Rather, in early life he suffered from the private anguish of a love-struck fool pursuing a doomed relationship, and later endured the stresses induced by the pressing demands of high office. His obsession with Bridget Byng and the dilatory way in which he pursued his younger years were the actions of an arrogant, callow youth merely pushing the boundaries of acceptable masculine behaviour and delaying having to do anything useful in life. In this he was typical of the affluent, educated youth who had little to do but enjoy the advantages of birth. Caught up in that world, Windham displayed unguarded emotion but was never wild or reckless to the point of courting total disaster. Confining his thoughts to private writing, and making no reference to the popular sentimental fiction of the day or the *Sturm und*

[188] Baring*, Diary,* 1 May 1797, p.361. With Burke, Windham was instrumental in the composing of a eulogy to David Garrick. One section read: 'His friendships were sincere; his manners were amiable. He excelled in all relations of domestic and social life. His conversation was gay, cheerful and ingenious.'

[189] Baring, *Diary,* 15 June 1792 and 4 June 1790, pp.256, 202.

Drang movement which arrived in England from Germany in 1777, Windham remained self-sufficient in his thoughts.[190] His literary pursuits always remained true to his academic and scholarly interests, a cerebral base which constituted the bedrock of the innate male superiority he most wished to be judged by.

Windham, it could be posited, was better able to handle the emotional and sentimental aspects of his life than he was the bouts of indecision and panic which plagued him at the height of his political career. Erratic hyperactivity, debilitating hypochondria and occasionally symptoms of agoraphobia all indicate that William Windham may have suffered from a mental illness more specific than Cheyne's *English Malady* and that this not only influenced his day to day behaviour and working life, but significantly impacted his own view of himself as a 'public' man.[191] Windham's passion for adventure can be seen as a counter to those difficulties of character and masculinity which he most struggled to deal with. Manly physicality and daring undoubtedly represented a confirmation of the type of man he wished to portray to those around him but which also gave him great enjoyment and release. When Sarah Windham, on learning of her son's liaison with a married woman denounced him as dishonourable and ungentlemanly, his response was to embark on a dangerous, albeit unsuccessful Arctic expedition. Exploration, adventure and a keenness to witness the momentous events of the day indicates a man who was courageous, impetuous and at the vanguard of Romanticism with the taking of pleasure through first hand personal experience.[192]

Windham's enthusiasm for the robust active sports of traditional England reinforced the honourable elite masculinity which was expected of him and emphasised the strong affinity he maintained with his Eton upbringing and its focus on traditional male physicality and the superior male stature. This passion was intrinsically linked with his firm belief in the pre-eminence of the English male character, regardless of station, and the importance of protecting the home soil on which he belonged. In this sense, Windham's vision as a statesman was completely driven by the certainty that under no circumstances should Britain be overrun by foreign invaders or surrender any of the traditional conservative values he held so

[190] See Footnote 64 in the Introduction for a description of *Wertherism* and the *Sturm und Drang* movement.
[191] See Footnote 114 describing Cheyne's *English Malady.*
[192] 'Romanticism' was an artistic, literary and intellectual movement which gained popularity towards the end of the eighteenth century. It advocated the opening up of the self to a wide range of authentic experiences such as new lands, cultures and relationships in order to make the most of the human potential.

sacred. Windham's paternalistic style of statesmanship was indeed redolent of the man of reason, the stoic and the classical Roman citizen - a respectable, orderly and authoritative gentleman operating within well-defined rules. Reference to the masculinity of the classical Roman citizen, suggests William Stafford, was evident in an extended obituary of William Windham which appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine.* Redolent of 'manly courage as defined in Plato's *Republic,* testimony was given to Windham's 'courage, manly fortitude and principled incorruptibility. His dauntless intrepidity and his noble disdain of vulgar popularity … no fear of consequences ever drove him from that manly and honourable course, which the rectitude and purity of his mind induced him to pursue'.[193]

Cecilia Windham also recorded those masculine qualities which her husband demonstrated in support of his native land:

> His views and councils were directed more to raising the glory than increasing the wealth of his country. He was above all things anxious to preserve, untainted the national character, and even those national manners which long habit had associated with that character. As a statesman he laboured to exalt the courage, to improve the comforts, and ennoble the profession of a soldier. As an individual, he exhibited a model of those qualities which denote the most accomplished and enlightened mind: frank, generous, unassuming, intrepid, compassionate and pious.[194]

The memorial is fair testimony to the considerable achievements of an elite man who though passionate in his beliefs was never entirely comfortable in his public role. 'I am now', he confessed, 'a little of two characters, and good in neither: a politician among scholars, and a scholar among politicians.'[195]

[193] W. Stafford, 'Gentlemanly Masculinities as Represented by the Late Georgian *Gentleman's Magazine'*, *The Historical Association,* (2008), p.59. William Windham's obituary appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* June 1810.
[194] Memorial to the Right Honourable William Windham at St Margaret's Church, Felbrigg, Norfolk.
[195] Baring, *Diary,* William Windham to Mrs Crewe 30 October 1790, p.211.

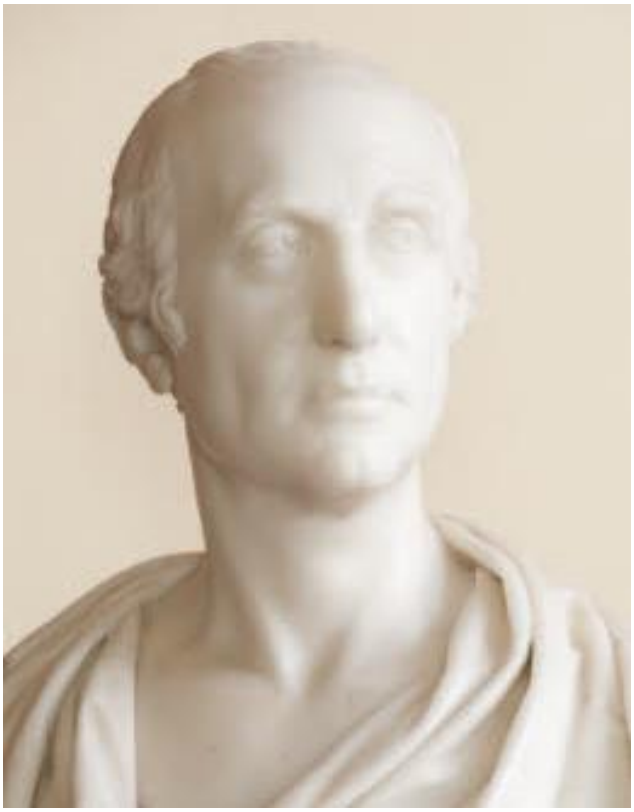

FIGURE 5 WHITE MARBLE BUST OF THE RT. HON. WILLIAM WINDHAM MP (1750-1810) BY SEBASTIAN GAHAGAN AFTER JOSEPH NOLLEKENS AT FELBRIGG HALL, NORFOLK (NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES)

Windham's acceptance as a fine and able statesman is certain and seen in the verdicts of those who both knew and challenged him. Identifying the true nature of his masculinity however remains elusive and difficult to disassemble. The critical manner in which he constantly chided himself does not parry with the effusive descriptions of his superior manliness by those around him. In the highest of circles, he epitomised the gentleman of refinement, intellect, erudition and charm and yet was ever dissatisfied with his own endeavours. To many he perfectly combined the scholarly influence of Samuel Johnson, the sagacity of Edmund Burke and the conversational talent of Sheridan. Yet, in his deepest contemplation Windham remained not only regretful and disillusioned with himself but also with the fundamental nature of his own sex and their propensity to conceal their true selves. Tinged with regret he concluded: 'Every man has some little corner in his mind which he reserves for meanness – a slut's hole.'[196] It was this very meanness, concludes Rosebery, which he invariably directed towards himself which 'dealt an

[196] Baring, 'Miscellanea On Tour' in *Diary,* 1785, p.67.

almost mortal blow to his own reputation' and can be regarded as an act of wilful self -sabotage to the faultless image he portrayed as the consummate elite man.[197] An understanding of William Windham's character and masculinity remains problematic and complex because its true nature was always internalised. Ultimately, Windham understood that the positive masculine traits he so admired – 'courage, honour, virtue, wisdom and authority' were as much extrinsic as intrinsic and therefore had to be outwardly displayed through, what French describes as his own 'personal and moral bravery, adherence to principle, intellectual strengths, oratorical skills, social graces and style'. It was this *performance* which earned him the epithet of 'consummate gentleman' but which caused him so much unease.[198]

[197] Rosebery, *Windham Papers,* p. xvi.
[198] French, 'I Tremble Lest My Powers of Thought', pp.278-279.

Chapter Two: Case Study - John Patteson Esq. (1755-1833)

The previous chapter illustrated the ways in which William Windham deliberately adapted the public-facing nature of his masculinity in order to mask those elements of his character he perceived as weak and unmanly. Concealing those aspects of his masculinity with which he felt most uncomfortable, Windham actively chose to present his masculinity in a way which met the expectations of his elite public persona. Conscious from an early age of what was expected of him in adulthood, Windham achieved and maintained the status of a near-perfect model of elite manliness to whom other men could aspire.

One such man was John Patteson, the eldest son of a prominent Norwich business family, whose masculine style was carefully and deliberately honed, not by himself, but by his mother Martha Patteson. In August 1768, Martha, a widow, set the measure of her goal remarking on none other than Windham himself, a young elite gentleman of whom she had heard very favourable reports:

> We have a young gentleman in our County whose name is Wymondham [sic], He is so excessively fond of his studies that he never enjoys any Happiness when he is from them, & full of Expectation that he will one Day be one of the brightest Men in the Kingdom, his Mother has also lost her Husband, what a comfort must such a Son be to her.[1]

In writing these words Martha made absolutely clear her desire that Patteson assiduously aspire to the standard set by such superior young men, envisaging a personification of manliness which would be specifically suited to the family's promising circumstances.

Martha's correspondence, comprising over forty letters sent first during a period of schooling abroad and later on a Grand Tour of Europe, represents an unusually rich source set of targeted advice and instruction directly aimed at instilling those masculine values which were deemed vital to both individual success and family prestige.[2] No family correspondence has survived however for the later period of Patteson's life thus creating an imbalance in the chronology of the sources

[1] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 10 August 1768.
[2] All original documents are held at the Norfolk Record Office, with transcripts of the Grand Tour correspondence published in D. Cubitt, A. Mackley and R. Wilson (Eds.), *The Great Tour of John Patteson 1778-1799* (Norfolk Record Society Volume 67, 2003).

and consequently this study. However, the strength of the earlier material facilitates a particularly interesting insight into Patteson's development from boy to man and the specific role of his mother in overseeing that process. The case study therefore has significance for this thesis as it extends our knowledge of the ways elite families paid attention to constructs and practices of masculinity and shows the keen and active involvement of parents in this process. It shows the projection of an authority which involved mothers as much as fathers consciously seeking to ensure that their sons developed according to those masculine norms approved by the family and wider society. The discussion on the 'importance of mothers in the ongoing formation of male gender norms' has been taken up by Henry French and Mark Rothery who argue that distance did not necessarily diminish influence.[3] Moreover, 'the inculcation and policing of masculinity', they argue, was never wholly restricted to fathers whose focus leaned towards practical matters, allowing women, as mothers to ensure and check that sons in far-away locations were progressing according to suitably 'manly' ideals of masculinity.[4] As a widow sending her son overseas, Martha Patteson made doubly sure that Patteson was placed on the 'correct developmental path' as she saw it.[5] Deliberately rejecting a *laissez-faire* approach to her son's transition from boy to man, it was Martha who devised a regime from which there would be no veering. In this way, the correspondence provides a unique insight into those elements of elite masculinity which were considered useful, achievable and above all admirable at this time: a lesson in 'how to be an elite man'.

The purpose of this analysis is to engage with Patteson's development as an elite gentleman during the latter half of the eighteenth century with the intention of drawing out the specific process adopted by an aspiring elite family with the explicit objective of producing a man fit to operate amongst the commercial and political elite of Norwich. The study is presented in three parts: the first demonstrates the educational rationale of the *tabula rasa* behind Martha Patteson's plan and the motivations driving her advice. The second part considers how Martha framed her

[3] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660-1900* (Oxford, 2012), p.39. The authors cite numerous examples of involved mothers such as Julian Buxton and Lydia Acland in their analysis. Elsewhere, Anthony Fletcher's *Growing up in England: The Experience of Childhood, 1600-1914* (New Haven and London, 2008) offers analysis of the shifts in parenting of English professional and upper-class children over a long period. More recently, Joanne Begiato's *Parenting in England 1760-1830: Emotion, Identity, and Generation* tackles the subject by looking at three cultural frameworks: Christianity, sensibility and domesticity.

[4] Rothery and French (Eds.), *Making Men: The Formation of Elite Male Identities in England, c.1600-1900 A Sourcebook* (New York, 2012), p.18.

[5] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.67.

son's overseas education with the intent that he should actively learn 'how to be a man'. The third part brings John Patteson's own views of himself as an elite Englishman to the fore as he made a Grand Tour of Europe, significant as it reveals those aspects of his masculinity which were consistent with his mother's expectations and those which indicate his own interpretation of how a man should present himself. A case study of Patteson therefore offers an opportunity to analyse the ways in which a boy belonging to an aspirational elite family was raised with very specific expectations of his masculine persona in mind. This was important because the future success of the business and family's social standing were dependent on being led by a man who was both capable and confident and also commanded respect through his actions and decisions. In this way, Patteson's path differed from the experience of William Windham, in that a very clear picture of the masculine values he should present was explicitly laid out from a very early age.

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A brief consideration of the Patteson family's story is useful in understanding Martha's *modus operandi* and her sons' relative positions. The swift rise of the family and Martha's role as a formidable player in its upward trajectory can be discerned from humble beginnings. Originally from Birmingham trading stock, Patteson's grandfather Henry Sparke Patteson came to Norwich in the early eighteenth century.[6] An ironmonger by trade he married Catherine Wace of Norwich in 1721 and set up a shop at the corner of the Norwich marketplace. Their two sons, Henry Spark (the father of John Patteson, the subject of this study) and John his younger brother opted for different routes. Henry, an elusive 'shadowy figure', notes Richard Wilson, continued the ironmongery business whilst his wife Martha, the daughter of a worsted weaver of Walloon descent became the driving force behind the creation of a growing textiles business along with her husband's brother John.[7] Not for Martha a life behind the shop counter: her interest always lay with the cloth trade. Following the death of John's wife Mary in 1761, and the death of Martha's husband Henry Spark three years later, John invited Martha and her two young sons to take up residence with him at his home in Surrey Street, Norwich. An

[6] Henry Spark's mother Millicent Coleburne was from Norwich where her family were prosperous ironmongers. In the 1760s John's brother Harry was the fortunate recipient of a substantial inheritance from the Coleburne property which provided him with an 'ample income' from an early age. It is not clear why he was favoured so. Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour of John Patteson,* p.3.

[7] It seems likely that brother-in-law John was apprenticed to a master weaver by his father during the 1740's, for two decades later he had become 'extremely prominent' in the city's textile trade. This was recognised by his election as sheriff in 1761, alderman in 1763 and as mayor three years later. Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* pp.3-4.

impressive building, designed by architect Robert Mylne, it was considered one of the finest townhouses in the city. Over the ten years before her brother-in-law's death, Martha took an active part in Surrey Street life - in addition to keeping house and presiding over social functions in line with the family's civic responsibilities, she continued her keen interest in the family wool stapling business 'Patteson and Iselin'. So much so that by the time of his death in 1774, John Patteson senior placed complete trust in Martha. Not only were all his chattels and property given over to her for life, and thereafter to her sons, but he also trusted her with the continued smooth-running and success of the family business until 1777 when her eldest son John was deemed old enough to assume some responsibility. It was with this unusual status and power that Martha Patteson took independent control of the upbringing and education of her two young sons.[8] Her particular project was the shaping of eldest son John into a paragon of elite manliness.

The 'Tabula Rasa'

The economic and social background against which Martha Patteson formulated her plan to achieve optimum success for her family was key to its direction. During the 1760s the reputation of Norwich as a centre of excellence in cloth manufacture was still intact, and the Patteson family's good fortune as leaders in that industry was embodied in the person of John Patteson senior.[9] His hard work and resultant success as both businessman and civic authority bolstered his role as *paterfamilias* to Martha's two sons, John and Harry: a role he willingly assumed with considerable generosity. In order to both confirm and further the family's wealth and status it was essential that both sons be put on the right path to becoming the kind of men who would be admired in both commercial and social settings. 'The pressure to redefine gentility', argues Peter Borsay, 'came in some measure from the changing dynamics of society itself' and the changing perceptions of what determined entry to the elite class. Inherited position and attributes were valued less; appearance and behaviour

[8] Richard Wilson considers the turnover of the business to have been around £19,000 giving Martha £1000 as her half share of a reasonable ten per cent profit. On incomes of this scale the family 'lived well' and 'placed them on a par with the lesser gentry and the very wealthiest clergy'. Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.16.

[9] 'The Norwich worsted industry in the eighteenth century', writes Richard Wilson, 'was the archetype of pre-mechanised industrial organisation, supporting agriculture and rural earnings, encouraging urban development, expanding labour markets, supplying home and overseas trade alike.' 'This system of cloth manufacture in East Anglia … was at its zenith', he explains, 'between 1740 and 1770.' After this, 'output in the West Riding was believed to have overtaken that of East Anglia. Yorkshire stuffs and Lancashire cottons were pushing the Norwich manufacturers into the more restricted sectors of highly volatile export markets.' C. Rawcliffe and R. Wilson (Eds.), *Norwich Since 1550* (London and New York, 2004), pp.230, 231.

were increasingly esteemed more as a part of the transition from 'courtesy to civility'.[10] Moreover, the growing numbers and wealth of the middling sorts, seen especially in the expansion of the professions and business classes, created the need for greater accessibility to status. Borsay has shown that the increased stress upon appearance and behaviour in defining gentility, 'provided the channels and mechanisms through which the middling orders could convert their wealth into status'. Families such as the Pattesons relied on younger members of the family to redefine their social status in a way which was refined, aspirational and unidentified with labouring occupations.[11]

Contemporary ideas on education were keenly debated. Borsay has shown that children were considered entirely free of preconception or knowledge, a 'blank slate' or *tabula rasa,* and therefore 'possessed almost unlimited potential' for being moulded and influenced as parents desired.[12] From Martha Patteson's perspective however education was not a matter which could be left to chance encounters with the outside world but required the careful 'filling of a void with specific content' according to family preference.[13] The approach reflected John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), a widely read text on the matter of raising children, and it is likely that Martha was familiar with its message. Locke's philosophy, explains C. Houswitschka, described a scenario where children presented as untainted, impressionable 'blank slates' on which it was the parents' own personal responsibility to mould their children's characters through the provision of education and other forms of social action which would prepare them for adulthood.[14] This method ensured that the child made a successful transition to responsible and moral maturity in preparation for specific tasks within a consensual

[10] Peter Borsay describes a sense in which 'formality and manners and the overt expression of social distance were criticised; easiness of manner and sociability were extolled … From the later seventeenth century this process was intensified by the cult of politeness, and the emergence of new notions of masculinity, which placed a novel emphasis upon inner and outer refinement'. P. Borsay, 'Children, Adolescents and Fashionable Urban Society', in A. Műller (Ed.), *Fashioning Childhood in Eighteenth Century Society* (Aldershot, 2006), p.60. Borsay references A. Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1998).

[11] Borsay, 'Children, Adolescents and Fashionable Urban Society', p.61.

[12] Borsay, 'Children, Adolescents and Fashionable Urban Society', p.61.

[13] C. Houswitschka, 'Locke's Education or Rousseau's Freedom: Alternative Socializations in Modern Society' in A. Műller (Ed.), Fashioning Childhood, p.84.

[14] Houswitschka, 'Locke's Education or Rousseau's Freedom', pp.84-85. In the second half of the eighteenth century the ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau also gained popularity. In his novel *Emile,* Rousseau advocated individual freedom in children's education aimed at preparation for dealing with 'the human condition, not for any specific place within human society'. Rousseau supported physical freedom and hardening, but in contrast to Locke he also wanted to see greater sensitivity and more feelings.

order and granted individuals more autonomy in the conduct of their affairs. Moreover, and critical to Martha's plan, was the notion, according to Houswitschka, that 'the upward mobility of the individual, as well as entire social groups, was no longer beyond the reach of the diligent and industrious'.[15] With the family business booming and aspirations high, Martha Patteson deliberated her sons' educational prospects with extreme care, and devised two very different courses. For John, with an eye to ensuring that the family business remained in safe hands, an education abroad was chosen. This was to provide him with the bearing and manners of gentlemanly status, but crucially also give a solid grounding in the skills necessary to engender professional respect and progress the family concern.

In 1768, Patteson travelled to Leipzig, Germany for a bespoke scheme of education set out by his mother and bankrolled by his uncle, with the specific aim of managing his transition from boy to man. Formidable mothers like Martha Patteson, were keen to play a pivotal role in this process, not only as a means to bolster their own authority, but also motivated by the knowledge that the future reputation of her sons would reflect directly on family prestige. Far from encouraging a loosening of the 'apron strings' the reality of intensified involvement represented a much stronger tether. French and Rothery have demonstrated that by taking control of sons' development according to their own ideals of how a man should be, women could offer advice on virtually any topic - however personal, confident in the knowledge that as women that they could not be accused of failing to follow their own advice.[16] Patteson's mission therefore was to learn those masculine skills and arts clearly laid out by his mother which would enable him to combine both business acumen and leisurely refinement with the natural easiness of the elite gentleman.

During the three year period 1768-1771, Patteson pursued this goal from the family home of German business clients, where he was not only immersed in the languages of Northern Europe, but also received private tuition in mathematics and a range of classical subjects.[17] Equally, if not more important however, was Patteson's attention to the constant stream of improving advice and instruction

[15] Houswitschka, 'Locke's Education or Rousseau's Freedom', p.82.
[16] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.68.
[17] Although astonishing to twenty-first century eyes, it was not unusual for Norwich manufacturers to send very young family members to Europe, with the aim of learning more about the woollen export trade and to reinforce vital contacts. In Patteson's case there was an implicit understanding that, in order to be a more effective aide to his Uncle when he joined the business, he should develop a good knowledge of German and the way business was done. C. Armstrong, *Mustard, Boots and Beer: inside stories of eight Norfolk men of business in the nineteenth century* (Dereham, 2014), p.158.

which travelled across the North Sea in his mother's hand and which constituted a vital complement to the bespoke programme and emphasised the importance to all concerned that the possession of elite masculine refinement was the prime goal. It is this exchange of copious letters which reveal the extent of Martha Patteson's involvement in the nurturing of her son as he set out into the world: in a form which she perceived to be most beneficial to all concerned: 'You see, Jack I grudge neither Time nor Trouble for your sake, therefore dear Boy let me once more beg of you not to grudge a little Time for my sake, & a great deal of application of your own.'[18]

The fundamental values and forms of behaviour such as self-control and honesty which resonate throughout her entire correspondence suggest a deep faith in the notion that human perfectibility was best understood by the old and learnt by the young and over the three years of Patteson's schooling, Martha's letters were frequent and invariably long. Advice and condemnation, in equal measure was elicited - often in targeted missives which contained very little other content. This provides us with a very clear picture of the kinds of qualities which a mother considered most desirable in the acquiring of an elite masculinity perfectly suited to an aspiring elite family in this period: 'self-mastery, the control of the emotions and of purse, of manners and behaviour befitting a gentleman, trust and trustworthiness, stoicism, hard work through rational learning and independence of mind'.[19] These qualities formed the basis of expectation and, for Martha, the task ahead represented a personal duty to her son: 'As a most anxious, fond & tender Mother, I shall at all Times give you my best advice, & point out to you those parts of your Conduct in which I think you blameable, or wanting.'[20] Compounding the pressure, Martha frequently referenced the progress of Patteson's contemporaries, in particular the son of a friend Mrs Ives, also being educated in Europe. Martha exclaimed: 'Each of us expect that our Sons should return Home Phoenix's.'[21] All that was required of Patteson was that he fully comply, with Martha well aware that the monetary outlay and meticulous planning which were a feature of her plan being no guarantee of instant success – this required constant monitoring. Whilst the learning of the German language, mathematics and the classics were useful tools for a future role in business, it was those fundamental values which were drilled into the impressionable Patteson with relentless repetition.

[18] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 10 August 1768.
[19] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* p.17.
[20] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.
[21] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 11 September 1768.

In many respects, Martha viewed her son's youthfulness as a barrier to acquiring the manly values she sought for him, as is revealed in her comment: 'I do not suffer either the gaiety of youth, or the Indolence in your Temper to occasion the waste of such precious moments.'[22] A recurring theme of the correspondence was a belief in the importance of Patteson making the absolute most of his opportunity at that specific time. With an eye to her son's continuing development over the next decade, Martha expanded:

> My dearest Boy let me explain again & again intreat you to not let slip so fine an opportunity as you now have of qualifying yourself for future prosperity in the World, both as a virtuous good Man & also as a flourishing and eminent Tradesman. You are now at a critical Time of Life the next two years are the most material for making improvements perhaps of any that you may ever experience.[23]

For Martha, her son was on the brink of adulthood and no time should be wasted in preparing him for his future role as the patriarchal head of the family. Specifically, this was a joint undertaking where both had a part to play.

The following section shows the ways in which Martha Patteson carefully considered every aspect of her son's education and personal conduct in order that nothing impeded his acquiring of a masculine character perfectly suited to his future life as an elite gentleman.

Der Junge Gelehrte

The central purpose of Patteson's European education was to prepare him for a commanding role in the expansion of the family's textile business. Whilst practical skills, commercial knowledge and gentlemanly trust had long been the features of such positions, the rapid expansion of trade in the second half of the eighteenth century required a more thorough understanding of overseas commerce and public policy.[24] The process encouraged Patteson to learn all aspects of the trade from

[22] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 14 February 1770.
[23] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 14 February 1770.
[24] The method of education undertaken by John Patteson was a very advantageous variation on an apprenticeship which prepared a young man for a specific trade. Rothery and French make the point that by the mid eighteenth-century apprenticeships were becoming much more popular with entrants from the lower middle classes. Moreover, it was felt that there was an inherent contradiction in 'genteel men serving under ''masters'' … being unable to display 'gentlemanly autonomy and independence'. Patteson's apprenticeship was designed to give him the necessary practical knowledge but also place him amongst important merchants of the trade. As the British Empire grew, 'expanding opportunities in the ''gentlemanly professions' of the law, the church and

sourcing materials and manufacturing the cloth, to continental trade and maintaining client relationships. Such professional skills were founded on a sound reputation and the establishing of oneself as an independent man free from any disreputable patronage. Therefore, the main constructs on which Martha grounded her advice were - adherence to favourable example, awareness of expectation, watchfulness of matters practical and physical, and avoidance of slippage into dangerous habits. Melding the ingredients of desirable behaviour into a display of superior elite manliness demanded in Patteson an acceptance that he show diligence, industry and above all gratitude for his opportunity to John Patteson senior, his father's brother. From the outset, Martha's letters signalled her brother-in-law's involvement with stark clarity, making it clear that the highest standards were set and that she would be monitoring progress at all times. Quite simply, it was this man to whom Patteson owed his big chance and he could do no better than to aspire to his Uncle's manly example with the utmost gratitude.[25] Failure to express sufficient thanks frequently evoked a lengthy reprimand from Patteson's mother:

> I was a good deal hurt that in your letter to your Uncle you took no further notice of his to you, than saying you received it, surely an Uncle who is so fond of You, & spares no cost or Pains for your improvement & advancement in Life, & at the same Time doing it in a manner that shou'd have shown that you had a just sense of the high obligation you are under to him, by thanking him for his kind letter, & for the great Trouble he had given himself to place you in an agreeable situation, & to have told him that you wou'd do every Thing in your Power to requite him, & deserve the continuance of his Favor.[26]

Martha's first letter to Patteson in July 1768 set the tone for all future correspondence and instruction: 'I hope my Dear you will endeavour frequently to recollect the affectionate & endearing Discourse you had with your Uncle y'day … make what he said to you your general rule of conduct, & you cannot do much

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the armed forces' offered choices which attracted elite men into more lucrative and stable careers. Rothery and French, *Making Men,* pp.155-156.

[25] Martha Patteson made only occasional reference to her deceased husband, Patteson's father, emphasising the joint ambitions for their son: 'You very well know that it was the Thing of all others which your poor Father & myself set our hearts upon for you before you were out of your Cradle'. She describes the uncle's role *in loco parentis* thus: 'I can only say I never saw a Parent equal to him' and when deemed necessary cautioned Patteson that he was 'not his Son, but his Nephew only.' NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 13 August 1770 and 14 February 1770.

[26] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.

amiss.'[27] It was usual for many such correspondents, comment Rothery and French, to use role models, 'whether living examples or historical figures', to illustrate appropriate (or inappropriate), traits of behaviour and attitude. 'Negative examples', they add, 'were deployed as examples of unmanly characters.'[28] The many virtues of the older Patteson were proudly held up for John's attention and appreciation:

> Your Uncle stands high in the Opinion of the World for his good Sense, Honour, Probity, & humane Disposition & in short for every valuable Qualification, now this Opinion my Dear will turn the Eyes of the whole World upon You, & they will expect that a young man upon whom he bestows so much Affection, Pains & cost, should turn out something above the common run of Mankind.[29]

Pressure to follow this fine example in all ways was nothing short of relentless:

> He [Patteson senior] would have you believe that every Thing is trifling that does not tend to improvement either in learning, or Virtue, & I would have you take notice that he does not preach one Thing & practice another, for you well know how plain he is in his Dress, and how few Indulgencies he allows himself, which is one great Cause of his Bounty being so extensively felt by others.[30]

Other than the financial outlay, Patteson senior's main contribution to the process seems to have been restricted to the selection of a suitable tutor for his young charge. As such, Herr Walther was appointed on the basis of his being a 'good natured man', suggesting perhaps that Patteson senior considered the man's approach a well-measured counterweight to Martha's onslaught of advice.

There is no doubt that a high awareness of expectation was drilled into the young Patteson from his very first days in Leipzig. John expressed neither resistance to his mother's plan nor offered any ideas of his own. With no fear of overwhelming her son with excessive pressure or expectation, Martha wrote:

> I woul'd not have you harbour a Thought that I have the least Suspicion of your future Conduct, for I assure you it is quite the Reverse, & what I have said only proceed from the unbounded Degree of Tenderness & Affection

[27] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 10 July 1768.
[28] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* pp.27-28.
[29] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 10 July 1768.
[30] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 31 October 1768.

> which I have for you, & which is attended with – perhaps too great an Anxiety least you shou'd not turn out that honourable & worthy Member of Society which I have set my heart upon.[31]

In order to monitor progress, a commitment to keeping a daily journal and answering all letters promptly was stipulated. Hungry for information, she set out her demands: 'I long so to know how you spend your Time, that I wish I could persuade you to give me an exact Journal of one week from Sunday morn to Sunday Night.'[32] Sample letters were also supplied from a contemporary of John's also away from his mother: 'I … [recommend] to your imitation a young man whose words & Actions perfectly Correspond, it is Mrs Martineau's eldest Son, you will see what his Words are by the Copy of two of his letters which I have sent to you.'[33] Frustrated at not receiving the level of detail required, a list of ten specific questions was issued which Patteson was urged to reply: 'I shall insist on you answering me the following questions, which I shall expect to have all answered.'[34] Needless to say, any slowness in communication to herself or others elicited a disappointed reaction and also triggered a warning regarding Patteson's future social standing and popularity:

> I must tell you that you will find an advantage in not neglecting the rest of your Friends in this respect, for such is the Constitution of the World that so much Respect & Civility as you pay, just so much you will receive, & I am sure you would be greatly mortified to find any of your old Friends look shy upon you at your return, & so should I, for I want to have all the World esteem you, therefore my dear have endeavour to get the better of that Reluctance which I know you have to writing.[35]

Ever with a practical eye, the retention of good connections in Norwich was especially recommended:

> Yesterday, our guild day and Alderman Ives was sworn Mayor, your Friend Tommy Blake had the good Fortune to be invited at the Hall owing to his

[31] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 13 August 1770.
[32] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.
[33] NRO, MC 2105/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 13 August 1770.
[34] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768. Her questions ranged from an enquiry into how many hours John spent in study, whether he ate fruit, if he had found any young companions with whom to play 'trap-ball', and whether he went to Church on Sunday.
[35] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 25 April 1769. Her impatience is further vented in a letter dated 8 May 1769: 'You say that you have so much to do that you cannot write to me oftner than once in 3 weeks or a Month!'.

> acquaintance with Master Ives, thus you see there is always some Advantage or another arising from the making of good & creditable Connexions.[36]

The bedrock upon which all Martha's expectations were based was a sound observance of religious principles. Without this solid footing, she believed, the potential for slippage and failure was greatly increased. Aware that daily prayer might not be the most appealing activity for her son, she extrapolated on her topic to make it more relevant to Patteson's situation: '[If you follow] a steady Perseverance in the Paths of Virtue, Honour & the true Religion, You can scarcely fail of Prosperity in this World, & will most certainly secure Happiness in the next.'[37] Martha's words of advice resonated with the views of Richard Steele whose work *The Christian Hero* was a key conduct text of the day regarding the practical benefits of religious piety. 'Central to Steele's argument', notes Jeremy Gregory, was 'the observation that … classical heroes – Caesar, Cato, Brutus and Cassius, whose careers all ended in despondency – religious faith [was] the only basis for the truly heroic man'. Commitment to the moral principles of Christianity encouraged young men to achieve the all-important quality of self-mastery whilst simultaneously showing kindness and understanding to his fellowmen.[38] Tailored to her son's situation, Martha added her own spin:

> Some people will say that Religion is too serious an Affair for Young People to trouble themselves much about, & that it is a bar to their Pleasures, but I assure you they are much mistaken, for I Know no People more cheerful & gay than those who are guided by a rational Religion.[39]

In sum, Martha believed that 'amidst all his [Patteson's] Studies the Practice of True Religion' provided the means to success:

> Virtue, Honesty & good Temper, must stand the foremost, for without these all other Accomplishments in my Estimation would be as nothing, & I had

[36] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 21 June 1769.
[37] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 7 August 1769.
[38] J. Gregory, 'Homo Religiosus: Masculinity and Religion in the Long Eighteenth Century' in T. Hitchcock and M. Cohen (Eds.), *English Masculinities 1600-1800* (London, 1999), pp.91-92. Richard Steele, together with Joseph Addison, is better known as a founder of *The Spectator* and a central philosopher in the development of 'polite culture' and the shaping of 'modern secular ideals' at the start of the eighteenth century. His work *The Christian Hero: An Argument Proving that No Principles but those of Religion are Sufficient to Make a Great Man* first published in 1701, reached a staggering twentieth edition by 1820.
[39] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 7 August 1769.

> rather see you a Journey-man Weaver, with those Qualities, than the greatest Man upon the Earth without them, let me also add that they are the best foundation for the most ambitious Disposition to build upon.[40]

Having dealt with matters ethereal, Martha's turned her attention to Patteson's physical appearance. Locke's idea that educating children was as much about care of the body as enriching the mind suited her purposes well pursuing the belief that education must be 'geared to the symbiotic cultivation of both mind and body'.[41] Confident in the credentials of Herr Walther and the abilities of both master and tutee to pursue their studies with vigour, Martha's letters now focused on those visible aspects of her son's developing masculinity, which would influence his conduct and the ways others saw him.[42] The notion that a slimmer physique was more desirable than a corpulent mass was gaining currency in the second half of the eighteenth century and in this respect Martha's concerns were very much on trend.[43] Where previously stoutness had been a mark of the wealthy and powerful, and thinness associated with emaciation and poverty, changing fashions favouring a sleeker line prompted a sea change in the way bodies were admired and this had significant ramifications for the acquiring of a type of manliness aimed at reputation and success. In order to encourage this preferred form Martha showed great interest in her son's physical fitness, his attire and his awareness of any potential behavioural pitfalls which would adversely affect the way in which he was perceived as a young man. All of these were ultimately crucial to his acceptance as a fine upstanding gentleman and pursuing Locke's idea that educating children was as much about care of the body as enriching the mind suited Martha's purposes very well.

One of Martha's chief concerns was that Patteson might return to England insufficiently grown and sporting a thicker waistline than she considered proper or

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[40] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 14 February 1769.

[41] R. Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason: How the Enlightenment Transformed the Way We See Our Bodies and Souls* (London, 2003), p.125.

[42] Martha reported: 'We are very pleas'd with the Division of your Hours of Study, & I shou'd be well pleas'd with another letter from Mr Walther that wou'd inform us of your making as much improvement as he can expect, & till that come I shall take it for granted that you do, for I dare say you mean to make the promise good which you made your Uncle in your last letter to him.' NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 30 November 1768.

[43] The extensive literature covering both scientific understanding and cultural perceptions of the body is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, recent work on men's bodies as external markers of sex, virility, maturity, civility and masculinity continues to expand with recent contributions from Karen Harvey, Joanne Begiato and Matthew McCormack. See the Bibliography for details of publications.

attractive, with the implication that this would not only incite ridicule but also influence the way in which he was regarded as a man. Again, drawing inspiration from the Uncle, she chided:

> We are rather afraid you lay too late in Bed, & that you want a little more robust Exercise, because we are told you grow fat, now provided you are well, I had rather hear of your growing taller, & you know I shall not be satisfy'd on this Point, till you have gain'd your Uncle's height, for I must have you like him in every Thing except his stooping.[44]

'Male height', notes Matthew McCormack, 'was bound up with both social class and political power', and as such was something to be worked on assiduously during Patteson's formative years. Favoured with access to higher quality meals and a more leisurely lifestyle, young men of the 'better sort' entered maturity healthier, more refined and blessed with a superior stature.[45] This was precisely the model that Martha Patteson wished to see in her son and it is in this context that the considerable commentary on Patteson's size should be understood. She insisted:

> [Mr Donne] tells me you are rather inclin'd to grow fat than tall, which we attribute to your so suddenly leaving off the Play & Strong exercise of School Boys, & commencing Man, for we are told there are no School Boys in Germany that rake about & Play as ours do, I wonder they have any Health or Spirits.[46]

Recommending a regimen of exercise, Martha pursued her topic: 'I hope you have by this Time began Fencing which I dare say will be of your great Service both as to your Health & Growth, & I beg you wou'd slip no opportunity of exercise that offer.'[47] Other sporting pursuits were also recommended – tennis, and particularly horse riding which Patteson senior viewed as a suitable manly skill, despite the fact that Patteson would 'never have an Inclination to become a Soldier'.[48] So concerned was Martha regarding her son's corporeal well-being and the importance of exercise she also consulted the family doctor on the subject of Patteson's bowel health. In line with contemporary thinking she pursued the idea that over-eating required a

[44] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 30 November 1768.
[45] M. McCormack, 'Tall Histories: Height and Georgian Masculinities', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 26 (2016), p. 88. McCormack also quotes Porter, *Flesh in the Age of Reason,* pp.246-247.
[46] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 25 April 1769.
[47] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 25 April 1769.
[48] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 7 August 1769.

counter-balance not only through exercise, but also a healthy, unimpeded through-put of waste. She therefore offered her boy practical advice on dealing with his scatological health:

> You must take care to have one discharge in a Day which if you can't have without taking Physick he [Dr Manning] desires the following may be your Medicine. One ounce of Sliced Rhubarb, 2 Drachms of Cardemon Seeds, put into one pint of Mountain Wine & take a table spoon full of it before going to bed.[49]

Martha was so concerned by Patteson's physical state, in particular that he might not return to England displaying the superior masculine form she desired, the following warning was issued:

> Let us know how riding & Fencing goes on, & if you continue the learning to draw I shou'd also be glad if you can find an opportunity of sending me another Measure of your Length & Breadth, I hope the last don't increase for if it does, wo betide you, for I shall certainly starve you when you come home.[50]

In this way, Martha Patteson attached great importance to her son's care in developing a pleasing masculine frame. This she felt was the surest way to display the easy energy befitting a young, aspiring businessman entering elite male society. A final ingredient remained however that could greatly elevate or depress the standing of a young man: his personal qualities, and particularly, notes Rory Muir, 'his appearance and manner. Did he look and behave like a gentleman?'[51]

Conformity in matters of taste and sobriety were essential in Martha's eyes, and an amusing thread of the correspondence illustrates a clash between John's inclination to mischievous experimentation with dress whilst away from home and the explosive reactions which followed. Within only a few months of Patteson's arrival at his new home in Leipzig, news reached his mother of an unwelcome change in his appearance. Aghast, Martha reached for her pen:

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[49] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 4 November 1769. She adds her own 'whole body' diagnosis: 'You may remember when you were with me your drinking a Glass of wine, eating too large a Dinner or Supper, wou'd often make you sick or give you the Head Ach. (I believe most disorders in the Head proceed from foulness in the Stomach).'

[50] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 13 August 1770.

[51] R. Muir, *Gentlemen of Uncertain Fortune: How Younger Sons Made Their Way in Jane Austen's England* (New Haven and London, 2019), p.37.

> James tells me that you have got your head doctor'd after the German Fashion, with an addition to your Tail, so that I suppose it now reaches down beyond the Waistband of your Breeches, I know this is what you have long wish'd for, take care not to make yourself ridiculous … & above all Things in point of dress take care not to be carry'd away with a likeing for Tawdry finery which is Reflection upon any Body's Judgement, but would be more particularly so upon an Englishmans.[52]

Unconventionality in matters sartorial had no place in Martha's plan for her young son and she feared absolutely him returning to England sporting an eccentric form of dress or displaying socially unacceptable effeminate behaviour. As such leather breeches were branded 'ungenteel' and an order for fabric received from Patteson dismissed as 'a certain thick gay kind of cloth which we use for Floor carpets, & therefore I think you will look like a Harlequin'.[53] Resorting to hyperbole she exclaimed:

> I am very glad to hear that you grow so long, & I am quite your Opinion that I should not know you were I to meet you unexpectedly, I dare say your dress & air are so thoroughly transmogryphid that you are not the same Boy.[54]

Martha's ultimate fear was that John might get into a 'Foppish way of Dress' for she [knew] of 'nothing that wou'd sooner call [John's] Understanding in Question in England than that'.[55] The figure of the 'fop' was a well-known stereotype in urban society and eighteenth- century literature, defined by Samuel Johnson as a 'man of small understanding and much ostentation'. [56] Developing the theme further, Philip Carter has shown that 'foppish behaviour' included 'spending a large amount of time decorating an unimpressive physique with colourful and fashionable dress, an elaborate and meticulously groomed wig, cosmetics and perfumes'. Fops' fussy appearance, 'far from denoting social status or professional authority, was deemed symptomatic of a superficial and trivial character … incapable of fulfilling public duties.' This was explained, argues Carter, 'in terms of an innate foolishness that distanced ''men of fashion'' from the more disciplined, rational and learned ''men of

[52] NRO, MC 2015/9 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 11 September 1768. James was the servant who accompanied Patteson to Leipzig and stayed for a time whilst his charge settled in.
[53] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 29 July 1769 and 11 February 1771.
[54] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 24 May 1769.
[55] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 11 October 1769.
[56] P. Carter, 'Men about Town: representations of foppery and masculinity in early eighteenth-century urban society' in H. Barker and E. Chalus (Eds.), *Gender in Eighteenth Century England: Roles, Representations and Responsibilities* (London, 1997), p.41.

sense'', as worthy males were often referred to in the period.'[57] Needless to say, such behaviour was anathema to Martha's plans for her son's future as a gentleman. Any interest Patteson may have held for fabrics and fashion were to be restricted entirely to what was relevant to the marketing of the family's textile products and never for personal exhibition. Finally, by way of a parting shot Martha also insisted on attention to dental hygiene: 'I find you all pay more regard to your outward appearance of your Dress, than to real neatness of your persons, but remember a clean good- looking set of Teeth wou'd give me more Pleasure to see, than the finest drest hair in Germany.'[58]

Another area for concern was the fact that the young Patteson was moving in circles of people much older than himself and adopting adult habits. This situation posed the risk of Patteson being exposed to alternative influences, failing in his exercise of 'self-government' and scuppering Martha's carefully laid plans for his smooth transition to male maturity. Gauging eighteenth century ideas on when a child was considered fully grown is difficult for modern minds to appreciate and clearly Martha herself was not fully confident in setting the exact moment of arrival. 'Childhood as an age of both sexual and moral innocence', argues Anja Műller, 'was commonly believed to end at six or seven' … however 'the eighteenth century witnessed a tendency towards prolonging childhood' thus confusing expectations of where particular milestones should occur.[59] In sending Patteson away to Europe on his own at the age of twelve Martha expected great maturity and resilience in her son, but still felt him to be a child who should not be exposed to adult pursuits. Martha laid out her thoughts, using a classical parallel, designed to capture the imagination:

> The old Romans my Dear a set of very worthy sensible Gentlemen with whom I should be glad you would cultivate a very intimate acquaintance, us'd to permit their youth to put on the Manly Gown if they were deserving at the age of 17 or 18, & from that time they were admitted to the Company and Conversation of Men, & it was expected from them that they should behave like men.[60]

To the motherly eye the dangers were clear:

[57] Carter, 'Men about Town', p.41.
[58] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 8 May 1769.
[59] Műller, 'Fashioning Childhood', p.5.
[60] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.

> Now you by uncommon advantage are arriv'd at that Situation before you are 13, & I am much afraid you are rather too young for it, as I perceive you are often out of Evenings & I am very fearful that you should be tempted to eat too much suppers, drink Wine, & set too late, all which Things we expressly ordered you not to do, because we know it would ruin your Constitution in your Youth.[61]

The habits found amongst the older members of Patteson's new set, in particular smoking and the drinking of wine were the principal targets for Martha's reprimands. High living, the taste for luxury and an inclination to excess were frequently associated with aristocratic life and these matters required very clear guidance on their successful navigation. Martha warned:

> The custom of smoaking in Germany seems so universal that without a caution you may be in Danger of falling into it … for we should be frighted out of our wits to see our little Boy Jack with a pipe in his Mouth & I assure you we have no polite young Gentlemen in England that smoak.[62]

The smoking of tobacco was associated with adult male homosocial places such as coffee houses, clubs and worst of all the gaming table, public spaces beyond Martha's reach and most certainly not to be recommended to her young son. Far better was the inculcation of polite ideals which would hold much greater currency in the sort of mixed society Martha had in mind for John to enjoy on his return. 'Polite women', stresses Amanda Vickery, 'abhorred extreme drunkenness and complained about tobacco smoke.' [63]

Other temptations also threatened, such as lavish parties and masquerades: activities that Patteson was unlikely to have experienced within the confines of Norwich society. Not so in Germany, within several months of his arrival he was taken on a visit by newly acquired friends to the city of Dresden, some seventy- five miles away. Concomitant with fears that Patteson was donning the 'manly cloak' at too tender an age, Martha made her point:

> I dare say you had a most charming Expedition to Dresden, we were frightened to hear of you going to & dancing at a Masquerade. We have no such young Folks admitted to those diversions in England, I should have

[61] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.
[62] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 8 May 1769.
[63] A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2010), p.274.

> delighted to have had a peep at you in your White Domino, oh rare Jack I wish you don't live your gayest days now.[64]

Parties naturally involved the drinking of alcohol and here motherly advice reverted to a quasi-religious tone:

> We are much pleas'd to find you pay so much Regard to the Cautions we gave you about the drinking of Wine … Perfect happiness is not the Lot of Human Nature in this World, but those who preserve themselves freest from Vice, & are desirous of doing all the good thing they can by setting a good Example to others.[65]

Exposure to such society was indeed a test for Patteson, and in order to ensure that her son remained on course, Martha continually reminded him of the end product she expected, with her fear of 'slippage' always noted:

> I must have a Word or two in favor of Industry & Application as I look upon that to be your weak side, & the Foible with which you are most easily beset, consider this point well, & remember that no one can make a Shining Figure in Life without the Liberal Education you have bestow'd on you.[66]

The utilisation of a cautionary tale was a key weapon in Martha's arsenal against failure and humiliation. In direct contrast to the exemplary conduct of Mrs Martineau's son, Martha presented a 'Hogarthian antithesis' in the shape of a young man, Jos Larwood, whose life had taken an alternative path. Rusticated from Cambridge, abandoning all prospects of a £300 a year clerical living, Martha pronounced him:

> Guilty of almost every Vice & Extravagance, almost broke his Mother's Heart, & to compleat the whole & his own entire ruin he is gone upon the stage with a set of low liv'd strolling Country Players … he must always lead a miserable Vagabond Life, or if he don't take Care & end it at the Gallows. Poor Mrs Iveson I don't know if it won't kill her.[67]

The possibility of John's life veering so wildly off course into 'sauntring & Idleness' was never truly feared by his family.[68] However, it did become evident

[64] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 25 April 1769.
[65] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 8 May 1769.
[66] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 23 May 1770.
[67] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.8 and NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 8 May 1769.
[68] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 10 August 1768.

from the earliest days that there was a genuine danger of Patteson's new cultural experience transcending the humbler roots from whence he had come: a predictable tension perhaps in the educational mission Martha had laid out for her son. 'A liberal, genteel education was all very well', opines Richard Wilson, 'but in likelihood encouraged taste and ideas in life much too high for [his] fortune to support.'[69] The young Patteson faced the difficult task of steering a path between the acquiring of refined gentlemanly masculinity and assuming airs too fine for his future role in life. The subject was seized upon by his mother:

> I am terribly afraid that you are in the way of growing up so fine a Gentleman that you will think it a great degradation when you return to England to shake out Black Yarn, & turn the Buzzing Mill, but that is a nice point you have to labour, for I mean to reconcile the industrious Tradesman & the Gentleman, which if you can't do, you will never make any Figure in the World.[70]

How John responded to this charge is not known, but it is likely that his mother's fears were tangled up with an element of jealousy that her young son was already finding the European way of life more engaging than the Norfolk scene. She reminded her son that should he find his 'situation in Life higher than it really is, & by that means be led to give a Taste for Pleasure & Company which will not at all suit you when you come Home', he would not be able to afford it and likely soon find himself in financial straits.[71] 'Martha, like all those engaged in business', cautions Wilson, 'knew the perils of bankruptcy in an age when limited liability was unknown.' The masculine virtues of 'sound management and frugality' were therefore to be encouraged, not just at a business level but also in personal expenditure, and thereby avoiding the 'aristocratic traits of luxury and gallantry'.[72] Querying her son's expenditure she urged him to 'endeavour not to heighten, but to lessen the Expence in every Thing that is necessary, particularly in the 2 articles of Pleasure & Dress.'[73]

Worst of all was the fear that Patteson might be lured into the most ruinous of aristocratic vices – gambling. The dangers were all too real. 'Its votaries', notes Donna Andrew, 'came from all classes and genders, from all walks and occupations

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[69] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* pp. 8-9.
[70] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 31 October 1768. Two months later, clearly missing her son, Martha bemoaned: 'I perceive you are all very jovial Folks at Christmas, & I dare say at all Times more lively than we grave sententious English mortals, & so far I have no objection to your becoming a Frenchman or a German, but I shall grumble if when the Time comes Leipzig has more Charms for you than Norwich.' 25 January 1769.
[71] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 11 October 1769.
[72] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.9.
[73] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 6 September 1769.

of life … its ubiquity made it not only the most prevalent but the most dangerous of vices.'[74] Gambling as an 'entertainment' was an established element of the elite world and was increasingly seen as highly destructive in its ability to harm both the individual and society, as well as the economic and political fitness of the nation. Those who indulged in gambling, argues Andrew, ran the risk of neglecting their 'duty to devote at least some of [their] time and best efforts to the public weal'.[75] Whilst Patteson was yet to move in such circles, his mother was well aware of the slippery slope it represented. Martha framed her words with a practical message:

> You seem to lay rather too much stress upon your winnings & losings at play, I beg you would be very carefull, for if you suffer yourself to be too eager after winning of Money, it may lead you into many unamiable Qualitities, such as tricking, cheating &c all that I have to observe to you on the Score is, that you don't suffer yourself to lose more than you can afford, & as to gaining, if it were to be Thousands it would only tend to your Dishonor.[76]

Essentially, 'upper class gambling', concludes Andrew, 'was contrasted to and seen as the enemy of polite conversation' and not something to taint the Patteson name.[77]

The final letters which Patteson received from his mother at the end of his Leipzig residency suggest a sense of satisfaction that the educational and social project had been successfully completed and that he had masterfully avoided taking any wrong routes. Three years of relentless advice on to how to make the transition from boy to man had paid dividends. Delighted, Martha reflected on her son's character:

> The thorough knowledge I have of your Affectionate & grateful Temper makes me fear that you will suffer a great deal more than I wou'd wish you to do upon parting with so many valuable Friends from whom you have receiv'd so many extraordinary and, & most affectionate Civilities, therefore my Dear I am very solicitous of assisting you by some proper Reflections to arm yourself with a becoming Manly Fortitude against being too unhappy & feeling too much, when the Time comes; in the first place I hope I may

[74] D. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery and Gambling in Eighteenth Century England* (New Haven and London, 2013), p.177.
[75] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice,* p.189.
[76] NRO, MC2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 5 September 1768.
[77] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice,* p. 184.

> without giving you too much Vanity remind you that your own good Behaviour has been very much instrumental in procuring these Friends, & that a continuance of your Sobriety, Industry, Cheerfulness, & obliging Dispositions will most certainly always secure to you the Love & Friendship of every Body with whom you become acquainted.[78]

Following his return from Leipzig, Patteson entered the Norwich business and completed his practical training between 1771 and 1774, the point at which Patteson senior died. In his will he praised his nephew's ''fidelity and care, application or industry, prudence and caution'', fully confident in the young man's abilities to take the helm as planned.[79] Martha's long project to create a young gentleman whom others would admire and give tribute had worked. Patteson's educational experience, managed every step of the way, had provided him with all the necessary tools to become an impressive businessman moving in the best of circles. All that was needed now was some exposure to freedom and leisure to balance the scales.

The following section shows how Patteson's youthful masculinity progressed beyond his mother's reach and was influenced first by a sojourn in London and the south west followed by that classic eighteenth century *rite of passage* for young elite men – a Grand Tour of Europe. For the first time, the interpretation and practice of elite masculine ideals was a matter of Patteson's own choosing and provides a vital contribution to this discussion of the ways in which those ideals were played out.

A Gentleman Tourist

This section examines the contents of correspondence between Patteson, his mother and other family members during a short visit to southern England and then a classic Grand Tour of Europe. The large correspondence is particularly significant as it allows us to hear Patteson's voice for the first time in direct response to his mother. In addition, it shows the ways in which an aspiring upper-middle class young man, on the cusp of a provincially based business career, interacted with a variety of leisure pursuits in the wider world indicating which of those experiences influenced his developing sense of himself as an elite man.

In 1776, on the event of his twenty first birthday, Patteson inherited his Uncle's considerable estate and became a partner in the family business. That

[78] NRO, MC2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 11 February 1771.
[79] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* pp.9,10.

spring, he wrote two exuberant letters to his mother Martha describing a period of time spent in London and Bath. The letters are a clear indication of how a young gentleman set out to sample metropolitan culture and society as a necessary step in the process of acquiring the kind of elite masculinity he considered desirable. His reports indicate the places he deemed suitable for a young gentleman to frequent, the entertainments to be savoured and the company he considered worth nurturing. The lure of the capital was extremely powerful for young men with money to spend: amusements abounded. 'Hanoverian London', writes George Rudé, 'was the centre of the nation's culture, fine arts, intellectual pursuits, taste and fashion, as it was the centre of government and economic life.' All of these pleasures and opportunities were aimed at the 'well-to do' but also provided diversions for a wider set of young men who aspired to elite status.[80] London offered unlimited delights, particularly for those with a decent income, and the Patteson family's business contacts would have provided the perfect entrée into such society. Hannah Greig describes the young and affluent male visitor arriving in London ready to 'sample all manner of urban pleasures: sipping coffee in the coffee houses, sauntering in the pleasure gardens, dancing at masquerades, and appraising actors and singers on the stage'. Patteson was typical of the 'untitled yet urbane gentleman', suggests Greig, who with the profits of commerce at his disposal was keen to avail himself of the capital's delights.[81] His letters reveal not only a sense of excited anticipation but also a frenetic desire to enjoy as much as possible through a constant stream of entertainments, introductions and experiences.

It is not certain whether Patteson had ever visited the capital during his childhood, but at the age of majority he clearly felt that it was high time to immerse himself in the London scene, and moreover that he would travel as an independent young man at his own expense. On arriving in town, Patteson was quick to manage his mother's expectations of a constant commentary of his days. 'Experience convinces me that it is not always in a man's power to do as he intends. I was fully determined to write yesterday, but found myself so tired when I came home that I was oblig'd to give it up.'[82] Notwithstanding fatigue, Patteson wasted no time in sampling the most fashionable entertainments available, in particular theatrical performances, a notorious trial and the pleasure gardens. 'The theatre', Rudé

[80] G. Rudé, *Hanoverian London 1714-1808* (Stroud, 2003), p.64.
[81] H. Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford, 2013), p.64.
[82] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776. Patteson does in fact manage to write several descriptive letters to his mother during his time away.

elaborates, 'was among the more reputable entertainments of the day, continuously popular with the fashionable classes and increasingly with ''the middle sort'' of people as well.'[83] Recounting visits to numerous performances in the West End, Patteson declared himself 'infinitely pleased with Mrs Barry in the character of Lady Randolph', but disappointed not to have seen [David] Garrick on stage due to 'one of those fatal accidents which officious people occasion' and 'went to Covent Garden' instead.[84] The greatest excitement however, was reserved for his attendance at the trial of the Duchess of Kingston at Westminster Hall.[85] Tickets for the trial were difficult to procure by members of the public and a fortuitous connection with a Mr Mace and his wife secured Patteson's admittance to the chamber where he was 'oblig'd to push & crowd: for 4 hours [standing] almost wholly on [his] right leg and saw but half the Company'.[86] Quite what Martha Patteson thought of her son's fascination with the seamier side of aristocratic life can only be guessed, but Patteson's vivid description of the experience indicates the energetic curiosity of a young man determined to make the most of his travels and immerse himself in the sensationalism of the day. On hearing the overwhelming evidence against the Duchess he concluded with an air of sanguinity beyond his years: 'the robe of innocence wherein she was wrapped begins now to disappear I'm afraid.'[87]

Other fashionable pursuits appealed in equal measure. Daytimes were spent 'running about' and dining with new friends such as a Mr Vere who he considered 'a very clever man'.[88] Evening entertainment was dominated by visits to the pleasure gardens, house parties and masquerades. Favourable reports of visits to Ranelagh Gardens were compared with a less genteel evening at Sadlers Wells, a smaller garden set up as a type of medicinal 'spa'. With regret, he noted: 'I am sorry I ended so pleasant a week at so infamously low a place. Nothing shall induce me to go there again I sat the whole time fretting & fumeing at having given up the opera for

[83] Rudé, *Hanoverian London,* p.65.
[84] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776.
[85] Elizabeth Pierrepont, Duchess of Kingston was tried for bigamy over five days, 15th-22nd April 1776, in front of the House of Lords. The case gripped the nation and all 119 Lords found her guilty. The trial is concisely described with contemporary images at https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/exhibitions/online/fromparchmenttopixels/duchessofkingston.aspx 'The Bigamous Duchess of Kingston', University of Nottingham, Manuscripts and Special Collections.
[86] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776.
[87] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776. He goes on to describe how he edged his way to the front: 'By degrees I got forwarder & for 3 hours saw all the Company perfectly well.'
[88] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776.

so villainous a Scene.'[89] Clearly seeing himself as the sort of man better placed amongst the superior Ranelagh set, Patteson's disgust at the offerings of Sadler's Wells indicates the level of society to which he felt most drawn and potentially useful to his future station in life. At a masquerade, comparisons were also made: a party held by a Mrs Pitts caused Patteson to be 'very well entertained with the characters – the Cream of my Evening' and provided more worthwhile society than that on offer at a Mrs Corneley's home. Patteson provided his mother with an indignant description of events:

> I found very few of the masks I had found at Mrs Pitts … for all the dull and stupid places I was in none appeared so bad; Not one good character –no wit – nothing but German Huzars who did not know the language.[90]

Evidently not a man to abandon his evening's entertainment, he concluded: 'I walked backward & forwards from one room to the other till near six o'clock & then retired with the pleasing reflection of having satisfied my curiosity & drained my purse.'[91]

The short domestic tour ended with a visit to the popular spa resort of Bath. In common with Ranelagh and Vauxhall, writes Greig, the town was important for offering a 'fluid social environment that existed at the edges of fashionable society'.[92] Fashionable visitors flocked to eighteenth century Bath because it was one of the optimal locations in the country for the acquisition and expression of status. Seasonal balls, family visits and fashionable shopping provided the spaces for display with Beau Nash, the *arbiter elegantiarum* setting the rules of etiquette where all ranks were required to behave alike. This scenario, offers Peter Borsay, appealed as much to the 'wealthy middling sort, whose numbers were growing so rapidly and who aspired to gentility, as for the landed gentry and aristocracy keen to

[89] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 April 1776. Ranelagh Gardens at Chelsea opened in 1742. 'Its chief attraction was its round room, or Rotunda, 150 feet in diameter, with an orchestra in the centre and tiers of boxes all round … Both gardens staged balls, masquerades and other elegant *divertissements*.' Rudé, *Hanoverian London,* p.73. Hannah Greig adds, 'Ranelagh's higher cost of entry, at around 2 shillings, [was] seen as commensurate with its claims to being the more genteel destination, catering to a more affluent crowd.' Greig, *Beau Monde,* p.68.
[90] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.
[91] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.
[92] Greig, *Beau Monde,* p.201.

sustain their prestige'.[93] Patteson's visit to Bath illustrates his eagerness to experience a variety of locations which dominated the elite social calendar and hence further advance his progress as a wealthy young gentleman comfortable beyond the confines of Norfolk society. Delighted with his surroundings, it was the society of women with whom Patteson was most enamoured, and it appears from his words that the feeling was mutual. Attending a ball at the Upper Rooms he danced with a 'most agreeable Lady' and later made up a party to cross the Severn to Chepstow in Wales where he met a 'Mrs Wollaton of Ipswich; a young Widow & one of the most agreeable women I ever knew'.[94] Enchanted by a visit to the rolling Welsh hills, he returned to Bath to dance with yet 'another agreeable Girl' and the next day embarked on a shopping expedition.[95] With an air of bemusement, he added:

> I have never had the honour of attending Ladies on such a scheme before & I have experienced that they are not averse to accepting of a trifle from a young man; my pretty widow & the other ladies cleared my pocket of a few pence that I might travel the lighter.

Later, finding himself a favoured partner on the dance card, he concluded with an air of whimsy: 'I begin to think whatever the Ladies do is right.' [96] The closing lines of Patteson's correspondence suggest that his visit had fulfilled its purpose and that he now considered himself a man of some maturity, self-assurance and attraction – all delivered with an air of confident urbanity. The tone with which he challenged the quality of his travel arrangements reveals a distinct superiority not discerned at the start of his tour. On deciding to change lodgings from a coffee house 'frequented only by the Understrappers of the Law' to a more salubrious location, he pronounced: 'If a man is tolerably dressed they stare at him like a wild beast & as the whole of my Business is now in the polite part of town I shall in all probability get out of the city dirt.'[97] To Martha, a little reassurance that the glamourous capital had not completely turned her son's head, Patteson reflected:

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[93] P. Borsay, *The Image of Georgian Bath 1700-2000: Towns, Heritage and History* (Oxford, 2000), p.290. Roy Porter records a growth in Bath's population from 2,000 in 1700 to 34,000 in 1800, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1982), p.227.
[94] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.
[95] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.
[96] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.
[97] NRO, MC 2015/10, 904X7 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 5 May 1776.

> I flatter myself you have a better opinion of me than to have the least Idea of my being unsettled; these Excursions are the best thing in the world for sharpening one's desire for Business & I am well assured I shall return with the same eagerness as I now pursue my Diversions.

Martha's responses to her son's letters have not survived, but there is a suggestion in Patteson's light heartedness that he now felt comfortable in offering his own views, and that he was at last a young man entering the world able to make at least some decisions for himself. It was not long before Patteson had the opportunity to enjoy even greater freedoms. Despite the effects of the American Wars on trade, the year 1777 was one of exceptionally good business for the family, and keen to cement profitable connections on the near Continent, Martha agreed that her son should embark on a purposeful tour of Europe and a schedule of travel which offered opportunities for not only for the promotion of business but also the savouring of cultural delights.[98] 'Through travel', argue Rothery and French, 'young men practised and rehearsed the values they had learnt at home and school … but in far more unfamiliar and foreign circumstances. The experience was 'intended to be ''transformative'' in social and gender terms', and irreversible, revealing the young man as a 'finished product' comfortable in the expression of the key values of manliness; 'self-control and self-management, industry and hard work, independence and autonomy, and truth and honesty.'[99] Crucially, explains Fletcher, it was felt that elite boys could not achieve that transition or reach their full potential if they remained cosseted and controlled by their mothers.[100] Martha Patteson, however, had her own plan when she despatched her son to Germany on the first leg of his travels. For the Patteson family, the eldest son's successful completion of a varied tour was not just a means of acquiring final polish but represented what French and Rothery describe as 'a positive step towards the full attainment of an active elite masculinity' which involved 'becoming not just a man, but also a gentleman, and increasingly, a self-consciously *English* gentleman'.[101] The eighty-one letters exchanged between Patteson and his family and friends are described

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[98] John Patteson set off for the Continent on 2 April 1778 and was not to return home again until November the following year. His tour took him through Germany, Switzerland and Italy, including Sicily and Malta, while his return journey included three weeks in France and the Low Countries. A. Moore, *Norfolk and the Grand Tour: Eighteenth- Century Travellers abroad and their souvenirs* (Norfolk Museums Service, 1985), p.69.

[99] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* pp.86, 7.

[100] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England, 1550-1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), p.317. Fletcher cites M. Cohen, 'The Grand Tour: Constructing the English Gentleman in Eighteenth-Century France', *History of Education* 21 (1992), pp.249-250.

[101] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate*, pp.141, 142.

by Wilson as providing 'an unusual angle on travel in Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France in the late 1770s' in that they present a commentary of 'half drudge of business' and 'half the excitement of travel for its own interest'.[102] The tour was therefore the perfect opportunity for Patteson to both prove himself as a businessman and also indulge in the pleasures of an 'elite' travelling experience.

The clear expectation from the project was that Patteson would return 'a more polished, complete man of the world having undergone the ''finishing stroke of a gentleman's education'' and formed connections which would enhance the family's standing amongst the Norwich elite and Norfolk county gentry'.[103] The tour was a multi-purpose exercise intended to combine cultural education, practical advantage and the acquiring of a superior 'edge' which would set Patteson apart in society.[104] French and Rothery emphasise the 'sink or swim' experience of both 'the hardships and pleasures of continental travel' and agree with Fletcher that 'the point of the Grand Tour was not simply becoming a gentleman but becoming a man'.[105] This process required not just the adopting of an easy refined and educated manner, but possessing an air of self-assurance born out of lived experience. Such a 'man' was someone who could handle himself in all kinds of situations, endure difficult situations and if necessary, stand up for himself physically. This requirement had been well set out by early traveller Richard Lassels, who in 1670, had emphasised that 'travel ''teacheth him wholesome hardship; to lye in beds which are none of his acquaintance; to speak to men he never saw before … to endure any horse or weather; as well as any meat or drink'''.[106] In this way, concludes Michele Cohen, 'the Grand Tour ''could produce men. It had a way of setting men free to be themselves'' … 'distinguish[ing] the man of sense from the fool'.[107] In sending Patteson on a tour of both business and pleasure, Martha placed great confidence in her eldest son's ability to both shine as a member of the elite classes but also leave his boyish adolescence behind. In this way the correspondence affords us an

[102] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour*, p.21.
[103] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour*, p.27.
[104] Rothery and French make a further distinction between travellers with 'Romantic Ideals' eager to be transformed by new experiences, sensations and sites, and those with the perspective of the tourist who merely sought variety and novelty. *Making Men*, pp.86-87.
[105] H. French and M. Rothery, ''Upon your entry into the world': masculine values and the threshold of adulthood among landed elites in England 1680-1800', *Social History,* 33.4 (2008) p.406. French and Rothery cite Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination,* p.317.
[106] R. Lassels, *The Voyage of Italy, Or a Compleat Journey Through Italy* (London, 1670), preface. Quoted by French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* pp.140-141.
[107] M. Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National identity and language in the eighteenth century* (London and New York, 1996) pp.58,59. Cohen quotes R. White, 'The Grand Tour' in A. Natan (Ed.) *The Silver Renaissance: Essays in Eighteenth-Century English History* (London, 1961).

insight into the kind of man Patteson was becoming, the masculine style he chose to adopt and the ways in which he considered the world around him.

One of the most arresting features of the Grand Tour correspondence is the importance attached to upholding a sense of Englishness at all times, and it is perhaps surprising that Patteson, given his continental education, should hold such definite views of English male superiority. This is feasibly explained by a general disapproval prevalent in England regarding the behaviour of Grand Tourists in the earlier part of the century. As a traveller of the *late* eighteenth century, it is likely that John Patteson would have been aware of the accusations levelled at earlier elite travellers who on returning to England from France and Italy exhibited exaggerated foreign manners and ostentatious display, a phenomenon which, as Fletcher argues, fuelled the fear that young men might return from abroad effeminate rather than confirmed in their masculinity.[108] Cohen has shown that the remedy for this was not to cease sending young men abroad but to encourage them to reassert themselves as '*Britons'* when faced with unsuitable instances of effeminacy and show.[109]

[108] 'The issue came to a head in the 1770s', elaborates Fletcher, 'when a group of young noblemen, who were enthusiastic about their experience of Italian culture, formed the Macaroni Club in contempt for the sober stuffy Englishmen represented by the Beefsteak Club.' Whilst, adds Paul Langford, 'there was nothing to prevent affectations such as daring head-dresses and artificial nosegays going with boisterous masculinity … the phenomenon [indicates] an instability in the gender order which is directly related to the Grand Tour' and in some instances turned parents against sending their sons abroad. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination,* p.320. Fletcher quotes Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People 1727-1823* (Oxford, 1992), pp.576-577.
[109] M. Cohen, 'The Grand Tour. Language, National Identity and Masculinity'*, Changing English,* 8.2 (2001) p.135.

FIGURE 6 JOHN PATTESON BY PHILIP REINAGLE, 1781 (NORWICH CASTLE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY)

There is no doubt that Patteson regarded himself as possessing an edge when it came to travel and that this was largely due to his status as an English gentleman. Within days of setting out on his tour he casually referred to himself as both a 'man of business and a man of the world'.[110] This is perhaps not surprising since at the age of twenty- two Patteson was indeed a good deal more experienced than the average English tourist. Having spent three years of schooling in Leipzig, he spoke German fluently and had a good network of connections on the Continent. 'He also knew', comments Wilson, 'that this would be his last opportunity to travel extensively before the demands of his position in Norwich closed in upon him, ''the great plan of life''' as he put it, and as such he intended to make the most of the time.[111] For Patteson this was not merely a holiday with a business element, but the first real chance for him to gain new cultural understanding through self- discovery. With distance and time in his favour, he was also now of an age where he could be more selective in the advice he took from his mother. The correspondence, rich in narrative detail, provides an important insight into how John reacted to the places he visited and the friendships he formed. In this way, it is possible to understand more about the development of his masculinity by exploring his observations as a

[110] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 24 April 1778.
[111] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour*, pp.22-23.

travelling Englishman, his perception of himself as a man acquiring cultural currency and as a consequence shaping the ways in which he viewed other men, nationalities and classes of society.

Martha Patteson considered her son's status very favourably, not merely as a fortunate young man with a good education, but in particular as a representative member of English society. Succouring to foreign manners was perceived as the antithesis of ideals of manly sincerity which were best displayed by the English gentleman. It was, argues Cohen, 'no longer politeness, a foreign and effeminating import, but its opposite, manly sincerity, that [was] set to produce the English gentleman.'[112] Martha expressed this view when writing to John in Naples:

> I find you almost tired of seeing pomp and show, which produce no happiness to an Englishman's taste. When you have quite satisfied your curiosity, I hope you will return safe and sound to old England, and there enjoy that happiness where I still think is no where elce to be found upon so solid a foundation.[113]

In addition, throughout the letters between mother and son, notes Wilson, 'runs a constant anti-Catholic thread, a deep satisfaction with their Englishness' emphasising what Linda Colley has described as 'the continuing resonance of anti-Catholicism throughout Great Britain after 1707 and far into the nineteenth century'.[114] Colley makes the argument that since the reign of Mary Tudor a strongly held belief persisted where Britain, in reverence to those martyrs who gave their lives, had a Protestant destiny to fulfil in the sense of being a 'promised land'. In the eighteenth century this view was encouraged by victories against the Jacobite Rebellions and the popularity of editions such as *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.* With the British people chosen as a bulwark against both 'Pope and Pagan', the Protestant world view was ingrained in the population's sense of a righteous British nationality 'irrespective of whether they went to church or not'.[115] Jeremy Black, pursues the theme in suggesting that although during the

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[112] Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity,* p.61.
[113] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 6 May 1779.
[114] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.27. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London, 1992), p.22.
[115] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London, 1992), p.30-31. Colley argues that 'the Protestant worldview which allowed so many Britons to see themselves as a distinct and chosen people persisted long after the Battle of Waterloo, and long after the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829 … for most Victorians, the massive overseas empire which was the fruit of

second half of the eighteenth century there was less stress on the religious differences observed by travellers, there remained an 'overwhelming assumption … that Britain was the best country to live in'.[116] When William Blake wrote the poetic lines of *Jerusalem* in the early 1800s, concludes Colley, they emphasised the long - held and uncontested belief that Great Britain was a superior society build on traditions of righteousness, destiny and progress.[117]

Patteson's correspondence frequently contained references to both the qualities and shortcomings of other English men he was acquainted with, inferring that collectively as men they bore a responsibility to represent Britain in the best possible way.[118] On arriving in The Hague, the bar was set high when the young tourist experienced the seemingly effortless *bonhomie* of British Minister Sir Joseph Yorke. Patteson exuded: '[Sir Joseph] received me with his usual politeness, and surely there cannot be a more agreable man … He is all affability and entertains you with various anecdotes … he is the compleat man of the world.'[119] Martha clearly approved and took the opportunity to advise her son:

> You will always find that kind of behaviour from people in that exalted rank of life, which proves that I am not much out when I assert that civility is next to godliness, and don't be offended, my Jack, when I tell you it is the accomplishment of all others that I wish to see you improved in at your return.[120]

Travelling through Germany, Patteson was careful to keep such thoughts of superiority between himself and his mother. He sympathised:

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so much successful warfare represented final and conclusive proof of Great Britain's providential destiny'. p.368.

[116] J. Black, *The British Abroad: the Grand Tour in the eighteenth century* (London, 1999), p.222.

[117] Colley, *Britons,* p.30.

[118] The correspondence is rich with casual references to a wide variety of men and their masculinities. Martha refers to Norwich youth Tom Blake as a 'plodder', to Dr Bacon as 'that excellent man' and Thomas Churchman as 'a silly old man'. She pays particular attention to the death of John's contemporary Jeremiah Ives who led a life of debauchery, comparing him to Thomas Blake who would 'one day be a great man'. References are in the index to Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour.*

[119] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 14 April 1778.

[120] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 30 April 1778. The early part of John Patteson's journey was hampered by his travelling companion Charles Collyer's illness and inability to travel. Frustrated that this would mean missing important trade fairs, John eventually abandoned him.

> My sentiments on my Leipzig friends are, as you prophesied, rather different, not but they are the worthiest people, but included with all the human German beings, they are not Britain's sons. There is a proud thought for you, as proud, so true. But it goes no further. How can people return from their travels and despise their native England? It is ridiculous folly.[121]

As such, it appears that Patteson spent a good deal of his Grand Tour pursuing a course of genuine interest and appreciation in all that he encountered, but moving with the air of a man who considered himself superior by sheer virtue of his nationality. His report on a visit to Dresden made the point: 'Nature has given them a country which is truly beautiful – hills covered with vines and wood, plains fruitfull with every grain, and the Elbe to facilitate the transportation of every product, had they [the Germans] brains enough to know how to use it.'[122]

Assured of his innate superiority as a young elite Englishman, Patteson imagined himself well placed to move in the best European social circles. Very soon however, rigid ideas of hierarchy and status proved this to be far from straight forward. In Hannover, he found himself baffled by a 'most disagreeable Society divided into innumerable classes. The first is that of the nobility; I mean the ancient, for no one is accepted who cannot show a pedigree of 16 generations'.[123] As a man representing commerce and trade, and eager to establish the best contacts, it was difficult for Patteson to find the most appropriate level of society in which to engage. A visit to Mannheim produced much confusion when a man at the city gate mistook him for a nobleman. Recalling the situation to his mother, Patteson reflected:

> I kept my countenance and very seriously told him my name. I dare say he was surprized to hear only the simple name of Patteson and the simple character that I was an Englishman. He asked me what I was. After the man had addressed me in such respectfull terms I would not mortifie him so much as to tell him his Grace was nothing more or less than a Norwich weaver.[124]

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[121] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 1 August 1778. In the same letter John refers to the German nobility as 'boars' [sic] in comparison to meeting a young Mr Greene: 'My heart jumps when I get acquainted with an agreable Englishman.'

[122] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 1 August 1778.

[123] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 13 July 1778. He continued: 'The second and the third are new baked nobles and the servants of the state according to their employments- tradesmen, parsons and such stuff as is there.'

[124] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 12 September 1778.

When the focus turned to Italy, Martha had high hopes of her son making valuable business contacts in the best society:

> The courts and the company of the people of fashion are the best [places] sources from whence you can draw the improvements I wish you to gain, and sure, with such recommendations and such a modest assurance as you are possessed of, you might get yourself introduced wherever you have in mind. Now is your only time for the improvement of your taste, manners and acquiring of foreign knowledge.

She particularly warned against the type of conduct exhibited by their Swiss-born business partner John Iselin when travelling in Italy:

> He kept very little good company, I fancy chiefly amongst them the 2nd rate tradesmen … and opera girls. I make this judgement of him by his taciturnity when he is in the company of strangers and people that he can't help thinking his superiors, and by his violence, vanity and self-opinionatedness.[125]

In this, Martha was convinced that the easy pleasantries of politeness and good humour were the passport for acceptance in the better sort of company and that her son had the qualities to succeed in this respect. However, the reality of being accepted in elite Italian society was both frustrating and fruitless. Writing from Siena, Patteson explained the situation:

> Our ideas of courts agree with regard to their teaching a man the ceremonial, but they are not the societies where one is to meet with friendship, or become acquainted with the manners of countries … In general, the line is so strictly drawn between nobility and plebeians that they scarce ever mix, whence a difficulty arises of uniting the two characters of a gentleman and a man of business.[126]

Several months later his exasperation peaked. A letter to Martha from Licata described the nature of the Italian aristocracy versus its English counterpart:

[125] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 9 December 1778. Iselin resided in Norwich and was a partner in the family business.
[126] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 16 January 1779.

> Prince and duke are the common titles, and in reality mean no more than in England a gentleman … such princes as in England would scarce pass for well- dressed journeymen on Sundays.[127]

The situation was not to improve, and by the time Patteson reached Turin on the return journey, he had clearly had enough: 'It is surprizing to me how rich tradesmen can bear to stay on this country, where they are despised by the nobility and treated with every indignity.'[128] The inability to form meaningful trade connections in Italy clearly irked the young traveller and the correspondence between Patteson and his business partner Iselin has not survived to inform us further. It does seem likely however that the striking of a favourable deal would have been relayed to Martha in John's reports. Faced with such difficulties, Patteson reached the conclusion that the most effective way to be well regarded was to embrace the customs and garb of the country he sought to impress, but with his own stamp. In order to achieve the impact he sought, great store was set by appearances and the clothing he chose to wear: 'For a traveller gets into company or not as he pleases or not and he would be a fool who offended in his first appearance to save a few pounds, especially as a man travels but once in his life.'[129] The interest he had shown in matters sartorial as a boy in Leipzig was once again evident on the Grand Tour. Anticipating his mother's reaction that his style was verging on foppery, or even worse the 'Macaroni' style Patteson was quick to explain his thoughts:

> Travelling is in itself expensive, and to keep good company, a necessary attention is requisite. I have so utter an aversion to playing the fop and see so many paper heads in fine clothes that I have a greater distaste for them than ever. Nevertheless, I have been obliged to provide myself with such as will carry me into all the companies … the Germans are very ceremonious and love that a stranger should appear in a proper dress. It is right and reasonable to indulge people in those trifles.[130]

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[127] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 May 1779.
[128] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 9 October 1779.
[129] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 11 December 1778.
[130] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 2 June 1778. In the 1770s, explains Dror Wahrman, 'the stock character that came to embody gender indeterminate male fashions was the ''Macaroni'', an exaggerated type drawing on the contemporary penchant for oversize wigs, brightly coloured tight-fitting coats, and impractical accessories.' D. Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth Century England* (New Haven and London), p.60.

Patteson's belief in the importance of creating a favourable impression stayed with him throughout his journey and undoubtedly provided a justification for his expenditure on striking attire. He pronounced: 'Appearances go a great way with strangers, which if neglected, prepossess and deprive one of the opportunity of shewing to advantage those more substantial qualifications which are not to be neglected.'[131] A letter from cousin Elizabeth Fromanteel expressed delight in Patteson's purchase of a statement red overcoat: 'I mightily approve your taste in fitting up your wardrobe, and as most women have ''a passion for a scarlet coat'', no wonder I should give the preference to that suit.'[132] Patteson's continued enthusiasm for sartorial impact was clearly infectious when he and a group of friends were greeted in Palermo as 'English milords'. He described the clothes thus: 'Which by the bye would make any people stare, for we wear long trousers and white slouch hats lined with green silk.'[133] There is however nothing to suggest that Patteson was self-indulgent or flamboyant to the point of excess and we should conclude that he was merely indulging a louche, theatrical inclination to be noticed during a limited period of time when he was able to have fun away from the constraints of Norwich life. By his own admission he conceded: 'Vanity is the most dangerous of my enemies, but as I am so well convinced of the necessity of scouting this enemy, I trust and hope she will not prove too many for me.'[134]

Patteson's enthusiasm for creativity in his dress sense did not however extend to a curiosity in the arts and antiquities of Italy. For many eighteenth century travellers, the sole purpose of a Grand Tour was to experience total immersion in the vast wealth of treasures to be found in the cities of Rome, Florence and Venice. In this pursuit, Patteson felt a degree of ambivalence and under some pressure to comply with this aspect of his gentlemanly education. The sense that refined masculinity should feature an understanding of paintings, sculpture and their creators caused him some concern and when faced with a plethora of artworks, he exclaimed:

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[131] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 19 February 1779.
[132] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Elizabeth Fromanteel to John Patteson, 2 December 1778. She refers to the growing attraction amongst women to military men known as 'redcoats'.
[133] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 May 1779. By this stage of his Tour Patteson was part of a group of four Englishmen who travelled with a considerable entourage: '7 horses, 3 baggage mules with muleteers and a guard who cut a tremendous figure, armed cap-a-ped, his cap of crimson velvet laced with silver.' The friends were Roland Burdon, Henry Greswolde Lewis and the young architect John Soane. On returning to England, Patteson was instrumental in helping Soane establish his professional practice. Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.25.
[134] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 16 January 1779.

> Bologna contains many very fine pictures in private collections and in churches, the best of which I saw. But unless a man is an artist I am morally certain he cannot have patience to see every picture the *valet de place* would shew him, unless there are admirers with much more patience than I have.[135]

Gallery fatigue reached a peak in Rome, where he declared: 'I assure you whoever means to see Rome well must give his attention most seriously to it, and bodily exercise does not tire so much as the attention requisite of the mind.'[136] Finally at Herculaneum and Pompeii, *ennui* reached its height. Dismissively, and not with just a hint of exasperation, he described them as:

> Worth seeing on the spot, but I don't think them worthy objects to take a man out of his way. Vesuvius answered my expectations, nay surpassed them, and notwithstanding the fatigue of climbing up a very steep sugar loaf hill of sand for two hours, I would readily undertake it again if required.[137]

Unperturbed by any disappointment, Patteson concluded: 'I shall be able to make people believe I have seen such wonderfull things as in any travelling book they will read of.[138] Patteson's honesty at his lack of appreciation in art indicates a young man who was not only developing a measure of self-awareness of his own limitations but also felt confident enough to suggest that others could be feigning an interest which did not exist. The recollections of travelling companion John Soane, recalls Soane's biographer Gillian Darley, reveal that Patteson's genuine interests lay in observing what was remarkable about the lands and culture he encountered: 'the exotic and unfamiliar crops of carobs, pistachios, aloes, figs and pomegranates as well as oranges and lemons growing as plentifully as apple trees at home' were frequently the topic of conversation. Yet, 'despite the fecundity of the place he was saddened by the signs of ''indigence and want … in the midst of plenty''' indicating a hitherto unseen sensitivity to other cultures and the plight of others.[139]

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[135] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 11 December 1778.
[136] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 31 March 1779.
[137] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson 12 April 1779.
[138] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 12 April 1779. He continued: 'I am now engaged in seeing things, absorbed in statues, paintings and virtus which so tires me and is such a sameness that, did I not find most men of the same opinion, I should be induced to believe my conception and understanding infinitely below the common run. I am very clearly convinced that I can make up pretty stories at my return.'
[139] G. Darley, *John Soane: An Accidental Romantic* (New Haven and London, 1999*),* p.46.

It is to Patteson's credit and an indication of the interest he showed in the lives of ordinary folk, that as a result of his tour his own prejudices, such as they were, faded over the course of his journey. With some consideration he wrote:

> The Italians are no longer boars, my countrymen are no longer the only rational beings. All mankind have happiness in my view: an Italian obtains it by one mode of life, an Englishman by another … I am astonished when I consider with how despicable an opinion of the Italians I entered Italy.[140]

Unimpressed, Martha replied: 'I think the more you see of Italy the more you must love your own country, and glory in the title of Englishmen.'[141] In this, John conceded, and described Italy as a country 'not worth leaving England for, to any but an artist or mad enthusiast after antiquities'.[142] Before she was to see her son again, however, an even more dangerous frontier loomed in the shape of France. Emphatic, Martha wrote:

> Sure you will not come through France. I should think it cannot possibly be in any way agreeable for an English man who loves his own country so well as you do, and have so much fire in his constitution as you have, to be amongst those vaunting, boasting Frenchmen.[143]

Not only were the French still the enemy at the door, but the enduring stereotype of the Frenchman as pretentious and arrogant was ever present. Robert Shoemaker has demonstrated that political developments at home and the frequent European wars during the period were crucial elements in the forging of a British (or English) national identity, which was frequently conceptualised in opposition to the effeminate 'other' of the French, with their perceived propensity to licentiousness, tyrannical government and 'popish' religion. In addition, and epitomised in the Patteson family's position, definitions of gentility were changing and 'placing more emphasis on the display of status and wealth and less on ancestry'. The desire or 'need for intermingling', adds Robert Shoemaker, was reduced by a growing

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[140] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 19 February 1779.
[141] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 12 March 1779.
[142] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 25 September 1779.
[143] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 9 August 1779. Martha refers to the French military support of the Americans, in the War of Independence. In 1775, France signed an agreement with America whereby it 'abandoned any claim to territory east of the Mississippi and promised not to make peace with England until American independence was achieved'. By 1778, the time of John Patteson's Tour, 'the English Channel had to be protected from a Franco-Spanish invasion, threatened in 1778, and attempted without success, in 1779'. F. O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), pp.195-196.

uncertainty about the 'alleged luxury and effeminacy' of the aristocracy, perceived to be at its worst in the French.[144] Little was said by Patteson regarding his experiences in France other than: 'I am glad at having passed through France, as I can now say I have made a compleat tour, and when once I set foot on English ground, I shall ne'er wish to leave it more.'[145] On the morning of Sunday 21 November 1779 Patteson landed at Margate, Kent and made his way back to Norfolk via Canterbury and London: his travels were over, he would never return to the Continent and the preparation for his future life as an elite gentleman in England was complete.

In considering Patteson's letters during his travels it is possible to sense an acute awareness of his own superior masculine image, his status as an Englishman and how he might adapt his behaviour to even better effect. He understood the importance of his journey, not just for its intrinsic value but as a metaphorical process in developing a gentlemanly masculinity which would be admired in years to come. A desire to 'fit in' and be accepted is at the heart of his correspondence and in this he exhibited a certain amount of self-promotion and performance. In self-deprecating style, he wrote:

> I am afraid I shall be a little vain when I come back: God forbid! If I am, I shall be very absurd and you may be sure I shall strive against being a fool … I think I had a pretty good opinion of myself in Norwich and that there was little room for it to increase. I am not sure it has.[146]

Martha was satisfied that her project had been successful and that her son's status as an elite Englishman was assured. She remarked: 'Rejoice that you were made for the world and not the world for you.'[147]

Conclusion

The letters exchanged between mother and son during John Patteson's educative years and those which followed contain clear expectations on the part of Martha Patteson and a tacit acceptance by her son that the acquisition of a refined elite masculinity was a desirable and necessary process for the assertion of family supremacy in both business and societal settings. The contents of the

[144] R. Shoemaker, Review of M. Cohen, *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1996) in *History in Focus: the guide to historical resources* (1996).
[145] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 15 November 1779.
[146] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 19 August 1778.
[147] NRO, MC 2015/11, 904X8 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 17 July 1778.

correspondence reveal Martha's chosen strategies in fulfilling that objective in order that Patteson be well prepared to head a family of commercial and social standing at the dawn of the nineteenth century. In everything but the inheriting of title, Patteson was the recipient of a bespoke *primogeniture* style preparation for his future which came with high expectations. McCormack has shown that by the end of the eighteenth century an elite man's masculine style was more to do with his person than his possessions and it was his ability to learn and adapt those key masculine values which would guarantee success in life.[148] Being the head of a household and family as well as having political responsibility required 'manly' qualities which were within the reach of every man: they had to be earned through inner strength and mastery of one's own circumstances. In essence, Patteson represents exactly the kind of man who set out to deliberately acquire those 'interior qualities that were not just accessible to the privileged few' but available to all.[149]

More significant was the dominant role of Martha Patteson. The frequently voiced instruction provides us with a clear picture of the kind of man she wanted her son to be, clearly stipulating the parameters required to achieve a model of masculinity suited to both present situation and future circumstances. In this way, Patteson represents those young men whose character and masculinity were purposely engineered in full anticipation of elevated status and success. At no point does Patteson express disinterest or annoyance at his mother's unsubtle designs and only infrequently raises ideas of his own. In effect, Patteson was expected to acquire those badges of elite masculine status, such as civility, sense, refinement, commercial acumen and a cultural currency which would equip him as the natural successor of a family 'on the up'.

The letters leave us in no doubt that Martha Patteson was tenacious in her quest to shape her son's masculinity and as a source offers an unusually powerful insight into the strong relationships between mothers and sons in the second half of the eighteenth century. In this sense Martha may not have been not so atypical a parent as we might think. As Fletcher notes, women such as Martha were 'deeply involved' in their sons' futures, bearing the full responsibility of their safety, welfare and progress whilst away from home.[150] The actions of Martha Patteson of course went much further than this and exemplify the view that a mother's work in bringing

[148] M. McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2005), p.18.
[149] McCormack, *Independent Man,* p.17.
[150] Fletcher, *Growing Up,* p.175.

up children was in a sense a 'performance' which sought to gain reassurance that 'the long- lasting influence of their care and tuition would prove beneficial' to all parties. In this way, Martha was well aware that it was not just the perfecting of her son's masculine image which was important but also the effect its success had on her own position and influence and whether she was regarded an 'effective' mother by her society friends.[151] Bearing the pain of separation over a prolonged period was the necessary price for producing young gentlemen not only practised in the arts and manners of elite society but also aware of its dangers. In this Martha made no attempt to hide her motives or expectations. The letters from Patteson to his mother reveal no expressions of anxiety or feelings of undue pressure, and there is a sense that he not only agreed with her plan, but saw little point in opposing any part of it. Only occasionally did he transgress, for example, in Leipzig, matters of his physical appearance, dress and a tendency to overspend prompted swift reprimand from Martha. In these instances, the reader gets a sense that he may have been deliberately amusing himself at his mother's expense, and more importantly that he had an acute awareness of the kind of masculine behaviour he valued in himself and saw practised in others. Overall, his responses conjured up an easy going, affable young man who was perfectly content to do what was required of him and 'go with the flow' of his mother's plan. Martha, herself expressed great satisfaction with her project:

> I have the pleasing Prospect of both my Boys likely to make a good & respectable Figure in Life, according to their different Destinations, don't you remember telling me that if you were a Man you could be Alderman, keep a Chariot, & do just as your Uncle did you desir'd no more, I was pleas'd with your judgement then, keep it still in your View, & it will be your own Fault if you don't one Day attain it, or I am much mistaken.[152]

It appears that Martha was very happy with the young man who returned from the Continent full of 'promise and ambition'.[153] Certainly, on returning to Norfolk Patteson married well, and in Norwich politics his duties and early ambitions were quickly realised.[154] By 1806, Patteson was returned as parliamentary member for

[151] Fletcher, *Growing Up,* p.108.
[152] NRO, MC 2015/9, 904X7 Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 19 November 1770.
[153] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.28.
[154] He succeeded his kinsman, Sir Thomas Churchman, as alderman for Mancroft ward in 1781; he was sheriff four years later and mayor in 1788. The decline of the Norwich stuffs trade at the end of the eighteenth century prompted a diversification into the brewing industry which proved to be a shrewd and highly lucrative move.

Norwich with a large majority, was re-elected in 1807 and remained in office until 1812. Conservative in his views and averse to the abolition of slavery, he was a loyal supporter of the government and a well-known and respected figure. Unlike his role model William Windham however, Patteson was never earmarked for political greatness at the national level. Election pamphlets for Norwich in the 1780s describe his status merely as a 'Gentleman of independent Principles, that is, of independent Fortune'.[155] At the turn of the century, settled in a 'first rate merchant house' with considerable land on the edges of the city, and the owner of a notable brewery, Patteson was 'Norwich's leading businessman … his social and political ambitions match[ing] his commercial success'.[156] In the eyes of the world, Patteson displayed all the masculine characteristics and accomplishments of an elite man.

Despite the hectoring tone of Martha's words, the letters between mother and son reveal a strong and warm bond between the two. They also provide a valuable insight into how a young man of the aspiring classes was educated with the unabashed intention of placing him higher up the societal scale. Patteson, never expressly choosing or rejecting those masculine traits which were laid out before him, emerged as a confident and likeable gentleman. At the time of her death in 1799, Martha was immensely proud of her son's business, social and military distinction and would have been delighted to see his portrait displayed in St Andrew's Hall, Norwich in 1803 testimony to his 'Talents, Virtues, Zeal and Public Conduct.''[157]

[155] NHC, *Proceedings at the Contested Election For A Citizen To Serve the Office of Sheriff of Norwich, Along with Elias Norgate, Esq; December 4th 1781.*
[156] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.33.
[157] Cubitt et al, The *Great Tour,* p.34.

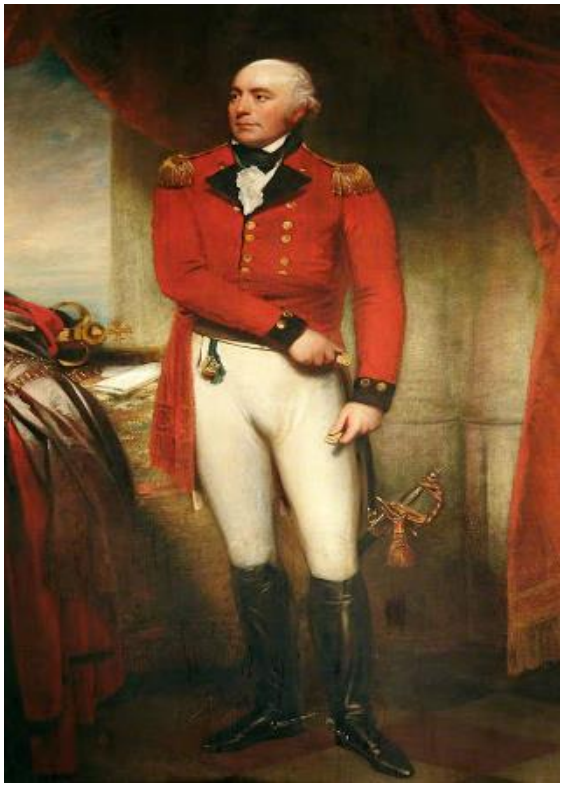

FIGURE 7 JOHN PATTESON BY SIR WILLIAM BEECHEY, C.1803 (NORWICH CASTLE MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY)

In the early decades of the new century however, the cautionary words of Martha Patteson regarding her son's over-easiness of manner and a fondness for the finer things in life were providential.[158] In the lean years after 1815, Patteson's inattention to the detail of business and continued lavish spending resulted in financial failure, the near-avoidance of bankruptcy and the sale of many household items including a substantial collection of fine art. Martha Patteson, Wilson recalls, had always warned her son about the 'ups and downs of business, the difficulties of maintaining a balance between the traditional extravagance of the landed gentry and the prudence of the business community'.[159] Without his mother's guiding hand, Patteson's natural inclination for cultured society and the indulgences of the rich proved his undoing and suggest a weakness in his masculine character which he failed to address. It was only the sharper business acumen of his son John Staniforth Patteson which kept the family afloat in the years following the death of George III.

Despite a mother's best efforts to shape her son's masculine character, Patteson openly acknowledged his propensity to weakness: 'I am become one of

[158] See Footnote 66.
[159] Cubitt et al, *The Great Tour,* p.39.

the most resigned, easy creatures, almost contented with whatever happens.'[160] A family memoir later confirmed: 'With his genial nature and sanguine temperament, John Patteson had been perhaps always too much inclined to look on the bright side of everything, and to trust too implicitly to the probity and wisdom of those with whom he was then in contact.'[161] The evidence of personal family dialogue therefore represents a valuable gauge of those facets of elite masculinity, in particular mastery of both self and others, which were important and conscious choices of the aspiring gentry at the turn of the nineteenth century. Ultimately, John Patteson's self- mastery failed him, both publicly and in private, and he was obliged to concede the very masculine role of head of the family to his more practical son. Following his death in 1833, the family chose not to honour their father with a list of his masculine strengths and personal qualities, so often seen at the time on church memorials, but to merely note the civic and political positions he had held over a long and distinguished public career.[162] In this way, notice of his mastery over others was offered as a diversion to his difficulties with self-mastery. McCormack has shown that a man's ability to 'support, protect and represent' others ultimately proved that he did possess the masculine characteristics of 'reliability', 'selflessness' and disinterested action – all attributes Martha Patteson could not have failed to admire.[163]

[160] NRO, MC 2015/12, 904X8 John Patteson to Martha Patteson, 23 October 1778.
[161] I. Patteson, *Henry Staniforth Patteson: A Memoir* (Norwich, 1899) pp.26-27.
[162] The Patteson memorial is in St Peter Mancroft Church, Norwich. It reads: 'In the 78 years of his age he was for many years a magistrate for the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, served the office of Chief Magistrate of this city AD.1788, was likewise one of its representatives in Parliament from 1806 to 1812, and Lieutenant Commandant of the Norwich Battalion of Volunteer Infantry raised in 1797.'
[163] McCormack, *Independent Man,* p.197.

Chapter Three: Case Study - Samuel Whitbread II (1764-1815)

The experience of John Patteson illustrates how clearly defined characteristics of masculinity were deliberately encouraged by a very single-minded and determined mother keen that her son should enter the world well equipped with those positive masculine characteristics which would ensure acceptance and success. This chapter continues the discussion of how elite masculinity was deliberately shaped for status and purpose by considering Samuel Whitbread II, well-known Whig reformer of the early nineteenth century, a prominent advocate of peace during the French wars, and also a man whose image as the heir to a flourishing business was very carefully considered. Whitbread's political career is well- documented; however, the breadth and nature of his character is relatively unexplored. In particular, there has been less attention given to how Whitbread's masculine character was actively constructed, first by his father through the careful management of both education and cultural experience, but also through Whitbread's own clear choices; an aristocratic marriage and a high- profile political career propelled him to become one of the most 'celebrated' men of the time.[1] The purpose and significance of this case study is to gain a deeper understanding of how Whitbread's highly distinctive masculine style was constructed and identify the ways in which that style affected his gendered experience of political life at the highest level.

Of the four case studies presented in this thesis, an analysis of Whitbread's masculinity presents a rather different challenge in the sense that an established and largely uncontested image of the man prevails. A stereotype persists of a high-profile man in full possession of a principled and garrulous personality, his politics featuring heavily in histories of the Whig Party and the debates of war in the revolutionary period. He is routinely represented as bold, plain-speaking and the epitome of Englishness, completely unswerving in his political views and forward thinking in his messages.[2] There is very little divergence from this 'bluff' image and moreover a tacit acceptance that this is how he should be remembered. In this sense, an image of Whitbread as the kind of Englishman Martha Patteson would

[1] In this chapter the use of the abbreviation 'Whitbread' refers to Samuel Whitbread II. His father is acknowledged as Whitbread senior.

[2] R. G Thorne describes Whitbread as possessing a 'powerful coarse intellect' with an 'extraordinary readiness and indefatigable application to business'. He also quotes Byron's impression of Whitbread as 'the Demosthenes of bad taste and vulgar vehemence, but strong, and English'. *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790-1820* (London, 1986), p.543.

have held up to her own son as *exemplar*, leaves the historian with the feeling that no further enquiry is necessary. However, the consensus regarding his character tells us very little about those elements of his masculinity which during his lifetime provoked both rebuke and adoration in equal measure, or indeed why his untimely death prompted a tidal wave of grief and acclaim at the loss of 'England's greatest and most useful citizen'.[3] Awareness of this stereotype reminds us that masculinity is never a reductive single quality, behaviour or style but much more sophisticated and nuanced and capable of taking different, complex and sometimes tragic directions. A case study of Samuel Whitbread is especially significant in this context as it reveals the fragility and vulnerability of an elite man's masculine persona at this time, the delicate balance of opportunity and failure ever present.

Historians have not shown curiosity in exploring Whitbread, the man. His life as a politician and businessman is the subject of only two short biographies and a volume published to accompany an exhibition of his collection of contemporary British art.[4] Where the former works describe Whitbread's parliamentary career and the latter his cultural interests, none approach the personality or masculinity of the man with any confidence and there are no recent studies to redress the gap. The problem lies in the manner of Whitbread's death and the difficulty in reconciling what is known of the man with the manner in which he chose to die. On 7 July 1815 Samuel Whitbread II took his own life and it is this final act which has come to dominate any discussion of the man forever remembered as one of the three distinguished public men who died in this way in the seven years after 1815.[5] Whitbread's biographer Roger Fulford remarks: that despite the 'existence [of]a large body of manuscript material … little of it runs below the surface of his personality, and though a prolific adult letter writer, he was 'guarded', always 'confin[ing] himself to the point' with 'little time for those trifles about himself which reveal character'.[6] This case study seeks to challenge this viewpoint by considering Whitbread's life on a personal rather than political level, in particular focusing on those years of maturity when his interest in the acquiring of a positive elite masculine image was most clearly expressed. The primary purpose, therefore of this chapter will be to discover those private elements of Whitbread's masculinity

[3] R. Fulford, *Samuel Whitbread 1764-1815: A Study in Opposition* (London, 1967), p.ix.
[4] R. Fulford, *Samuel Whitbread 1764-1815: A Study in Opposition* (London, 1967), D. Rapp, *Samuel Whitbread (1764-1815): A Social and Political Study* (New York and London, 1987) and S. Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Porter: Samuel Whitbread II (1764-1815) and British Art* (London, 1984).
[5] Sir Samuel Romilly and Lord Castlereagh also resorted to suicide by slitting their own throats. The Introduction to this thesis highlights Linda Colley's comments on the phenomenon.
[6] Fulford, *Samuel Whitbread,* pp.xii-xiii.

which have not been fully considered and may offer better understanding of the man behind the public glare. By focusing on personal rather than political sources, the case study will address those neglected aspects of Whitbread's character which affected the way he behaved as an elite man at the centre of public life. In doing so, argues Matthew McCormack, we can improve our knowledge of a 'male-dominated activity like politics' which was key to events at the start of the nineteenth century.[7] The case study will approach its subject in five parts: firstly, an exploration of how a Grand Tour of Northern Europe revealed insights into Whitbread's views of acceptable and unacceptable displays of masculine behaviour. Secondly, an examination of Whitbread's masculine style as he approached the adult landmark of marriage and his role as an emotional suitor. The third and fourth parts discuss Whitbread's attitude to fame and how his distinctive masculine style created the 'bluff' celebrity persona. Lastly, a considered attempt is made to understand Whitbread's private sense of himself as a man in the public sphere and how that mentality impacted his untimely death.

The primary source material for this case study is taken from early travel journals, letters to fiancée Elizabeth Grey and correspondence and comment from others who either knew him personally or observed him at various stages of his life. Analysis addresses the complexity of Whitbread's masculinity through an understanding of his own accounts and thoughts whilst maturing from youth to manhood and also considers the views held by others as they witnessed him as a leading figure in the political spotlight. In adopting this approach, there is an opportunity to reveal those masculine values which Whitbread considered most important and how those qualities were perceived by those around him as he acquired reputation, fame and celebrity. Essential to the mapping out of this 'psycho-biography' is an identification of those lesser known elements of Whitbread's masculinity which were key to his success but also suggest a mentality prone to feelings of persecution and despair and pre-empted his painful and catastrophic decline. Focusing on human experience, this highly subjective approach to understanding gender offers a means of accounting for the motivations of public actors such as Whitbread and understanding behaviours which are sometimes perplexing if not downright self-destructive thus drawing out the vicissitudes of actually living the life of an elite man at this time. Such 'identities', as

[7] M. McCormack (Ed.), 'Men, 'the Public' and Political History' in M. McCormack (Ed.), *Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain* (Basingstoke and New York, 2009), p.24.

Michael Roper has stressed, were 'often *felt* to be in danger of unravelling' and this illustrates the 'precariousness of masculinity at the level of lived experience'.[8]

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A short description of the Whitbread family background is a useful starting point in advance of this study and serves to situate Whitbread's position in elite society. The swift rise in status and wealth of the Whitbread family over the twenty -five - year period 1760-1785 was impressive by any standards and formed the backcloth into which young Samuel was born. Moving from Bedfordshire lesser gentry, to wealthy London brewers and back to Bedfordshire as great landowners the Whitbread family is frequently cited as an example of how eighteenth-century merchants successfully used the profits of trade to establish power and influence. This feat was achieved by Whitbread's father Samuel Whitbread I in a bold systematic style which involved amassing both fortune and land. The family were not 'brash newcomers to the county', explains Dean Rapp, as 'they had been justices of the peace and holders of county office in the seventeenth century, and they had resided in the county for longer than many of the other large landowners'. However, addressing his family's longer-term prospects, Whitbread senior demonstrated both the 'desire to be assimilated' and a 'willingness to conform' to the mores of landed society recognising that the most important way of doing this was to provide his children with an aristocratic style of upbringing which prepared them well to 'mix easily with landed society'.[9]

As the only male child and heir, Samuel was the main focus of his twice widowed father's attention and great expense was lavished on his education at Eton as the best preparation for the future.[10] Public school, argues Anthony Fletcher, 'provided parenting at one remove' and nurtured a style of manliness which prioritised characteristics such as 'endurance and self-reliance' which were

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[8] M. Roper, 'Slipping out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History' in *History Workshop Journal,* 59 (2005), p.63.

[9] D. Rapp, 'Social Mobility in the Eighteenth Century: the Whitbreads of Bedfordshire, 1720-1815', *Economic History Review,* 27 (1974), p.387. During this time Whitbread's father spent 'over £100,000' of brewery profits for 'an estate of 4,500 acres scattered over eight counties'. In 1795, he completed his goal of owning over 10,000 acres by acquiring the Bedfordshire estates of the fourth Viscount Torrington. In 1796, Whitbread II 'succeeded to an estate of approximately 12,500 acres, around 10,500 of them in Bedfordshire' and with an estimated gross annual income from both land rentals and brewery profits of nearly £31,000. pp.380, 382-383.

[10] Whitbread's mother died shortly after he was born. Thereafter, he was brought up by his stepmother, who also died when he was a young child, and later other female relatives.

considered as vital to the upholding of English traditions.[11] For Whitbread, this was followed by a spell at Oxford and Cambridge, with the process completed by a fully-funded Grand Tour of northern Europe.[12] Fletcher succinctly describes this path towards domination of both political and commercial institutions as 'the foundation of the gentry's patriarchal command of English society', a view few historians of the eighteenth century would not support.[13] In this way, there is little doubt that Whitbread senior took on the role of ensuring his son acquired those masculine attributes most valued in elite society and did it with a very clear plan in mind, much like Martha Patteson. In this sense, notes Stephen Deuchar, Whitbread's early life was not unlike the experience of the other privileged young men.[14] Not only did he benefit from a thorough classical education and the promise of inheriting a vast financial fortune, but he also mixed in the most illustrious circles where progressive ideas of the day flourished. The focus of this chapter is therefore to gain a better understanding of how early lived-experience shaped the man Whitbread would become and how both assimilated and innate characteristics of elite masculinity strongly influenced the way he conducted his life, both privately and in public.

A Romantic Traveller

This section explores the impact of the European Grand Tour on Samuel Whitbread's developing sense of masculine values in the wider world. It will consider how exposure to new surroundings and encounters with diverse peoples shaped his opinions regarding acceptable and unacceptable forms of masculine behaviour which he then took forward into adult life.

During the 1780s when he was in his early twenties, Whitbread made two trips to the Continent, both of which are significant to this study of elite masculinity. The first of these represents the classic elite male *rite de passage* – a European Grand Tour and the second a short 'exile' in order to reflect on his feelings for Elizabeth Grey: the subject of the next section in this chapter. In contrast to the Grand Tour of John Patteson, Whitbread was fortunate that his experience did not involve any business expectations or other constraints on his time other than the acquiring of that gentlemanly polish and confidence which would round off his

[11] A. Fletcher, *Growing up in England: The Experience of Childhood, 1600-1914* (New Haven and London, 2008), pp.196, 197.
[12] A detailed description of the ways in which an Eton education influenced the development of a young man's masculinity is found in the earlier chapter on William Windham.
[13] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London), p.298.
[14] Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Porter,* p.10.

education as an elite man. Whitbread, senior, himself a great protagonist of foreign travel, considered it vital for his son to experience the rigours and delights being abroad which the 'aristocratic' tradition of the Grand Tour provided. As Henry French and Mark Rothery have shown, elite families were instrumental in encouraging their sons to establish their innate superiority by 'displaying essential personal qualities … ''manly'' self-control, thrift, independence of judgement and the exercise of authority'.[15] In addition, 'knowledge of ''the world'' was essential to the gentleman as public agent, enabling him to deal with persons of different ranks, discern an individual's ''ruling passion'', and identify and learn from virtuous companions'.[16] The significant work of Michele Cohen sums up the importance of the Grand Tour, emphasising its enduring role as an exclusive preparation for those young men who would become the next generation of leaders.[17]

The success of the tour was vital to both Whitbread men, the risks of getting it wrong well understood. By the last quarter of the eighteenth century there was a growing sense that too much exposure to French *politesse* was incompatible with the manly character Englishmen were looking to acquire. Linda Colley has argued that in contrast to previously held ideas that the acquisition of foreign manners was advantageous to a young man, such actions were now frowned upon as being incompatible with British supremacy.[18] For Whitbread senior, the tour represented the final stage of an expensive elite education designed to equip his son with the experience and knowledge necessary for success in elite male circles. In this sense, argues Fletcher, Whitbread's tour represented a well-understood process of 'polishing' where a superiority of understanding and accomplishment complemented and reinforced the 'political stance which put English institutions and customs in a favourable perspective compared to those of other states'.[19]

The decision was made that Whitbread should not take the classic tour through France and Italy, but head east and north taking in the capitals of Scandinavia, Russia, Latvia, Poland and Prussia. A preference for destinations other than France and Italy was influenced by the interruption of war, as it had been

[15] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities 1660-1900* (Oxford, 2012), p.181.
[16] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.139.
[17] M. Cohen, 'The Grand Tour: Language, National Identity and Masculinity', *Changing English,* 8.2 (2001), p.130.
[18] Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London, 1992), p.166. The loss of the American colonies in 1783 was blamed on the incompetence of the British elite who were seen to be 'unmanly'.
[19] Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination,* p.317.

in the early 1780s and after 1794. The second half of the eighteenth century, argue French and Rothery, represented a 'tipping point' after which many 'literate English people began to believe that the best models of civic virtue, courtly behaviour, aesthetic genius and cultural prowess were not, necessarily, any longer to be found in France or Italy'.[20] The deliberate exclusion of France and Italy from the route suggests that Whitbread senior was probably not only cautious of his son setting foot on French soil due to French involvement in the recent loss of the American colonies but also wished to prevent his son falling into that dissolute extravagant foppery much associated with the English aristocracy in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. The publication of Richard Hurd's *Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel* (1764) had already cast doubt on the Grand Tour's ability to 'make men' suggesting that it was producing youths who displayed unsuitable feminine characteristics such as over attention to appearance and a preference for idleness. Effeminacy acquired through excessive politeness and the adoption of the French language was to be avoided at all costs. The French tongue, explains Cohen, dealt in 'hints and circumlocutions' compared to spoken English which possessed a 'courageous forthrightness of address', and was most crucially, 'forcible and manly'.[21] In this respect, it is likely that Whitbread's father, well-versed in the plain languages of land and trade, was unwilling to risk the possibility of his son returning to the masculine world of the brewery business with affectation or pretence.

The choice of a more difficult route through Scandinavia, Russia and Central Europe was therefore more likely to guarantee that Whitbread's experience would be authentic, challenging and consistent with the development of manly fortitude: ideas which were fast gaining currency in the last quarter of the eighteenth century following the outcome of the American War.[22] Essentially, the tour - according to Fulford, was designed to 'strengthen' rather than 'polish' Whitbread's manly character well away from the 'sultry, effete personages' perceived to be lurking in Italian cities.[23] There is no suggestion that Whitbread was disappointed with his father's decision regarding his destinations and with generous funds at his disposal, a servant and travelling companion on board, the itinerary held great promise for

[20]French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.140.
[21] Cohen, 'Grand Tour', p.137.
[22] 'The period of the war', argues Matthew McCormack, 'prompted a change in Britain's moral atmosphere' with 'public men' [and those aspiring towards it] 'expected to be virtuous in both their public and private lives' where no accusations of effeminacy could be levelled against them. *Citizenship and Gender in Britain, 1688-1928* (Oxford, 2019), p.46.
[23] Fulford, *Samuel Whitbread,* p.16.

him.[24] In particular, scheduled audiences at the royal courts of Sweden, Russia and even with Frederick the Great himself offered glamour and amusement. In this way, Whitbread senior asserted his position as a man of wealth and status by following the trend set by other elite families who, notes Hannah Greig, actively encouraged 'exposure to continental courts, culture, and a network of European grandees'.[25] This tour was clearly not intended as mere geographical exploration but designed as a statement that young Whitbread was the kind of man who was at ease in both rustic and regal environments.

From the outset, Whitbread recounted the events of his travels with the air of a man confident in his status as an Englishman abroad, avidly recording his thoughts in a series of six journals, three of which have survived. The journals represent a significant source as they offer detailed insight into those elements of Whitbread's masculinity which came to the fore as he reacted to the people and places he encountered, and also represent a genuine account of those feelings wholly unaffected by the concerns of writing to a potentially critical recipient.[26] Whitbread's writing shows that he was eager to immerse himself in a full cultural exploration of the countries he visited and as such it is helpful to consider the tone he employed. Thoughts are recorded in an enthusiastic, honest and even emotional prose which intriguingly allows us to gain a real sense of the young man away from home and reveal those private views on other peoples which would otherwise have been lost. Through the lens of his words, Whitbread can be seen as someone who viewed the experience of travel as a form of personal adventure, holding out the promise of a discovery or realisation of the self through the exploration of the 'other'. Chloe Chard describes this view of travel at the end of the eighteenth century as 'Romantic' – travel featuring the crossing of 'symbolic as well as geographical boundaries' and actively embracing peril and risk.[27] Such a perspective permits an

[24] Whitbread's travelling companion was William Coxe, the future Archdeacon of Wiltshire and an enthusiastic traveller and writer. Lively, independent and curious to sample local cultures in every form, Coxe seemed a risky choice. Seven years before the Whitbread tour, Coxe had visited Russia, making no secret of his exploits, but this does not appear to have alarmed the elder Whitbread. Following the Grand Tour with Whitbread, Coxe wrote a multi volume account of their travels entitled *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark* (1784) which by the 1790s had reached its fourth edition.

[25] H. Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford, 2013), p.24.

[26] Bedfordshire Record Office (BRO) holds the second, fifth and sixth of Whitbread's travel journals, however the letters he received have not survived. Whitbread's forty-eight letters to Elizabeth Grey mostly written from the Continent are fully transcribed and represent a compelling account of a young man expressing his love.

[27] C. Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt on the Grand Tour: Travel writing and imaginative geography 1600-1830* (Manchester and New York, 1999), p.11. Chard suggests that, as now, there were two approaches to travel at the end of the eighteenth century – the 'Romantic' approach and that of the

understanding of Whitbread as a man keenly observant of other men's behaviour and abilities and an openness to those ideas and practices which he witnessed in the cultures of others. The writing also allows us to consider his fascination with the wonders of landscape and its connection with contemporary ideas of beauty and sublimity. These perspectives not only shaped the liberal view of the world which was to be the basis of his political beliefs and a lifelong appreciation of the arts and sciences but also suggest elements of his masculine personality which were largely forgotten in his later years and therefore give resonance to this study's aim in discovering those facets of Whitbread's masculinity which might more fully define the man.

Drawing on the benefits of a privileged education and the cushion of wealth, Whitbread moved around with certainty and assurance, always ready to comment on the people, places and customs he encountered. There is a definite sense in which he was not only aware of his own superior status and bearing but was also keenly observant of other men's masculine style, regarding their behaviour with the eye of someone seeking to enforce a rubric in which he was well- qualified and believed suitable for all. Inevitably, not all encounters were favourable and in common with many travellers Whitbread was 'more eloquent in expressing [his] distaste or amusement for ''foreign'' manners, fashions, and conversation than … in articulating desires to copy them'.[28] In Fredericsborg, Sweden, Whitbread observed with some amusement: 'The General [Claussen] was very civil & pressed us much to stay but our time would not allow it so he rubbed his nose three times in each of our faces & and having put by stealth four bottles of Wine into our carriage bid us adieu.'[29] Openness to the hospitality of strangers and a strong interest in their lives are noticeable features of Whitbread's early travels in Scandinavia. In Carlserona, Sweden, he remarked: 'Sir Thomas Wroughton very civilly invited us to dinner where we met his secretary Mr Keene & Baron Geddow, a man who seems to possess very accurate information on all subjects respecting the constitution of Sweden, new and old.'[30] These comments are typical of the kind Whitbread passed each time he made a new acquaintance and indicate an expectation that men

'tourist', that is someone who would visit similar places but steer clear of those encounters with the foreign which may pose a risk.

[28] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.151.

[29] BRO, W/3933/2 *Travel Journal of Samuel Whitbread II: Journal of a tour of Denmark, Sweden and Norway,* 13 June 1784. General Claussen gave Whitbread and his companions a tour of the munitions factory he owned.

[30] BRO, W/3993/2, 1 August 1794.

should not only behave in a courteous and engaging manner but also have something worthwhile to say. As such, the importance of making good first impressions and possessing exemplary social skills were the hallmarks of the privileged education of which Whitbread had been a beneficiary and this is evident in his treatment of strangers. Later in Berlin, Whitbread continued to make his observations on these matters: 'The Society, Manners & Dress at Berlin appeared to me in a very advantageous point of view just emerged from the Barbarous Asiatic Manners of Latvia and Poland.'[31]Two encounters in Berlin produced very different responses from Whitbread however and indicate the interest he took in other men's characters and how they chose to present themselves in public. He recalled a Mr Cramer, 'who speaks most excellent English lodged in the Hotel with Us. He is established in a Compting House in London, an unaffected sensible Young Man, I like him very much.' In comparison, he lamented:

> To our misfortune we met frequently a Dutch man named Haslar: almost everywhere; traveling with his Wife. He has travelled a good deal, & is very proud of that and his money … He is vulgar, prosing, talks much & tells a number of dull lies. Everybody soon smoked him.[32]

The implication in all of these situations was that Whitbread, presenting himself as an elite Englishman, already considered himself fully qualified in the presentation of, what Philip Carter terms, a 'successful gentlemanly identity' and was therefore well placed to comment on the efforts of others and whether or not they lived up to that ideal.[33] It is quickly discernible from the sources that Whitbread showed particular regard not only for the display of gentlemanly civility but also valued the possession of sound knowledge and evidence of application and industry. In this he makes no distinction of class or rank, focussing entirely on talent and ability and the desirability of work over idleness. At the Academy of Sciences in Stockholm, Whitbread was impressed to meet a Mr Sparman who had served with Captain Cook at the Cape of Good Hope. He wrote:

> Mr Sparman is a great naturalist and has made during his travels a very large and choice collection of Animals & plants which since his return he has

[31] BRO, W/3993/5, *Travel Journal of a Tour in Central Europe*, 23 June 1785. Whitbread's journals W/3993/3-4 which cover the period between leaving Norway and arriving in Berlin are lost. During this period his travels took him to Finland, Russia, Latvia and Poland.
[32] BRO, W/3933/5, 23 June 1785. Whitbread also occasionally commented on women: 'Coxe met with an old Strasbourg Acquaintance Madame Schutz. She is not *de mon gout.'*
[33] P. Carter*, Men and the Emergence of Polite Society: Britain 1660-1800* (Oxford, 2001), p.164.

> considerably augmented & enriched his collection of Insects is scarcely to be paralleled consisting of above 3000 subjects in the highest possible preservation.[34]

Unlike John Patteson, who had rapidly tired of the arts and antiquities in Italy, Whitbread delighted in appreciating examples of both local artists and classical masters. In Dresden, he applauded: 'Among the curiosities of Dresden the Picture Gallery is certainly the first: the finest collection in Europe - some glorious works of Rubens, the 'Magnificence of the Idea' in one made me start.' Less pleasing however was a visit to the Treasury of the Elector of Dresden which precipitated a sharp sense of wrong in the young Whitbread, a theme which recurs throughout his travels. Disgusted, he pronounced that a collection 'containing a prodigious quantity of Works of Art, & so great a Collection of Diamonds & precious Stones and of such enormous Value, as to make one pity the folly of the Elector who collected them & the people on whom the money was levied to be so ill expended.'[35] This was the first time that Whitbread aired his frustration at evidence of social injustice with the implication that those men meting out that injustice were in every way deficient, deluded and a disgrace to society.[36]

The theme gained momentum as Whitbread travelled through Scandinavia and the German principalities, his repugnance at the public face of male royalty increasing in intensity, showing not only a dislike of royal extravagance but especially an abhorrence of effeminacy and homosexuality. An audience with Gustavus III of Sweden prompted Whitbread to describe the attire of the monarch and his entourage with some incredulity:

> The King was dressed in a light purple silk lined with Green, the cuffs & the cape of his cloak [were] embroidered with silver, the Knights of the Seraphim were habited in Crimson lined with flame coloured sattin, those of the Polar Star in habits of the same colour with some differences in the Embroidery and the crowd in light blue silk lined.[37]

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[34] BRO, W/3933/2, 2 August 1784.
[35] BRO, W/3933/5, 3 July 1785.
[36] 'The love of jewellery, and of diamond jewellery in particular', writes Hannah Greig, 'was widely deployed by satirists and critics as a characteristic of fashionable society, one that underscored its frivolity'. The 'amassing' of diamonds was particularly associated with female patrician displays of wealth and vanity and was therefore regarded as extremely unmanly. *Beau Monde,* pp.47-48.
[37] BRO, W/3933/2, 3 August 1784.

Later, as the King's guest at the Opera Whitbread vented his full opinion on the Court:

> It would disgust me to see so much Effeminacy more than once or twice in one's life. How different the courts of Charles XII & Gustavus III. If the spirits of deceased persons really hover about the Earth now must the Ghost of Charles gnash its immaterial Teeth to see the silken [?] Luxury parade take place where he held his plain and manly court.[38]

Evidently, Whitbread viewed such pomp and parade as both lacking in the masculinity required to assert leadership and an embarrassing spectacle. The Opera met with limited approval being 'very well performed: & the Scenes, Dresses very handsome'. However, disapproval in what he viewed as a rotten system based on subservience to the Court dominated his verdict: 'The King encourages as much as possible theatrical representations not only as his own peculiar taste; but also, as leading his subjects to the Polite Arts & turning their minds from Political subjects'.[39] In mentioning how rulers such as Gustavus deliberately attempted to fool their people, Whitbread's clear dislike of the excess, extravagance and privilege was taking shape, indicating a growing concern with royal conduct and the ways in which those rulers presented an image of masculine despotism at its absolute worst.

On reaching Germany, Whitbread keenly anticipated an audience with Frederick the Great. He wrote: 'I was very curious to see this celebrated man.'[40] However, arriving at the King's residence in Potsdam, a less than favourable impression was formed. Acknowledging that his address was 'that of a Gentleman', Whitbread's preoccupation with visual impressions swiftly took over and a scathing attack was launched on the ageing King and everything he represented. The following paragraphs are important to this study as they show how Whitbread 'peeled back' the layers of this old man's masculinity and indicate those elements he considered to be important in a male elite figure and those elements he found repugnant and unmanly. In a detailed passage lasting several pages of his journal,

[38] BRO/W3933/2, 3 August 1784.
[39] BRO/W3933/2, 3 August 1784.
[40] BRO/W3933/5, 29 June 1785. Frederick the Great (1712-1786) was King of Prussia from 1740 to 1786. He was acclaimed for his military victories, his reorganisation of the Prussian armies and his patronage of the arts and the Enlightenment. He was also openly homosexual and a confirmed atheist. Tim Blanning's *Frederick the Great: King of Prussia* (London, 2016) provides a thorough account of his life.

Whitbread wrote in consternation at Frederick the Great's bizarre and unmanly attire:

> His dress was most singular, a shabby blue Uniform, lined with red, a yellow waistcoat, black velvet breeches & boots become perfectly red by rubbing, his head dress equally curious, his own hair in a Toupe & Tail, five curls fastened on each side without the least art, upon some black substance which formed a contrast to the whiteness of his hair, small worked muslin Ruffles, a black stock & his whole nastied with snuff, with a chapeau plumé in his hand.[41]

With evident disgust at the King's sartorial presentation, he pursued his theme with an unforgiving description of the monarch's ageing anatomy:

> His person is short & very thin, his back round from Age, & one shoulder rather higher than the other; a defect I take it he had in his youth, his visage is thin & rather long, his Eye large, prominent & penetrating, he has lost some front teeth which breaks his voice a little, & has obliged him to quit his favourite amusement of the flute. He is very strong upon his legs, for so advanced an age as 74 & possesses his faculties most perfectly.[42]

The detailed tirade clearly expressed Whitbread's abhorrence at what he saw and indicates a morbid fascination with the male ageing process and in particular its effect on the mind and body – the two most tangible vessels of a superior masculinity.

It was however Frederick the Great's despotic and depraved character which received the harshest criticism. Attempting a degree of magnanimity Whitbread was unable to conceal a strong repulsion, particularly regarding the King's known homosexuality.[43]

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[41] BRO, W/3933/5, 29 June 1785. An earlier meeting with the King's brother made a different impression. Whitbread was pleasantly surprised to find a 'man of about 50, of plain Gentleman like appearance dressed in Uniform, talks well and willingly & seems to possess good plain sense rather than shining abilities. His courage is undoubted'. BRO, W/3933/2, 3 August 1784.

[42] BRO, W/3933/5, 29 June 1785.

[43] The palace at Potsdam was where Frederick enjoyed intimate relations with young officers as well as his first valet Fredersdorf. The house contained a 'specially commissioned fresco of Ganymede' and the park was filled with 'statues of Antinous' and 'pairs of male lovers'. P. Mansel, 'Atheist and gay, Frederick the Great was more radical than most leaders today', *The Spectator,* 3 October 2015.

He expounded:

> Endowed with every quality which rails human Nature to superior excellence he has acquired by Art every Vice which degrades it the lowest Infamy. When we view him in the exercise of his natural qualities, we see the wisest Temporal Monarch that exists, perhaps one of the wisest that ever existed, the greatest General of his Age. One of the first of Men. Turn the Picture, & we see a Monster we are induced to hope is hardly of our own Species. In these two points of views, we find half the world adoring him as somewhat above humanity: the other half cursing his name as a disgrace to the Annals of Mankind.

In writing these words, it is clear that Whitbread believed that any positive manly qualities inherent in the King's character were effectively wiped out by the nature of his sexuality, the company he kept and the irretrievable damage this caused to his public image. Unpalatable to modern liberal thinking, the viewpoint emphasises the importance elite men such as Whitbread placed on the public display of an unquestioned heterosexual character. A man, he believed, could not command respect in the wider world and fulfil his responsibilities if he did not adopt a conventional family-based lifestyle.[44] The alternative 'man' had no choice but to hide himself away from society as Frederick did at Potsdam, neglecting his authoritative role in the pursuit of unnatural sexual activity. Whitbread concluded his thoughts thus: 'Born of a robust male, & without passion for Women, he [Frederick] has formed himself to others too horrid to be named. Humane by Nature, he is cruel by choice and Principle.' Clearly unable to make sense of the man, he attempted magnanimity: 'Nevertheless when we consider his Reign, the Acquisition of Territory he has made, & the awe in which Europe stands of his name, we must confess him a Great Man, & lament that he is not also a Good One.' [45]

The encounter between Whitbread and Frederick the Great is significant to this study of elite masculinity as it draws attention to the kind of negative views on effeminacy and homosexuality which clearly underpinned his upbringing as the son of a hard-working and respectable male role-model who was the unquestioned head of the family. Not an unusual position on masculinity, most fathers dreaded their sons developing feminine traits and being incapable of acceding to the demands of

[44] The Queen lived separately from the King. He described her as 'this incorrigibly sour subspecies of the female sex'. Mansel, 'Atheist and gay', *Spectator,* 3 October 2015.
[45] BRO, W/3933/5, 29 June 1785.

patriarchal power. Whilst effeminacy and foppish manners exhibited in flamboyant dress and outlandish manners were an acknowledged stereotype of the early eighteenth century, by the last quarter the meaning of such lifestyles came increasingly under question. 'Deformed and enervated', writes Philip Carter, ''fops' participation in female rituals of self-preservation invariably resulted in an identity with effeminacy' and consequently this frequently led to suggestions of male sexual deviance and sodomy.[46] By the 1780's, effeminate men were no longer a curiosity, but were ridiculed for unbecoming conduct in an emerging network of polite public spaces and given names such as fop, Macaroni and molly. In Whitbread's eyes such men represented the antithesis of a modest manhood which displayed 'self-regulation and intelligence' - values well established in previous centuries and which were his own clear *modus operandi*.[47] Other considerations of dubious masculinity raised by his recent encounters troubled Whitbread further. Whilst the effeminate and extravagant conduct of the Swedish and Prussian kings deeply saddened him, it was their apparent abrogation of other masculine traits such as kindness and humility which he believed rendered them unfit for their role as monarch. Even worse, Frederick the Great's known propensity for arbitrary violence suggested not only a depraved preoccupation with the male physical form but a lack of consideration for his subjects. Whitbread's description of him as a 'monster' illustrates his total dismissal of Frederick, not only as a man, but also a human being.

If the effeminate image and conduct of European kings was a disappointment, the same cannot be said for the people under their sovereignty. A more positive theme of Whitbread's travel writing was his enthusiasm for the pastoral communities he encountered and a fascination with the apparent blissful simplicity of their lives.

[46] Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society,* p.144. As Matthew McCormack has shown, homosexuality was viewed very differently in the eighteenth century with the term 'homosexual' not used until the later Victorian era. Sodomy remained a serious crime of deviance which attracted the death sentence and was even associated with witchcraft and the occult. Politically, to engage in homosexuality undermined men's natural dominance of weaker individuals such as women and slaves, and 'to take the passive role in sodomy was to lose manhood, self-ownership and even citizenship'. *Citizenship and Gender,* pp.39-40.

[47] Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society,* p.148.

He reported:

> I never saw Peasants so civil & the Swedes they are a handsome race of people. The men tall, stout & well made & the women in general well-featured, healthy looking & with remarkable good Teeth.[48]

Whitbread's appreciation of both an attractive and healthy body and the donning of simple apparel contrasted sharply with his revulsion of the peasants' own rulers' bodies and dress and suggests a facet of his own masculinity which valued beauty, simplicity and taste – ironically concepts frequently associated with the 'feminine'. Indeed, contemporary ideas about engagement with beauty had much to say about the ways in which individuals responded to both surroundings and objects. These responses crossed contemporary gender expectations and provide an opportunity to understand a new facet of Whitbread's masculinity which became evident at this time – the expression of emotion. Chard suggests that 'around the middle of the eighteenth century the authority of the eye-witness [was] supplanted by an authority derived from an ability to respond emotionally to the objects of commentary'.[49] Notions of the sublime and the beautiful were given an influential statement in Edmund Burke's writing and it is likely that Whitbread who was an avid reader, would have been aware of these ideas and their relevance when responding to the landscapes he encountered.[50] Considering these thoughts from a gender perspective, beauty was defined by proportion, form and symmetry and as a more 'sociable category' identified with 'feminine softness'. The sublime, however, was associated with inspirational awe and danger and therefore more 'masculine' in tone.[51]

In practice, there was an overlap in these categories in the writing of both male and female travellers as demonstrated by Whitbread himself. Seeing the falls at Carlsgraf, Sweden, Whitbread could not contain his responses to both the sublime and the beautiful:

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[48] BRO, W/3933/2, 24 July 1784.
[49] Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt,* pp.35-36.
[50] Burke's philosophy states that 'sublime objects are vast in their dimensions, beautiful ones comparatively small; beauty should be smooth, and polished; the great, rugged and negligent'. E. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford, 2015 edition), pp.100-101.
[51] T. Brekke and J. Mee, Introduction to M. Wollstonecraft, *Letters written during a short residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (Oxford, 2009), pp.xviii-xix.

> I cannot describe what I saw, or what I felt on seeing the first cataract, the sublimest sight my Eyes ever beheld. I stood like the Countryman not knowing whether to admire most the beauties of Nature so wonderfully displayed, or the Swedes in attempting to render these cataracts navigable.[52]

In this sense, Whitbread pitches himself and his writing somewhere between a 'feminine' appreciation of beauty and the 'masculine' awe of one in potential danger.[53] Such 'responsiveness', explains Chard, was 'compatible with manly simplicity and restraint: by adeptly combining hyperbole with rejections of too immoderate an effusiveness, both male and female travellers were positioned as feminine yet manly'.[54] Whitbread's travel journals contain numerous effusive examples of his appreciation of the landscape which he variously described as beautiful, sublime, romantic or merely picturesque and these episodes are significant as they show Whitbread's emotional engagement with instances of the sublime in the presence of fear and that this was manifested in a submissiveness to greater powers beyond human control and a fascination with darkness and terror. 'To be [truly] profound', argues Simon Schama, 'was to plumb the depths' be it in 'caves, chasms or at the edge of the precipice' and it was there that 'the sublime would be discovered'.[55]

Whitbread was clearly fascinated by his experience of the sublime indicating a type of emotional manliness which was drawn to extremes of feeling and danger coupled with a tendency to romanticise words and actions. The following section pursues the extent to which Whitbread was overwhelmed by even greater feelings of emotion – this time related to his feelings for a woman, the impact those feelings had on the way others viewed him and how he presented himself as a man worthy of marriage.

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[52] BRO, W3933/2, 26 August 1784.

[53] Burke claimed that 'the sublime delights us by exercising our nervous system and arousing it and us from indolence, an experience that is pleasurable as long as it stops before the point of pain'. Conversely, whatever produces 'that agreeable relaxation, which is the characteristic effect of beauty will be perceived as beautiful'. P. Guyer, Introduction to E. Burke, *Philosophical Enquiry,* p. xxiii.

[54] Chard, *Pleasure and Guilt,* p.36. In the 1790s Wollstonecraft rejected Burke's gendering of these categories in her vindications, and insisted on the possibility of a woman displaying a 'masculine' understanding capable of grasping sublimity. Brekke and Mee, Introduction to *Letters,* p. xix.

[55] S. Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (Bath, 1995), p.450.

An Emotional Suitor

This section examines the subject of elite masculinity through the content of letters written by Whitbread during his engagement to Elizabeth Grey. The source material presents an opportunity to assess those aspects of Whitbread's masculinity which were exhibited in his role as an 'emotional' suitor, the importance of marriage in the context of elite masculine status and the passionate manner in which he chose to present himself as a prospective husband. The series of forty-eight letters not only reveal fresh and intimate aspects of Whitbread's masculine character but also represent an opportunity to observe the classical masculine virtues of honour, truth and civility in the context of courtship. Of equal importance, the section considers the dynamic between father and son during the course of the engagement and the manner in which masculine superiority shifted from one generation to another.

The institution of marriage marked an important point of entry into the male adult world and for Whitbread represented a key component in confirming his status in elite society. 'Marriage', argue Rothery and French, 'was regarded not just a facet of adulthood, but also as a means by which to realise the essential attributes of masculine identity.'[56] The cornerstone of the 'patriarchal ideal', marriage awarded men the 'patriarchal dividend' of 'natural and moral superiority' over all those in their domestic orbit. In effect, marriage established husbands as the unassailable head of the family household and provided men with an opportunity to further develop their masculine character.[57] Returning from the Grand Tour and with all the benefits of worldly experience, Whitbread regarded himself as an accomplished and wealthy young gentleman ready to enter the married state and establish a reputation which was at least equal to his father's. During the summer of 1786, Whitbread met and fell in love with Elizabeth Grey, the sister of his Eton friend Charles Grey and a member of the Whig aristocracy. He was adamant that she should be his wife.[58] The practice of courtship was the perfect opportunity for Whitbread to exhibit all the manly qualities he had acquired as a youth; honesty, trustworthiness, manners, self-mastery, rational thought, good financial sense, persistence and stoicism. However, 'the process', note Rothery and French, 'was not simply conducted between the two parties concerned … it could involve any number of friends and family members and

[56] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.197.
[57] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* p.119.
[58] Elizabeth Grey belonged to the aristocratic and staunchly Whig Grey family from Fallodon, Northumberland. At Eton, Whitbread had become close friends with Elizabeth's brother Charles, later the reforming Prime Minister 2nd Earl Grey (1830-1834). Charles Grey's life (1764-1845) is fully documented in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

neighbours.'[59] In addition, as Amanda Vickery has shown, the entire process could be protracted, complex and sensitive, rarely taking into account the wishes of the lovers involved.[60] On several occasions the letters refer to Whitbread, an eligible bachelor, as the subject of considerable press speculation with a number of different ladies put forward as suitable candidates. In this case, Whitbread's father took an active and influential role, mindful that his son's marriage should enhance the Whitbread family status.

From the outset, Whitbread senior's involvement in the process was dominant, his first step being to separate the young lovers. Between May and December 1787, Whitbread was sent to Europe on a five -month *sojourn* with the intention that he should reflect on his intention to marry Elizabeth and be sure of his feelings for her. Such moments, explain Rothery and French, represent a bold expression of 'masculine authority, autonomy and control' and evidence that Whitbread senior wished to show 'closeness of … alignment with conventional social and gender norms, rather than … resistance to them'.[61] His son clearly thought otherwise. The letters written to Elizabeth during this period of separation reveal the passionate pleas of a young man desperate to be the husband of the woman he loved whilst at the same time placating a respected father determined to be involved in the process. Fully aware of his son's appeal in the marriage market, Whitbread senior, decided to make a thorough assessment of the future bride before giving formal consent. This he felt could be better done with his son at a safe distance.

The precise reasons behind Whitbread's removal to the Continent are not entirely obvious. Whitbread, senior was known for his passionate belief in the benefits of travel, and it is entirely possible that he regarded the journey as a second 'Grand Tour', this time in the company of amiable young friends: a manly pre-marital jaunt to be enjoyed.[62] This also allowed time to rule out any serious objections to the Grey family and make the necessary business arrangements for his son's graduation to adult married life. Elizabeth's position was aristocratic but

[59] Rothery and French, *Making Men*, p.118.
[60] A. Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 1998), p.45.
[61] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.232.
[62] Whitbread's travelling companions were friends Bill Nesfield, who was reading for the Bar and Tom Monson, the younger son of Lord Monson. Whitbread particularly praised Nesfield: 'his Spirits, his good Humour, his Friendship have all their full force now.' BRO, W1/6548 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 16-17 May 1787.

not wealthy, but this is unlikely to have a made a difference to her suitability bearing in mind the Whitbread fortune. More probable is that Whitbread's father considered the marriage insufficiently brilliant to overcome his prejudices against the Whig party and in particular the family's strong links with Charles James Fox and the gaieties of the Devonshire House circle.[63] In these circumstances, the desire to exert paternal influence prevailed and whilst no specific objection to the match was ultimately voiced, Whitbread's father, not only a committed parent but also a loyal Tory, clearly wished to ensure that the public reputation of the family patriarchy as a marker of manhood and sound morals was not under threat and that his son's future happiness, status and respect was assured.

The unexpected separation did however offer Whitbread the opportunity to impress his future bride through the exchange of love letters, tokens and gifts and this correspondence served to intensify their romance. Men, argues Sally Holloway, held a 'traditional role as the instigators of courtship [and] one of the key tropes of men's love letters was their sincerity'.[64] In this, Whitbread excelled. Unsure as to how he should respond to the situation as a man whom Elizabeth would take seriously he attempted to illustrate his coping strategies with absolute honesty. Returning to those notions of the sublime which had so captured him in Scandinavia, he wrote:

> I am less manly and less resolute than I thought I had been. I shrink when I think of the distance we are to be separated from each other, but I feel a pleasure & that is exquisite in the indulgence of this species of horror, because it confirms me in the idea that we shall meet unaltered & with double the satisfaction and delight.[65]

Later, keen to reassure with an impression of manly fortitude and resolution, Whitbread reconsidered his position:

> I now remember, a very strong sensation of Sorrow at leaving England. [Your] anxiety to me will construe my sorrow into repentance, & make you

[63] Devonshire House was the London home of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire. It was notorious as the centre of fashionable Whig society otherwise known as the 'beau monde'. At the time Charles Grey was involved in an illicit relationship with the Duchess which resulted in the birth of a child, Eliza Courtney, who was taken care of by the Grey family at Fallodon.
[64] S. Holloway, The *Game of Love in Georgian England: Courtship, Emotions and Material Culture* (Oxford, 2019), p.58.
[65] BRO, W1/6547 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 8 May 1787.

> imagine that I regret having left home; or that I am irresolute or that I am unmanly.[66]

These expressions underscored Whitbread's keenness to maintain the impression of stoic control whilst concealing his fear that he had relinquished all management of the process to his father.

Whitbread, senior was not inclined to move matters along with any urgency, preferring a slow 'pace of social launching' which, suggests Fletcher, 'depended on thoughtful parental pondering' of all aspects of the match.[67] This was all the easier to carry off with the subjects of his project held at a safe distance from both himself and each other. From southern France, Whitbread accepted his father's methods with relaxed affability:

> We are great Gainers by having taken the Southern Tour, But notwithstanding his Whims, notwithstanding the Agony & Tears that he cost me this Spring; believe me when I say that my Heart throbs with gratitude when I think of his Affection & Kindness for all his children, for me more particularly than the rest, that I return that Affection to him in the most unfeigned & unbounded manner, & that I reverence his Character independent of all filial ties, as composed of the soundest Principles of Benevolence, Honour & Generosity. Such as I here describe him, you will find him.[68]

Clearly torn between filial loyalty to his father and love for Elizabeth, Whitbread settled on a policy of resigned gratitude and deference until he was better placed to take matters into his own hands.

The moment marked a turning point and indicated an imminent shift in the relative positions of father and son. By late September Whitbread returned to England and was impatient to progress plans for the wedding on his own terms. Whitbread's outward bearing was now that of a man about to enter the adult world as a married man, a position which, explains Alexandra Shepard, 'transcended hierarchies of age since married men were accorded higher status than their elders who were single.'[69] As Whitbread, senior had no living wife, his son was poised to assume superiority. In addition, whereas previously happy to leave matters of

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[66] BRO, W1/6550 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 23 May 1787.
[67] Fletcher, *Growing Up,* p.271.
[68] BRO, W1/6562 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 8 July 1787.
[69] A. Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), p.75.

business to his father, Whitbread now adopted a forthright manner on the all-important subject of his material future and the management of wealth. 'Marriage', notes Holloway, 'promised [not only] companionship, but also financial security, social advancement, and the continuation of the family line': the setting up of an independent home being a major milestone in the life of a young man.[70] For the first time Whitbread showed the passionate resolve and unbarred determination characteristic of his later political life and began to display a bold and impetuous brand of masculinity previously unseen. Incensed at his father's lack of action and wishing to demonstrate command of the situation, he relayed three areas of concern to Elizabeth:

> The first, whether by procrastination he meant to put an end to the Match? secondly whether he had any Advisers behind the Curtain of whom I was ignorant? & thirdly What motive he had for wishing to delay till May, what might be done immediately? [71]

All charges were denied by Whitbread, senior, but his son's reprimands resonated:

> I told him his Conduct had given me & You [Elizabeth] & the whole Family reason to suspect that he wished the Match to go off, & had taken these Methods to break it. He said he was very sorry that his conduct should be so misinterpreted, that it was by no means his Wish, & that he had no Conception that I should find so much difficulty in complying with his wish, of marrying in May instead of January which seemed to be the time that You and I had pitched upon.

In this way, note Rothery and French, Whitbread showed that 'elite males did not simply ''become'' adult men, and *then* marry, but rather *through* marriage they progressed further towards the attainment and enactment of the perennial ''adult'' male values, such as authority, autonomy, self-command and responsibility'.[72] In the aftermath of the confrontation, Whitbread gave reassurance to Elizabeth, offering a manly resumé of the situation: 'He has no objection to the Match; and will do everything most handsomely … I am always at your command, & believe that my Father will make amends to You, if it is possible, for all his unaccountable conduct.'[73] By December 1787, calmness prevailed and Whitbread looked forward

[70] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.10.
[71] BRO, W1/6585 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 23 November 1787.
[72] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* pp.232-233.
[73] BRO, W1/6587 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 28 November1787.

to a ‘Xmas in the true Patriarchal way Mince Pies & Prayers’ and that that he would ‘swear or pray or do whatever the Old Gentleman fancies, so long as he continues so good’.[74]

FIGURE 8 SAMUEL WHITBREAD BY SAMUEL REYNOLDS, AFTER JOHN OPIE MEZZOTINT, 1806 (NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY)

The tone of Whitbread’s letters show that not only was it imperative that he demonstrate his command over a difficult situation, but it was also vital that he presented himself to Elizabeth as a man worthy of her love. As Holloway has demonstrated, the language of love utilised by the late eighteenth century mood of ‘sensibility’ provided the literary vehicle for men such as Whitbread to express themselves without emotional constraint.[75] The volume and intensity of correspondence written by Whitbread shows how these sensibilities encouraged a super-charged prose, a trend wholly supported by the ‘proliferation of literature’,

[74] BRO, W1/6594 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 15 December 1787. The couple were married at Fallodon, Northumbria on 26 January 1788. The bride and groom were almost alone in the church and due to the long distance from Bedfordshire no members of the Whitbread family attended.

[75] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.8.

which argues Vickery, glamorised the 'romantic experience'.[76] As Holloway has shown, this was seen in the intensity of language utilised by lovers in written declarations of love sent prior to a marriage taking place.[77] Whitbread excelled in this heady approach to love: 'I wish to God I was not ashamed to cry, I could do it and most heartily too; but I repress my tears conscious of so many more substantial reasons for Joy than Sorrow.'[78] And in response to Elizabeth's enquiry: 'Are you sure you shall return in the same mind?' Whitbread responded:

> You may now say You are convinced that my Affection for you will be tenfold if possible on my return. Think'st thou the Theme intoxicates my pen? Am I too warm? – too warm I cannot be. I loved You much but now I love You more.[79]

In this way, descriptions of everyday events took second place to pronouncements of love and despair and Whitbread's words were consistent with the tendency for men's love letters to be unconstrained by conventions of modesty, allowing lengthy rumination about the nature of his passion. Making his case, Whitbread declared: 'A Man can only write upon those subjects which are uppermost in his Mind, & as Eliza Grey is in possession of this Man's head & Heart, therefore Eliza Grey must be the theme even when he writes to herself.'[80]

Courtship letters, Holloway has shown, were key to confirming the suitor's seriousness of purpose and the possession of an appropriate level of education: they also allowed tentative discussion of the practicalities of married life together.[81] Like many men, Whitbread quoted poetry in his letters often omitting the source of his chosen lines to serve as a way of flattering Elizabeth by presuming her knowledge of the author. Typically, he wrote: '*Where'en I go, whatever Realms I see, My Heart untrasselled turns to thee, Still to my Bessy turns with ceaseless pain & drags at each remove a lengthening Chain.*'[82] The 'role of romantic verse', demonstrates Holloway, 'was key to masculine wooing. It enabled men to set

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[76] Vickery, *Gentleman's Daughter,* p.41. Holloway gives examples of such works: Eliza Haywood's *Love in Excess* (1719-20), Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie, ou la nouvelle Heloise* (1761), Wolfgang von Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.2.
[77] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.57.
[78] BRO, W1/6546 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 6 May 1787.
[79] BRO, W1/6555 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 16 June 1787.
[80] BRO, W1/6561 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 3 July 1787.
[81] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.60.
[82] BRO, W1/6546 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 6 May 1787. Whitbread replaces the word 'brother' with 'Bessy' in an extract by Edward Young.

themselves apart from competing suitors by showcasing their education and refinement'.[83] Similarly, the presenting of luxury gifts could provide a gentleman with a way to emphasise his status, anticipating the situation in which they could expect to live once married. On his return from Europe, Whitbread gave Elizabeth a fur muff made from sable skins, thus emphasising his good taste, social standing and the ability to provide her with all the trappings of fashionable society.[84]

The manner in which Whitbread expressed his love to Elizabeth through words and tokens, though excessive to modern tastes, indicates his intention to leave her in no doubt as to his sincerity and dependability as a future husband. His behaviour illustrated those aspects of masculinity such as honesty and openness which he wished to demonstrate to wider society and make known in the transition to the married state where, Shepard stresses, an even 'greater claim to trustworthiness' was expected.[85] In effect, Whitbread's strategy of amorous bombardment was a method of both reinforcing his own honourable character and a form of proof that he would be an honest and direct husband. 'I believe I must tell you what Nesfield say[s] I am famous for doing, the naked Truth, it is like yourself, what I esteem, value & love most in the World.'[86] Whitbread's readiness to enter the married state was summed up by his companion Tom Monson: 'Sam [is] already considering himself as a Sober, Steady married man … He is a very good good Fellow & richly reserves all the Happiness that is in Store for him and Madam Curl'd Lip.'[87]

Whitbread's tendency to frustration and impetuosity frequently battled with bouts of melancholy and despair, characteristics he jokingly described to Elizabeth as embodied in the two personas 'Sam and Sad'.[88] Whilst men could legitimately share the sighing, sleeplessness and dreaming as physical symptoms of love, it was during the course of this highly charged correspondence that a real sense of Whitbread's vulnerability to feelings of anxiety and paranoia became apparent, often triggered by the lack of a highly anticipated letter from Elizabeth. Unconvinced by the vagaries of the postal service, he expounded: 'I cannot reconcile myself to the

[83] Holloway, *Game of Love,* p.41.
[84] Despite sister Mary pronouncing 'No such furs are to be bought', Whitbread went ahead with his gift. BRO, W1/6586, Samuel Whitbread to Elizabeth Grey, 29 November 1787.
[85] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood,* p.73.
[86] BRO, W1/6550 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 22 May 1787.
[87] BRO, W1/ 6605 Tom Monson to Punch, 31 December 1787. Whitbread also makes affectionate references to Elizabeth's 'curl'd lip'.
[88] BRO, W1/6550 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 23 May 1787.

Idea of not hearing from you for so long … but I am an over anxious fool.'[89] Subsequently in receipt of a letter, he declared: 'these troublesome companions are now replaced by Confidence and Joy.'[90] The episode is illustrative of Whitbread's uneasy relationship with emotional stability and the influence of Elizabeth's actions and words on his equilibrium. In fact, there are numerous occasions when the desperate and submissive nature of his letters must have caused Elizabeth deep concern with such abandonment of composure suggesting a man living on the edge and conceivably viewed by his intended as both unappealing and unmanly. Typically, he wrote: 'The letter I wrote was the impression of my Mind & Heart … Do not scold me for anything I have said. You will annihilate me.'[91]

Constantly aware of the precarious balance between happiness and despondency which dogged his daily equilibrium, Whitbread attempted to reassure: 'You know that I dislike to be unmasked … But good humour is a disguise so essential to the happiness of Life; strip't of that Ornament everyone appears so horrid and disgusting.'[92] Ultimately, Whitbread presented himself as a man worthy of Elizabeth's affection by appealing to her as an equal. His words revealed progressive thoughts on friendship and equality in marriage and a certainty that only with these foundations in place could conjugal happiness be assured:

> Do be tenacious of the title I have given you of First Friend; you are so, & deservedly too. I shall derive honour & Pleasure for having placed it in so good hands & thank you for your ready acceptance of it. I claim the same distinction from you & am sure you will allow it me.[93]

By the time of his marriage to Elizabeth in 1788, Whitbread was already sensitive to the construction of his own masculinity within the privacy of his relationship, the identity of the public facing man was soon to follow. Building on the advantages of an Eton education and overseas travel he seized the opportunity to combine all the benefits of a man married into aristocratic society with the advantages of possessing considerable wealth.[94] However, it was not merely amongst a narrow elite that Whitbread now wished to impress, his ambition was to create the superior reputation of a 'public man' worthy of attention and respect. As

[89] BRO, W1/6559 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 28 June 1787.
[90] BRO, W1/6562 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 8 July 1787.
[91] BRO, W1/6560 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 30 June 1787.
[92] BRO, W1/6563 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 13 July 1787.
[93] BRO, W1/6550 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 23 May 1787.
[94] The continued success of the brewing business ensured a stream of income only dreamt of by most in his circle. See Footnote 9 for details of the Whitbread finances.

such, Whitbread set out to present himself in a style befitting a young man of sound classical knowledge and worldly experience but with an eye to much wider appeal.

The Man of 'Fair Fame'

This section considers how the private and emotional masculinity displayed by Whitbread in his earlier years was superseded by a public facing manliness and emerging fame which emphasised the masculine values of honesty, responsibility and fairness. The evidence shows how Whitbread created an image of superior manliness not merely through the careful honing of personal style but also by setting himself apart in his lifelong endeavour to improve the lives of those less fortunate than himself. In this sense, Whitbread's private values influenced his public actions and characterised him as a man whose hard-working 'independence' was, explains Matthew McCormack, expressed in a 'sturdiness and directness of demeanour' which promoted a 'plain model of manliness emphasising sincerity and straightforwardness'.[95]

It is useful to begin by reconsidering the idea of the 'public man' in eighteenth-century politics and how that concept relates to ideas of masculinity. The term, argues McCormack, suggested 'men of a certain station whose destiny it was to serve the public good'.[96] Such men were prominent and open to comment ensuring that masculinities were 'central to the conduct of politics, and political culture was a prominent site in the construction of masculinities themselves'. ''Masculinity', continues McCormack, 'was not merely relevant to politics because it was usually men who happened to be doing it': but the way men chose to present themselves, the joint values adopted over time and the relationship between those who were accepted and those who were not had huge ramifications for those in the public eye - as Whitbread would discover.[97] From the late 1770's, attention became focused on the competency of the British elite and the inappropriateness of rakish, irresponsible behaviour on the public good and this created an expectation that elite men 'be virtuous in both their public and private lives … the private lives of public figures … ever more important'.[98] Public men, stresses McCormack, were

[95] McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2005), p.2.
[96] McCormack, 'Introduction' to *Public Men,* p.3.
[97] McCormack, 'Introduction' to *Public Men,* pp.4-5.
[98] M. McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender,* p.46. A letter from a Captain Graham Moore, R. N. to Thomas Creevey in July 1806 indicates a general awareness of the importance of this change. The Captain wrote: 'I have long ceased to be very sangwine in my expectation with regard to the conduct of public men, yet I have high hopes that we shall see a manly, decided line of conduct adopted by

'increasingly judged in terms of their personal qualities and habits … a man's political persona was impossible to separate from the personal and vice versa'.[99] Whitbread considered this transition with reference to the flamboyant public persona of Charles James Fox: 'I am fully aware of the apathy of the Publick and of their indifference towards the proceedings of the House of Commons, and of their Distrust of all Publick Men; and I cannot but agree with you that poor Fox did overset the Publick opinion with regard to Statesmen.'[100] Where parliament had throughout the eighteenth century led the creation of a 'celebrity culture' encouraged by a vibrant entertainment and print culture, its inhabitants and their behaviour now became the focus of far greater scrutiny.[101] Whitbread's arrival on the public stage in the last decade of the eighteenth century coincided with these changing views. It is possible therefore to view him as someone whose masculinity represented the 'turn' from rejected models of excess, hypocrisy and effeminacy to the 'manly' virtues of responsibility, diligence and integrity.[102]

Whitbread was well aware of the importance of public image and this received his careful consideration. McCormack has shown how all aspects of a gentleman's person which could be observed by the general public – 'dress, speech, and manners' required not only 'time and money' but an awareness that these things really mattered.[103] Perhaps recalling impressions of Frederick the Great, he firmly believed that the way a man presented himself in public constituted the outward expression of the inner person. In a letter to Elizabeth, he wrote: 'You talk to me very often upon my Criticism in dress, but You know it is said; ''that the apparel oft bespeaks the Man''. I believe that true.'[104] The selection of an elaborate waistcoat by Elizabeth was met with a degree of mutual admiration regarding matters of dress and combined with a satisfaction that in the eyes of the world they

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the present Muphties.' H. Maxwell (Ed.), *The Creevey Papers*: *A Selection from the Correspondence & Diaries of the late Thomas Creevey, M.P.* in Two Volumes, Vol I, p.78.

[99] McCormack, *Public Men*, p.4.

[100] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol I, p. 92. Stella Tillyard describes Fox's flamboyant style: 'His blue wigs, red shoes, extravagant gambling, determined womanising, brilliant speeches and overwhelming charm were the stuff of speculation and gossip for decades.' S. Tillyard, 'Celebrity in 18th-Century London', *History Today,* 55.6 (2005), p.26.

[101] E. Barry, 'From Epitaph to obituary: Death and celebrity in eighteenth- century British culture', *International Journal of Cultural Studies,* 11.3 (2008), pp.265-266.

[102] Samuel Whitbread II entered the House of Commons in 1790 as Member for Bedford, the seat he would hold as a committed Whig for twenty- five years.

[103] McCormack, *Citizenship and Gender,* p.47.

[104] BRO, W1/6574 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 31 August 1787.

were a good match: 'You want another compliment & only call me a Beau, that I may tell You are a Belle.'[105]

Appearances were therefore key to establishing an influential footing in public life and Whitbread's correspondence reveals a keen interest in the creation of an appearance which was both distinctive and a reflection of affluence, status and capacity for business. 'Clothing', argues David Kuchta, 'put power in plain view … enacting the articulation, negotiation and personalisation of power.'[106] With his connections to both aristocratic society and middle-class commerce, Whitbread favoured the darker and simpler fashions which were becoming popular at the end of the eighteenth century, a preference for sartorial modesty which can be attributed to the increasing acceptance of bourgeois moral virtues - industry, thrift and sobriety. Portraits show Whitbread in relaxed pose with his thick auburn hair cropped short, wearing plain quasi-military apparel with dark coloured riding jacket matched with white or cream breeches and tall 'Wellington' leather boots. This sober yet smart style of dress was in keeping with the notion that tailored garments emphasised the manly form and, according to McCormack, 'bestow[ed] self-confidence and social status upon the wearer'. Moreover, he argues, such attire served to reinforce the difference between men and women with 'outward signs of male gender' taking on 'renewed significance in a period when political citizenship was increasingly aligned with masculinity'.[107]

[105] BRO, W1/6577 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 11 September 1787.
[106] D. Kuchta, The *Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England 1550-1850* (Berkeley, 2002), p.7.
[107] M. McCormack, 'Boots, material culture and Georgian masculinities', *Social History,* 42.4 (2017), pp.464, 470.

FIGURE 9 SAMUEL WHITBREAD BY SAMUEL REYNOLDS, AFTER JOHN OPIE MEZZOTINT, 1804 (NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY)

In this way, Whitbread demonstrated an awareness of wishing to exhibit a strong masculine appeal which would not only excite Elizabeth's admiration, but also give him the edge in those public spaces which contained both men and women. Indeed, many women considered Whitbread very attractive. Considering his appeal, he wrote:

> I find myself not too fat, nor too thin, & hope to return precisely what you would wish & escape all abuse. My hair is now fixed, must remain upon my head as long as it is possible to hang on; & I must exhibit all over my head that respectable & silvery appearance of Age.[108]

The reference to greying hair indicates Whitbread's desire not only to exhibit a suggestion of gravitas which would ensure he was taken seriously in debate, but also that he favoured the trend towards a more natural manliness distinct from

[108] BRO, W1/6562 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 8 July 1787. Whitbread alludes to Elizabeth's aversion to his wearing a brown 'Scratch' or wig. Wigs and powdered hair were increasingly seen as ostentatious, costly and redolent of the '*habit à la francaise'.* Colley, *Britons,* p.187.

effeminacy and foppishness.[109] Thus, ostentatious extravagance was rebuked in favour of a subdued and functional attire which encouraged a business-like approach to public life.[110] Variously described as both 'vain and rough', notes Rapp, middle-class gentility as championed by Whitbread was authentic, natural and self-made, rather than the product of artificial social institutions.[111]

Awareness of changing tastes was not only restricted to the adoption of an appropriate dress code, but was to be found with even greater expression in the establishment of a home where both affluence and authority could be showcased. The creation of a country seat was a key priority in Whitbread's arrival as 'public man' and the extensive rebuilding and refurbishment of Southill Park in Bedfordshire represented a vital component in the establishment of a manly superiority and reputation. The idea of the country house as the dominant focal point and 'radiator of authority', remarks Vickery, was not of course an eighteenth-century invention.[112] However, the triumph of 'taste' as a means of assessing interiors, objects and furnishings gained real momentum during the period and denoted 'a whole field of discrimination'.[113] 'Architecture', opines Vickery, 'was the most expensive Georgian taste' with decoration and contents of a house projecting the culture and learning of its occupants. It was also predominantly masculine, a field almost totally dominated by men pursuing those professions associated with design and luxury.[114] From his earliest discussions with Elizabeth on their future life, Whitbread showed a practical involvement in both the restructuring and furnishing of the home:

> If my taste is not the same as yours, you must put up with it … Upon this plan I have proceeded thinking it a most wise one, & a little degree of taste is I think always more an equivalent for the absence of finery.[115]

Nonetheless, in the years following his father's death and taking control of a vast fortune, Whitbread spared no expense in ensuring his country seat epitomised

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[109] Kuchta expands: 'Just as early eighteenth-century commentators saw the Restoration as a reign of "luxury and effeminacy", early nineteenth-century commentators looked through their own period of male sartorial reform to view the immediate past, for good or bad, as a "dandified and effeminate" age.' *Three-Piece Suit,* p.165.

[110] 'Great Britain', explains Colley, was 'one of the first European nations in which this shift in style from peacock male to sombre man of action became apparent'. *Britons,* p.187.

[111] D. Rapp, 'The Left-Wing Whigs: Whitbread, the Mountain and Reform. 1809-1815, *Journal of British Studies,* 21.2 (1982), p.41.

[112] A. Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (New Haven and London, 2010), p.132.

[113] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors,* p.18.

[114] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors,* pp.129, 130.

[115] BRO, W1/6597 Samuel Whitbread II to Elizabeth Grey, 22 December 1787.

both 'Regency light and good living'.[116] In the design, rebuilding and furnishing of Southill, Whitbread created a home which fulfilled his passion for artistic beauty, but also exuded the wealth, status and responsibility which came with it. The house represented the outward expression of Whitbread's desire to establish a reputation as a man not only of clear means but also public responsibility and local influence. In essence, Southill became the base from which he could exhibit his true self and where the people of Bedfordshire could admire the expression of status.[117] In this regard, Whitbread was known as ''the driving Whitbread'', a nod to the County's admiration of his 'drive' and commitment to the community.[118] When relieved of 'the usual occupation of hanging Mad Dogs, Swearing Bastards, convicting poachers and such like country performances', Whitbread opened up his home to friends in the Whig circle.[119] On one such visit, Thomas Creevey reported:

> We leave Whitbread's for London, having spent a very happy time at Southill, and with a most firm conviction that Whitbread – tho' rough in his manners – tho' entirely destitute of all taste or talent for conversation … is a man of the very strictest integrity, with the most generous and feeling heart.[120]

Success in public life however required much more than the effects of appearance. From the outset, the vital tenets on which Whitbread based his public masculinity were fairness, opportunity and justice for all: ideals firmly rooted in the Whig liberal tradition. This sense of political responsibility formed the bedrock of his public persona and significantly shaped the way he was viewed by others. Where Whitbread's father, with all the social confidence of a self-made man, was wary of political change, the educated son, sensitive to the subtleties of class and conscious of his origins, actively sought change understanding that the removal of discrimination and stigma was impossible without it. Reform of parliament, the removal of corruption, support for the disadvantaged and an opposition to the 'over mighty' were at the centre of Whitbread's belief in the uphill struggle towards a

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[116] R. Wilson and A. Mackley, *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House 1660-1880* (London and New York, 2000), p.324.

[117] Ironically, the idea of exhibiting one's wealth to the general public was seen as essential in avoiding charges of hypocrisy. So, 'between 1795 and 1801 – a period marked at either end by two of the most severe outbreaks of food rioting in England during the French Wars', Whitbread spent '£54,000 on rebuilding Southill (a house which had already cost £85,000 to buy) without apparent fear of criticism and even with some expectation of local approval'. Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Power,* p.15.

[118] A. Cirket (Ed.), *Samuel Whitbread's Notebooks 1810-11, 1813-14* (Bedford, 1971), p.8.

[119] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers*, Vol. I, p.90.

[120] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers*, Vol. I, p.110.

better society.[121] As a local Justice his sympathy for the plight of the lower orders was seen in his fair treatment of cases. One observer remarked: 'Such was his reputation … for justice tempered with honesty and kindness that many from beyond these arbitrary boundaries turned to him, with what perhaps other justices would have thought trivial matters.'[122] His friend and fellow Whig Thomas Creevey captured the theme: 'Do then Whitbread lend yourself to this poor insulted country and its constitution; if fame is your object I am sure it is the road to it and if you are in pursuit of power I do from my very soul believe it is the only road to it also'. With reflection, Whitbread answered: 'My object certainly is fair Fame. Neither Place nor Power I hope.'[123] The sense of wishing to acquire a lasting memory in people's minds gained through actions rather than position is significant as it exemplified an interpretation of fame reminiscent of classical thought which, Stella Tillyard argues, valued 'recognition and achievement' but also 'an unearthly quality that went along with worldliness, a touch of immortality, of death, remembrance and a place in history'.[124] In this way, fame as part of the new Romantic ideology was no longer a corollary of social status but available to all, and by the end of the eighteenth century could 'take as its exemplar the self-made man' personified in Napoleon Bonaparte himself.[125] This shift in view was a spur to social mobility and a more democratically structured society relevant to both the gentleman and the tradesman. In England, Whitbread, strong admirer of the French leader, led the way in bringing both types of men into the same cultural sphere, the growing urban landscape bringing people ever closer to political debate and the issues of reform he so keenly pursued.

The 'Bluff' Englishman

The following section addresses Samuel Whitbread's relationship with reputation and celebrity, the manner in which he expressed his masculinity in the public sphere, and the ways in which that persona was interpreted by the people who encountered him. It was not only Whitbread's role as a proactive, brusque and vocal

[121] Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Power,* p.14.
[122] Cirket, *Notebook*s, p.7. Whitbread dealt with a wide variety of cases – assault, sheep-stealing, cases of bastardy, incompatibilities between master and servant, non- payment of wages and drunkenness. p.20.
[123] Fulford, *Samuel Whitbread,* p.200. Fulford dates the correspondence to around 1808 but does not provide a traceable reference. In the same year, Whitbread remarked to Creevey that he hoped his latest [unidentified] 'Parliamentary Campaign was not injurious to my Fame'. Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol.1, p.91.
[124] Tillyard, 'Celebrity in 18th-Century London', p.22.
[125] Barry, 'Epitaph to Obituary', p.261.

businessman and parliamentarian which contributed to the 'bluff' stereotype which had its origins at this time but also the contentious political causes he chose to pursue. These ensured that a high degree of fame and interest in him *as a man* was inevitable. This section explores his interaction with those causes, the methods of attack he chose to employ, giving us a greater understanding of Whitbread's 'public' reputation and enlightening our understanding of his masculine character both in and out of Parliament. A consideration of fresh evidence in the form of anonymous letters reveals a public preoccupation with Whitbread as a 'celebrity' with distinctive masculine style exposed to extremes of admiration and censure from both sexes.

Whitbread's high-profile presence in Parliament was crucial to his own perception of himself as an effective and influential elite man and he was well aware that the causes he championed were considered unpalatable by many. Advocacy of major reform to the Poor Laws, a passion for the establishment of universal education and relentless attacks on the louche behaviours of the Duke of York and Prince Regent were among the political pressures which Whitbread viewed as essential to the improvement of English society. Never one to shy away from controversy Whitbread found that the wider public arena was the space in which to find recognition and support: 'Whilst I have a seat in Parliament, and can obtain a hearing, I cannot help proceeding as if I thought the World would give me credit for the Purity of my Motives.'[126]

The first occasion to raise Whitbread's public profile to the level of 'fame' in this way was his leading role in the 1806 impeachment of Henry Dundas, Lord Melville.[127] In broad terms, Whitbread's attack on Melville can be viewed not merely as a challenge against the embezzlement of public money, a practice which had been the subject of censure since John Wilkes's tirades against 'Old Corruption', but significantly represented the championing of the very virtues his father had advocated in the creation of his brewing empire – 'generosity, piety, lack of ostentation [and] honest industry'. Moreover, adds Deuchar, Whitbread, senior had acquired his status not through the idle misappropriation of the public purse but by hard work and 'fair trade only'.[128] In this way, Whitbread styled his public-facing masculinity with the representative status of someone who genuinely spoke on

[126] Samuel Whitbread to Thomas Creevey, 20 December 1808 in Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* p.92.
[127] In 1805 Henry Dundas, Lord Melville and First Lord of the Admiralty was accused of misappropriating public funds during his tenure as Lord of the Admiralty. Eventually acquitted, he never held office again.
[128] Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Power,* pp.12-13.

behalf of the British people. Moreover, the high level of publicity surrounding the trial elevated Whitbread's public profile to national prominence and initiated the long-standing reputation of him as the tenacious 'bluff' Englishman, utterly relentless in his pursuit of a straight answer and someone who was both accessible and ordinary. 'English commentators', recalls Paul Langford, 'thought he personified the national character, describing him as ''quite English in plainness and directness to the subject'''. In addition, William Hazlitt considered that Whitbread '''spoke point-blank what he thought, and his heart was in his broad, honest, English face … he was the representative of the spontaneous, unsophisticated sense of the English people on public men and public measures'''.[129] Hence, in his discussion of English characteristics during the period, Langford instinctively holds up Whitbread as:

> The epitome of the national character …the simple manners, sometimes abrupt but always kind, - the sturdy, honesty, sometimes rough, but always consistent, - the shrewd penetration, ever active, but ever candid, - the boldness of spirit, sometimes violent but always steady; - which altogether have ever been considered as the infallible marks of a genuine Englishman.[130]

The appearance of Whitbread on the front benches during the trial prompted a widespread public interest not only in the case itself but also in his own distinctive performance. As a man who had risen to elite status from outside the usual aristocratic circles, Whitbread's sudden fame held fascination for the public. On the first of two visits to Parliament Mary Preston of Grosvenor Street, London captured the essence of Whitbread's plain speaking:

> All the Town is running to L[or]d Melville's trial, the spectacle as yet the only amusement. Mr Whitbread's 4 hours speech was not thought very interesting, few flowers of rhetoric being intertwined with dull calculation & some thought a little witty abuse might have enlivened his oratory.[131]

Three weeks later, compelled to attend again, she considered herself to be much entertained, though not 'vastly charmed with Mr Whitbread's eloquence'.[132] Mary's comments show that unlike the classically inspired oratory of grandees such as Fox

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[129] P. Langford, *Englishness Identified: manners and character, 1650-1850* (Oxford, 2000), p. 211.
[130] Langford, *Englishness Identified,* p.122. Langford quotes The Autobiography of William Jerdun, (London, 1852-3).
[131] Norfolk, Record Office (NRO), WGN 1/5/38 Mary Preston to William Gunn, 1 May 1806.
[132] NRO, WGN 1/5/39 Mary Preston to William Gunn, 26 May 1806.

and Burke, Whitbread favoured a blunter less wordy approach to business which was yet to receive the approval of a public who expected their politicians to deliver a theatrical performance. It was Whitbread's plain and practical style of speaking, first observed at the trial, which has served to perpetuate the 'bluff' stereotype, in comparison to the method of men such as William Windham who continued to use grandiose rhetoric to support their cause. Whitbread himself remained fully aware of the impact of his public appearances and worried that his speeches fell short of expectation. Seeking Creevey's opinion, he wrote:

> I ... believe that you are interested in my Reputation. I acknowledge that in the course of the last Session of Parliament, I may have dwelt too much and too often upon topicks that are not generally interesting, because they are not generally understood, and I am quite aware that I may have spoken both too often and too much.[133]

The public interest sparked by Whitbread's involvement in the Melville trial marked the beginning of an engagement by the general populace with Whitbread as a male 'celebrity'.[134] In this context, 'celebrity status', explains Tillyard, 'was born at the moment private life became a tradeable public commodity. If fame depended on posthumous memory and reputation, celebrity was transient and febrile.'[135] In this context, the risks of scandal were well-known. Observing Whitbread from the public gallery, one female admirer sought to arrange an assignation:

> A length of time has gone since I first felt a desire for your acquaintance. I can no longer resist making known my sentiments to you, if ever I am so favoured as to cultivate an intimacy, I shall consider myself the most fortunate Woman, for both our sakes caution is necessary, for you most particularly which is my first object.[136]

The sensation of the Melville trial and Whitbread's passionate role in the prosecution ensured that from this point no aspects of his personal style were beyond comment and this engagement was characterised by a period of strong opinions on his actions, both public *and* private, all fuelled by the drama of the

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[133] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol.1, p.91.
[134] Maxwell states 'No public man was ever better beloved than Fox on account of his private qualities'. Fox enjoyed the 'passionate affection, approaching to idolatry, which was freely given'. *Creevey Papers,* Vol.1, p.79.
[135] Tillyard, 'Celebrity in 18th- Century London', p.25.
[136] BRO W1/700/16/32 Anonymous woman to Samuel Whitbread II: has attended the whole of Melville's trial and seeks to make an assignation [Undated].

proceedings. A negative effect of Whitbread's rise to national prominence through the Melville trial was a growth in jokes about his brewing background, in particular a stream of satirical drawings which frequently portrayed him as a beer barrel, ridiculed by onlookers. Indeed, Whitbread's zealous approach to politics was often compared with the properties of beer itself. One commentator at the impeachment described how '"Mr Whitbread ran about, foaming like one of his own butts of porter, in high fermentation, and he continued… in froth, spleen, effervescence and vanity, during the trial"'.[137] In this sense, Whitbread's credibility as an elite public man was frequently undermined by his association with trade and work.

FIGURE 10 'THE WORKING OF THE PROPHECIES OF SAMUEL THE PROPHET OR THE BREWER SUFFOCATED IN HIS OWN WORK TUB', ENGRAVING BY S. W FORES, 12 NOVEMBER 1813 (BRITISH MUSEUM)

The Melville trial was also the first occasion to prompt anonymous correspondence frequently not directly related to Whitbread's actions in court but

[137] Deuchar, *Paintings, Politics and Porter,* p.13. Deuchar quotes *A Letter to His Majesty. The Bandogs: or Remarks on the Managers against W. Hastings Esq. and Lord Melville,* 1807, p.12.

specifically towards the celebrated person, now widely considered public property. Thus, Whitbread's political masculinity became the focus of targeted anger at the private man from a range of sources, the tone ranging from admiration for his bold and brave performance in challenging the actions of a corrupt Minister to expressions of disgust at the affrontery of a mere 'brewer' in considering himself equal to the task. Whilst the very nature of an anonymous letter denies ownership, the frequent use of male pseudonyms suggests that the worst tirades of criticism were probably levelled by male observers from the lower orders, men who viewed Whitbread's rise to success with envy and suspicion. A typically abusive letter rebuked:

> Oh Miserable Man – How has this mighty business at last ended, how must your manly heart swell, at the complete acquittal of Lord Melville … What shameful work, what disgraceful toil. Blush – for heaven's sake blush at ever having uttered such words – so unbecoming of a Gentleman or any person possessing the smallest spark of liberality or humanity … The House of Commons is Disgraced – And who has been the means of it – why the sapient Mr Whitbread. Oh miserable Man – oh disgraced, & disgraceful Brewer.[138]

A *Eulogy to Samuel Whitbread* struck a more positive note:

> Hail! generous Whitbread, who stood firm and bold, Impeaching Plunderers of the Public Gold! The honest Muse, exhalting hears thy praise, The just applause thy grateful Country pays. Unites her Pray'rs for Him, who nobly great, Rose a firm Pillar midst a sinking State! Who giant strength like Hercules of yore, Did, what the Nation ne'er could do before! Snapp'd the strong Links of Foul Corruption Chain And sent, (brave deed), a Scotsman home again![139]

Both these letters indicate an interest in Whitbread the man, the first angry at his rise to wealth and fame, the second in awe of his capabilities and achievements.

The considerable number of letters containing similar material suggest that this form of communication dogged Whitbread throughout his public life and it is likely that over time their unpleasant contents did affect the way in which he felt about himself as a man. The level of vitriol aimed at Whitbread seems excessive

[138] BRO, W1/7000/16/19 Anonymous letter to Samuel Whitbread II, 13 June 1806.
[139] BRO, W1/5301 Anonymous Eulogy to Samuel Whitbread II, 1805.

even by modern standards and the retention of such letters indicates that he did not disregard their message.[140] A typical admonishment from 'John Bull', ostensibly speaking on behalf of the public, read:

> Sir, The severe closing Mr Canning gave you on Friday has made your backside so sore, & tender that I suppose you will not be able to take your Seat, or open your Mouth for some Time. The public say your Conduct in the House in the present dangerous state of the Country is shameful & scandalous & ought to be corrected … and prove you an Enemy to your Country and a Traitor to your King.[141]

The worst examples therefore not only called into question Whitbread's right as a 'brewer' to count himself amongst the elite, but also his identity as a loyal Englishman. Another struck a more personal and sinister note:

> The reason of my [letter] you [k]now is to express the horror & Detestation with your whole political conduct of late has inspired in the minds of the honest & impartial man, & particularly the violence & intemperance which so strongly marked you in the debate … I confess I have looked over you with a jealous & suspicious Eye – You certainly forget yourself and your origins in the most extraordinary manner. We are not yet reduced to bear particularly a man taken from the dregs of a brewery for a leader ... You have talents Mr Whitbread, but they are sunk in a load of rubbish, that they won't profit you. You wish to raise yourself from your original nothingness, but you are after all but <u>a brewer</u>, & we do not sufficiently like your present mixture … crammed down our throats.[142]

At its worst, masculine aggression towards Whitbread contained the threat of murder:

> Sir, beware how you trifle with my feelings I am a man and you shall know it I will be revenged Sir and what manner it lies with you to determine. Either

[140] Whitbread was not alone in being targeted; a letter from Lord Castlereagh indicated that he too had received malicious correspondence. BRO, W1/5594 Lord Castlereagh to Samuel Whitbread II, 19 February 1809.
[141] BRO, W1/4193 Anonymous letter to Samuel Whitbread from *John Bull:* abusive letter on Samuel Whitbread's speech on peace, 12 April 1808.
[142] BRO, W1/2537 Anonymous letter abusing conduct of Samuel Whitbread in Parliament, 16 April 1812.

> meet me tomorrow (at Hide Park [sic] in the morn) or I will find a more certain means of accomplishing your destruction. I am Determined.[143]

If Whitbread's masculine persona was frequently rejected by anonymous male observers, the opposite was true of those who appreciated his chivalric interest in the plight of the weak. Michèle Cohen has shown how the revival of noble ideals of chivalry in the second half of the eighteenth century contributed to doubts over the cultural practices of 'politeness' and 'sensibility' which were increasingly seen as insincere, effete and unmanly. 'Chivalry', argues Cohen, 'provided a vocabulary for refashioning the gentleman as masculine, integrating national identity with enlightenment notions of progress and civilisation' and employed 'universal ideals such as generosity, justice and courage.'[144] In this context, women frequently applied to Whitbread seeking his help in difficult situations. One 'Much Oppressed Female' wrote:

> Flattered by your known Goodness and Humanity, I have ventured to solicit your powerful Interest for the cause you have so feelingly at times have deplored. Namely that of the detention of the Unfortunate Prisoners of War in France, at the same time I beg leave Honourable Sir to return my most grateful thanks for your attention to this subject last week, and earnestly implore that something may be done of their release before the conclusion of this Session.[145]

It was Whitbread's role in supporting Caroline, Princess of Wales following accusations and rejection by her husband, the Prince Regent which prompted a wave of admiration for his courage in leading the campaign to protect her honour. In direct contrast to the Prince's public image, Whitbread appeared the epitome of those masculine values reminiscent of chivalry and honour toward the fairer sex, the uxorious nature of his own marriage well-known. His opposition to a Prince, publicly reviled as debauched and spendthrift, fuelled the view that a man's reputation was inextricably linked to the proper performance of his duty in protecting his wife and behaving respectably. Louise Carter has demonstrated that a man's ability to preside over a well-run and congenial family home was not merely a matter for those concerned but failure to do so provided a strong 'indication of lack of adult

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[143] BRO, W1/3229 From the place of my abode, 4 March 1810.
[144] M Cohen, '"Manners" Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry and the Construction of Masculinity 1750-1830', *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (2005), p. 315. Cohen cites Richard Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance* (1762) as marking the shift in attitudes and interest towards chivalry.
[145] BRO, W1/2682 Anonymous 'Much Oppressed Female to SW', 1812.

character and manly responsibility'. Moreover, this was perceived to hold serious and direct implications for a man's ability to discharge his public duties effectively.[146] Motivated by a deep sense of personal outrage at the Princess's shabby treatment, Whitbread styled himself as Caroline's 'champion' advising her on the action she should take to restore her status and dignity as a member of the royal household. Where the Prince displayed everything that was odious and disreputable in a man, Whitbread presented himself with straightforward honesty and unaffected candour – strong and remarkable features which upheld the notion that 'character rather than status was the best judge of a man's worth, and that all areas of a man's life should be able to withstand public scrutiny'.[147] Public opinion concurred: 'Resolved that the Thanks of this Common Hall be given to S. Whitbread Esquire MP for his able Manly and persevering Conduct in Parliament in vindication of the injured honour of Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales.'[148] Another correspondent went further:

> Your admirable exertions on behalf of the much injured Princess of Wales demand the warmest acknowledgments …You have indeed proved yourself the "Prince of Justice" – Exalted Man! To you the Nation look for everything excellent, great and good![149]

Naturally, the Princess too expressed gratitude for Whitbread's assistance:

> I cannot omit longer assuring you of my gratified acknowledgement for all the Interest you have taken in the severe trials I have gone through, and I feel that I owe it entirely to your Integrity of Character, perseverance and wisdom, to be restored to that unimpeached and unblemished character to which I was entitled, by your Exertions and indefatigable Endeavours.[150]

In essence, Whitbread's efforts were widely praised for his success at raising the fortunes of a wronged and lonely woman but the episode prompted a growing preoccupation with the fragility of his own reputation and the damaging consequences of living in the public glare. Ultimately futile, his involvement with the abandoned Queen and the financial rescue of Drury Lane Theatre proved problematic and Whitbread struggled to find direction.[151] The following section seeks

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[146] L. Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial in the Queen Caroline Affair of 1820', *Gender and History,* 20.2 (2008), p.251.
[147] Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p.251.
[148] BRO, W1 2856 T N Williams, Clerk Community Hall, Woodthorpe, 2 April 1813.
[149] BRO, W1/2748 Anonymous letter of commendation to Samuel Whitbread, 1813.
[150] BRO, W1/2848 Caroline, Princess of Wales to Samuel Whitbread II, 11 April 1813.
[151] The philanthropic project with which Whitbread became most absorbed was the rebuilding of Drury Lane Theatre which had burnt to the ground in 1809.

ways of understanding how Whitbread's views of his own reputation as an elite man contributed to his final act of suicide.

Tragedy and Legacy

This section refocuses on Whitbread's preoccupation with masculine image, not now as an energetic young man entering the public sphere but one who was both physically ageing and disregarded as a political player. Where source material dating from the last months of Whitbread's life is limited, this discussion will approach the subject of Whitbread's fatal decline by considering what is known of his views on the ageing process discerned from earlier writing and how these views may have affected his approach to his own death. In addition, some reflection on the reactions of those around him and how cases of suicide amongst the elite were viewed in the early part of the nineteenth century provides a useful guide as to how Whitbread might have envisaged his own legacy. Where speculation is the method employed this will be in the spirit of offering fresh possibilities for scholarly consideration. The main aim of the section is to gain a greater understanding of how Whitbread viewed his masculine self as he conceived his own death.

When knowledge emerged in July 1815 that Whitbread had taken his own life, the shock of his loss was deeply felt. Correspondence between H. Bennet M.P. and Thomas Creevey captured the mood: ''It is with a heavy heart that I write to tell you that you have lost your friend Whitbread; and though I hardly know how to name it, yet I must add that he destroyed himself in a paroxysm of derangement from the aneurism in the brain. He had been for the last month in a low and irritable state.''[152] Explanation then, as now, was elusive. However, some reflection on how Whitbread might have reached this tragic point is significant to this study of elite masculinity as it provides an opportunity to explain which elements of his masculinity were vital to his own sense of himself as an elite man.

The final years of Whitbread's life represented not just a period of decline in his physical health but also a total disillusionment with his life as an influential member of the elite. Long criticised for his open admiration of Napoleon and his determined opposition to the war, any possibility of achieving the high office he craved diminished with successive changes of government and a hardening of

[152] H. Bennet to Thomas Creevey July 1815 in Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol.1, p.241.

policy.[153] As Whitbread's views became increasingly unpopular, the man who was once viewed as the epitome of Englishness was now cast as a virtual traitor. One anonymous letter from 'Jack Pitch & Jack Rope' railed:

> White Bread, What a damned infernal french rascal you are, your french heart will very soon be torn out … you who infest the nation with your vile parisian principles you are a thief a liar a scoundrel a coward, and what is worse you oppress the poor under a mask … [We] would as soon drink poison than a draught of Beer from your brewery … and wishing you a speedy transportation to wherever your bosom friend Bonny is.[154]

Further personal criticism followed, even death threats. Now, both his political stance *and* the success of his business were targeted: despite his staunch opposition to the legislation, the Brewery was attacked by Anti-Corn Law demonstrators. Whitbread retreated into a state of profound despair and paranoia. Convinced that ''the world will point and scoff at me… the populace will pull my house down'', he had in effect become a victim of his own obsession with public reputation.[155] In an era where physical attacks on public figures were common, there is no suggestion that Whitbread's experience was unusual in this respect but his words indicate a rapidly fading belief in himself as a man. Ultimately appalled by the heavy bloodshed at Waterloo and the abdication of the French leader, Whitbread summed up his position as he saw it: ''My public life is extinct …They are hissing at me … I am become an object of universal abhorrence''.[156]

[153] The assassination of Spencer Perceval in 1812 created space for the reactionary Tory government led by Lord Liverpool which had little tolerance for the progressive Whig principles held by Whitbread who had by then few allies in the House.
[154] BRO, W1/5655 Anonymous letter from *Jack Pitch & Jack Rope* to Samuel Whitbread II, 1812.
[155] Deuchar*, Paintings, Politics and Porter,* p.27.
[156] E. Lean, *The Napoleonists: A Study in Political Disafffection 1760-1960* (London, 1970), p. 108.

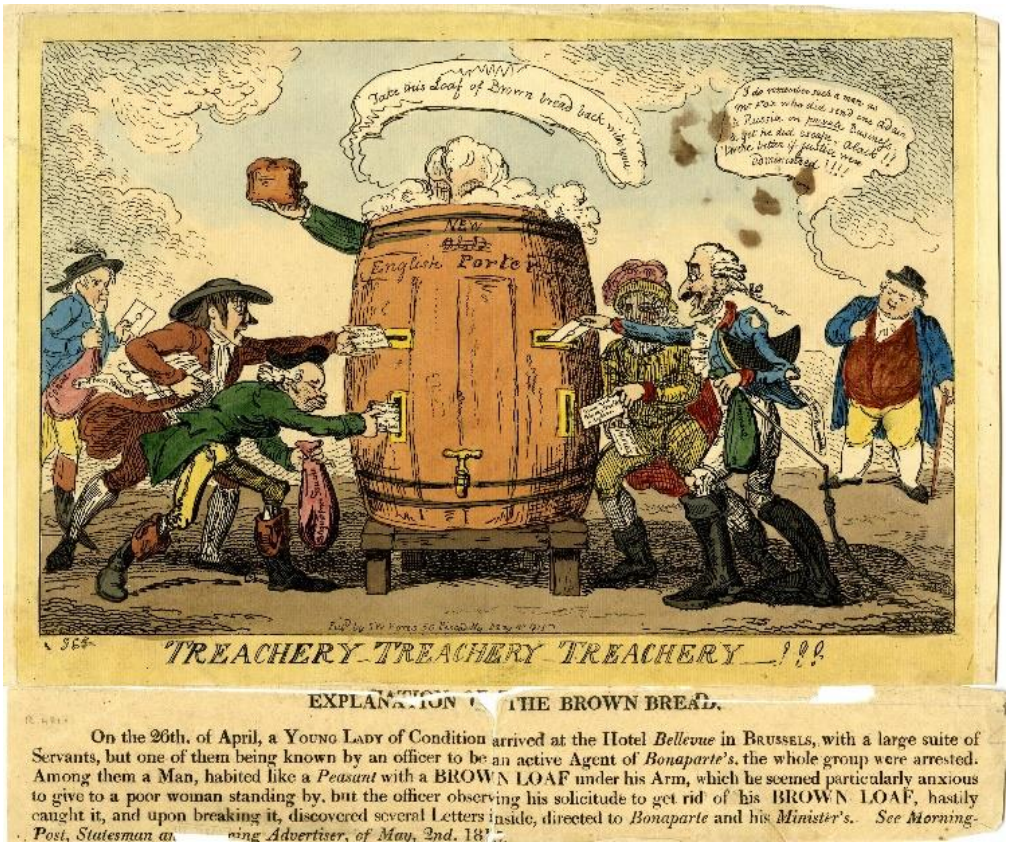

FIGURE 11 'TREACHERY, TREACHERY, TREACHERY!!!', ENGRAVING BY S W FORES, 10 MAY 1815 (BRITISH MUSEUM)

Feelings of persecution were compounded by issues of masculine self-image, a pre-occupation which assumed even greater significance in the final years of his life and deeply affected the way he felt about himself as an influential man worthy of respect. The striking handsome appearance, once so admired, was marred by a series of persistent and debilitating health problems all of which proved unresponsive to treatment and contributed to a deepening depression. At the age of fifty-one symptoms redolent of hydrocephalus: excessive weight gain, bloating and severe headaches were compounded with lassitude and insomnia, his moods oscillating wildly, his vanity offended.[157] No longer interested in the affairs of the day, an associate was curtly informed: "'Tell that fellow, who has come to embarrass me with *public business,* that I shall have nothing to say to him. *Public*

[157] Susannah Ottaway asserts that 'the age of sixty served as a particularly strong and common marker for entry into old age' in this period, but this was 'flexible and fluid … tempered … by differences according to social class and gender', it could be hastened by 'the individuality of the experience of aging'. S. Ottaway, *The decline of life: old age in eighteenth century England* (Cambridge, 2004), p.18.

business was once a concern in which I took part; but he knows my incapacity and that I have given it up''.'[158]

As the effects of illness took hold, Whitbread's physical appearance became unrecognisable, and for someone whose reputation and celebrity had been achieved through the deliberate presentation of a distinctive flamboyance in both dress and style, the realisation that he now bore little resemblance to his former self struck hard. Susannah Ottaway has shown that in the eighteenth century there was a strong association of old age with drastic physical decline and compromised health and this idea resonated strongly with Whitbread's view of his manly image.[159] Recalling his expressions of disgust at the appearances of Frederick the Great and Gustav of Sweden, it is possible to surmise how he might have considered his own bodily decline and its suitability for public display. In the weeks before his suicide, friends remarked on changes in Whitbread's demeanour: ''Sam looks and is very ill … I never saw him so low.'[160] It is probable, therefore that he was already weighing up the consequences of taking matters into his own hands and considering the manner in which such a death would be viewed.

The prevalence of death in all its forms, from the casualties of war to street riots, lynch mobs and public executions was an accepted part of life in late Georgian England and cases of suicide were much debated. Whitbread would have been well aware of the rising numbers of lapses into insanity and suicide amongst Members of Parliament from the late eighteenth century onwards, some in response to crazes such as Wertherism, others following a spiral of sentimental decline.[161] It is therefore useful to consider the concept of elite male suicide, as Whitbread would have understood it, and discover to what extent that discourse might have influenced his thoughts, actions and notions of his own legacy when ending his own life. In the early nineteenth century, explains Donna Andrew, the act of suicide was interpreted in two ways: *felo de se* meaning a 'conscious and wilful self-murder' or '*non compos mentis,* an unintended act which occurred when a person was deranged', even temporarily. A Christian burial was denied to those who committed the former,

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[158] F. Phippen, *An Authentic Account of the Late Mr Whitbread consisting of Facts and Anecdotes relating to the Latter Days and Death, Developing the Causes which led to that Deplorable Event.* (London, 1815), p.8.
[159] Ottaway, *The decline of life,* p.28.
[160] H. Bennet to T. Creevey, 5 July 1815 in J. Gore, *Creevey's Life and Times: A Further Selection from the Correspondence of Thomas Creevey* (London, undated), p.83.
[161]The phenomenon 'Rogues, Lunatics and Suicides' is described by R. Thorne in *History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790-1820* (London,1986), pp.329-332.

property was seized and the family shamed, and as a consequence virtually all suicidal deaths of ''great folk'' during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were declared 'lunatic' to avoid these problems.[162] However, as the 'popularity' of elite suicide increased, Andrew has argued, public opinion fixed on the idea that the act was a barometer of overindulgence, weakness of mind and general 'badness' associated with dissipated lifestyles and it was in this climate that Whitbread chose to die.[163] Writing over a century later, Herbert Maxwell, suggested that the frequency of suicide amongst public men at this time was the direct consequence of two social habits: 'hard drinking' fuelled by the demands of fashionable society and 'constant recourse to drastic physic and excessive bleeding to remedy disorders induced by high living'.[164] Whilst Whitbread undoubtedly moved in illustrious circles, there is no evidence of his displaying uncontrolled excess. However, like many others of his class, he underwent frequent blood-letting to 'alleviate' discomforts. It is not surprising then, that the day following the news of his death friends were quick to draw attention to his illness, thus obviating any accusations of dissolute lifestyle. In a note to Creevey, Bennet confirmed: '"I hardly know how to tell you that the blow, great and overwhelming as it is, is much increased by the manner of his death. He destroyed himself in a paroxysm of the disease in the head which was an aneurism under which he laboured.'"[165]

There is no doubt that, in the spring of 1815, Whitbread was seriously ill with little prospect of recovery. However, the notion of a sudden unplanned suicide seems surprising in a man whose entire character resonated with the tenets of reason, argument and integrity. His swift decline was more likely the immediate result of profound despair at the desperate waste of human life at Waterloo and the futility of years attempting to campaign for a peace to avoid such an end. In addition, Whitbread was suffering from an acute sense of paranoia and feelings of exclusion from the circles he had long frequented and a realisation that he would never again display the vibrant masculinity of his youth so admired by Elizabeth. Whether deranged or decisive, Whitbread dismissed his physician and decided to let matters take a different turn.[166] 'It was requisite', reported The Examiner, 'that the

[162] D. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery and Gambling in Eighteenth- Century England* (New Haven and London, 2013), p.85.
[163] Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice,* p.97.
[164] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol.2, p.41.
[165] Gore, *Creevey's Life and Times,* pp. 83-84.
[166] NRO, NC 1392/97, Letter from John Pitts to Richard Harvey, 21 October 1790. The correspondence recommended the republishing 'in a less expensive price' of an 'excellent inquiry

patient should minister to himself: - alas! The troubles of the brain were too deeply impressed. The lion who roused our senate from its slumbers was suddenly to be heard no more.'[167]

Words such as these emphasised the strong connections between elite suicide and the masculine influences of neo-classicism which had been drawn since the early part of the eighteenth century. Whitbread's Eton education would have encouraged a familiarity with the 'great lives' of classical figures and an admiration for Roman heroes who had killed themselves in acts of stoicism. Their example, suggest Michael MacDonald and Terence Murphy, glamorised a new fashion for honourable suicides among real gentlemen living in very different circumstances.[168] It is almost certain that Whitbread would have been aware of these ideas and feasibly viewed himself in a light where honourable death was a noble choice. As a man of integrity, standing by his long-held principles of pacifism would have been paramount in his mind and although no one openly advocated the practice, argues Isaac Land, 'self-sacrifice, including a willingness to risk or lay down one's own life for others, figured as a specifically masculine attribute'.[169] Seen in this way, argue McDonald and Murphy, 'the stain of disgrace' could be avoided, or even 'forestall further dishonour by proving both the suicide's courage and his commitment to the ethics of his class'. With calm resolution, men of honour chose a suitable method to kill themselves, ideally the sword, although other blades particularly the razor were also viewed as 'preferred instruments of death'.[170] It is therefore possible, that from the privacy of his Dover Street house, Whitbread took a blade to his throat as an 'honourable' and manly response to both illness and resignation in equal measure and that he considered his legacy in this light. Perhaps, as an advocate of human

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into the subject of Suicide'. A key theme was its usefulness in providing advice on the merits of suicide versus surgery.

[167] 'The Late Mr Whitbread', *The Examiner*, Issue 396, 30 July 1815.

[168] M. MacDonald and T. Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 1990), p.176-177. The authors note: 'Towards the end of the century, the publication of Goethe's *Sorrows of Young Werther* and other romantic tales made sentimental suicides, especially deaths for love, occasions for maudlin lamentation, rather than shocked condemnation.' It was however the example of Cato who killed himself in defiance of the imposition of a tyrannical regime which was immortalised in Joseph Addison's tragedy *Cato* (1713) and became the marker of honourable suicide.

[169] I. Land, 'Epilogue: Gendered virtue, gendered vigour and gendered valour' in M. Brown, A. Berry and J. Begiato (Eds.), *Martial Masculinities: Experiencing and Imagining the Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Manchester, 2019), p.257.

[170] MacDonald and Murphy, *Sleepless Souls,* pp.184, 185.

rights and liberal reforms he even envisaged a time when suicide would be judged more charitably with his own example a legacy worth leaving behind.[171]

In the aftermath of death, a sense of disbelief prevailed. One letter between two female acquaintances speculated:

> What a melancholy end closed the political career of Mr Whitbread – whether the fatal act was caused by mental derangement, or by conscious guilt one cannot guess. The more is known of his conduct latterly certainly was like insanity, & I believe that symptoms of it have appeared at times in some of the family – but these are circumstances, that give rise to different suspicions – who will succeed him I wonder in the County?[172]

Fellow politicians immediately adopted a benevolent view of Whitbread's act. Speaking to Parliament the Marquis of Tavistock pronounced: ''His [Whitbread's] eloquent appeals in this House in favour of the unfortunate – appeals exhibiting the frankness and honesty of the true English character – will adorn the pages of the historian''.'[173] Admiration for Whitbread's integrity, commitment and sense of duty reinforced opinion of him as the consummate public man, sympathy virtually unanimous. Whitbread was of course not to know that within seven years both Samuel Romilly and Lord Castlereagh would die in the same manner, fuelling speculation as to motive and the wider debate on how society should respond to cases of mental health and suicide. Contrary to the prevailing wisdom that the act was the inevitable consequence of 'vice, self-indulgence and law-breaking', suggests Andrew, the enigma of Whitbread's (and subsequently Samuel Rommily's) death initiated the view that manly virtue could foreshadow decline 'as the inevitable outcome of philosophic radicalism and Enlightenment self-confidence'. In this way Whitbread represented a brand of elite public men who, suggests Andrew, were 'flawed by the very attributes that made them admirable'.[174]

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[171] Following the suicide of Lord Castlereagh in 1822 and demonstrations at his Westminster Abbey state funeral, restrictions on the burial of persons found *felo de se* were relaxed by the Burial of Suicide Act 1823. The offence of *felo de se* was finally abolished in the Suicide Act 1961.
[172] BRO, L30/11/323/138 Agreta Yorke to Lady Lucas, 11 July [undated, 1815?].
[173] F. Phippen, *Authentic Account,* p.39.
[174] D. Andrew, 'The Suicide of Samuel Romilly: Apotheosis or Outrage?' in J. Watt (Ed.), *From Sin to Insanity: Suicide in Early Modern Europe* (New York, 2004), p.188.

Conclusion

This study of Samuel Whitbread II has, through the examination of underused source material, gained a greater sense of the man behind the 'bluff' stereotype and the lesser known aspects of his masculinity. The chapter has not attempted to 'explain' Whitbread or his suicide, but to offer fresh insight into those elements of his masculine character which have not been fully considered alongside his more well-known public life and death. This is significant as Whitbread can be seen as someone whose gendered experience of elite public life was deeply rooted in very clear ideas of how he wished to be seen as a man. His lifelong determination that his actions would have a lasting impact on the lives of others set him apart as an elite man whose masculinity was understood to be both distinctive, purposeful and self-sacrificing in every sense. By studying his earlier views on masculine constructs such as civility and intellect, outward appearance and excess, and the sublime and the beautiful it has been possible to understand more of the bold yet emotional masculinity which formed the core of his complex character.

This case study has shown that in advance of entering public life, Whitbread made clear references to those elements of masculinity he found to be acceptable and those he did not and the sincerity and dignity with which he conducted himself in public life was based on these principles. In this sense, through the benefits of a privileged upbringing and a watchful father, Whitbread understood that his role as a member of the elite classes was to uphold those 'normative' masculine values which had formed the basis of acceptable male conduct since early modern times – honour, civility and the exercise of natural authority over dependants. It was these qualities which formed the foundation of his own masculine identity. In addition, the rejection of inferior stereotypes reinforced that sense of English manly superiority which he considered commendable in his own character and aspirational to others. On the Grand Tour, expressions of disgust at the debauched lifestyle of Frederick the Great were held in contrast to an admiration for the simplicity and honesty of peasant life. A dislike of arrogance and ignorance in his fellow travellers was counterweighted by a generosity towards those artisans and scientists who Whitbread observed working hard and improving their understanding.

Above all, it was Whitbread's adherence to high standards of honesty, integrity and industry which defined him as an elite man worthy of widespread admiration. As a young man these facets of his masculinity were seen during his courtship of Elizabeth where he displayed intense emotional openness in the

expression of the love he felt for her. In addition, his reputation as 'the earnest and indefatigable friend of the oppressed' in the County of Bedfordshire ensured his respect in that area.[175] In Opposition, Whitbread was famous for his passionate speeches, often blunt, penetrating and challenging. *The Examiner* pronounced: ''He is the most eloquent speaker in the House, if eloquence consist, not in ornamented sentences, but in the language which, coming from the heart, never fails to touch the heart.''[176] However, both the human cost of Waterloo and the difficulties in advancing an agenda for reform marked the crisis point where Whitbread could no longer believe in his own effectiveness or political future. Compounded by the ravages of illness and the deterioration of his striking appearance, it was the decline in his fundamental self-belief which led to feelings of uselessness, redundancy and early death. In this sense, Whitbread represented the kind of elite man who practised a highly principled and honest masculinity as a natural response to the demands of his position, but always on his own terms. Whitbread, a product of the commercial classes himself, personified those nineteenth-century middle-class masculine characteristics which, according to French and Rothery, '''stressed a punishing work-ethic, independence from patronage or favour, piety and high-mindedness, sobriety and chastity, and dedication to family pursuits'''.[177] In essence, Whitbread completely understood the importance of upholding and promoting those masculine values which he rehearsed in both private and public life and saw as relevant to all men, not just the elite.

If living out these masculine principles formed a vital part of Whitbread's character, then it was the moment of death which prompted adoration of both the man and his contribution to public life. 'Gracious God', wrote Bennet, 'what is not the loss to us all, take it any way, public or private? Who is like him, who was ever like him?... The purity and honesty of his life and character: there is not a person in the kingdom but the vile and base, who does not deplore his loss.'[178] With equal praise, the House lauded their man as 'one of the public treasures – manly, honest and true, an ornament to his country'. *The Constitution* summed up with a classical parallel:

> Thus [Whitbread] has suddenly been removed from this earthly scene, in the fullness of great esteem, at a period when he could least be spared, a man

[175] Cirket, *Notebooks,* p.27.
[176] 'Tributes of the Public Press to the Memory of the Late Mr Whitbread', (London, 1815), *The Examiner*, 9 July 1815, p.28.
[177] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.9.
[178] Gore, *Creevey's Life and Times,* p.84.

whose loss his country and the world must severely feel; - thus has the last of the Romans bowed to fate.[179]

In this way, the public discourse settled on a way of remembering Whitbread as a man who epitomised the fundamental and enduring masculine values of personal virtue, honour and honesty.[180] There was tacit agreement that public intrusion into those tragic personal circumstances served no useful purpose. Despite the manner of his death, Whitbread continues to be held up as the *exemplar* of early nineteenth century elite masculinity: 'His person and deportment commanded respect; his voice was full, clear, and fully modulated, his enunciation bold, correct and pleasing; and his whole manner prepossessing.' 'To a stranger sitting in the gallery of the House', described *The Examiner, '*he exhibited in his dress, his look, and his mode of expressing his sentiments, a complete picture of the genuine English country-gentleman.'[181] It concluded: 'Those who wish to form a correct estimate of his character, must not look to two or three particular speeches, but to the whole tenor of his public life. They will see a consistency of action which is to be found in few other public men.'[182]

The distinctive masculine style of Samuel Whitbread therefore evolved out of his unique strengths and abilities and was manifested not in the final moment of death but in the long pattern of his upbringing, marriage and public achievements. This legacy set in place a style of elite masculinity for the era of industry and reform which demanded a firmness of character lived out through passion, determination and action.

[179] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol.1, p.242. *Constitution* 9 July 1815, p.21.
[180] Fulford suggests that letters between family members concerning Whitbread's death were subsequently destroyed. However, other private discussion of Whitbread's demise remains.
[181] 'Tributes of the Public Press'*, The Day,* 7 June 1815, p.11.
[182] 'Tributes of the Public Press'*, The Examiner,* 9 July 1815, p.27.

Chapter Four: Case Study - Edward Harbord, third Lord Suffield (1781-1835)

This chapter considers the masculine character of Edward Harbord, third Lord Suffield, a man whose experience of growing up at the turn of the nineteenth presents an opportunity to examine how contemporary events influenced the way he presented himself as an elite man. Moral issues surrounding the pursuit of war, political ideas of wider representation and social concerns for the disadvantaged all had the capacity to shape constructions of masculinity. Unlike the experiences of Windham, Patteson and Whitbread, Harbord's transition from young boy to man was played out entirely against the backdrop of war with Revolutionary France during the 1790s, the fear of invasion by Napoleon in the early 1800s and the consequences of Wellington's campaign in the Peninsula in the first decade of the nineteenth century. By 1815, Harbord was only thirty- four years old, his sense of himself as a man strongly influenced by his own interpretations of events and his role in the wider world. The case study is especially significant as the source material spans Harbord's lifecycle in a way which previous case studies have not. It therefore allows greater understanding of how a man born into the highest level of society adapted and styled his masculine persona as he grew older and became increasingly influential. The chapter is presented in four parts: firstly, an exploration of the early influences on Harbord's masculine character at Eton, during a Grand Tour and exposure to London high society. Secondly, an examination of how his 'independent' style in public life affected both his own views of himself and the reactions of others. The third part addresses the ways in which Harbord presented a mature and forward- thinking masculinity to meet the demands of his roles as aristocratic Lord and committed father. The final section considers how Harbord, a man of recognised principle and empathy, exerted his distinctive masculine style to redress wrongs, influence progress and make his mark in the political arena.

Despite an extensive archive of family letters and estate records scholarly interest in the Harbord family has been very limited, consisting merely of a short entry in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography and local interest pamphlets describing the Gunton estate.[1] The political career of Edward Harbord's father Sir Harbord Harbord is largely eclipsed by that of his more controversial contemporary William Windham, and Harbord's influential role in the campaign against slavery is

[1] The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography contains an entry for Edward Harbord, third Lord Suffield (Anon, revised by H. Matthew, 2004).

less well-known than his efforts deserve. The most detailed accounts of Harbord's life are to be found in an effusive personal memoir written by friend Richard Bacon immediately after his subject's death and a recent chronicle of events compiled by descendant Richard Harbord. Bacon's account is based on a selection of correspondence chosen by Lady Suffield but offers very little criticism and frequently lapses into flattery. Similar material can be found in a later family history recalled by son Charles, fifth Lord Suffield.[2] The Gunton archive, however, provides a particularly valuable collection including letters from Harbord to his father at Eton, several volumes of travel journals, letters to and from associates and a plethora of correspondence on political, social and judicial matters. Utilising these sources, a new perspective on Harbord is created allowing greater understanding, not just of his life, but of the masculine values he chose to adopt, practise and crucially set as an example for others to replicate and adapt after him.

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A concise outline of the Harbord family background and the Gunton estate serves as a useful introduction to Harbord's life and position within the Norfolk elite. The wealth and influence of the Harbord family paralleled the rise of the Whig ascendancy in the late seventeenth century and was founded on the connections of William Harbert who served as Surveyor General to both Charles I and II. In the first half of the eighteenth -century Harbord's paternal grandfather William Harbord's first act was to rebuild the family seat of Gunton Hall choosing to work with the designs of Matthew Brettingham, architect and supervisor to the construction of nearby Holkham Hall, and favourite of the local gentry. As first baronet William also entered Parliament representing the Suffolk constituencies of Ber Alston and Dunwich, the handsome classical home setting the tone for the family's rapid ascendancy on the regional and national stage.[3]

The credit for permanently elevating the fortunes of the Harbord name can be confidently attributed to Sir Harbord Harbord, second baronet and popular Norwich MP for over thirty years and elevated to the peerage by William Pitt in 1786. His marriage to Mary, daughter and co-heir of Sir Ralph Assheton of Middleton, Lancashire produced three sons and four daughters, establishing his

[2] The main works are R. Bacon, *A memoir of the life of Edward, third baron Suffield* (privately printed, Norwich 1838), C. Suffield, *My Memories 1830-1913* (London, 1913) and R. Harbord, *Edward the 3rd Lord Suffield: Norfolk's Most Radical Peer* (Independently published, 2018).

[3] A synopsis of the Harbord family history at Gunton can be found in The Churches Conservation Trust publication *St Andrews Church, Gunton, Norfolk* (London, 2005).

position as peer responsible for dynastic success far beyond his own personal conduct and achievements. Harbord Harbord fully understood the importance of formal education and upbringing as training for young elite men entering the world and ensured that his sons were availed of the very best opportunities. Edward Harbord the subject of this chapter was the youngest of the three brothers, the eldest of whom Charles died in infancy leaving William Assheton, the next eldest brother heir to the Gunton estate. The expectation of Harbord ever assuming the title was low, but as 'second son' his personal conduct and public engagement were vital to the family's growing reputation as new members of the aristocracy.

The Younger Son

The following section considers Harbord's experience of entering elite society as the younger son of an elite family and how that process shaped the masculine character he chose to adopt throughout his life. Public school, a Grand Tour and several years 'at play' in London's high society, Harbord's education followed the path of many young aristocratic men of the day. Each of these stages show how a younger son was prepared for entry into elite society with the aim of providing the knowledge, contacts and experience which would pave the way for success. This process was vital as, in common with younger sons of many gentry families, Harbord found himself penalised by the system of primogeniture which, in favouring his elder brother William, resulted in the expectation of a meagre inheritance and no status. Henry French and Mark Rothery argue that whilst young men such as Harbord were positioned near 'the apex of social and gender privilege', this was no guarantee of a comfortable and affluent future free from reliance on the goodwill of relations, specifically elder brothers.[4] In such situations, younger sons had to forge a path between upholding the good reputation and success of the family whilst simultaneously portraying an image of self-sufficiency, composure and ease.[5]

Even a cursory glance at the source material reveals a self-assured young man, independent of character and very much aware of the masculine values he considered both desirable and important to his own identity. There is a sense in which Harbord quietly considered himself his own *'tabula rasa'* and prepared for his maturity with energy and hope. In 1791, Harbord's father took the decision that the best way to guarantee his younger son's future status in 'public' life was to invest in a public- school education. Drawing boys from 'well-to -do families across the whole

[4] H. French and M. Rothery, 'Male Anxiety Among Younger Sons of the English Landed Gentry, 170-1900', *The Historical Journal,* (Published online 20 November 2018), p.2.
[5] French and Rothery, 'Male Anxiety', p.26.

nation', writes Anthony Fletcher, Eton boasted a formidable array of high- profile alumni, not least William Windham and Samuel Whitbread II.[6] If Harbord was to uphold the reputation of his family's newly acquired status then Eton was the location to ensure it.

At the age of ten, Harbord arrived at Eton and wrote regularly to his father, mother and two sisters, Louisa and Kitty. It is not known whether Lord Suffield had a particular profession in mind for his younger son, but in sending him to Eton he was giving him the best chance to not only receive a classical education, but also make friendships and alliances at the highest level of elite society. The letters to his father represent a rare source set of detail, being both informative and reflective. Bacon describes the letters as the 'best evidences of his [Harbord's] successful turn for study, coupled with traits of high spirit and good temper, an entire absence of selfishness, and warm affections towards home, together with a sly humour'.[7] More significantly however, the letters reveal an understanding of purpose behind the process of his education, an awareness of Lord Suffield's expectations and an understanding that the transition from boy to man was being closely observed. In this sense, Eton was not merely a seat of learning but a place to acquire the experiences and accomplishments which would create the kind of man who would be at ease in elite circles, comfortable in his masculinity.

Displaying no sense of entitlement or arrogance, Harbord framed his correspondence in such a way as to keep his father up to date with his studies. He remarked on notable events in the school calendar, enquired fondly after family and expressed gratitude for gifts. In December 1795, Harbord provided a typically mixed yet enthusiastic account of his everyday life at Eton:

> Dear Papa, I thank you for your letter received this morning, am very glad you have heard so good an account of me. I think I am almost certain of winning my remove next Saturday so that I shall be able to tell you when I get home that I am in the upper remove fourth form … This morning [my Master] created me Praeposter for this week of his division, & I hope to perform the office properly tho not a very agreeable one, I am obliged when any boy can not say his lesson, to have him flogged, which you may

[6] A. Fletcher, *Growing Up in England: The Experience of Childhood, 1600-1800* (New Haven and London, 2008), p.196.
[7] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.5.

> suppose is not very pleasant, and this morning before ten o'clock there were five to be flagellated.[8]

Despite displeasure with his post, the tone of Harbord's correspondence is consistently optimistic, avidly conscientiousness - yet jocular and boyish in tone. Understanding that his father expected regular updates on his academic progress, this information formed an important element of Harbord's accounts:

> I am very happy and well … I have when I have finished this letter to make a copy of verses on Love, a copious subject, as I intend to do a good number, I have all today to do them in.[9]

Whilst it is clear that he found the study of classical subjects dry and onerous, he used cheerful descriptions of more practical activities such as the dramatic arts to attract his father's attention:

> I am very glad to hear that you [Father] are coming here … I hope it will be soon – that is I shall not put my finger, in my eye, and cry, if I heard you was coming down tomorrow it is rather lucky you did not come down this morning for you would have had the honor of seeing me act for one of the principal performers has gone home.[10]

He concluded the subject of his stage debut with the admission: 'I suppose Louisa told you about my acting, I can assure you I did not feel very comfortable on the stage, the first time, I wish you had been there with all my heart.'[11]

The touching informality and emotional honesty shown by Harbord in his letters reveals a boy who not only treated his father with respect but also trusted him as a confidant, describing both successes and setbacks. 'On the whole', argue French and Rothery, 'young boys echoed their parents' perspectives on their masculine development', evidenced in their anxious relaying of both success and struggle.[12] In this sense, Harbord lacked any sense of boyish awkwardness in addressing his father, presenting himself as sensitive and secure young man who

[8] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/2 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 1 December 1795. 'Remove' was the term for a form or class division. Praeposter was a role dating back to Eton's Elizabethan days and was essential to the working of the school. They were required to assist with keeping order in the classroom and other communal spaces. T. Card, *Eton Established: A History from 1400-1860* (London, 2001), pp.45-47.
[9] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/11 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 24 November 1795.
[10] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/6 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 26 May 1795.
[11] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/8 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 8 December 1795.
[12] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Maculinities, 1660-1900* (Oxford, 2012), p.74.

understood fully that not only was he personally responsible for his own progress but that his father expected full confirmation that this was taking place.

Where the rigours of scholarship lacked appeal, the sporting field provided just the arena for Harbord's natural masculinity to flourish and this afforded him both popularity with his fellow pupils and the admiration of his father. Excitedly, he reported: 'I am grown a great leaper, which is quite the fashion here, at this time of year', and went on to recount an energetic escapade of 'leaping' over hedges and colliding with another boy in a muddy ditch.[13] In embracing such exercise, Harbord's physical appearance epitomised the nimble, manly body suited to walking, riding and dancing which was associated with the poised and agile form typical of eighteenth- century ideals of manly beauty which were based on the Greek model of litheness and speed. Whilst at Eton, Harbord developed a passion for swimming and cricket: 'Tho' I am very fond of the water, my great amusement now is Crickett, & I want for the holidays ... to exercise my skill in that art, which I suppose you own is not to be equalled'[14]. The ability to master and excel at new sports such as swimming or rowing was not only an indication of muscular strength and co-ordinated skill but also stoic endurance and fairness – important facets of Harbord's masculinity which were vital to his own sense of himself as a young man. Exuding self-confidence, Harbord actively nurtured a natural physical masculinity at Eton as a balance to his academic endeavours which in the main he found tedious.

Traditional manly sporting virtues of 'fair play' strongly influenced the importance Harbord attached to keeping up appearances, showing decency and berating injustice. These values fuelled his future political campaigning and were the fundamental tenets of his masculine character for life. The importance of upholding such values was evident during the months leading up to 17 May 1796 when the event at Eton known as 'Montem' was scheduled to take place.[15] Much preoccupied with the prospect of parading in highly decorative fancy dress, Harbord described his elaborate uniform thus: 'Sword and hat turned up at the front with a Gold button & white ostrich feather, a black stick, a scarlet coat turned up with black white

[13] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/14 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 21 February 1796.

[14] NRO, GTN 5/9/20/30 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 8 July 1796. Athletics and cricket do not appear to have been part of the official curriculum at Eton. Harbord recounts the boys organising an informal cricket match with Westminster School without permission. Severe floggings and expulsion were the result of it being discovered. See NRO GTN 5/9/2/32 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 27 July 1796 .

[15] Montem was the name given to a money-raising practice for the benefit of the senior college at Eton. Pupils dressed up in elaborate costumes and walked to a hill near Slough and asked for donations from anyone they saw on the way.

Kerseymere waistcoat and breeches.'[16] Complex plans were put in place to ensure that the entire family saw Harbord parading in his costume, with specific instructions to his father not to let the side down:

> I am so anxious to know whether I shall see you at Montem or not, you cannot think, you must be very smart indeed, for there will be at Salthill all the world & his wife, Lord Melbourne, Lord Carlisle, Lord half a dozen dozen Lords are to be there.[17]

In the event, Harbord did not take part in the parade due to a mistake of protocol and Lord Suffield did not appear. The boy's angst and acute sense of injustice was overwhelming:

> I received the clothes late last night … not half an hour after which I received word to say that Doctor Heath had thought proper to order every boy who had six or eight servants, to discharge two of them, because … there will be not enough boys to walk in the rank, & I being one of the two who my Master chose last, I am obliged to go and be a common poleman, which I think very hard, as my dress is made, & will be obliged to be paid for without my having the pleasure of wearing it.[18]

The fiasco of Montem is the subject of many letters between father and son and is an example of the ease with which Harbord was uninhibited in his expression of emotion.[19] Whilst the precise reasons for the disappointment are not fully known, French and Rothery suggest that at times parents 'purposefully generated anxiety as a test of masculinity and as a call to action'.[20] There are no surviving letters between father and son after July 1796, and it was at this point that Harbord entered the only phase of his life which could be described as high spirited. Bacon suggests that this began with Harbord becoming increasingly involved in unspecified 'amusements' and skirmishes at Eton, in particular fighting, which was an approved though unofficial form of physical exercise, and regarded as a test of

[16] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/21 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 1 May 1796.
[17] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/23 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 13 May 1796.
[18] NRO, GTN 5/9/2/23 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 13 May 1796. Dr Heath was Headmaster at Eton.
[19] Other instances include Harbord's detailed accounts of his schoolboy illnesses and a dental emergency which resulted in a visit to Mr Normansel the Dentist, London. 'I hope you will not blame me for making so much of what appears trifling; it would be so if it were not a front tooth, but it is not a very agreeable thing to lose one in front at my age.' NRO, GTN 5/9/2/25, Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 27 May 1796.
[20] French and Rothery, 'Male Anxiety', p.24.

social acceptability. In a 'battle' with another boy Harbord broke his arm so severely it was weakened for the rest of his life. In the late 1790s the incidence of rebellion at Eton became frequent and, according to Bacon: 'It probably happened that [Harbord] was not only engaged in the rebellion, but took so eminent a part in it that he was removed.'[21] In a final, if unexpected mark of approval of Harbord's character and popularity at Eton, Doctor Heath applied to Lord Suffield to allow him to return for a time to employ his influence in restoring peace to the school. The result, according to Bacon, was that 'it had the natural effect of increasing the overweening self -confidence of youth' thus placing Lord Suffield in a difficult situation regarding the control of his son.[22] In the light of these events, Lord Suffield took the decision to despatch his nineteen year old son on the most classic of contemporary upper-class *rites de passages* - a Grand Tour.[23] An analysis of this period of Harbord's life is significant to this study as it draws our attention to developing aspects of his masculinity such as his keen sense of himself as a member of the elite, an attention to physical presentation and appearance, and a developing interest in other cultures and the lives of others.

The tour chosen for Harbord was necessarily unconventional. In 1800, routes to the classic path towards Paris and Italy were thwarted by war with France, so an alternative six -month tour was sought encompassing Northern Europe and Russia. In addition to the restraints of warfare it is likely that Lord Suffield deliberately chose these destinations as less likely to draw the young Edward into the temptations of the classical *rivieras* or fall into the company of disreputable types. A bracing exploration of relatively uncharted territory would be character affirming and bring Harbord into contact with ordinary men living in difficult climates. In this sense, argues Fletcher, 'the point of the Grand Tour was not simply becoming a gentleman but becoming a man'.[24] Where being a gentleman was exclusive to an elite caught up in considerations of status and appearance, becoming a man was socially inclusive, authentic and interiorised. 'One could be born a gentleman', argues John Tosh, but to be accepted as a *man* had to be

[21] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.13.
[22] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.14.
[23] The purpose and significance of undertaking a Grand Tour is discussed in the preceding case studies on John Patteson and Samuel Whitbread II.
[24] A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven and London, 1995), p.317.

‘earned by mastering the circumstances of life and thus securing the respect of one’s peers’.[25]

The planned route indeed provided such a test, with a challenging itinerary resembling expedition rather than holiday. It is unclear how much planning went into Harbord’s Baltic journey or to what extent potential hosts were forewarned of the party’s arrival and expectations: his travel journals show no indication of being anxious about the risky nature of his Tour, which he carefully plotted in his own hand- drawn map. On the day of departure, a self-portrait sketch shows him smartly attired in green overcoat, blue breeches and hat pulling up the ship’s anchor with a look of grim determination.[26]

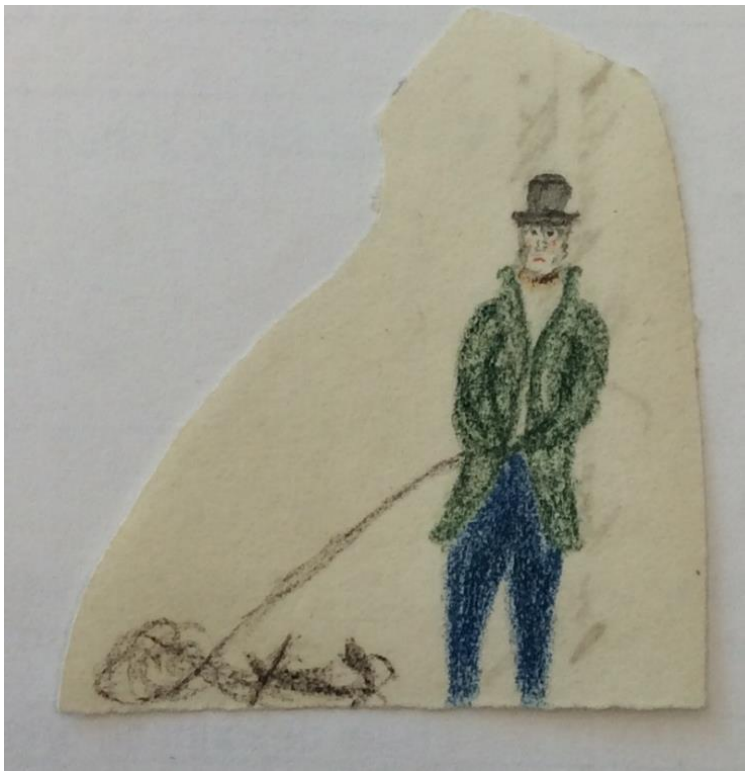

FIGURE 12- EDWARD HARBORD 'ON BOARD THE PACKET FROM YARMOUTH' (NORFOLK RECORD OFFICE)

Harbord’s record of the next six months was meticulous and regular, and like Samuel Whitbread, he showed great interest in the places he visited and the people he observed. Two incidents revealed his approach. In Denmark, he remarked: ‘Arrived at Copenhagen – rather disappointed in the approach, passed a palace

[25] J. Tosh, ‘Gentlemanly Politeness and Manly Simplicity in Victorian England’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 12 (2002), p.458.
[26] NRO, GTN 5/9/12/1-2 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801, Vol II.

where the King resided.'[27] And, on leaving Berlin: 'The streets again struck us with admiration; every house was … almost all equally beautiful; in short it seemed impossible to conceive a town more universally magnificent.'[28] In common with Whitbread's writing, the tone of the journals indicate a very confident, almost arrogant young man supremely comfortable with his status as an English aristocrat venturing into the world for the first time and fully equipped to deal with whomever and whatever came his way. Two incidents reveal his stance: firstly, an uncompromising view of an evening in Copenhagen was recorded:

> Went to a ball at what in England would be termed a vulgarly and disorderly house …The men chiefly appeared to be sailors … but were very drunk & the confusion and vulgarity of the scene & condensed our visit very short.[29]

More tellingly, he revealed his thoughts on the calibre of the men he encountered, and for the first time showed an appreciation (or lack of) of women. Whilst negotiating a sea passage, Harbord described his dealings with the ship's commandant and his wife:

> A little man insignificant in his appearance sitting as he imagined in a posture which implied much awe and respect. He received us with a slight inclination of the head and without asking us to be seated or taking any other notice of us proceeded with his own business which continued for about 2 hours. – His wife (reckoned a beauty) then made her appearance & was shewn great attention by the second officer.[30]

The eagerly anticipated tour of Russia proved much more pleasing to Harbord's high standards and sensibilities, with an impressive itinerary arranged by Lord St. Helens, the British Ambassador. Much to his delight, Russian elite society provided a limitless supply of appetising banquets, excellent wines, beautiful decor and well-dressed company. Firmly assured of his status as the son of an English peer, Harbord attended balls, concerts and even the coronation of Tsar Alexander I. Whilst some of the female company disappointed him by 'being both dull and ugly,' Harbord immersed himself in the local culture to 'observe the manners of all classes', English horses ridden by Russians, a bear-bait, which he found to be a

[27] NRO, GTN 5/9/12 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801.
[28] NRO, GTN 5/9/12 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801.
[29] NRO, GTN 5/9/12 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801.
[30] NRO, GTN 5/9/12 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801. Following this treatment, Edward and his party were asked to come back at 2 o'clock the next day to obtain their pass.

cruel and uninteresting spectacle and a wrestle between a tame bear and a man, which was both 'laughable and entertaining'.[31]

Harbord also indulged his love of clothing and shopping with the purchase of 'a pair of fur boots & shoes, a sword and a Turkish dagger, the image of which is captured in a second self -sketch where he depicts himself richly attired for his wintry environment. [32] Descriptions of his flamboyant clothing purchases and a keenness to capture his own likeness indicate that Harbord was a man who took great pride in his appearance and conducted himself with the confidence and superior air of a man educated, worldly and blessed with good fortune. There is no evidence that he considered himself in any way disadvantaged by his status as a younger son.

FIGURE 13- EDWARD HARBORD 'AT A VILLAGE NEAR MOSCO' (NORFOLK RECORD OFFICE)

[31] On leaving Russia and arriving in Berlin with all the rapidity that 'execrable roads' would allow Edward is disappointed with a concert, at which 'the audience was not quite so numerous as the band … the music not super-excellent'. Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.21-22.

[32] NRO, GTN 5/9/12 Travel Journal of Edward Harbord 1800-1801. The entry for Edward Harbord in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* describes his dress sense as a young man as a 'little recherché and fantastic, giving a false impression of effeminacy'. The Grand Tour journal is the only part of the archive which contains such delightful self-portraits.

The remainder of the Tour through Latvia. Germany and Holland proved less notable with a mixture of theatrical amusements, variable food and drink, and in Osnabruck 'the stupidity of the people at the inn exceeding anything he had ever seen'.[33] On his return to England in January 1801, Harbord divided his time between Gunton and Oxford, where he completed his degree and entered chambers at Lincoln's Inn with the intention of being called to the bar. From 1802 to 1806, Harbord's life was spent mostly at leisure in the company of the high society young men whom he was acquainted. 'He was chiefly in London', notes Bacon, 'but visited his father and friends in the country during the season of field sports, in which he much delighted.'[34] It is evident that Lord Suffield placed considerable trust in his younger son at this time allowing him the freedom to navigate the temptations of London life without damaging his own or his family's reputation. The dangers were all too real. 'A profligate son was every Georgian father's nightmare', notes Nicola Phillips. Such sons were a well-known caricature of popular culture giving out the resounding message that this type of individual was the direct result of inadequate parenting and a failure to 'instil the virtues of moral, sexual and financial control'.[35] During this time Harbord enjoyed invitations to the most brilliant circles, being a particular favourite of the Duchess of Devonshire and a close friend of Tom Sheridan, wayward son of Whig grandee Richard Brinsley Sheridan.[36] 'Members of the eighteenth-century beau monde', explains Hannah Greig, 'laid claim to what might be described today as the ''it'' factor: an elusive yet exclusive form of social distinction.'[37] Variously labelled as the *ton* or *bon ton* 'these aristocratic celebrities', adds Donna Andrew, 'were the trend-setters, the arbiters of style' and in many cases the 'practitioners of the multiple modes of aristocratic vice, ranging from minor follies to major sins'.[38] For a popular young man freshly returned from his travels the enticing world of the capital promised all the thrills and temptations of the age.

[33] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.23. On one occasion Edward drank so much wine he reported, 'My face being swelled up stayed at home the whole day.' NRO, GTN 5/9/12.
[34] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.24.
[35] N. Phillips, *The Profligate Son Or, a True Story of Family Conflict, Fashionable Vice, and Financial Ruin in Regency England* (Oxford, 2015), p. xiv.
[36] According to Bacon, Tom Sheridan was 'amongst the most fashionable and fascinating men of his day' but an inclination for excess inevitably resulted in much reduced circumstances, ill-health and early death. *Memoir,* p.25.
[37] H. Greig, *The Beau Monde: Fashionable Society in Georgian London* (Oxford, 2013), p.3.
[38] D. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery and Gambling in Eighteenth Century England* (Yale, 2013), p.4.

Bacon described Harbord at this time as 'in person five feet ten inches tall, of slight but compact form, and uncommonly active and vigorous'.[39] He was also widely admired for his amiable character, confident musicality and in particular his impressive sporting talents. Son Charles described his father:

> He was an extremely active man, a first-class cricketer and very good at wrestling and boxing, a fine horseman and an A1 shot. Additionally, he could run a mile in five minutes with perfect ease.[40]

The ideal of the Georgian manly body; graceful and strong, but not burly, was in transition during the years of Harbord's youth, fuelled by the perception of national crisis during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The slender, sensible manly form became viewed as less suitable to sustain and defend a nation, the revised notion of the male body being a more solid, broad, rugged and essentially less elegant frame. Tosh describes the possession of 'manly vigour', including 'energy, virility and strength', as key to the idea that men should be 'equipped to place their physical stamp on the world'.[41] The result, explains Joanne Begiato, was a 'more outdoors, less ''feeling'' version of the idealised manly body' where members of the military were admired for their rugged mass and strength resulting in sheer 'size bec[oming] a corporeal vehicle through which masculine values were demonstrated'.[42] Not content with speed and agility in the classical tradition, Harbord learnt to display his corporeal masculinity in more dramatic fashion. As Fletcher has demonstrated one of the ways for young men to gain prestige with their contemporaries was through dangerous 'acts of bravado' which harked back to earlier chivalric ideals of 'adventure and glory'.[43] Incredibly, Harbord took to exhibiting his muscular strength through feats of endurance and even sleight of hand. One popular party trick which he regularly performed was the ability to break a poker by bending it round his neck, an act which almost cost him his life at a gathering hosted by Lady Castlereagh when on the point of asphyxiation, he had to be extricated from the bent metal by his friends.[44]

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[39] Bacon, *Memoir*, p.24. As the average male height for the time was five feet six inches, Edward Harbord would have been considered tall. See M. McCormack, 'Tall Histories: Height and Georgian Masculinities', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 26 (2016), pp.79-101.
[40] Suffield, *Memories*, p.19.
[41] J. Tosh, 'Gentlemanly Politeness', p.460.
[42] J. Begiato, 'Between Poise and Power: Embodied manliness in eighteenth and nineteenth century British culture,' *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 26 (2016), pp.133,134.
[43] Fletcher, *Growing Up In England,* p.13.
[44] Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.24-25.

This experience of what Bacon referred to as 'the dizzy precipice' did not taint Harbord's judgement or encourage a dissolute path.[45] He emerged from his experiences, unscathed, enthusiastic and brimming with self-assurance. Charles later recalled his father's demeanour at this time:

> His own personality was the most attractive attribute he possessed; his manner was always said to be one of his greatest charms, and his ready sympathy and kind, gentle nature always made him accessible to anyone who appealed to him for assistance or advice.[46]

Armed with these qualities, it appears that associating with the key political movers and leading aristocracy of the day reinforced his sense of belonging to that stratospheric group and encouraged the pursuit of a superior gentlemanly conduct. Consequently, the plan of pursuing a legal career, the classic steady 'metier' of younger noble sons, appears to have held little interest for Harbord. The opportunity was largely overlooked and he was never called to the bar. Instead following in the footsteps of his father, the lure of parliament and public life beckoned where he saw an opportunity to make his own individual mark for the greater good. In taking this path, Harbord would discover that participation in political life and the way he presented himself as a man were very closely tied. 'Manliness was important in political situations', demonstrates Matthew McCormack, 'but politics was also central to the business of being a man.'[47]

An 'Independent' Man

This section addresses Edward Harbord's approach to public life, in particular the ways in which ideas of 'independence' had a bearing on his masculine character, public conduct and the consequences of that behaviour on his relationships with others. The section places particular focus on Harbord's reactions to events which placed him in direct opposition to both his father and brother and characterised him as a man who preferred to devise his own path. In this sense, nonconformity in both speech and action reveals Harbord's 'independence' as a direct confrontation to the hierarchy and dominance of the male relatives on whom he was clearly 'dependent', both financially and politically. In pursuing this path, Harbord set himself apart as an elite man who challenged the prevailing assumptions of how an aristocratic younger

[45] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.25.
[46] Suffield, *Memories,* p.21.
[47] M. McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 20005) p.33.

son should live his life, but at the same time misunderstanding that privilege came at a price.

The idea of 'independence' and its importance in the Georgian political world has been analysed by Matthew McCormack in his study *The Independent Man*. An idea associated with earlier advocates of reform such as John Wilkes and Major John Cartwright, the idealised figure of the 'independent' man epitomised those 'Country' beliefs that 'only virtuous and free individuals should be entrusted with political responsibility'.[48] In the language of the day, 'independence' was not only used in a relational sense to denote 'freedom from obligation' but also, argues McCormack, held 'far greater evaluative implications of … autonomy, self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility'.[49] Harbord, like many of his contemporaries, considered the possession of 'independence of character' vital to his own view of himself as a man. 'Independence', demonstrates McCormack, influenced not only a man's relationships in the home but also the way he conducted his business outside: it had a bearing on manners 'from the most momentous political decisions to the minutiae of … everyday life'.[50] More than anywhere else, this *modus operandi* lent itself to public life, in particular political life. 'When Georgian men', such as Harbord 'claimed to be 'independent'', notes McCormack, 'they were drawing upon a political culture that privileged freedom from obligation, self-ownership, patriotism, straightforward manliness and constitutional balance.'[51] Unfortunately, for the youthful Harbord, freedom from obligation was not a luxury he could afford as he made his entrance into public life. In 1806, at the age of twenty-five, Harbord, with the full financial backing of his father and brother, was elected Member of Parliament for Great Yarmouth representing the Pittite Opposition to the Grenville administration known as 'The Ministry of all the Talents'.[52] Ebullient, he addressed his father:

> In regard to politicks, I shall be glad to have some conversation with you – my brother & I certainly do think differently, but unless you differ from him also, we shall certainly act together. The old story of Whig & Tory is now

[48] McCormack, *Independent Man*, p.4.
[49] McCormack, *Independent* Man, pp.1-2.
[50] McCormack, *Independent Man,* p.12.
[51] McCormack, *Independent Man,* p.201.
[52] The 'Ministry of All the Talents' was a short- lived administration in government between October 1806 and April 1807. It comprised a coalition of the old aristocratic Whigs (including Fox himself) and the new generation of Whigs led by Charles Grey. Its principal legislative achievement was the Abolition of the British Slave Trade Act of 1806, a cause which Edward would fervently pursue in the future.

> forgotten, all parties are sided together, & were I to follow my own discretion I would espouse & support that which I thought best calculated by talents to promote the interests of this country.[53]

The somewhat naïve tenet of Harbord's letter to his father confirms his desire to 'stand on his own two feet' politically, knowing full well that this would bring him into conflict with his staunchly conservative family - the prime movers behind his election triumph at Yarmouth.[54] Encouraged by the formation of the 'Talents' which was supported by many of his friends, Harbord was motivated by the concept of a fluid conviction-based political arena fired by personal initiative and belief rather than any firm affiliation to party or loyalty to other interests. This brand of political action suited both his forward thinking and energetic masculine style and his desire to be involved in the contemporary debates around social improvement and the conduct of war. His family however thought differently: his father had been elevated to the peerage by Pitt and his brother was related to Lord Castlereagh through marriage. Harbord's declaration of autonomy therefore, illustrates a very simplistic and outspoken approach to political involvement which completely failed to recognise the expectations of those who had facilitated his election and viewed him as wholly tied to their cause. From the outset therefore, Harbord's insistence on being seen as 'independent' in public life was problematic to both family and party and shows that the 'independence' to which he claimed a 'right' was contradictory to his circumstances, even hypocritical. Shortly before the fall of the 'Talents' in March 1807, Harbord wrote to his father, his exasperation clear:

> I voted last night with my brother, and with those who appeared to me very little entitled to my support. I voted completely in opposition. First, in opposition to my own sentiments; secondly, in opposition to plain sense and reasoning; and thirdly, in opposition to Government … Your ever dutiful and affectionate Son, Edward, And a rank oppositionist unless you give me permission to be the contrary.[55]

[53] NRO, GTN 5/9/9/12 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield [undated].
[54] In addition to the pressures placed on him by his father (MP for Norwich for over thirty years) and his conservatively inclined older brother William, Harbord was also connected to Lord Castlereagh through William's marriage to the sister of Castlereagh's wife Emily. Castlereagh's political career as a leading Tory was in the ascendant.
[55] Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.30-31.

Lord Suffield was cautionary in his response: 'I have known strong constitutional measures voted for and against by Members of that place … but a systematic opposition would not, I think, be long or twice endured.'[56]

Harbord proved a popular MP at Yarmouth over the six years he held office, perhaps largely due his easy affability rather than exceptional achievement: his inclination to 'independent' conduct largely tolerated.[57] Relations between himself and both his father and brother were however becoming increasingly strained, so much so that in 1808 he was sent on a temporary posting as Military Secretary to General Decken on active service on the Iberian Peninsula. The role was essentially created to keep Lord Castlereagh abreast of relations and transactions in that arena of war, and so pleased was the Minister with the results that an offer of the post of Private Secretary was made to Harbord on his return. At no point did Harbord reflect on the fact that his own political views would not have coincided with Lord Castlereagh's, the prestige of the post occluding any doubts he may have harboured. The final consent before Harbord was able take up the post rested with Lord Suffield. However, a delay in communications resulted in the post being offered to another candidate and the opportunity was lost. Both Harbord and his father were bitterly disappointed. Harbord confided in his mother:

> Among the few enviable qualities I possess, an even mind, a mind not apt to be elated or disposed extravagantly by turns of fortune, is certainly one; and when I tell you with confidence that I have been disappointed in the first object of my ambition, you will give me credit I think for the even mind of which I boast. [58]

Continuing, he attempted to hide his despair with an optimistic philosophy:

> Whether I may get something else or not, is very uncertain; it is very improbable that I should do so, but while there is a possibility there is hope, and the certainty of everything in this world should be as much a consolation to the unlucky, as it should be a check on the arrogance of the prosperous. The good things of this world are never permanent, why should the bad?

[56] History of Parliament Online, *Edward Harbord* (1781-1835), p.2. https://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1790-1820/member/harbord-hon-edward-1781-1835

[57] Harbord's appearances in Parliament were neither serious nor frequent and there is no record of any significant speeches or committee work.

[58] NRO, GTN 5/9/9/13 Edward Harbord to Lady Mary Suffield, [undated, 1809?].

Magnanimously Harbord considered his father's thoughts: 'I am quite as sorry for the disappointment on his account as on my own; he certainly had this first step to my political advancement much at heart.' Clearly, despite their differences, Harbord's feelings of regret at missing the opportunity were as much directed at his father's dashed hopes as his own, implying a sense of gratitude and respect for his father's support and an obligation to fulfil his expectations of success and progression at the highest levels.

The death of Lord Suffield in 1810 brought Harbord and his brother William's differences further into focus, yet again centred on Harbord's refusal to acknowledge any 'dependence' on family. Harbord's insistence on adopting an 'independent' public style had continued to annoy both his brother and father, so much so that Lord Suffield left neither land not money to his younger son. Clearly saddened, his mother urged him to accept one thousand pounds from her own funds: 'This grieves me, but in his lifetime he did handsomely by you, and it is not for *me* to cast a shade on his conduct.'[59] Despite pledges of support from the constituency, Harbord informed William of his intention to resign from his Yarmouth seat at the next election. An acrimonious exchange between the brothers immediately ensued indicating that Harbord considered himself an equal to his older brother, possessing an agenda of his own unhindered by his status as younger sibling. A tableau of two opposing masculinities was becoming increasingly evident. William, now Lord Suffield, expounded:

> You have told me that it is your intention to withdraw from Parliament, but I cannot feel satisfied without calling your attention to the subject, and begging you will candidly ask yourself whether, considering all the money that has been expended to bring you in Yarmouth … you can think yourself justified in thus abandoning the interests of your family, which cannot be supported by anyone so well as by you.[60]

Harbord was visceral in his response:

> I have only to answer that the money so spent has, I think, been well spent. Your Lord Lieutenancy and Petre's Receiver Generalship have been the consequence. In point of pecuniary advantage to the family the Receivership General pays more than the interest of the capital sunk; if I

[59] NRO, GTN 5/9/14/2 Lady Suffield to Edward Harbord, 19 February 1810.
[60] NRO, GTN 5/9/8/6 William Assheton, 2nd Lord Suffield to Edward Harbord, 2 October 1811.

should take my seat for any other place, I shall do so upon terms which will not render me amenable to anyone for my political conduct.[61]

The passionate and confrontational manner with which Harbord reacted to such castigations can perhaps be explained by the event of his marriage a year earlier and a sense that he was effectively free from his brother's restraint. In 1809, following his return from Portugal, Harbord married Georgiana Venables Vernon, the sole heiress of a vast £90,000 fortune, a scenario which effectively replaced one form of financial dependence with another highlighting further contradictions in Harbord's claims to 'independence'. The acquiring of such a fortune through marriage was difficult enough for men blessed with the advantage of primogeniture, but for a younger son such as Harbord who had no expectations of acceding to the family peerage, to make such a match was highly unusual. Harbord's situation was all the more fortuitous in that he appears to have been much admired by his parents-in- law and welcomed into their family without any suspicion that his motives might be dishonourable. Fortuitously, the situation appears to have suited all parties and rather than feeling emasculated by the reality of a future lifestyle financed by his wife, Harbord appeared much emboldened by his new circumstances. Ben Griffin has shown that there was no sense of disgrace in living off an income which derived from 'land or investments' even if it was 'generated by property brought to the marriage by a wife' and in this light Harbord was free to continue his unique interpretation of 'independent' manliness unfettered by either the demands of obligation or the embarrassment of stigma.[62]

In the few years following his resignation from Parliament, Harbord avoided any further wrath from his brother by spending most of his time away from Norfolk, mainly with his wife's family at their Derbyshire estate and then as a resident of Dorsetshire 'where he reared a great head of game, according to the Norfolk plan'.[63] During this period of removal, Harbord together with his young family, pursued a simple somewhat quirky existence where he paid little attention to either his own aristocratic status or his wife's vast inheritance, though happily enjoying the financial prop of that fund. Free from the lecturing of his father and brother, this was a time to reflect, reinvent and discover the kind of manly characteristics he wished to be

[61] NRO, GTN 5/9/8/7 Edward Harbord to William Assheton, 2nd Lord Suffield, [undated copy made by Edward's wife Georgiana).

[62] B. Griffin, *The Politics of Gender in Victorian Britain: Masculinity, Political Culture and the Struggle for Women's Rights* (Cambridge, 2012), p.172.

[63] The couple were happily married and in 1813 Georgiana gave birth to a son Edward Vernon, the first of three children. Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.43, 48.

known by. Bacon describes these years as 'almost barren of incident' the effects of seclusion diverting Harbord towards 'the resources of his own mind for occupation'.[64] Essentially without a formal job of work, it was during this period that Harbord first developed an interest in helping the poor, writing pamphlets promoting social improvements and pursuing the traditional practical skills of working men, in particular an enthusiasm for metal working in iron, silver and gold.[65] At this time, explains Begiato, 'the labouring rural manly body' was viewed favourably in contrast to the inactive, idle, aristocratic form and it was not unusual for elite men to distance themselves from this negative image by displaying a similar appearance to the 'plebeian' man.[66] Surrounded by his family the working man epitomised virility and domesticity, an image Harbord was keen to adopt as he toiled at the anvil. In 1816, one grateful recipient of a 'beautiful ring' enthused: 'I am really very much obliged to you … having given you so much trouble, for I saw enough of your workshop, I know how much labour you went here.'[67]

Relations between Harbord and his brother were cordial but cool during this period, each doggedly unmoved in their views. Harbord and his family were occasionally entertained by his brother and wife Lady Caroline at Blickling Hall, Norfolk but is clear that the personal and political differences between the brothers continued to trouble them both. There is an indication of this in a six- page draft letter written by Harbord in heavy blotchy ink with large sections frantically scored out. He wrote:

> The way in which we parted yesterday & the impression made upon my mind by the conversation that had passed between us, renders it necessary that we should come to a better understanding before we meet again upon the terms of friendship & affection.[68]

An argument having clearly taken place, Harbord challenged: 'Is this handsome conduct towards your Brother? Is it possible for any man of honour, your Brother or not, to submit silently to such charges.'[69] Evidently, Harbord was neither deferential nor restrained, strongly indicating a masculine character of passionate straight

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[64] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.48.
[65] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.49. One such pamphlet on the subject of savings banks was entitled *A word to the wise among the Labouring Classes resident at Blandford and its vicinity.*
[66] Begiato, 'Between Poise and Power,' pp.139,140.
[67] NRO, GTN 5/9/9/8 Harriet Frampton to Edward Harbord, 7 October 1816.
[68] NRO, GTN 5/9/14/1 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, October 1817.
[69] NRO, GTN 5/9/14/1 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, October 1817. It is not known whether a final version of the emotionally charged epistle ever reached his brother. The argument appears to centre on William's belief that Harbord had 'become possessed of property by unfair means'.

forwardness and the ability not to be cowed under the pressure of his brother's superior position.

In the years leading up to the death of George III two major events occurred which crystallised Harbord's 'independent' approach to public life and the masculine values which would form the basis of his conduct in later years – his experience as a candidate in the Norwich Parliamentary Election of 1818 and his reaction to the events at Peterloo in 1819. On the dissolution of Parliament in June 1818, Harbord was invited by the Ministerial (Tory) party to stand for election as Member of Parliament for the city of Norwich. Following the resignation of several other hopefuls and in line with the party's wish to promote a man more closely connected to the city, Harbord appeared a favourable choice. His aristocratic pedigree, family links to Lord Castlereagh and being the son of Sir Harbord Harbord, admired Norwich MP for over thirty years gave him the ideal credentials.[70] An application was made to his brother Lord Suffield to determine whether or not he could be induced to come forward and a subscription was duly raised. In many ways it is surprising that Harbord agreed to the contest being critical of the policies pursued by the incumbent administration dominated by Castlereagh, but it is possible that in the chaotic restructuring of post war England he saw an opportunity to make a difference. [71] His underlying desire to please his brother and patch up their family differences appears to have clouded his judgment regarding being funded and promoted by a party to which he had no political sympathy and the implications once again for his supposed 'independence'.

In the days before the vote, Harbord was thrust into the centre of a furious three-way debate where his adamance to 'independence' was questioned by the electorate and proved nothing short of political suicide. Supporters of the government were keen to emphasise his connections to Lord Castlereagh, whilst the Freemen of the city admired his commitment to independent principles and liberal views. Another very vocal group were scornful of what they perceived to be

[70] Lady Caroline was sister to Emily Hobart, wife of Lord Castlereagh. They were the daughters of John Hobart, second Earl of Buckinghamshire.

[71] The long- awaited peace of 1815 'created severe economic [and political] dislocation' resulting in outbreaks of radical protest. Unemployment, poor harvests and the passing of the Corn Law of 1815 aroused fury amongst the labouring classes and agitation from a radical press and reforming clubs led by men such as William Cobbett and Sir Francis Burdett. In January 1817, alarmed by an attempt on the life of the Regent, the Government carried through Parliament a Habeas Corpus Suspension Act and an Act banning most public meetings. As Leader of the House of Commons and Foreign Secretary, Castlereagh was the face of Lord Liverpool's public policy. See F. O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century: British Political and Social History 1688-1832* (London, 1997), pp.251-252.

an utterly duplicitous manifesto. Harbord had allowed himself to be manoeuvred into an impossible situation claiming that his qualifications were 'humble' in an attempt to placate all sides. Speaking in the market- place on 13 June 1818, Harbord attempted to locate his political position and underline his manly credentials:

> There is not a more independent man in this City than myself … I am pledged to no party: neither am I prepared to pledge myself to any particular line of politics … I can only assure you that my public conduct in Parliament will be guided by honest and conscientious feeling; and, in any concern of this city, by what I conceive to be your best interests.[72]

The electorate's reactions were mixed, some emphasising his moral message proven in his campaigns on behalf of the poor.[73] Others associated him with the harsh measures imposed by his brother on tenants at Gunton and his connection with the government and Castlereagh. This situation was worsened by a letter to the press from Castlereagh calling for his kinsman's valued assistance followed by a public rally led by Sir Samuel Romilly decrying the alleged crimes of Castlereagh and all those associated with him.[74] The *Norwich Mercury* however, came out for Harbord:

> Mr. Harbord is a man of most respectable character, and one whose manners and address are calculated to attach the class of persons upon whom they are designed to act. He has reserved to himself most unequivocally and most decidedly the freedom of exercising his judgement upon all political questions. He has given no pledge, but has spoken uprightly and independently.[75]

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[72] NRO, GTN 5/9/18/1-3 Public Notices regarding Norwich Election 1818: *To the Loyal and Independent Electors of the City of Norwich.*

[73] NRO, GTN 5/9/18/1-3 *Public Notices.* The Freeman and Freeholders were strong supporters of Harbord asking the electorate: 'Can a man of such feelings be any other than a good Man? Can a man of such principles be considered a Friend of Oppression? Can a man of such noble principles be an Enemy of Freedom? No! my Fellow Citizens, such principles as these declare a *kind and noble heart* – if such principles become him, who might represent our Ancient and Honourable City – then, FREEMEN and FREEHOLDERS, give your warmest support to Mr. Harbord'.

[74] Norfolk Heritage Centre (NHC), Coleman Collection, *Norwich Election Budget No. 1, 17 June 1818 Concerning a Selection of all Addresses, Squibs &c Published during the Contest between Messrs Smith & Gurney – and Mr. Harbord,* p.5.

[75] *Norwich Mercury*, 13 June 1813 quoted in Bacon, *Memoir,* p.59. *The Norwich Mercury* was edited by Richard Bacon.

The tipping point came following a burst of ill-considered political canvassing to the Whig and Tory factions. Addressing the Blue and White (Whig party) Harbord declared:

> Sir I can assure you I come forward to support the principles of Freedom, I abhor Lord Castlereagh's measures, and quite a Whig in my heart. If you return me, I shall support the principles which my Father supported in the early part of his life.

To the Purple and Orange (Tory party) he proposed:

> Sir you know the attachment of my family to the principles of Mr. Pitt, you know my intimate connection with Lord Castlereagh and his friend; it is my interest and principle to support the present administration. I mean to do so heart and soul.[76]

Reaction from all sides was indignant. From the liberals, 'Sir, a man who comes supported by Government, Placemen and Pensioners cannot be a friend to the people.' Others were more vociferous in highlighting an inconsistent campaign: 'What do you think of the base duplicity of a Man who blows hot and cold with the same breath? Who pretends one thing to one man and another to another?'[77] Such was the public anger, that on a tour through central Norwich Harbord was showered with stones, one of which he caught and held up to the crowd, in a gesture of submission. The ordeal was effectively over and on hearing the result, Bacon recounted, Harbord 'wept when the certainty of his lost election was announced to him'[78]. His farewell address to the upper echelons of Norwich society was typically self-effacing and thoughtful:

> I retire Gentlemen, with sensations more of pride and satisfaction than of disappointment and regret. I have performed a public duty. I have not been treading the path of ambition, or following the mean course of private interest … Happiness is the object of us all; and the little that I have seen of what is called Public Life, inclines me to believe that we do not live entirely for ourselves.[79]

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[76] NHC, Coleman Collection, Norwich Election Budget No. 1*, Specimens of Mr. Harbord's Canvassing*, p.12.
[77] NHC, Coleman Collection, Norwich Election Budget No. 1, *Specimens,* p.12.
[78] Harbord received 1475 votes, losing to W. Smith and R. Gurney who gained 2089 and 2032 respectively. Bacon, *Memoir,* p.60.
[79] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.61.

The experience of Norwich was a difficult lesson and defined Harbord's views on the dubious merits of taking up a political career: 'I have no taste for office; I would rather be a good rather than a great man, and there appears to me great difficulty in being both.'[80] In a reflective letter to his friend Bacon, he concluded:

> The time is long past, when as a very young man, and a younger brother whose fortunes were afloat, I might have engaged myself in a political career, under a Minister whose sentiments I should probably have imbibed if employed by him. I devoutly thank the stars which directed me in a different course.[81]

The moment had undoubtedly shaken his thoughts and demonstrated a side of his character already seen during his residency in Dorset – a compassion for his fellow men and a desire to improve their lives:

> To be known as a man who had been chiefly instrumental in abolishing the Slave Trade, in amending the Poor Laws, or in conferring any permanent benefit upon that class which most needs our assistance, would, I own, be to me an ample meed for any personal sacrifices I could make.[82]

In the summer of 1819, violent events involving innocent civilians at St. Peter's Field, Manchester profoundly affected Harbord and bolstered his intention to position himself as a man whose mission it was to help the less fortunate.[83] 'Peterloo', writes John Bew, 'was indefensible; the protest had been entirely peaceful' and as a consequence there was an immediate outcry among radicals, reformers and the general public with mass meetings held up and down the country. The difficult task of justifying the actions of the local magistracy and yeomanry fell to Lord Castlereagh, prominent figure in Lord Liverpool's government and Leader of the House of Commons.[84] The official response to the massacre from the County of

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[80] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.62.

[81] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.63. Harbord refers to the post of Private Secretary to Lord Castlereagh which he was offered but never took up.

[82] Bacon, *Memoir* p.64.

[83] On 16 August 1819, thousands of working men and women assembled in the heat to hear the radical orator Henry Hunt. Alarmed by the swelling numbers local Magistrates took the step of reading the Riot Act. As the tension mounted, the magistrates panicked and called in the yeomanry to arrest the speakers and seize their banners. Intoxicated with drink and military bravado the yeomanry rode into the throng swinging their sabres, trampling women and children and hacking indiscriminately at whoever was in their path. Eleven persons died and hundreds more were maimed and injured.

[84] J. Bew, *Castlereagh: The Biography of a Statesman* (London, 2011), p.463-464. The government's response to the unrest was a punitive legislative programme which became known as the 'Six Acts'. 'Hugely unpopular, these acts prohibited unauthorised military drilling, severely restricted public

Norfolk came in the form of a 'Declaration' signed by leaders of the ministerial party and local gentry including Harbord's brother Lord Suffield, acting in his capacity as Lord Lieutenant but crucially as loyal supporter to his brother-in-law Robert Stewart, Lord Castlereagh. The tone of the Declaration expressed disapproval of those assembling in an 'unlawful and riotous manner'. It also cast doubt on the merits of a proposed tribunal to investigate the actions of the perpetrators on the grounds that it would 'become the means of increasing … the spirit of insubordination … and of weakening that respect and attachment which the people of this country have always felt for the constituted authorities of the realm'.[85] Harbord saw matters very differently. In a letter to his friend Bacon, Harbord expressed outrage at the government's attempt to stall a tribunal: 'It seems that every dirty, shabby, low artifice has been resorted to for the purpose of shielding their [the magistrates and military] conduct from investigation.' He expanded:

> I shall not intrude my opinions where I think they can be of no service, but if called upon to declare them, I have no notion of concealing them, or shrinking from the discussion of a subject in which we all as Englishmen must feel an interest.[86]

Pressed to support the Declaration, Harbord declined, insisting on maintaining an independent stance 'unconnected with party' and in support of 'humanity and justice', and thereby divesting himself of any remaining political connections with his brother.[87] Lord Suffield's response was swift, chiding his younger sibling:

> I must confess that nothing in my life has occurred more truly and really to *vex, mortify* and hurt me than the line of conduct you took on that day; it has made a *deep* impression on me … that you should identify yourself with a party, the political enemies of your Brother and late Father.[88]

Replying at length with clarity and judgement, Harbord annihilated his brother's accusations:

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meetings, gave local magistrates the right to search for arms, increased the cost of running newspapers and printing pamphlets, increased penalties for sedition and sped up the prosecution process.' Bew, p.464.

[85] NRO, GTN 5/9/23 Printed copy of the *Norfolk Declaration* signed by Lord Suffield [2nd Lord in capacity of Lord Lieutenant] and others, and with written amendments by Edward Harbord, 25 October 1819.

[86] Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.85-86 Edward Harbord to Richard Bacon, 25 September 1819.

[87] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.88.

[88] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.91. Lord Suffield's letter of 2 November 1819 is missing from the Gunton archive.

> In spite of my public declaration that I hold no connection with the Whigs, am I to be identified with them because they happen to agree in opinion with me? Am I then so incapable of forming an opinion, that if by accident I should have formed an opinion of my own, am I to abandon that opinion merely because I find your political opponents have adopted the same?[89]

His anger increased assuming both an air of intellectual superiority and responsibility for his country:

> You should recollect, that I think it essential to the safety of our Constitution, of our liberty, of our prosperity, and perhaps our lives, that a particular party should be checked in their frantic career of substituting might for right; that the poor deluded people in the meantime should be led to suppose confidence in their legitimate rulers, men of rank, of wealth, of education … I do not pretend infallibility of judgement – I may be wrong, but is your judgement infallible, and may you not be in error? If I am not capable of forming a right opinion at thirty-eight years of age, I should be glad to know when my maturity of perception is to arrive.[90]

From this point, Harbord and Suffield had little further to say to each other. The Ministerial party, perhaps with an eye to the future, did not cast off Harbord completely however, inviting him to be their independent champion of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation, but deeply distressed by the quarrel with his brother he declined any further direct involvement in Norfolk politics.[91] It was around this time that Harbord became acquainted with John Joseph Gurney, a close friendship which was to last until his death in 1835. In a letter written shortly after Harbord's rejection by his brother's family, Gurney provided reassurance:

> My dear Friend, I am grieved at hearing of thy being involved, by thy late manly and interesting conduct at Norwich, in any personal and private difficulties, but yet I can truly rejoice in thy having publicly asserted the unalienable right of man – TO THINK FOR HIMSELF.[92]

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[89] NRO, GTN 5/9/8/11 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 3 November 1819.
[90] NRO, GTN 5/9/8/11 Edward Harbord to Lord Suffield, 3 November 1819.
[91] In 1820, Harbord was invited to represent Parliament for the Dorset seat of Shaftesbury where he resided. In this role he was a popular MP, only relinquishing the seat on his accession to the peerage in 1821. On hearing that Harbord was to sit in Parliament, the issue of 'independence' still rankled with his brother: 'Thank you for letting me know your intention of standing for Shaftesbury; I hope you will succeed, as you seem to wish it. You are fortunate in finding a place, where no questions are asked as to political principles, and no money required!' NRO, GTN 5/9/23 [undated].
[92] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.98.

In early August 1821 Lord Suffield died without issue and Harbord succeeded to the title and estates, becoming the third Lord Suffield. Bacon wrote:

> The heir and successor came down to Gunton two days before the funeral. For some hours … he sat in a small room, from the windows of which he saw the yawning vault surrounded by the fresh earth thrown up to open the grave of his brother. He often spoke of these hours, as hours of the most profound, awful, and wholesome contemplation to which his mind had ever been subjected. His thoughts were raised from corruption to incorruption, from mortal to immortality; and perhaps they fixed even more deeply than heretofore those religious sentiments that had already taken a firm root in his mind.[93]

The 'independent' man was finally able to act with the freedom, authority and conscience to effect real change without challenge from either his father or brother.

Lord and Father

This section examines the transition made by Harbord from the relative anonymity of 'independent' gentleman to his accession as Lord Suffield, peer responsible for the management of vast estates and the lives of those who lived on them. This role demanded a masculine authority which would ensure both the smooth running of affairs and the earning of respect from those who served him. The empathy he had felt for the people at Peterloo now evolved into a sense of active responsibility for his tenants and labourers. Moreover, argue French and Rothery, this was Harbord's opportunity as a father to 'rehearse other societal values … ''gentlemanly'' behaviour, ''respectability'' in manners, friendships, and public associations, ''responsibility'' in running the household and … ''duty'' in undertaking various public offices, extending to sitting in Parliament'.[94] All of these masculine qualities would set an example to his sons and provide a guide on how to behave as an elite man.

The period of solitary reflection in the days before his brother's funeral afforded Harbord not only an opportunity to lament the years of antagonism between the two of them but also to shape his ideas regarding the kind of Lord he wanted to be, and to satisfy his most earnest wish that others share in his prosperity.[95] There were however two areas of concern which focused his

[93] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.139.
[94] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.231.
[95] Harbord's father and brother were known for their draconian methods at Gunton Hall particularly regarding the punishment of poachers and the payment of pitifully low wages during times of high

immediate attention. Firstly, unease regarding his position as Commanding Officer of the Local Militia, and secondly a desire to make clear that he would exert no unfair influence over his tenantry in relation to political opinion. The events at Peterloo in 1819 had left a permanent scar on Harbord's consciousness, and according to Bacon, he now considered the 'possibility of his regiment being entangled in a similar service', and the inevitable conflict he would feel 'between his military duty, and his conscientious feeling as a man'.[96]

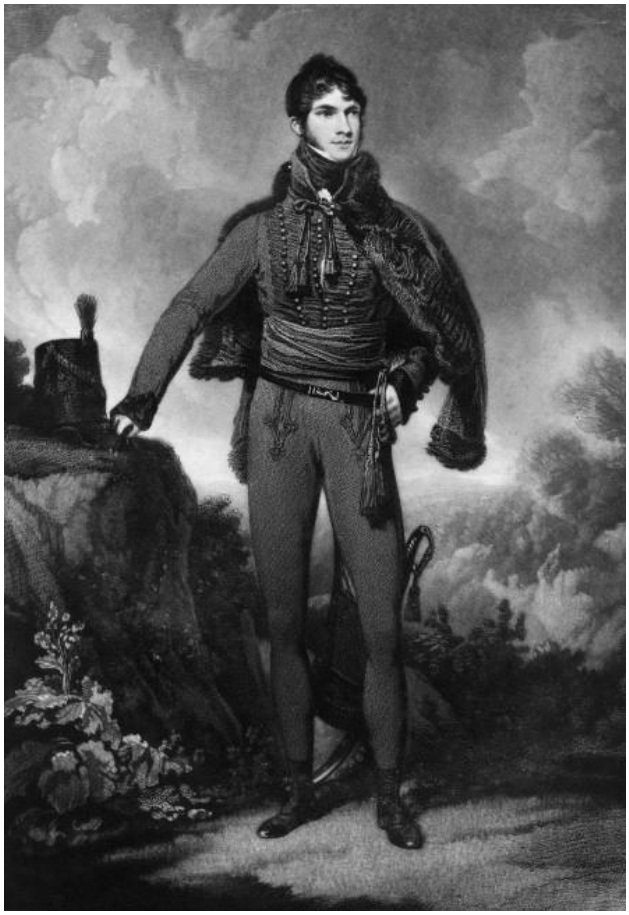

FIGURE 14- EDWARD HARBORD, 3RD LORD SUFFIELD IN THE UNIFORM OF LT. COLONEL, 1ST EAST NORFOLK MILITIA, RIFLE CORPS (NORFOLK LIBRARY SERVICE)

Harbord composed a letter to Colonel Wodehouse, newly appointed Lord Lieutenant of the County of Norfolk:

grain prices. During Harbord's electoral campaign at Norwich in 1818 the crowd lost no time in reminding him, 'Let anyone apply at Suffield, Gunton or Blickling Hall, and they will soon find their way to Aylsham Bridewell, if they ask for bread.' NHC, Coleman Collection, *Norwich Election Budget, No. II,* June 1818, pp.27-28.

[96] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.141.

> I have long since resolved to execute no military office ... I beg further to assure you that unwilling as I should be to fill any situation of responsibility under the present administration, more especially one of a military nature.[97]

Further disassociation with the Tory interest was manifested in the swift publication of a pamphlet entitled *Reasons for opposition to the Principles and Measures of the present Administration* which was circulated amongst his tenants. The express purpose of the tract was to inform them of his own independent views, engage general attention and above all encourage individual political judgement.[98] His view, explains Bacon, was that 'an honest assertion of an upright judgement would always be to him (Lord S.) the surest and best recommendation'.[99] Charles summed up his father's approach to these early days: 'He was always fair, equable and anxious to see a question from every side, and he invariably leaned towards the weaker and least able to fight for themselves.'[100]

Harbord wasted no time in familiarising himself with his land and responsibilities, keen to differentiate himself from the hard line stance of his late father and brother. An early visit to the industrialising Lancashire town of Middleton came as a genuine surprise to its people unused to such interest from their Norfolk aristocrat:

> Unfortunately, when you came down here, your Lordship's political character was not sufficiently known to be fully appreciated, indeed, we had been so accustomed to experience abuse and treachery from those, who …assume the title of "Gentleman" that we were not prepared to render justice to any stranger who appeared in that character.[101]

They were particularly impressed with their new Lord's progressive and independent views which were reported at a (Norfolk) County Meeting:

> In stating the theory, and opposing <u>the practice</u> of the constitution, in insisting upon the necessity of a Reformed Parliament, and in your open declaration that at Manchester "the people's throats were cut", Your Lordship spoke the language of truth and spoke it well, and … if your manly

[97] NRO, GTN 5/9/48/3 Lord Suffield to Colonel Wodehouse, 25 August 1821.
[98] There are no copies of the pamphlet in the Gunton archive, although we can assume that its message was innovative and encouraging of alternative political views. Hitherto, the occupiers of all the Gunton estate farms had been expected to vote with their landlord on the Tory side.
[99] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.143.
[100] Suffield, *Memories,* p.25.
[101] NRO, GTN 5/9/49/11 John Buckley to Lord Suffield, 11 February 1822.

> example were tenaciously followed …by those who aught to be the guardians of the people's rights, an inestimable impression would soon be made upon that mass of corruption the House of Commons.[102]

Enthused and encouraged by these reactions, Harbord looked to the condition of the twelve-thousand -acre estate at Gunton, Norfolk as the primary focus of his position and influence. 'The ownership of land', explain Richard Wilson and Alan Mackley, 'underpinned the aristocracy's national and local political power … political authority was displayed in the houses they built, landowners using the discourse of architecture and planned landscape to demonstrate their ascendancy over tenant and employee alike.' Above all, in developing the Gunton estate, Harbord was keen to create a comfortable and attractive home for his family and an impressive place for friends, colleagues and community acquaintances to visit.[103]

Harbord understood the necessity of putting his own personal stamp on dynastic property as a display of his aristocratic birth-right and confirmation of his position as the managerial figurehead of a large rural community. Backed by his wife's large personal fortune Harbord had plenty of scope to fund grand scale improvements and create a comfortable family home in keeping with his aristocratic status. Over the next fifteen years a major extension was added to the north of the house with decorative bows and iron verandas, giving the house the air of a row of houses on Park Lane with further improvements to the park including the introduction of deer and a herd of thoroughbred cattle. Plans for follies were also drawn up by London architect Robert Jearrad and enacted by William Gilpin, a well-known arbiter of the picturesque landscape. The building of a one hundred- and twenty-foot-high Observatory Tower on Pheasant Hill to be used as both a belvedere and a lookout to police the park was the subject of much correspondence and discussion between Lord, architect and builder. Mr Jearrard wrote: 'I have kept it simple that it may be well done & bold in its Character that it may not be unworthy in so noble a Domain.'[104] The Tower proved extremely useful as a lookout during the riots of 1830 when a mob threatened to destroy the saw mill at Gunton. Flying a red flag, Harbord mobilised and armed over a hundred of his labourers who had remained steadfast. A display of strenuous confrontational leadership was

[102] NRO, GTN 5/9/49/11 John Buckley (Middleton) to Lord Suffield, 11 February 1822. The death of his brother enabled Harbord to speak more openly (and in sympathy with the Whig cause) regarding the need for parliamentary reform.
[103] R. Wilson and A. Mackley, *Creating Paradise: The Building of the English Country House 1660-1880* (London, 2000), p.354.
[104] NRO, GTN 5/9/36/2 Robert Jearrad to Lord Suffield, February to July 1828 [date unknown].

successful in frightening off the mob, his son Charles recalling one man saying, 'we saw your *bloody* flag, which we knew was to be the sign that you would give no quarter; we knew your courage and dared not encounter you.'[105]

FIGURE 15- GUNTON PARK, NORFOLK AFTER 1825 (BACON, MEMOIR)

The finished effect of such extensive works at Gunton served to illustrate modernity, magnificence and good taste, described by Amanda Vickery 'as a visible demonstration of morality and nobility of mind'.[106] Investment in the fabric of the Gunton estate also served to reinforce Harbord's commitment to the lives of the people who lived in the locality. In 1826, he established a school in the nearby village of Thorpe Market for the education of both boys and girls, but it was his deep concern for the plight of the poor which continually preoccupied his thoughts and actions. As an agricultural landowner living through a period of acute economic stress his responsibility was deeply felt. The decade following the end of the Napoleonic Wars witnessed some of the worst agricultural distress since the late 1790's and the introduction of Corn Laws in 1815 worsened the condition of the masses to a wretched state.[107] Harbord expressed feelings of uselessness:

[105] Suffield, *Memories,* pp.32-33.
[106] Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (Yale, 2010), p.143.
[107] The passage of the Corn Law of 1815 stated that 'no foreign corn could be sold in Britain until the domestic price had attained 80 shillings a quarter. The object was 'to protect the landed interest against falling prices', and its consequence 'to keep the price of bread artificially high.' Inevitably, 'it

> I am, Mr. Bacon, one of the idlest men living, and I reconcile myself to this useless state of existence by finding a great advantage from it in point of health, and by the hope that it may eventually enable me to do all that will be required of me for my family, and my *little best* for the public during a few short years.[108]

Furthering the 'independent' position he had pursued as a young man, Harbord devoted himself to identifying and addressing what he perceived to be the causes of entrenched rural poverty and brought about as many improvements to the lives of his own tenants as possible.[109] His role as Lord 'accentuated the ''masculine'' qualities of leadership, authority and judgement', and in particular, suggest French and Rothery, provided a fatherly focus for 'the ''duties'' of paternal self-control, self-restraint and (more generally) self-presentation'.[110] 'My father', remarked son Charles, 'had been a model landlord. He put all the farms and cottages into thorough repair, made roads, built a wharf on the canal at Antingham and erected a bone-crushing mill which proved most profitable to the farmers.'[111]

In September 1824, Harbord experienced the unexpected loss of his adored wife Georgiana, Lady Suffield. His suffering and despair revealed a loving and sentimental bond with his family, and a sense that his entire *raison d'etre* rested on a deeply held resolution to provide the best possible life for them all. Supportive words from friends suggest his strong emotional attachment to both wife and children and a capacity to draw on his own inner resilience during a time of grief.

His friend Lord Belgrave wrote:

> My Dear Suffield … I have not remained unconcerned at the loss you have sustained, and which I know from your domestic habits you will feel most

showed that there was one law for the rich' – protectionism and thus security - and another for the poor – the free market, and thus poverty and insecurity.' The passage of the Corn Laws resulted in a pattern of riots. O'Gorman, *Long Eighteenth Century,* p.251.

[108] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.168.

[109] Harbord believed the problems of the poor resulted not only from the effects of the Corn Laws and high taxation but also from the enforcement of a Poor Law which rewarded idleness and the fathering of large families; the lack of apportioned land for the poor to farm their own produce, and the terrible consequences of falling foul of unnecessarily harsh game laws.

[110] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.231.

[111] Suffield, *Memories,* pp.75,76.

> severely – but … the foundation of your hopes & the principles of your actions will sustain you under the might of your affliction.[112]

His good friends Richard Bacon, John Joseph Gurney and Dr Stephen Lushington endeavoured to draw him out of his grief with projects of public import but he conceded:

> I would not willingly shrink from the performance of any duty, or carelessly lose an opportunity of doing good. But at a time when dainties can scarcely awaken my appetite, the dry crust has little chance of inducing a hearty meal. Nothing interests me at present in any great degree, except my dear little children at my elbow, who I thank God are all that the fondest and most anxious parent can desire.[113]

Left alone with the solace of his children, Harbord's behaviour demonstrated both a commitment to domesticity and a 'connectedness' to both family and friends, behaviours which were features of 'Christian masculinity' and the 'man of feeling'. Joanne Bailey has shown that these two models of masculinity had common features 'since the religious objectives of Christian manhood fitted neatly with the traits of sensibility' and this encouraged men to indulge in a 'mix of ''types'' of manhood where 'feeling, genteel sensitivity and benevolence were promoted … combined with traditional admirable masculine virtues such as fortitude, stoicism and courage'.[114]

The years 1825-1829 present an opportunity to observe Harbord, a father himself to many sons, and consider how his approach to parenting differed from that of his own father at the turn of the century. In 1825, his thoughts turned to future prospects and the formal education of his two eldest sons. 'These dynastic concerns', assert French and Rothery, 'amplified the importance of fatherhood in defining, shaping and reinforcing adult male identity', and illustrate the all-important matter of continued authority and legacy.[115] The deaths of brother William and wife Georgiana pointed to Harbord's own mortality and the need to ensure that the family

[112] NRO, GTN 5/9/56/11 Lord Belgrave to Lord Suffield, 1 October 1824.
[113] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.206. Edward was left with two sons and a daughter.
[114] J. Bailey, ''A Very Sensible Man': Imagining Fatherhood in England c.1750-1830', *The Journal of the Historical Association,* (2010), pp. 271-272. James Fordyce's *Addresses to Young Men* (1777) actively encouraged this type of masculinity.
[115] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.212.

heir was suitably prepared to take over the role of Lord when the time came.[116] Most pressing, was a decision on whether Master Edward should receive a public education at Eton as he himself had done, or be tutored privately.[117] Bacon describes the lengthy debate between himself and Harbord on the relative merits of the two options and their suitability for a young boy's development. In a series of long letters to his friend, he propounded: 'The scheme of a public education is a vast loss of time, and does not comprehend what is chiefly necessary to an English Nobleman, who *must* be a Statesman, and who *may* be a member of the Government.'[118] His main objection was that establishments such as Eton, whilst engendering an elite male community based on traditional classical instruction, were lagging behind in preparing those young men with the skills for their entry into a fast developing world, where a broad knowledge and strong intellect were increasingly demanded.

> Youth, my Lord, is the age for such attainment as belong to the memory; and not to read, write, and speak the modern languages, French and Italian at least, and German is now very nearly allied to disgrace in a finished gentleman. Consider my Lord, the power it gives a statesman![119]

In the end, Bacon's powers of persuasion did not succeed and the decision was made to send Master Edward to Eton with a private tutor just as Harbord himself had experienced during the 1790's. Harbord summed up his thoughts on the matter:

> Of evils, the probable evils which (you cannot deny) belong to a public and to a private system of education, give me the most *liberal* and the most gentlemanlike; and if I may have either a prodigy of learning with little learning from men, or a little learning from books and a large stock of experience, knowledge of the world, and good taste, in the station of life to which my boy is born to fill, give me the latter.[120]

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[116] It is likely that the suicide of his relative Lord Castlereagh in August 1822 also affected Harbord, although there is no record of his reaction to the news or whether he attended the funeral at Westminster Abbey.

[117] Up to the age of twelve Edward Vernon's education took place at Hall Place, Beaconsfield under the watchful eye of Reverend Bradford. In his half-yearly report, the clergyman warned, 'I have on the whole reason to be satisfied though there are some points in which I think more might have been done if Edward had been uniformly diligent – I have to lament that he occasionally permits the bad examples of others to lead him to be idle or at least to be careless.' NRO, GTN 5/9/50/40. Reverend W Bradford to Lord Suffield, 28 July 1823.

[118] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.222.

[119] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.223.

[120] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.227.

Hence, the ideal graduate of the preferred education route would be:

> A highly finished scholar, as fond of letters, and generally as well informed upon all subjects, as he can be consistently with the possession of an extensive acquaintance, the manners and mind of a gentleman, and good taste, which is neither more nor less than a natural good sense, polished by observation and experience.[121]

With expectations high, Master Edward Vernon had much to contemplate as he prepared to enter Eton. There is no record of correspondence between father and son during this time, but it is likely that Harbord would have taken a keen interest in his son's progress and development, knowing from his own time at Eton the importance of paternal interest and positive reinforcement. There is a sense that whilst he would not have inflicted the disappointment he himself had felt by his own father's absence at Montem, the expectation of a closer confidence between father and son was tacitly understood.

The expression of fatherly emotion was a key element of Harbord's parenting style, his participation in family life enthusiastic. In September 1826, Harbord married for a second time and over the next nine years his new wife Emily gave birth to seven more healthy children.[122] The death of eleven-month -old Arthur in July 1828 however caused a deeply emotion reaction from his father. Attending the private funeral alone, Harbord gazed upon the dead infant and eulogised:

> What a lovely placid countenance did I behold! … How calm! How angelic! I want nothing more than to reconcile me to his departure. May the rest of my life qualify me to look at this poor child in his coffin! I shall then by the mercy of God through Jesus Christ meet him hereafter in a better world.[123]

Such an outpouring of grief in an age of high infant mortality suggests that Harbord's role as father was shaped by an intense religiosity which ran deeply and described by French and Rothery as 'add[ing] a distinct ideological edge to family life'.[124] In the new year of 1829 Harbord's role as a father was put to the test in the form of a serious rift with his eldest son Edward Vernon. The episode is particularly important as it demonstrates how Harbord's ''own sense of self'' sprang from the

[121] Suffield, *Memories,* p.39.
[122] Emily was the daughter of Evelyn Shirley of Eatington Park, Warwickwhire. The Shirley and Vernon families were long acquainted and the match, viewed favourably by all parties, was a great success.
[123] Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.274-275.
[124] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.233.

respect of his dependants and that on this occasion his position was both disregarded and undermined by his son's behaviour.[125] Unlike the rift with his own father which had raged over differing political allegiances and his determination to assert 'independence', the dispute with his eldest son rested on the fundamental masculine values of honesty, trust and self-control. Not only were these values vital to the future credibility of the family name but, in the abandonment of them, Edward Vernon rejected everything his father considered important in a man.

In his sixteenth year, Edward Vernon, the heir to Gunton was on the cusp of adulthood and all attention was focused on his making a smooth transition to engagement with his family responsibilities and the wider world. 'Sons, particularly eldest sons', write Rothery and French, 'were reminded directly by parents of their dynastic function' and it was expected that the sound moral values which had been instilled in young minds during childhood would gradually allow fathers to step back, confident in their offspring's good sense.[126] The discovery, therefore, that Edward Vernon had deliberately conducted a clandestine romance with the daughter of a much deplored family brought his father to boiling point.[127] In Harbord's view the unfortunate episode indicated a deeply worrying setback in his heir's progression from boyish dependence to manly competence. In particular, it displayed his inability to make a sound judgement in tune with the values placed on him as an important member of the family. In a lengthy epistle he set out strong objections to his son's duplicitous behaviour, his perceived ingratitude and the belief that Edward Vernon had failed in all reasonable expectations of him as a young man of nobility and character: 'Of all moral values regard for truth has been inculcated upon you with the greatest earnestness from your earliest capability of knowing right from wrong to the present unhappy moment.' With no restraint he continued:

[125] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate,* p.186.

[126] H. French and M. Rothery, 'Upon your entry into the world: masculine values and the threshold of adulthood among landed elites in England 1680-1800,' *Social History,* 33 (4), pp. 413. The attempt to provide a moral template was practised in three forms – 'direct moral injunctions on specific issues, reference to conduct texts or general guides to behaviour and the identification of appropriate role models'.

[127] Despite being warned against any dealings with the family in question, Edward Vernon had entered into a relationship with an 'artful girl', the daughter of a man who had broken the heart of Louisa- Harbord's much beloved sister. 'Was it not enough that her father should by his perfidy go near to break my Sister's heart, ruin her health & sour her thoughts for her remaining years. The daughter of this faithless brute now practises her arts upon her nephew, my son & again disturbs the domestic peace of our family.' NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23 January 1829.

> Shame, disappointment, remorse, the feelings supposed to be the lot of those consigned by Divine vengeance to eternal punishment in another world, are now preying upon <u>your</u> Father's heart - The father who from the hour of your birth till yesterday made you the object of his most anxious care and solicitude … Who as you advanced in years, treasured up in his remembrance every trait of manly sense & virtuous feeling which you were supposed to exhibit.[128]

Recalling his late wife's commitment to 'Truth & sincerity', Edward recalled:

> You know how perseveringly I have reminded you from time to time of the lessons she taught you in this respect especially, & you know as well as any one the confidence which I expect in the success of our united efforts to make you worthy of the <u>manner</u> you bear, & of the rank and station in life which you were born to occupy.[129]

The fact that Edward Vernon had lied about his association with 'a most unprincipled and dishonourable family' was proof to his father not only of a complete disregard for the love and advice he had received whilst growing up, but also a flagrant ingratitude for the investment made in his future. Harbord wrote:

> Have I not since I came to reside at Gunton put myself in every way to promote your interest & increase the value of the property? Do you not know that I am constantly contriving by present sacrifices to accumulate wealth for you hereafter?[130]

Evidently, Harbord's sadness at events and regret in his son's weakness was deeply felt: 'You in whom I placed the greatest confidence, you for whom I have ever reserved the strongest affection have thought proper <u>barely</u> to abuse both.'[131] In his closing lines he emphasised the impact of the situation on the rest of the family and in particular his relationship with his sons: Edward Vernon had not only caused private hurt and public embarrassment but his behaviour reflected badly on the masculine identity and reputation of his father.

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[128] NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23 January 1829. Lord Suffield went on to describe how he alone had nursed his son through infection sparing no trouble, expense or risk to himself.
[129] NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23 January 1829.
[130] NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23 January 1829.
[131] NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23January 1829.

This difficult episode demonstrates the close relationship between father and heir in early nineteenth century elite society and the absolute requirement for a son to live up to the high expectations placed on him. Where Harbord had been a loving and respectful son towards his own father, Edward Vernon had only shown selfishness, ingratitude and weakness. 'Successful, well-liked, and value-affirming children', remind French and Rothery, 'contributed positively to the male sense of self.' Children who fell short of these standards suggested inferior parenting and a lack of firm masculine influence.[132] It is not known how long the rift over the disapproved liaison lasted. Edward Vernon did ultimately succeed his father as fourth Lord Suffield.[133] However, the contents of Harbord's letter suggest that his greatest distress was founded not on the unfortunate results of a foray into local society but on Edward Vernon's complete inability to exercise 'good sense' and his failure to recognise the importance of his station in life. In Harbord's eyes the ideal form of elite masculinity was grounded in the fundamental virtues of honesty, judgement and self –command to exercise those virtues. 'Such self- possession and moral authority', argue French and Rothery, 'were an integral component of the self-image of the social elite and a justification for their power.'[134]

The importance of family and station remained of utmost importance to Harbord in his remaining years, his own integrity and experience providing the moral compass for all his family. In 1831, he wrote to daughter Georgiana on her coming of age, advising the shunning of vain pretension and the exercise of utmost circumspection:

> Intrinsic worth, virtue and honesty of heart, accompanied by modesty of thought and mind, will alone set forth any real superiority you may happen to possess, as a ruby is shewn to the greatest advantage when set in diamonds … Ponder, Georgiana, now and then on what I now write. When I am gone you never can find so sure a friend, so certainly faithful an advisor.[135]

The desire to make a lasting impact on the lives of his family and those with whom he came into contact continued to be a driving force. The changes he had

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[132] French and Rothery, Man's Estate, p.213.

[133] Alas, Lord Suffield's concerns about his son were realised. On becoming Lord, Edward Vernon Harbord spent little time at Gunton resulting in the estate becoming rundown and in financial turmoil. The situation was later rectified by Charles, fifth Lord Suffield the son of Harbord and Lady Emily.

[134] French and Rothery, 'Upon your entry into the world', p.422.

[135] Bacon, *Memoir,* pp.354-355.

made to improve the lives of those within his immediate suzerainty and the admiration he earned as a result of his brief but successful tenure as Member for Shaftesbury gave him the confidence to tackle more ambitious causes. His position as a member of the House of Lords gave him the very platform he needed to develop his own wider understanding of society, challenge the inadequacies of the political system and campaign for humanitarian change on a much greater scale.

Servant of the People

This section shows how Edward Harbord employed the passion and drive exhibited in his management of the Gunton estate to influence much greater issues on the national and international stage. It considers how Harbord actively developed his masculine character to overcome barriers to political success and achieve his objectives, recognising that through improving his understanding of public policy, broadening parliamentary contacts and honing his powers of oratory he could achieve his ambition of making lasting change in the lives of others. In doing so, Harbord became a key member of the House of Lords and a voice for the post war moral reform movement or 'service aristocracy'. This growing class of elite men, writes M. Roberts, were driven towards 'a career of ''universal usefulness''… well-placed to make a major contribution to moral reform causes'.[136] In this way, Harbord's desire to be a 'good' rather than 'great' man found a channel for his efforts.

A revival of the masculine values of chivalry in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries provided the constructs for men such as Harbord to pursue their objectives. Michele Cohen has suggested that positive manly qualities such as 'bravery, loyalty, courtesy, truthfulness, purity and honour' were integral to the notion of 'service: the character of a new gentleman encompass[ing] love of truth, sensitivity to those weaker than oneself, and protection of women'.[137]Joanne Bailey (Begiato) goes further opining that 'male feeling was about conveying care and sympathy for the helpless' whether that be within the family or in wider society.[138]

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[136] M. Roberts, *Making English Morals: Voluntary Associations and Moral Reform in England, 1787-1886* (Cambridge, 2004), p.126. Further analysis of the revival of paternalism can be found in K. Lawes, *Paternalism and Politics: The Revival of Paternalism in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke, 2000).

[137] M. Cohen, '"Manners" Make the Man: Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830, *Journal of British Studies,* 44.2 (2005), pp. 326, 327.

[138] J. Bailey, 'Masculinity and Fatherhood in England c. 1760-1830' in J. Arnold and S. Brady (Eds.), *What is Masculinity? Historical Dynamics from Antiquity to the Contemporary World,* (London, 2011), p.174.

In the twelve months preceding his accession to the peerage, Harbord represented the parliamentary constituency of Shaftesbury. During those months he was able to make considerable positive impact to 'the relief of suffering humanity, improvement of Prison Discipline, revision of the criminal code, political economy & retrenchment, & various other measures tending to the general benefit of the subject'.[139] It was during this time that he became absolutely determined to facilitate permanent change in the lives of those less fortunate than himself. Bacon considered the moment: 'It will be clearly seen from the whole tenor of his future life, that although his path lay amongst the highest classes of society, his most fixed regards were always devoted to the improvement and happiness of the humbler.'[140]

The return to Parliament prompted a realisation in Harbord that purely reactive help to the needs of the poor was an inadequate means of effecting lasting change. A greater understanding of public policy was required and Harbord looked to an honest reassessment of his own knowledge, skills and habits in order to tackle the vacuum. 'His London life', records Bacon, 'was one of comparative seclusion. 'Mr Harbord passed some of his evening hours at the clubs, where he met his private and political friends.'[141] In the House, he was reticent to speak, waiting until he felt confident of having mastered the skills and knowledge required to make his mark. Bacon even suggests that his friend 'lamented the effects of having wasted his time on other pursuits than the cultivation of intellect, and especially of the art of public speaking'.[142] In order to quench his thirst for knowledge and bolster the content of his speeches, Harbord turned his attention to the state of the library at Gunton Hall, which though comprising around five thousand volumes boasted nothing published in the previous twenty years. Entrusting his friend Bacon to bring the library up to date he allocated an annual budget of £200 to £500 pa to ensure the presence of 'a considerable number of excellent modern books'.[143]

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[139] NRO, GTN 5/9/47/8 Address of thanks to Edward Harbord from the inhabitants of Shaftesbury on his succeeding to the peerage and resigning as Member of Parliament for that town, 1821.
[140] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.53.
[141] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.115.
[142] Bacon, *Memoir,* p. 119. The ability to hold forth effectively and engagingly in Parliament was viewed as an essential political skill. Harbord would have been aware of the ridicule men such as Lord Castlereagh and Samuel Whitbread had endured regarding their own public speaking difficulties. Bacon continues, 'He was rarely fluent even when his matter was the most fluently arranged, because probably he began late, and because he distrusted himself for want of habit.' As a Member of the House of Commons between 1820 and 1821 he made thirteen contributions to open political debate which are transcribed in full at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/people/mr-edward-harbord/
[143] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.158. Figure 16 shows Harbord richly attired standing next to a display of books and folios.

FIGURE 16 - EDWARD HARBORD, 3RD LORD SUFFIELD, PRINT ENGRAVING BY GEORGE CLINT 1831 (NATIONAL TRUST IMAGES)

At the same time, a strengthening of his friendship with John Joseph Gurney influenced a growing interest in philosophical and religious debates which formed the bedrock of his devotion to the less fortunate. Gurney recognised that in his friend:

> The internal struggles of liberal principles had made great way in his mind. He was already a friend to public improvement, especially adverse to all kinds of warfare, opposed to capital punishment, and zealous for the administration of prison discipline. These common interests presently united us.[144]

[144] J. Braithwaite (Ed.), *Memoirs of John Joseph Gurney with Selections from his Journal and Correspondence,* Vol I (London, 1854), p.154.

Testimonials to his good character were abundant with one Norfolk gentleman so impressed with Harbord's performance at a County Meeting that he was moved to employ Anthony's description of Brutus to describe him as 'the noblest Briton of them all'. Less romantically, Gurney summed up: 'He is a man of religious principles, liberal and enlightened mind, and *full of good works …* a zealous promoter and firm supporter of the best of all causes – that of righteousness and truth.'[145]

The observation of religious devotion assumed greater significance to Harbord following a serious illness in 1821, demonstrated in his insistence of family observance each morning at Gunton. The *Gentleman's Magazine* described his devotion: 'Lord Suffield was particularly attentive to his duties as a Christian; his religion, the result of full conviction, being at the same time unaccompanied by superstition, or vain ostentation.'[146] The influence of evangelicalism on social and economic thought during the early part of the nineteenth century has been described by Boyd Hilton as an *Age of Atonement*: not only a period of reflection on past events but also an opportunity to make changes for the common good. Hilton charts this turn in religious direction as an 'upper and middle-class reaction against the French Revolution and English Jacobinism', and also against those who believed that unchecked population growth was a positive development. Campaigners such as William Wilberforce realised that the problems caused by an unhealthy cocktail of war, scarcity and famine alongside depravity and ignorance demanded a fresh approach in social policy.[147] Harbord's adoption of an increasingly religious element to everyday life is indicative of the more practical and realistic adaptation of Christianity proselytised by members of the Gurney family (notably Elizabeth Fry) and which was becoming firmly established amongst the upper and middle classes. For Harbord, direct association with a religious manifesto characterised by loyalty, vigilance and patriotism complemented the political integrity he had adopted as a young man. His own spiritual thoughts combined with a commitment to those humanitarian causes which deeply concerned him found

[145] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.103.
[146] *The Gentleman's Magazine,* Vol 4 (1835), p.177.
[147] Hilton. B, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865* (Oxford, 1988), pp.3-5. Matthew McCormack describes the Evangelical view of Britain at the beginning of the nineteenth century: 'Everything was not as it should be: the poor were licentious and ungodly, and the rich … were little better. God had punished France for its immorality with chaos, suffering and bloodshed of apocalyptic proportions, and would only judge Britain the victor in the coming struggle if its people turned their backs on their former ways.' *Independent Man,* p.145.

expression in a brand of liberalism which would later become an established parliamentary label. These views, writes McCormack, championed 'personal freedom, ''independence'' concerned only with an individual's ability to resist constraint and his basic (economic) capacity for self-determination'.[148]

Harbord's position as a peer in the House of Lords gave him just the platform and connections he required to energetically pursue a range of public policy improvements. The most significant of these was the Abolition of Slavery Bill which had been introduced to him by his old friend Thomas Fowell Buxton. Writing after Harbord's death, Buxton described his friend's commitment to the Bill which entered the Statute Books in 1833:

> He was almost alone in the part he took, and certainly I could not adequately express my sense of the strength of principle and the moral courage he showed in standing as he did perfectly steady against all opposition, the arguments, taunts and sneers, with which he was assailed …He elicited a body of truth which had considerable influence in bringing about the Abolition of Slavery.[149]

The extent to which Harbord immersed himself in the rectifying of social ills can be understood by counting the measures he successfully influenced during the last ten years of his life: the betterment of conditions in prisons, the improvement of conditions for agricultural labourers, the abolition of capital punishment for any offence other than murder, the cessation of public executions and other humane reforms such as the outlawing of spring-guns. 'I am proud to be able to say that my father was', wrote Charles, 'if not the instigator, certainly the country's mouthpiece in all these measures.'[150]

During the later years of his life Harbord was in almost constant receipt of praise, thanks and invitations for his involvement in a myriad of projects and schemes ranging from the appointment of gamekeepers, sponsorship of lifeboats, setting up of adult schools and becoming President of the Norfolk and Norwich Museum. During the time of the Swing Riots, a letter from friend William Tooke urged:

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[148] McCormack, *Independent Man,* p.192.
[149] Suffield, *Memories,* pp.25-26. In early 1833 following acute public agitation the Bill was finally taken up by the government and after much debate in both Houses was finally passed on the 12 August 1833.
[150] Suffield, *Memories,* p.56.

> I much regret your Lordship's continued absence from London where so many objects of public interest might be promoted by your Lordship's aid & I should the more regret it were I not aware of the paramount importance of a watchful attention to the present extraordinary state of agricultural distress & consequent excitement requiring in its management the exercise of a firm but temperate & soothing direction and control on the part of a resident nobility & gentry, maintaining in its best influences that happy and wholesome relation of Landlord & Tenant hitherto the peculiar boast of England.[151]

Pursuing his long- held love of 'active sports and manly exercises', Harbord's creation of the Norfolk Cricket Club symbolised the manner he continually strove to maintain that 'happy and wholesome' relationship between himself and those who served him. The gesture he hoped would bring the young men of the county together in 'early connexion and friendship.' Bacon applauded his friend:

> Lord Suffield used this occasion, as he did all the others, to lessen the distance and cement the union of the various classes, with the benevolent view of shewing that a part of the duty of affluence and station is to expend their wealth and direct their power to the protection of those who look to them for support, and whose labour contributes to their wealth, their abundance, and their strength.[152]

In 1834, the year before Harbord's death, the point was succinctly made in a letter written by 'humble individual' Henry Turner who concluded that 'the Example of the Nobility and Gentry, as your Lordship is aware, [is that] manners do not ascend but descend'.[153] In the adoption and practice of those manly principles which engendered both respect and emulation, Edward Harbord not only succeeded in presenting himself as an elite man of worth but also narrowed the gap between himself and the rest.

[151] NRO, GTN 5/9/40/29/1-2 William Tooke to Lord Suffield, 25 February 1830. The 'Swing Riots' involved an uprising by agricultural workers in southern and eastern England characterised by the destruction of threshing machines. Labourers responded to 'conditions of want and distress which intensified their depressed status as machine farming and market forces took their toll'. O'Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century,* p.362.
[152] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.261.
[153] NRO, GTN 5/9/92/3 Henry Turner to Lord Suffield, 4 May 1834.

Conclusion

As a man, Edward Harbord was almost universally admired by those who knew him. His engaging demeanour and firm resolve underpinned the considerable achievements which were the direct consequence of those attributes. Any minor criticism of his person is lost in effusive recognition of those manly principles which were an integral part of his character from boyhood to becoming a man. In January 1838, Lady Emily Suffield prefaced Bacon's memoir of her husband's life with a letter to her young children. The purpose of her letter was clear:

> The calamity which deprived you of a Parent, at a time when you could have known nothing of his mind and character, has made it most desirable that they should if possible, be given to your view in a permanent shape. I have therefore conceived this Book to be written, in order that you may form some faint idea of what your Father was.[154]

Communicating with her husband's friend Richard Bacon in the months following his death, Emily felt it her duty to ensure that her young family, in particular her sons, were aware of their father's character and legacy. Above all, Emily wished to direct them towards the highest principles of aristocratic manly conduct and encourage them to emulate their father's standards in every respect. She insisted:

> You will find your Father's character minutely reflected in his opinions, words and actions; from these, at a more advanced age you will gather his principles. But in the meantime, I wish to point out to you more particularly his profound sense of religion; his resolution to search out and act upon the truth; his candour and openness to conviction; his integrity and command of temper. Second only to these qualities were his active desire to render every hour of his time, and every advantage which he derived from station, fortune, and a remarkable determination never to leave a work unfinished, as extensively useful as possible to all his fellow creatures, more particularly to that portion of them which stood most in need of assistance.[155]

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[154] Bacon, *Memoir.* The letter to the Suffield children appears as a Preface to the main text.

[155] Bacon, *Memoir,* preface. The necessity of a fitting tribute to her much beloved late husband's character and conduct as a highly respected elite man was resolutely at the fore of Emily's mind. Suddenly responsible for the upbringing of Harbord's seven surviving sons and two daughters, and giving birth to her own seventh child in the months after Harbord's death, the weight of parenting fell heavily on her. In addition, she no doubt wished her own much younger off-spring to know their father as intimately and to have the same advantage as the progeny of Harbord's first wife Lady Georgiana, mother to the eldest three children including the heir to title and estate, twenty-two-year-old Edward Vernon Harbord.

Emily's preface captured the essence of those principles on which her husband based his life - truth, candour, integrity, evenness of temper and a determination to achieve the goals he set himself. Bacon described 'the foundations of his [Harbord's] character as 'firm religious faith, benignity of disposition, and unwearied energy. Directed and governed by these impulses, he exhibited a sterling example of how much might be accomplished by one man'.[156]

The significance of these words indicates a real sense that Harbord, directed by those principles from an early age, was actively engaged in constructing his own masculine self, a purposeful process in which he eschewed all previous models of elite masculinity, preferring to adapt and learn with age. The third holder of a peerage only created in the final decades of the eighteenth century, Harbord viewed the progress and success of his aristocratic life as not only dependent on championing those masculine values which would guide him in his own personal and public endeavours but also engender trust, service and respect in those around him, particularly his sons. In this way, the process was a deliberate, thoughtful and continuous response to the demands of his public responsibilities and private motivation. Unlike Windham, Whitbread and Patteson, Harbord suffered from no psychological tensions either public or private and wholeheartedly embraced both the serious and the playful, whether visiting a prison or bowling a cricket ball. As such, Harbord practised a distinct style of masculinity which was the product of his own actions, experiences and friendships. Comfortable in 'his own skin' he understood how a man of high social status living through fast changing times should conduct himself and that this 'new' self-styled brand of elite masculinity had to be unimpeachable. It is tempting to consider that he deliberately set out to be considered the perfect aristocratic man.

In common with Windham, Patteson and Whitbread, Harbord understood that politics, power and masculinity were intrinsically intertwined and that this was the most important arena in which to be observed. Never a follower of others and always with a clear objective, the masculine characteristic he valued above all was the exercise of manly 'independence', a stance which initially was totally at odds with the reality of being financially supported and promoted by his politically conservative father and brother. His determined, confident and single-minded approach to the way he conducted himself was always rooted in the issues which mattered to him. Exasperated with a stale political system, despairing of war and

[156] Bacon, Memoir, p.509.

disapproving of corruption, he realised that the wide-ranging social reform he desperately sought would require the efforts of men, like Whitbread, who were prepared to step aside from party expectation and stand out as men with passion and conviction. Thus, in the years before acceding to the peerage, and in the absence of gainful employment, Harbord adopted a distinctive style of 'independent' manliness as a channel for displaying both seriousness of purpose and thoughtful individuality. The fortunate circumstances of his first marriage allowed him to adopt his own 'independent' style which had little in common with the luxuries of aristocratic idleness but was indicative of the importance he attached to 'certain ''male'' stations that were increasingly associated with political responsibility – father, husband, breadwinner and householder'. It was these roles which demanded specific 'manly' and 'independent' virtues such as honesty, respect and reliability in the care of others.[157] Thus, whilst Harbord's determination to style himself as a politically 'independent' man in early life was interpreted by his father and brother as unacceptable, ungrateful and even hypocritical, much later as a member of the Lords he was able to achieve the autonomy to be truly 'independently' effective in public life.

As Lord Suffield, Harbord actively moulded the earlier expression of political independence to a model of public manliness carrying even greater weight. He now not only tackled a daunting agenda of public policy reform but also confirmed his manly status as father of estate, household and family. Fatherhood was fundamental to Harbord's sense of his own masculinity and also his status as a peer. He understood that the elite had a public responsibility to set the tone, and his performance as a father involved leading the household in a manner which would establish standards of masculine behaviour and prepare offspring, particularly sons, to make a successful entrée into the world. 'Failure to establish and manage a harmonious household', argues Louise Carter, 'was … not simply a private shortcoming but an indication of a lack of adult character and manly responsibility.'[158] Family life provided him with heart felt enjoyment but also stimulated strong emotional responses ranging from inconsolable grief to indignant rage, as was seen in his responses to his infant child's death and to his eldest son's duplicitous actions. Moreover, the love, protection and commitment he exhibited to his considerable extended family was mirrored in the caring and paternal manner

[157] McCormack, *Independent Man,* pp.17,18.
[158] L. Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial in the Queen Caroline Affair of 1820', *Gender and History,* 20.2 (2008), p. 251.

with which he ran the estate at Gunton, vastly improving the lives of the people who lived there.

In this way, 'fathering and fatherhood', argues Begiato, 'contributed to the formation of a personal male identity as both a public category and a more subjective experience.'[159] The importance Edward Harbord attached to both these 'fathering' roles indicates that the setting of positive public example was an approved marker of elite masculinity. Harbord can be considered a man whose individual masculine style was distinct, enlightened and noble in every sense. Significantly, this was a brand of masculinity which was increasingly espoused by middle- and working-class Englishmen who, like Harbord, valued hard work and the improvement of society above fashionable appearance and refined social performance. 'By the early nineteenth century', suggests Louise Carter, 'a more sober vision of masculinity was gaining ascendancy, in which character, sincerity, respectability, piety, duty and domestic steadiness were regarded as the greatest priorities' of all.[160]

[159] J. Bailey, 'Masculinity and Fatherhood in England', p. 169.
[160] L. Carter, 'British Masculinities on Trial', p.260.

Conclusion

By entering the company of William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread II and Edward Harbord, this study has demonstrated how elite men purposefully responded to and shaped constructs of masculinity at the turn of the nineteenth century. Occupying positions of power and influence, these men were conscious that the understanding and practice of particular masculine behaviours had a direct bearing on how they were perceived by others and that this formed a strong connection between private character and political ability. One contemporary observer was succinct: 'A man's real rank and value in life is best estimated by his behaviour.'[1]

This thesis makes a significant contribution to the study of elite masculinities in the late Georgian period by demonstrating that this was a time when questions of gender and political power were very closely connected. Private lives were the subject of unprecedented public interest and elite men recognised a need to present a positive expression of masculine individuality in order to succeed. The contents of letters, diaries and journals (ego-documents) utilised in this study have shown how such men actively chose to adopt (or reject) specific masculine values and behaviours to suit their own purposes and how this enabled them 'to take a manly part' where gentlemanly performance could be blended with practical effectiveness. The genuineness of personal writing shows the attention each of these men gave to considerations of masculinity and illustrates that this was not merely a system of social and cultural constructs but an aspect of personality and character to be shaped and reviewed over a lifetime. This observation challenges the notion that the end of the eighteenth-century witnessed a reaction against gender 'fluidity' and shows that there was space for men to select specific masculine values or adopt multiple masculinities. The methods adopted in this research suggest that far from 'closing down' gender identities, as Dror Wahrman has argued, there was an opportunity for greater analysis of the 'self': a process of ''self-examination'' where men created and critically evaluated their own masculine individuality through a varied private literature of self-awareness which carried both reflection and purpose.[2] This offers a new perspective on our knowledge of masculinity at the turn of the nineteenth century as it shows how elite men recognised that simply being

[1] I. Taylor, *Character Essential to Success in Life* (London, 1824), p.1.
[2] J. Brewer, 'This, that and the other: Public, Social and Private in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' in D. Castiglione and L. Sharpe (Eds.), *Shifting the Boundaries – Transformation of the Languages of Public and Private in the Eighteenth Century* (Exeter, 1995), p.10.

part of a socially exclusive group of *gentlemen* was not enough to equip them as men both fit to command authority *and* be effective in power. Rather, gender 'fluidity' of a different nature connected to understanding suitability for responsibility and office encouraged elite men to be thoughtfully engaged in their own authentic interpretation of multiple masculine values and behaviours and this was key to the earning of public acclaim and self- respect.

The thesis evidences the importance elite men attached to shaping their masculine selves in three specific areas. Firstly, there is significant evidence that these men possessed an awareness that 'elite masculine identity was *always* public' and that to separate personal and public character was 'artificial and misleading' to a populace who deserved to know the capacity and worth of their ruling class.[3] Secondly, parental influence was a driving force in encouraging and inculcating those masculine values and connections which would not only best serve sons as they entered the world of business and politics, but would also reflect well on family, status and success. Thirdly, an important manifestation of the 'ideal' elite man, was that he upheld a model of 'Englishness' which identified him as a legitimate member of a ruling class. Perpetuating the manly qualities of self-control, plain-speaking and honesty there is a clear trajectory of change towards the display of male individualism characterised by inner strength, dependability and compassion. 'Self-control', argues Paul Langford, 'was not submissiveness. It went with a strong sense of individualism, not to say self-seeking.'[4] Each of these themes illustrate how elite men and their families recognised both the importance of masculinity in gaining access to those positions of power and prestige in a period of immense upheaval, and also its precariousness and the consequences of getting it wrong.[5] Crucially, the shift from masculinity as social reputation to an interiorised sense of personal identity brought with it not only the possibility of success and acclaim but also the risk of ridicule, exposure and ostracism.

The merging of public and private responsibility had significant ramifications for constructs of elite masculinity and it's lived experience and this is evident in the experiences of each of the men studied. Their words reveal an understanding that the personal and political were not separate spheres but were inextricably linked to ideas of public roles and that these roles converged around concepts of manhood

[3] H. French and M. Rothery, *Man's Estate: Landed Gentry Masculinities, 1660-1900* (Oxford, 2012), p.239 and D. Andrew, *Aristocratic Vice: The Attack on Duelling, Suicide, Adultery and Gambling* in *Eighteenth Century England* (New Haven and London, 2013), p.244.
[4] P. Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character 1650-1850* (Oxford, 2000), p.70.
[5] H. Mansfield (Ed.), *Selected Letters,* Edmund Burke to William Windham, 30 March 1797, p.362.

and personal reputation. No longer was it possible to lead a double life of contradictions, prominent men now needed to take greater care that their private actions reflected inner virtue and that their masculine character was fit for public consumption. Public display was all-important in achieving and sustaining a superior masculinity and any perceived difficulties or inadequacies not only threatened a man's sense of his own worth but could also damage his reputation in the wider world. William Windham's preoccupation with his own scholarly and oratorical performance is a recurring theme of his diaries. His words resonate with the struggle to balance the exemplary public masculinity of being the 'finest gentleman of his age' with private feelings of inadequacy and failure at his own efforts to perpetuate that image. At their worst, these concerns manifest themselves in prolonged bouts of 'feel', described by Henry French as a 'mental and physical confidence' which had the effect of Windham regularly removing himself from the outside world until his spirits rallied.[6] The fact that he concealed this aspect of his masculine personality from friends and colleagues indicates a realisation that his feelings of weakness and doubt were inconsistent with expectations of 'manliness' in public life and to reveal them would invite criticism and failure. Although Windham's diaries represent an unusual insight into one man's preoccupation with image and performance, it is unlikely that he was alone in feeling this way. Samuel Whitbread's early reference to being susceptible to the two personas 'Sam & Sad' reveal a level of private masculine sensitivity which does not resurface, at least not until his death, and suggests that he too may have deliberately concealed his true self. In this sense, Whitbread epitomised the elite man whose private and public lives were indistinguishable behind the veneer of celebrity status. Where the debate surrounding Windham's public masculinity largely took place in the pages of his private writing, the highly personal public discourse targeted at Whitbread indicates a relentless interest in the perceived qualities and deficiencies in his masculine character with ill-considered private action potentially disastrous to public reputation. In a secret letter to Whitbread, a female admirer amply demonstrated: 'Caution is necessary, for you most particularly'[7]

Elite men in highly visible positions of power and authority were therefore increasingly seen as 'public property' and the pursuit of clear political aims such as

[6] H. French, 'I Tremble Lest My Powers of Thought are not What They Ought to be': Reputation and the Masculine Anxieties of an Eighteenth- Century Statesman' in C. Fletcher et al (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Masculinity and Political Culture in Europe* (London, 2018), p.271.
[7] BRO W1/700/16/32 Anonymous woman to Samuel Whitbread II: has attended the whole of the Melville trial and seeks to make an assignation [undated].

pacifism or reform often created exposure to violent criticism. Their lives played out on centre stage, elite men needed to remain ever 'watchful over their behaviour, values and beliefs'.[8] 'Weathercock' Windham was often lampooned for his oscillating political sympathies, inviting accusations of weakness and indecision and Whitbread endured almost twenty years of abuse regarding his background in trade being seen as unsuitable for inclusion in 'aristocratic' government. Both men were regarded as unfit to represent the ruling class: Windham by ignoring the will of his supporters and Whitbread by daring to ascend the 'limitations' of his birth. Moreover, men's suitability for political office was no longer assessed solely in terms of their political record or family credentials but increasingly judged by their personal qualities and actions. The period therefore marks an important shift in the way elite masculinity was perceived: no longer just a question of 'social reputation' linked to family background or dynastic honour, but firmly rooted in a private responsibility for a personal reputation which was constantly subject to public appraisal.

Parents understood very well that their sons would be judged on their performance in the public sphere and that the possession of titles, estates and wealth was no guarantee of appropriate manly values and behaviours. Families such as Whitbread and Patteson whose social mobility was in the ascendant recognised that elite masculinity was an acquired system of norms and values shaped through a learning process which demanded continuous supervision and mediation.[9] Supporting the research on elite parenting undertaken by Rothery and French these letters confirm that both mothers and fathers encouraged their sons in the acquisition, practice and embedding of acceptable masculine values with a focus on putting systems in place which would facilitate the correct progress.[10] Education was key to the process with parents encouraging, influencing and monitoring the progress boys made in 'becoming men'. This is evident in the volume of correspondence which flowed back and forth between parents, sons and personal tutors such as Thomas Dampier who acted *in loco parentis*. Watchful guidance and advice ensured adherence to the 'fundamental, although socially constructed values of masculinity, such as self-control, hard work, thrift and truthfulness' and these provided the foundation for the creation of a superior

[8] French, 'I Tremble Lest my Powers of Thought', p.279.
[9] M. Rothery and H. French, *Making Men: The Formation of Elite Male Identities in England, c. 1660-1900 A Sourcebook* (Basingstoke, 2012), p.18.
[10] In both *Making Men* (2012) and *Man's Estate* (2012), Mark Rothery and Henry French develop themes in Anthony Fletcher's *Growing up in England: The Experience of Childhood 1600-1914* (2010) by emphasising the importance of both mothers and fathers in the inculcation of masculine values.

masculinity.[11] Marjorie Morgan has argued that parental influence marked a clear reassertion of those 'highly valued moral principles' which were associated with earlier times and in direct opposition to the non-virtuous behaviour and appearance of fashionable aristocratic ladies and gentlemen'.[12] The most striking example of parental influence is evident in the words and actions of Martha Patteson through her organisation and supervision of her twelve year old son John's education in Germany. A very determined mother, Martha's programme of instruction and advice to her son John represents the most thorough of processes in the inculcation of elite masculine values for the purposes of social advancement. Over the three- year period of Patteson's schooling, Martha's letters spelled out a very clear picture of the kinds of qualities she considered most desirable in a wealthy young man aspiring to make a smooth entry into the commercial and social elite of eastern England. Basing her advice on the example of her son's uncle whose mastery of masculine behaviours such as trustworthiness, control of the emotions and hard work set the standard to emulate, Martha left no area unchecked in her oft repeated recommendations of how her son should present himself as the perfect elite man. In her eyes, it was paramount that Patteson acquire the masculine skills and arts which would enable him to combine both business acumen and leisurely refinement thus ensuring a future where he would operate with the natural ease of an elite gentleman.

The evidence of Martha Patteson's letters suggests that both parents and sons were aware of the importance of learning, adopting and rehearsing to perfection those elite masculine values which would guarantee acceptance and success at the highest levels of society, and moreover that these were best learnt at a young age. Many, such as the Windham, Whitbread and Harbord families chose schooling at Eton, a prescriptive system of education aimed less at individuality and creativity and more at training privileged boys to claim membership of a national elite. Parents believed, writes John Cannon, that 'public school was the best preparation for public affairs' and for second son Edward Harbord, an Eton education ensured his membership of a particular elite group of men which would bolster his future prospects.[13] Moreover, Lord Suffield, newly admitted to the peerage and mindful of his son's future, placed his son in an environment which would encourage both masculine superiority and inclusion. The letters of Harbord to

[11] Rothery and French, *Making Men,* p.18.
[12] M. Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class* (Basingstoke, 1994), p.71.
[13] J. Cannon, *Aristocratic Century: The Peerage of Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge, 1984), p.43.

his father reveal a touching awareness that his presence at Eton was a process to be both endured and savoured and his keenness to share all the news with his father shows appreciation of his family's vested interest in the success of the project. His letters are significant as they suggest an awareness of the process of acquiring a masculinity suited to his station. Mastery of the classical curriculum ensured his inclusion in masculine elite culture and participation in the 'rough and tumble' of sporting activity demonstrated a level of manliness which precluded all accusations of effeminacy or weakness.

The reach of parental involvement went well beyond their sons' leaving formal education. The re-evaluating and moulding of masculine identities continued through other important phases, in particular the organisation and supervision of a Grand Tour and the approval of a suitable marriage partner. Such key moments represented further opportunities for parental influence to secure a successful future for all involved. The case studies suggest that at the turn of the nineteenth century parents considered the primary purpose of a Grand Tour to be less the leisurely voyage of discovery and more a challenging expedition demanding the exercise of manly adaptability and initiative. Both Whitbread and Harbord were despatched by their fathers on Grand Tours of Northern Europe, not only notorious for the hardships involved but also requiring the exercise of good sense and initiative. Whitbread's journals are especially cogent in describing his thoughts on the cultural differences he encountered in men's behaviour, and Harbord's considerable logistical difficulties demanded that he show resolve and perseverance. Martha Patteson took a different, though no less specific approach to her son's Grand Tour making the promotion of the family business a priority. In this way, parents intentionally placed their sons in unfamiliar, often strange situations as a 'necessary stage on the road to full, gentlemanly discretion, autonomy and authority'.[14]

In the matter of love, parental influence was equally evident and emphasised the importance of 'reinforcing adult male identity … in the successful social reproduction of the family'.[15] Unauthorised or illicit liaisons were not viewed in a favourable light. The reaction of Sarah Windham on hearing of her son William's adulterous affair with a married woman was unequivocally disapproving. Not only horrified that her son's choice of love interest was the subject of society gossip, but

[14] H. French and M. Rothery, ''Upon your entry into the world': masculine values and the threshold of adulthood among landed elites in England 1680-1800', *Social History,* 33.4 (November 2008), p.406.
[15] French and Rothery, *Man's Estate*, p.212.

his indiscreet and uncontrolled behaviour rendered him, in her eyes, a man completely lacking in honour: the traditional tenet of elite masculinity on which all other qualities rested. Similarly, Harbord was incensed to hear of his son Edward Vernon's duplicitous behaviour in concealing an unsuitable relationship. The crime was made all the worse by his disregard for the principles of 'truth and sincerity' which had been expounded by the boy's late mother in their 'united efforts to make you worthy of the manner you bear, & of the rank and station in life you were born to occupy.'[16] Harbord understood that outward behaviour needed to be congruent with inner principles as this held ramifications for the masculine 'conduct, appearance and language' which could be open to public comment.[17]

The third significant theme which emerges from the lives of Windham, Patteson, Whitbread and Harbord is a strong sense of the superiority of being English and the manly characteristics which were the expression of it. Historians have understood the link between Englishness and masculinity in different ways. Linda Colley and Michele Cohen have emphasised the turn away from continental habits and the French language towards a preference for plain-speaking and English tradition. Paul Langford has developed this idea in his discussion of the manners and characteristics which supported the shift. As such, responsibility, virtuosity and integrity became increasingly evident amongst men in public life and these ideals became fundamental in maintaining a positive personal image of competent leadership. Matthew McCormack has shown that these models were linked to traditional English 'Country' values of 'plain-dealing, directness and – in particular – rurality' and their re-appropriation by the elite in the last quarter of the eighteenth century served to realign them with popular feelings of patriotism at a time of war and economic hardship.[18] Whitbread and Harbord are examples of elite men who were well-known in their rural communities, were conscious of their responsibility towards the less fortunate and recognised the call for greater representation. In this way, the elite keen to disassociate themselves from accusations of 'french' aristocratic effeminacy or charges of 'polite' hypocrisy, embraced the notion of a more 'natural' manliness based on models of usefulness and public spiritedness. This marked an important shift in the tenor of British

[16] NRO, MC 350/1,711X2 Lord Suffield to Edward Vernon Harbord, 23 January 1829.
[17] Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class,* p.71.
[18] M. McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2205), p.110.

political society with the assumption that 'Englishness' brought with it the key qualities of credibility and integrity both of which were always *fully* possessed.[19]

A strong awareness of 'Englishness' is evident in each of the cases studies and this is demonstrated not merely through a satisfaction with the English way of life but also a strong belief in its superiority over other cultures. When travelling abroad, Patteson, Whitbread and Harbord all exhibited a sense of confident advantage in their status as Englishmen and regard positive behaviours in men of other nationalities as an exception to be noted rather than assumed. All displayed a comfortable confidence in their own manliness, considered the example that they set should be observed by others and were keenly critical of men whose masculinity fell short of that standard. Comparisons with 'English' ideals of masculinity invariably revolved around negative perceptions of sexuality and lifestyle, accusations of stupidity and incompetence or despair at lewdness or poor taste. Whitbread's judgement was firmly based on the understanding that a heterosexual, family-based lifestyle was the natural foundation for an exemplary masculinity and his journals reveal consternation that the worst examples of 'deviance' from this were to be found amongst debauched royalty and the best amongst simple peasants. An encounter with the openly homosexual Frederick the Great produced total disgust, labelling him a 'monster', whilst Swedish peasant men were praised for appearing 'tall stout and well-made'.[20] Patteson's criticisms of German incompetence and stupidity and Italian 'pomp and show' were bolstered by his mother's frequent insistence that the English elite were in every way superior to their continental counterparts and that her son' s eventual return 'safe and sound to old England' would confirm her views once and for all.[21] A lack of refinement in society prompted criticism from Harbord that the men he encountered in Denmark were vulgar and disorderly. In doing so he assumed the air of one who, simply by virtue of being a member of the English elite, was supremely well-versed in the best tastes and fashions and as such could move with the air of someone with cultural superiority. It was not until he reached Russia that he felt comfortable with his surroundings

[19] M. Cohen, 'Manliness, Effeminacy and the French': Gender and the Construction of National Character in Eighteenth-Century England in T. Hitchcock and M. Cohen (Eds.) *English Masculinities 1660-1800* (London, 1999), p.54.
[20] BRO, W3933/5 29 June 1785 and BRO, W/3933/2 24 July 1784.
[21] NRO, MC/2015/11, 904X8, Martha Patteson to John Patteson, 6 May 1779.

remarking even 'English horses were ridden by Russians' thus confirming his suspicions that being English did hold the most superior status.[22]

On home soil, ideals of elite masculinity and 'Englishness' were embedded in both rural society and urban life. On the country estate Old English ideals of purity, benevolence and healthy vigour prevailed, whilst in town they were increasingly rooted in hard-work, plain-speaking and public responsibility. The archival sources suggest that each of the men had clear ideas of what it meant to be an elite Englishman with evidence of some change in interpretation over time. Presiding over large country estates, Windham, Whitbread and Harbord all regarded land ownership and the overseeing of tenants as a way to establish both their own masculine vigour and to influence or regulate ideals of manliness in those who served them. Whitbread and Harbord in particular created highly personalised environments where they were omnipresent, respected and seen to improve the lives of their fellow countrymen - Whitbread through the administration of fair justice and Harbord through the introduction of social improvements and the protection of tenants' property. Indeed, maintaining a connection with rurality and the 'common' people was an important expression of cohesive 'Englishness' which involved setting an example and engendering respect. During the riots of 1820, Harbord joined forces with his men on the Gunton estate to repel attackers putting himself at considerable risk and Whitbread regarded his 'country performances' as local magistrate both a service and an honour to his Bedford constituents.[23] In addition, the encouragement of traditional English sporting activities such as 'camping' set an example of manly vigour with a touch of danger, something which both Windham and Harbord heartily endorsed. It is however possible to discern differences in attitude towards sports and their associations for men. Windham's passion for fist fighting, let alone bear-baiting was not shared by Harbord and Whitbread, the latter seen as barbaric and outmoded, the former heavily associated with masculine brutality and the prosecution of war and firmly rejected by the two younger men.

In the holding of public office, the expression of 'Englishness' became an important component in the 'cultivation of character', and was seen 'as much a social as a moral and personal responsibility'.[24] The Houses of Parliament, long regarded the arena for lengthy elaborate rhetoric, became populated with men less

[22] R. Bacon, *A memoir of the life of Edward, third baron Suffield* (privately printed, Norwich 1838), p.21-22.
[23] H. Maxwell (Ed.), *The Creevey Papers: A Selection of the Correspondence & Diaries of the Late Thomas Creevey, M.P.,* Vol I (London, 1903), p.90.
[24] Morgan, *Manners, Morals and Class,* p.67.

worried about style and more about content. Hence, Windham's use of the classical metaphor gave way to men such as Whitbread who epitomised the quintessential honest English gentleman with his hardworking, high-energy approach to both commerce and public business. Speaking plainly, free from embellishment or rhetoric, it was this image which became associated with the pursuit of social and political reform and a defining characteristic of English manliness across broader social groups in the early nineteenth century. In this way, Harbord keen to make his mark, deliberately set about to improve his understanding of public policy in order to 'think for himself' and harness the support he needed before taking his place in the chamber and pursuing the societal change he sought.[25]

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This thesis has shown that elite men *were* actively aware of their masculine selves from a young age, and as they grew older recognised and assimilated those qualities which men at the highest levels of society needed in order to uphold and fulfil the responsibility of public office. In each of these case studies there is evidence in the sources to suggest that during the life cycle masculine values and behaviours were consciously learnt, practised and reproduced, both in themselves and in others, and that the possession of an individual masculine identity was vital to the process of seizing opportunity. Experiences of both the mundane and the extraordinary have provided new insights into how those interpretations of masculinity were fundamental to both their private mental interiority and to their publicly declared selves. In doing so, this thesis extends our knowledge of historical masculinity moving beyond the ideas of Dror Wahrman and building on the work of Michael Roper, Mark Rothery, Henry French and Matthew McCormack. By showing the significance these four elite men attached to contemporary values and systems of masculine behaviour we have a much better grasp of how private character and psychic mentality influenced their public selves, the pursuit of power and the belief systems they supported.[26]

The research reveals that there was personal awareness and engagement with changing constructs of masculinity happening in the lives of elite men at the turn of the nineteenth century and crucially this brings a much greater understanding of both men's historical dominance and the nature of the British

[25] Bacon, *Memoir,* p.62.
[26] M. Roper, 'Slipping out of View: Subjectivity and Emotion in Gender History', *History Workshop Journal,* 59 (Spring, 2005), p.58.

political system. Men actively selected the masculine virtues they knew would assure opportunity and success in public life and reprimanded those whose behaviour fell short. The discourse between Whitbread and his political friends acknowledged their understanding of the shift away from the ostentatious flamboyancy and libertinism epitomised by Fox 'which had overset the Publick opinion with regard to Statesmen' towards a greater openness, selflessness and sense of civic duty.[27] Indeed, the political and economic stresses of the time demanded that the elite should lead by cohesive example and this was reflected in both the conflation of public and private masculinities and a shift away from 'personality' to 'character' implying a sense of steadfastness, resoluteness and the ability to deal with difficult situations. Moreover, the actions and experiences of Windham, Patteson, Whitbread and Harbord have shown that constructs of elite masculinity were moving far beyond ideals outlined in conduct books or stereotypical notions of masculine behaviour such as 'politeness'. They now presented a more sophisticated, nuanced and personal interpretation of masculinity which was accompanied by a heightened awareness of the desirability of taking a leading role and the possibility of influencing permanent positive change.

Constructs of masculine character therefore ran much deeper than individual 'personality' and influenced the manner in which lives were played out, the motives adopted and the way the world was seen. 'Good' masculine character was judged by intention as much as outcome with the key virtue of 'integrity' linked to qualities of transparency, sincerity and fairness.[28] This shift is illustrated in the difference over time between Windham's egocentric preoccupation with concealing his own inadequacies, compared with Whitbread and Harbord's public-spiritedness in adopting the moral values and principles which were key to influencing the innovative political issues and actions which really mattered to them. In this way, as McCormack has stressed, masculine character was increasingly connected with the idea of 'work' as a 'sphere in which men could prove their manhood' and make their mark, the expanding elite no longer comfortable being associated with aristocratic idleness.[29] By the middle of the nineteenth century these ideas were expressed in the political doctrine of John Stuart Mill who advocated a preference for the 'active' 'self-helping' character over the 'passive' in representative government where the active was 'not only intrinsically the best, but the likeliest to acquire all that was

[27] Maxwell, *Creevey Papers,* Vol I, p.92.
[28] M. Buerck, 'Moral Character', *The Moral Maze* (BBC Radio 4, 26 June 2019).
[29] M. McCormack, *The Independent Man: Citizenship and Gender Politics in Georgian England* (Manchester, 2005), p.17.

really excellent or desirable in the opposite type'.[30] In this sense, these case studies not only deepen our understanding of men as private individuals but also significantly point to wider considerations of their gendered experiences, in particular the need to gain better understanding of 'the role of gender in political situations and the impact of politics on gender ideology and relations'.[31]

The aim of this thesis has been to expand narratives and themes which have been underdeveloped by historians. Matthew McCormack's insistence that 'there is much to be gained in openly critiquing something which is silently assumed' has cast light on the importance of masculinity and gender as fundamental constructs of the public political domain.[32] Exploring the gendered experiences of William Windham, John Patteson, Samuel Whitbread II and Edward Harbord through the contents of ego-documents has allowed us a better understanding of the connection between private character and public ability and a sense that 'engagement with political events did shape personal values'.[33] The contents of letters, diaries and journals inform the historian about how elite men evaluated their own masculine selves in a way which is not accessible through public documents. Manners, emotions, reactions and feelings reveal the authentic man and show that there is a close alignment between masculine character, lived experience and political belief. Studying contemporary experiences of masculine constructs affords us greater perception of men in positions of power indicating that for historians of political history and political psychology there is much to be gained from considering the masculine lives of men whose motives and actions were instrumental at key moments in time. By considering the linkage between masculine traits and political activity we might feasibly pose the questions – What sort of men were attracted to the demands of decision-making and high office; what effects might the masculine character of those men have had on political outcomes and how far was a man's political belief system affected by his masculine character?[34]

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[30] J. Mill, *On Liberty, Utilitarianism and Other Essays* (Oxford, 2005), p. 221. Mill's essay *Considerations on Representative Government* was published in 1861.
[31] M. McCormack, 'Men, 'the Public' and Political History', in M. McCormack (Ed.), *Public Men: Masculinity and Politics in Modern Britain* (Basingstoke, 2007) p.28.
[32] M. McCormack, 'A Man's Sphere? British Politics in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries in C. Fletcher et al (Eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Masculinity and Political Culture in Europe* (London, 2018), p.260.
[33] M. Morris, *Sex, Money and Personal Character in Eighteenth-Century Politics* (New Haven and London, 2014), p.23.
[34] T. Gray, 'Psychology and political theory: Does personality make a difference?' in P. Jones (Ed.), *Party, Parliament and Personality: essays presented to Hugh Berrington* (London, 1995), pp.203-204.

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