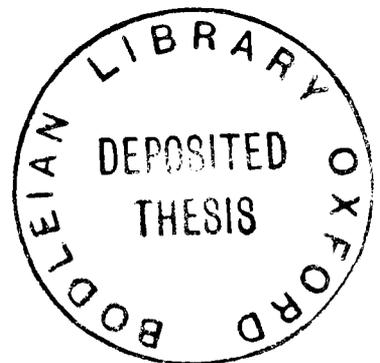


Royalty and Public in Britain: 1714-1789

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford

Matthew Charles Kilburn
St John's College
Oxford

Trinity Term 1997



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The thesis sets out to examine the interaction between the British royal family and its 'public' in the period between the Hanoverian succession and the recovery of George III from 'insanity' in 1789. Throughout, emphasis is given to the reception of royal activity by the press, who circulated information around the kingdom. It argues that the emergence of the domestic, popular monarchy in the middle of the reign of George III was the result of long-term considerations which arose from the activities of earlier generations of eighteenth-century royalty, and were further developed by George III and his siblings. The growth of the royal family, and the physical and social limitations of the eighteenth-century court, led to its members finding avenues for self-expression outside the court and consequently to the expansion of the public sphere of the royal family.

The subject is approached through six chapters: the move from traditional - usually sacerdotal - manifestations of royal benevolence, to sponsorship of voluntary hospitals and similar charities; accession and coronation celebrations during the century; royal public appearances in general, including the theatre and the masquerade, as well as visits to the provinces; the royal residences; royal support for scientific endeavour; and the legacy of the seventeenth century on eighteenth-century royalty, including portraiture and the family's martial connections, and the appearance or absence of mythologized seventeenth-century images in relation to the Thanksgiving of 1789.

The thesis is intended to complement recent work on the emergence of national consciousness in Britain in the eighteenth century, as well as on royalty itself. It attempts to identify some of the questions concerning the place the royal family had in the society of eighteenth-century Britain, how its public image reflected that context, and how this helped the monarchy to survive as a stronger institution.

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'Royalty and Public in Britain' concerns the inter-relationship between the British royal family - not exclusively the monarch and his consort, but also the children, siblings and other kin of the three reigning kings of the period, when they are resident in Great Britain - and the 'public', a term that applies to the subjects of the crown, of whichever social level, and to the sphere of royal activity outside the court. It approaches this subject through six chapters. The first deals with the changes in the expression of royal benevolence, from one based on royal almsgiving to the support of voluntary organisations. The second concerns accessions and coronation celebrations. The third deals with public appearances by royalty, including visits to places of public entertainment and royal tours. The fourth, with the importance of royal residences with regard to the public image of the royal family and the monarchy. The fifth chapter regards royal support for scientific improvement during the period, and the sixth looks at the influence of seventeenth-century events on perceptions of royalty in the period, including the martial aspect of eighteenth-century royal life, and leading up to the Thanksgiving of 1789, which terminates the period of the thesis.

As indicated in the introduction to the thesis, impulse was provided by Linda Colley's article 'The Apotheosis of George III'. Her emphasis on political events of the 1780s as being principally responsible for the emergence of the image of George III and his family as domestic icons located in a context of national heritage and patriotic virtue appeared to be in need of a response. This initial reaction gradually evolved into an attempt to find continuities between the royal image as portrayed and perceived in the reign of George III and as it appeared in the reign of his grandfather George II, and his great-grandfather George I. In doing so, it was hoped to place the activities of George III in the context of eighteenth-century royalty as a whole. J.C.D. Clark's *English Society 1688-1832* also suggested that there was room for further exploration of the position of royalty in the political ideology of eighteenth-century Britain. Recent work in English literary studies, in the shape of Christine Gerrard's book *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole*, had gone some way towards explaining the career of George III's father Frederick in relation to 'Patriot' literature and politics in the 1730s. Although a D.Phil thesis covering the greater part of the eighteenth century could not attempt to cover the influences on every individual member of the royal family in such depth, it could endeavour to discover the place of perceptions of royalty in the emerging national consciousness of Great Britain, and how such impressions reflected or moulded the public life of the monarch and his family.

The thesis concentrates, therefore, on the emergence of a royal family with a public life that did not revolve exclusively or even primarily around state business but was instead

increasingly concerned with 'being seen'. George III is already associated with a revival of royal visits to parts of the country outside London, but this was not a revival of late Stuart period informality or of the royal progresses that Anne attempted. The thesis seeks to find what happened to royal public life between the death of Anne and the flourishing of George III's public image following his recovery from ill health in 1789, and to challenge the assumption of a period of stagnation which remains prevalent in much recent historiography.

Newspapers established themselves as particularly useful source material, not only for public events such as coronations and thanksgivings, but also for tracing less grand events such as the Maundy ceremony, which endured throughout the period despite it appearing to be a moribund relic of mediaeval and renaissance modes of royal benevolence. Newspapers also provided, on occasion, valuable information that had escaped major secondary reference sources. For example, a performance of 'The Battle of Culloden' in 1750, celebrating the anniversary of the victory four years earlier, was missed by *The London Stage* but recorded in a number of the *General Advertiser*. London newspapers were vital as they were distributed around Great Britain and disseminated provincial news to the capital, a volatile nest of opinion. At times of crisis, such as the accession of 1714, the press could help calm a nervous population or stir them to indignation and activity. Newspapers formed a public space in their own right - events such as tours by foreign royalty were reported in detail and aroused commentaries including contemporary and historical comparisons with their British counterparts, enabling eighteenth-century British kingship to be defined alongside continental models on its home territory.

As with the newspapers, pamphlet literature was consulted, but with greater selectivity. Particular instances include comparisons between reactions to the ascendancies of the Duke of Marlborough and the Duke of Cumberland when discussing the martial image of the monarchy, and impressions of great buildings which were often the subject of poems dedicated to their owners and published in pamphlet form. Brief lives, satires, sermons and prospectuses were all of relevance to the subject of the thesis.

Additional sources included the diaries and journals of persons close to the court. They often commented upon the press reports and recorded other items of anecdotal material which contributed towards a general picture of how the monarch and his family were regarded in the period. The upper echelons of society were, in effect, the principal 'audience' for royalty in that members of the royal family had more personal dealings with them than other levels of society, but they were also observers, although not necessarily impartial ones, of classes more remote from the apex of power and social status.

The thesis should help bridge the chronological and thematic gap that exists in recent historiography between several important works. For example, while 'Royalty and Public in Britain' only covers the subject in its second chapter, the study of celebrations of accessions and coronations pursues some - though by no means all - of the lines of enquiry surrounding the commemorative calendar which, in regard to seventeenth-century England, was explored by David Cressy in *Bonfires and Bells*. The emphasis of the thesis on the Hanoverian dynasty and the nature of its public role, explaining how a foreign royal family were assimilated into British society and why they were successful in doing so, should complement those works which have studied popular Jacobitism and perhaps also redress the balance a little towards

the family who remained on the throne despite, according to some historians, substantial opposition from their subjects.

The first chapter, on the fading of traditional forms of royal benevolence based around the relationship of the monarch to church and state and the increasing importance of individual action, could be read as a precursor to Frank Prochaska's *Royal Bounty*, laying greater emphasis on the period before the accession of George III and on the continued existence of earlier expressions of royal charitable activity in the eighteenth century. The accounts of royal visits to urban centres reflect the importance of urban society in eighteenth-century Britain, on which Kathleen Wilson has laid great stress in *The Sense of the People*. As has already been indicated, the thesis should, in more general terms, contribute towards the debate on the emergence of British national consciousness as a whole.

The success of the thesis should lie in that it emphasises the emergence of what in many ways is recognisably the 'modern' British royal family as part of a cumulative process within the development of British society in the eighteenth century. What is just as important as the detachment of the monarch from the personal direction of government policy is the incorporation of members of the royal family in social events in general and the way in which they could be used as emblems representing the victories of the government of the day, the opposition or the triumph of Great Britain herself over her enemies.

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Acknowledgements

The work involved in writing a doctoral thesis in the humanities is usually that of one individual, and this thesis is no different in that respect. However, the course has been smoothed by a number of people for whose assistance I am very grateful.

I would like to thank the Hon. Caroline Douglas-Home for permission to consult and quote from the manuscript journals of Lady Mary Coke, held at the Hirsell in Coldstream. The staff of the National Register of Archives (Scotland) in Edinburgh were extremely helpful in arranging for their temporary deposit at West Register House so the journals were easily accessible. My supervisor, Paul Langford, has been excellent; his advice throughout has been invaluable. Others who have read and commented on all or parts of the thesis, or offered suggestions which have been of help, include Anna Bowles, Tim Clayton, Stephie Coane, Paul Harper, Joanna Innes, Jessica Kilburn, Cindy McCreery, Robert Mayhew, Frank Prochaska and Roey Sweet.

I am grateful to St John's College Library, as represented by the Library Administrator, Ruth Ogden, and the Assistant Librarian, Angela Williams, who provided me with gainful employment throughout my period as a research student. Additional finance while revising this thesis was provided by the Modern History Faculty of the University of Oxford, who employed me as a research assistant. My most particular thanks, however, are due to my parents, Alan and Doreen Kilburn. Without their support, I would not have been able to embark on this thesis. No list of acknowledgements would be complete without special reference to them.

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Abbreviations

I have attempted to keep abbreviations to a minimum; however, the following represent the most frequently-cited works and periodicals:

BM Prints and Drawings	F.G. Stephens and M.D. George, eds., <i>British Museum Department of Prints and Drawings: Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires</i> , 11 vols. (British Museum, London, 1870-1954)
BL	British Library, London
<i>GM</i>	<i>Gentleman's Magazine</i>
<i>HKW v</i>	H.M. Colvin, J.M. Crook, K. Downes and J. Newman, <i>The History of the King's Works v: 1660-1782</i> (HMSO, London, 1976)
<i>HWC</i>	Horace Walpole, ed. W.S. Lewis and others, <i>The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence</i> , 48 vols. (Yale, New Haven, 1937-83)
<i>LC</i>	<i>London Chronicle</i>
PRO	Public Record Office, Kew

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Introduction
Questions concerning the Self-Presentation of the
House of Hanover

In this thesis I seek to examine the development of the presentation of Hanoverian royalty, largely through the perceptions that were formed by its 'audience', the 'public'. The people outside the palace that the monarch and members of his family were most aware of were probably those from the ruling elite. Admittedly 'ruling elite' is something of an ambiguous term; I use it to refer to the nobility and great landowners who, though resident in London for most of the year, derived their wealth and their claim to status from their country estates, holding sway with local dignity and office over a proportion of the population even if they didn't hold any places in the ministry. Their involvement both with the administrative and economic business of the country, as well as the high social life of the metropolis, helped tie together the capital of Great Britain with the country at least within England, and to some extent with Scotland as well. The mercantile community of the City of London had some claim to be part of the governing elite as well, though they would have considered themselves a separate body with rights and privileges that gave them considerable authority. Throughout the century the monarch as a matter of routine granted audiences to provincial dignitaries from outside the landed aristocracy and endorsed them with tokens of state authority such as knighthoods. However, members of the national governing class were perhaps best placed to observe and comment on the doings of the royal family and the ways in which their behaviour accorded with what those who had put them on the throne thought suitable.

If we are to look upon the royal family as a kind of theatrical company, whose conduct played out the 'story' of what the monarch and his kin represented or sought to represent, and their courtiers were also actors in the drama, then members of families who came from the ruling class, who did not holding positions in government but nonetheless moved in circles close to royalty, were at least in the boxes overlooking the stage, and at worst in the front row of the stalls. There are a large number of published memoirs written by individuals who enjoyed proximity to royalty which I have consulted for their insight into the opinions of those close to the court or who shared the social outlook of those who did. The Verney letters, for example, provide information about the hopes of members of the so-called 'Hanoverian Tories', soon to be proscribed, at the accession of George I. Other writers provided eyewitness accounts of coronations or royal visits to the provinces.

The writers on whose journals and correspondence I have placed particular reliance are Lady Mary Coke and Horace Walpole. Both provide substantial sources, largely concerned with the later part of the period, but in themselves connecting with assumptions about royalty and royal life gathered from the reign of George I and the early part of the reign of George II. Lady Mary Coke's journal - most of it remaining unpublished - was addressed to her sister the Countess of Strafford and, following Lady Strafford's death, to her widowed husband. However, Lady Mary was privy to a weight of court gossip and was able to make informed judgements upon it. In the later part of the 1750s and early 1760s she believed herself to have entered into an understanding with Prince Edward, Duke of York, brother of George III, and while Edward, who was much younger than Lady Mary, certainly never

intended to marry his admirer and derided her to other members of his circle including his aunt Princess Amelia (to whom Lady Mary Coke portrays herself as a close confidante) he does seem to have given the diarist some evidence of respect for her on occasion.¹ Admittedly she never refrained from taking a partisan position, such as in her fierce criticism of the Prince of Wales in the 1780s and her approval for the conduct of George III with regard to his sons, but in some senses she was representative of currents of opinion that can be identified in other source material from the period: early in the reign of George III, for example, she regretted the court's lack of splendour, but subsequently viewed George III as setting his kingdom a moral example. Her fears concerning the behaviour of the future George IV she justified when his 'marriage' to Maria Fitzherbert became known; her assumptions about Roman Catholic tyranny in Great Britain were rooted in the arguments employed most actively in defence of the Hanoverian succession earlier in the century, as perhaps befitted the daughter of an early Hanoverian minister.

Horace Walpole was the son of the most powerful of the ministers of George I and George II, and his impressions were also coloured by the closeness to royalty his father had enjoyed. Walpole had a large number of correspondents, including some located outside Britain such as Madame du Deffand and Sir Horace Mann, and his letters often contained his account of public ceremonies which he had been involved in or witnessed, with observations on royal participants. Although his grasp of the political machinations in the reign of George

¹Letter from Edward, Duke of York to Lady Mary Coke in the collection of the Earl of Home, dated Southampton, 3 August (? 1761)

III has been shown to be lacking, for example by John B. Owen, Walpole had a keen, perhaps obsessive, interest in royalty and several items of what might appear to be minor interest attained great significance in some of his correspondence.² His relations with the royal family developed a personal turn when his niece Maria Waldegrave married secretly William, Duke of Gloucester, after the Duke of York's death eldest brother of George III; this event offended the king's sense of royal conduct and Walpole felt his niece was subsequently victimised. Most relevant to this thesis is his interest in royal self-presentation; like Lady Mary Coke, he was critical of certain aspects of the royal image and articulated impressions found in the press concerning, for example, the bad management of features of the 1761 coronation. The targets of his sense of humour include what seem from even the most cursory selection of press reports to have been the most characteristic feature of the royal calendar under the House of Hanover, the military review.

The views of members of the elite are obviously of great importance when studying the presentation and reception of the royal family in the eighteenth century. However, the period under discussion saw the emergence of a wider public with a means of gaining information about all manner of public affairs, whose sense of identity was in part defined by the common means of communication and exchange of goods and ideas - the newspaper. The

² For Owen, see 'George II Reconsidered' in A. Whiteman, J.S. Bromley and P.G.M. Dickson, eds., *Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants: Essays in Eighteenth Century History presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland* (Oxford, 1973)

eighteenth century saw the dramatic expansion of the newspaper industry to the point where it has allowed recent historians to claim that by the late 1770s newspapers were not only the vital sign of the spirit of liberty encouraged by the British constitution, but also gave practical definition to the political community³ The king was of course the head of the eighteenth-century political nation. The arrival of the new royal family in 1714 occurred during the refashioning of the newspaper following the passing of the 1712 Stamp Act, by which newspapers evaded duty on paper if they used one and a half sheets rather than a single or half sheet. Intelligence concerning the movements and duties of royalty - and a multi-generational royal family was a novelty for the new realm of Great Britain in 1714 - helped fill the space that the authors and compilers of newspapers found themselves with in their initially successful attempt to escape taxation. The details of royal life continued to be printed following the refinement of the Stamp Act into a more effective means of raising revenue from the growing press in 1725, presumably both because they were popular, and also because royal affairs were considered part of the business of government which was the principal domestic interest of early eighteenth-century news coverage.

It is by no means certain how wide a public were reading the newspapers published during this period, but it is likely that the tri-weeklies printed in London, often referred to as the 'country' press, and the provincial papers themselves, reached an increasingly substantial

³John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge, 1976) in particular pp 139-40; see also H.J. Barker, 'Press, Politics and Reform: 1779-85' (unpublished Oxford DPhil thesis, 1994) p 49

section of the population.⁴ The principal arguments concerning literacy in the eighteenth century have been summarised by John Feather in his *History of British Publishing*: these turn on whether the historian should give more weight to the growth of educational provision during the eighteenth century and the large number of books aimed at the poor, or on arguably more concrete evidence such as the number of signatures in marriage registers as opposed to marks.⁵ Whether literacy was widespread among the poor or not, the growing sales of books, pamphlets and newspapers can be held to indicate an expanding market of readers. The continual increases in stamp duty and in advertising tax paid by the newspaper industry throughout the century are reflections not only of the government's continual need for more revenue but also of the increasingly lucrative nature of the newspaper business for those involved in it.⁶ Across the country, newspapers were distributed not only through booksellers in the towns, but also through established trade networks such as those of the common carriers, and also through similar services established by newspaper publishers themselves, such as the newsmen, newsboys and hawkers.⁷ Communications were improved by the expansion of the turnpike road network and the similarly ongoing reform of the postal

⁴For more information on the relationship between the tri-weekly and weekly London papers, see R.M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Ohio State University Press, 1965) chapter one: 'Weekly Intelligence for Country Readers'.

⁵John Feather, *A History of British Publishing* (Routledge, London, 1988) pp 94-6

⁶A. Aspinall, 'Statistical Accounts of the London Newspapers in the Eighteenth Century' in *English Historical Review* lxxiii, 1948, pp 202-205

⁷For provincial distribution networks (which could also apply to the London press) see C.Y. Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins and the Provincial Newspaper Trade in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1997), pp 72-92; for the interdependent relationship between the newspaper and book trades, see John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1985) particularly pp 16-20, p 37, p 46.

system which certain publishers, such as Edward Cave of the *Gentleman's Magazine* were well able to exploit.⁸ Information and opinion was carried to parts of the kingdom and society previously isolated from affairs of state, no doubt arousing greater interest in personalities such as members of the royal family. Newspaper historians have remarked on the comments of foreign visitors concerning the consumption of newspapers: a statement frequently quoted is that of Saussure, who as early as 1726 remarked on how "Workmen habitually begin the day by going to coffee-rooms in order to read the latest news" or collaborated in purchasing a paper to share between them.⁹ As the century progressed there were larger numbers of proprietary libraries in large towns, and book clubs in smaller ones, which allowed men of relatively modest income (and in some circumstances women) to have access not only to books, but also to periodicals containing news and comment on the affairs of the day.¹⁰ It is important not to forget that the printed word would be assimilated into oral culture by means of its being read aloud in the home or in inns or coffee houses.¹¹ By the end of the reign of George I there would appear to have been a wide social constituency for newspaper reports about royalty, at least in London; by 1770, when there were at least forty provincial

⁸Brewer, *Popular Politics*, p 159; A.D. Barker, 'Edward Cave, Samuel Johnson and the Gentleman's Magazine' (unpublished Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1981) pp 133-8

⁹H.J. Barker, 'Press, Politics and Reform', p 30; Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p 86

¹⁰For some examples of book clubs see Paul Kaufman, 'English Book Clubs and Their Role in Social History' in *Libri* xiv, 1964, pp 1-31; John Feather, 'The Ely Pamphlet Club 1766-1776' in *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* vii:4, 1980, pp 457-460.

¹¹Feather, *History of British Publishing*, p 94

newspapers, the readership would have been broader still.¹²

I have elected to draw the majority of my newspaper reports from the London press. In the light of recent research on the provincial newspaper this may seem to have neglected a major section of the potential source material. However, even in the later part of the period, when the revenue the government collected from the provincial press in the form of advertising duty was moving towards equalling that from London, many provincial titles lacked journalists of their own and still depended on the arrival of papers from London from which they compiled their titles.¹³ The more substantial country titles seem to have had their own correspondents in London from relatively early on in their histories.¹⁴ Nevertheless, as the markets for the London press and the provincial counterparts overlapped, business arrangements emerged which led to the sharing of advertisements and news between London and provincial titles; even when this did not occur, at least some of the editors of the London press would receive country newspapers and quote stories from them that they thought of interest to their readership. One of the most informative London tri-weeklies in the later part of the century was the *London Chronicle*, established in 1757 by the West Country press magnate Benjamin Collins, printer and proprietor of the well-established *Salisbury Journal*.¹⁵

¹²H.J. Barker, 'Catering for Provincial Tastes: Newspapers, Readership and Profit in Late Eighteenth-Century England' in *Historical Research* lxi, 1996, p 42

¹³*ibid.*

¹⁴Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, pp 202-3

¹⁵Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p 50

In the 1730s Collins had connections with the *London Magazine* where his regional rival Richard Raikes of Gloucester was an agent for its rival the *Gentleman's Magazine*; subsequently, in 1755, Collins bought a share in the latter periodical¹⁶.

Distributing the London press, or at least making copies available for visitors to the shop or printing office, was clearly an integral part of the business of many provincial newspaper publishers; Wiles refers to examples in 1727 and 1757, where the *Gloucester Journal* and *Williamson's Liverpool Advertiser* advertised the *London Evening Post* and *Lloyd's Evening Post* respectively, although without stating where the titles could be obtained, while the *Nottingham Weekly Courant* and the *Coventry Mercury* explicitly stated that they took in subscriptions for London papers.¹⁷ During the 1730s several thousand copies of the *London Magazine* were specifically printed for Salisbury and Gloucester, and rivalry between the monthly periodicals was intense: according to the *Gentleman's Magazine* some of their copies bound for Bristol in the winter of 1738 were subjected to sabotage.¹⁸ The London press remained ascendant throughout the period, and while the advances of the provincial press were remarkable, the interest of provincial proprietors in buying in to the London market showed that the London papers enjoyed the most authority and remained a desirable business investment; because the London papers had access to provincial

¹⁶*ibid.*, pp 127, 164; p 55

¹⁷Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, p 7

¹⁸Ferdinand, *Benjamin Collins*, p 127; A.D. Barker, 'Edward Cave, Samuel Johnson and the *Gentleman's Magazine*' (unpublished Oxford DPhil thesis, 1981) p 113

correspondents and increasingly to sister titles in the country, while remaining a key resource for provincial editors, they remain a valid source concerning reaction to events on a national scale.

My principal interest in the press has been as a source of information about the reported deeds of the royal family. These were generally printed without comment, although occasionally a sentence or two of speculation would be added concerning the reasoning behind a deed or the future plans of the monarch or his family. I have concentrated on the tri-weeklies and weekly newspapers as, certainly earlier in the period, these were more likely to contain more detailed accounts of royal movements than the dailies, which had more pressure on space, and also because the weeklies and tri-weeklies had wider circulations than the dailies. The *Gentleman's Magazine* has been extensively consulted, with recourse to its main rival, the *London Magazine*, at particular junctures.

With the exception of periods when there was very high pressure on space, such as during the War of the Austrian Succession, it would be very unusual for a week to go by in the London press without at least one paragraph appearing concerning royalty. Often this would be the blandest of statements concerning royal activities such as in a later era might be classified under the heading 'Court Circular'. However, other accounts of royalty were

such as would both inform and entertain readers.¹⁹ Royal affairs covered public administration, information on fashionable behaviour, notes on the exemplary deeds of the great (and as such sustaining approval for the social and political settlement which the Hanoverian succession guaranteed), and, on special occasions, the cultured or eccentric practices of foreign royalty. 'Scandal', as such, seems to have been absent in explicit form; some indiscretions would be alluded to but privileged information might be needed to uncover its meaning, such as the references to Miss Vane, mistress of Frederick, Prince of Wales, in the 1730s. This would seem to be in contrast to the world of satirical prints, where royal and other public indiscretions were quite baldly depicted throughout the century. This might be because editors, printers and proprietors thought their position precarious. Particularly in the age of Walpole, the Commons took a very dim view of the reporting of parliamentary proceedings and editors ran the risk of being prosecuted. Several publishers relied for some part of their circulation on the Post Office, and until the Franking Act of 1764 the printers with places or representatives in the Post Office were at an advantage as they were able to escape postage charges.²⁰ Printing material that could be seen as seditious would have been injurious to these enterprises, of which the government already disapproved as injurious to postage revenue. In addition, many editors stated that their aim was to inform

¹⁹The distinction between information and entertainment in the eighteenth-century newspaper, made by Lucyle Werkmeister in *The London Daily Press 1772-1792* (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1963) p 5, would seem too bald a statement, particularly with regard to many accounts of royal affairs such as weddings, or public events such as the Royal Fireworks of 1749, which were surely reported in such a way that the reader could imagine themselves at the entertainment.

²⁰Edward Cave of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which strove for a high provincial circulation, and appears to have succeeded, was one such. See A.D. Barker, 'Edward Cave', in particular pp 133-138.

and, at least among the provincial press and in the early part of the period before the increasing number of newspapers and periodicals encouraged greater editorial diversification, attempts to include lengthy editorial comments favouring government, opposition or even Jacobites may well have been rejected by readers.²¹

There are noticeable changes in coverage of royal affairs. These appear to march in time with the development of journalism as a whole. After decades of repetitive reporting of the Maundy ceremony - a supposedly royal event from which, with the possible exception of the officiations in 1715, the monarch was absent throughout the eighteenth century - imagination came to be shown in the 1780s when the press came to pay attention to the music that was performed in the ceremony. This development expanded upon the earlier hints that the Maundy ceremony was something of a social occasion, with members of the nobility present, and reflected the greater interest of newspapers in the 1780s with the fashionable world, and also the interest of George III himself with music. After the 1740s royal visits to the theatre ceased to be religiously reported, perhaps because they were so commonplace; although some historians have argued that royal visits to the theatre fell off, there are indications that members of the royal family continued to attend the theatre on occasions that newspapers did not report. This might have reflected an emerging public sense of members of the royal family as private individuals, distinct from the court. As a whole, there is an

²¹See Wiles, p 269 for one paper, the *Evening Post* of 16 September 1709, assuring its readers that it wouldn't tell them what to think, unlike the essay papers; also pp 210-1 for the limitations that editors placed on themselves when making editorial comments.

impression that the press becomes more selective during the period with the result that royalty had to do more to be worthy of notice. This is perhaps an indication of Great Britain, or at least London, becoming progressively less of a 'court society' through the period, or at least losing the mentality of one as expectations of royalty changed. In this thesis I will attempt to explore what these expectations were and suggest why they happened and what effect they had on the emergence of the royal family as an institution.

When dealing with sources for this thesis, I have been trying to identify cultural currents largely through considering the data extracted from the sources themselves rather than by placing emphasis on the process in which the sources came to say the things that they did. The first step in a history of cultural attitudes is to establish what happened: who said, did and (with more difficulty) thought what, and attempt to establish the consequences of their actions. When considering what might be thought of as the material impact of royalty on the public landscape, such as the changes to royal residences and the development of the royal estates, resource was made to guidebooks, both general and specific. Like the expansion of the newspaper press during the eighteenth century, the emergence of the guidebook (and its sister branch of the publishing tree, the travel book) catered for a reading public that showed interest in the well-being of the political community as a whole. Eighteenth-century guides exist for London from early in the period, and these pointed out attractions of historical significance including several relating to George I, George II and their predecessors on the English throne. During the reign of George II books arose dealing with royal residences such as Windsor and Hampton Court, as well as for major private seats

such as Stowe. The latter, as will be shown, was presented as a set of political allegories representing the concerns of successive generations of the Temple and Grenville families. These form an invaluable source for the study of the development of tourist attractions and the way in which they evoked dynastic and national iconography through the augmentations made to them by their royal and noble owners. The impressions gained from guidebooks have been supplemented by the comments of visitors to London or sites of interest. Particularly of note are those of foreign visitors who as outsiders do not take the interplay of royalty with commoners for granted and make comments about the characters and intentions of members of the royal family that British writers might not make.

The study of royal involvement in and support for 'improvement' - the development of innovative methods and the expansion of knowledge in scientific fields - demanded more diverse sources. There were mentions in the press and in journals that were relevant but a better appreciation of the context of royal involvement with the promotion of scientific knowledge could be gained from the manuscripts of the Royal Society and various documents in the British Library, particularly in the Sloane collection, relating to royal visits to scientific displays or demonstrations or royal patronage of scientific bodies or schemes. In many ways this work complements that on the 'royal landscape', as alterations to royal parks were often bound in to a desire by members of the royal family to put their land to better use and, importantly, to be seen to be doing so.

Little material appears to have survived that directly concerns the crafting of royal self-presentation for large parts of this period.²² Notes concerning royal ceremonial that passed through the offices of the Lord Chamberlain, Lord Steward or the College of Arms appear for the most part to have been destroyed; what remains often appeared in the public domain at or shortly after the time of the event, such as accounts of ceremonial at coronations, funerals or weddings, or in the case of papers in the Chamberlain's and Steward's papers is concerned with narrowly-expressed financial matters.²³ The existence of a line from the offices concerned with ceremonial to the press suggests that much of the rumours and speculation surrounding the monarch and his family that were related in the press and in letters and diaries stemmed from court officers or their dependants. Household officers were also instrumental in directing royalty towards the voluntary organisations that they became associated with in the century. The evidence for the shaping of the public and the private image of royalty is in some areas circumstantial and shadowy; but I hope in this thesis to show where substance might lie.

²²Enquiries directed toward the royal archives on this matter proved unhelpful, the archivist explaining that there was very little existing before the accession of George III, and what was present was unlikely to be very helpful. I was directed by the archives towards existing works such as *Queen Charlotte* by Olwen Hedley (London, 1976) but the material in the royal archives pre-dating 1789 seemed to have less potential, for the purposes of this thesis, than sources outside Windsor Castle.

²³For example, see College of Arms SML 30 fo 178-183, account of the marriage of King George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz in 1761, which rapidly appeared in the press in a form similar to that set down by Garter King of Arms Stephen Martin Leake; an account by Leake of the wedding of Anne, Princess Royal, to William Charles Henry, Prince of Orange, in 1734, which also foreshadowed the press reports, appears at SML 30 fo 37.

The absence of papers relating to the organisation of drawing rooms and levées before the middle of the reign of George III might suggest the relative informality of such occurrences for much of the period, or else complement the sense that royal procedure for much of the century followed as well-worn a path as the repetition of formulas in newspapers describing the doings of royalty or the character of public festivities celebrating royal or national anniversaries. Celebrations that followed a well-established form appear to have demanded a standard response. In a letter to his countess in 1729, witnessing celebrations of the anniversary of the accession of George II at Ipswich, the Earl of Bristol moved to an impersonal account that could have appeared in any newspaper, deviating from the more informal observations he had made on other matters previously.²⁴ The development of the calendar of popular celebration of civic, religious and royal anniversaries has been well charted for the seventeenth century, and the pattern established by the end of that period endured well into the eighteenth.²⁵ This thesis is not a study of that calendar nor of its evolution but the chapter below on the commemoration of accessions and coronations will suggest some ways in which the forms of popular celebration altered as economic and social life changed and the dissemination of information became more sophisticated.

Any discussion involving the place of royalty in the political imagination is bound to have implications for the ongoing debate on the nature and formation of British identity in

²⁴John, 1st Earl of Bristol, ed. S.G. Hervey, *The Letter Books of John Hervey 1st Earl of Bristol*, (Wells, 1894) iii, p 40 (Lord Bristol to Lady Bristol, 12 June 1729)

²⁵David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1989)

the eighteenth century. If not ignited by it, then the flames of this discussion burned brighter following the publication of *English Society 1688-1832* by J.C.D. Clark. Clark conceived of eighteenth-century England (and by extension Great Britain) as an 'ancien régime' state, governed under an essentially aristocratic ethic and broadly similar in that respect to pre-revolutionary France.²⁶ Whether or not one accepts Clark's interpretation of British politics and society as a whole, questions relevant to this thesis are raised by the place the post-1714 monarchy has in his book. George I is shown to have been defined by contemporaries, particularly churchmen, as ascending the throne through an act of providence, reinforcing an amended version of divine right ideology that evaded endorsement of the claims of James Stuart.²⁷ For Clark, such a stance was necessary to ensure the adherence of sufficient numbers of Anglican clergy to the Hanoverian succession. It also complemented the beliefs of most Whigs, who Clark sees for strategic reasons (like the 1689 convention parliament) holding that William III and Mary II had not been elected to the throne by parliament but instead had succeeded as the nearest unquestioned heirs following the abdication of James II. In this way the Hanoverian successors of William and Mary could avail itself of popular religion and the force of tradition, assuming the position of head of society with the Church's guarantee, until the point where such rhetoric no longer proved necessary, which for Clark was the coronation of George III.²⁸ The foundations for the depiction of the Hanoverians in this fashion, in both intellectual and popular culture, were the threat of Jacobitism and the

²⁶J.C.D. Clark, *English Society 1688-1832* (Cambridge, 1988) in particular pp 96-102

²⁷*ibid*, chapter three, pp 119-198

²⁸*ibid*, p 217

residual loyalty of the English and the Scottish to the Stuart succession. This threat was real not so much because of the number of adherents (which Clark admits was low) but because intellectually the ruling classes were drawn towards the legitimating principle.

Whereas Clark sought to correct what he considered to be an erroneous but prevailing account of the political ideology of eighteenth-century Britain and the workings of the social and political order, Linda Colley's *Britons* emphasises instead the development of a British political identity. This was shaped not by Anglican aristocratic hegemony but by a pluralist Protestantism, the growth of a trade-based empire (something which is marginal to Clark's vision), an aristocracy as close to the commercial metropolis as to the land, and a high level of military mobilisation. The monarchy has a special place in Colley's argument, emphasising the innovations of George III compared with - in Colley's view - the self-consciously impermanent George I and George II. However, Colley fails to adequately explore or resolve the question "Why did the early Hanoverians not devote more attention and imagination to the challenge of appearing as splendid rulers and as *British* rulers?" For Colley, the first two Hanoverians, cowed by the Stuart threat and by their loyalty to the Whig party as the best means of securing an efficient and loyal administration, failed to grasp opportunities presented by circumstance to magnify their royal status; George III did so, inspired by the ideas and limited practice of his father, but was only really successful after 1783, when the king was able to represent the enduring spirit of Great Britain following American independence and embody the public and private morality threatened firstly in parliament by Charles James Fox, and subsequently overseas by the French revolution.

The problem with Colley's interpretation is that it effectively assumes that George III's mode of presentation was either inherited from his father Frederick, or arose anew in the 1780s. Most of Colley's analysis of the phenomenon of 'Majesty' is based in the post-1780 period and fails to deal with royal involvement with subjects under the first two Georges.²⁹ Clark provides a potential starting point for further explanation of the position of royalty in the eighteenth century; if, among the politically active in 1714, the support of most of those who endorsed the accession of George I was "merely prudential", from the minority commonwealthmen and other political radicals to the clergy and aristocracy, then it might be asked how the incoming dynasty successfully assimilated itself, faced with a governing class to whom it was allegedly more an unfortunate necessity than a worthwhile cause.³⁰

The historian who has perhaps come closest in recent years to mounting a study of British royalty in the eighteenth century is Monika Weinfurt in her comparative study of three monarchies in *der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*.³¹ Her assertion that the kingship of William III was already essentially *bürgerlich* would seem questionable as it neglects the essentially militarist nature of William III's qualifications for the British thrones, and consequentially the

²⁹See Linda Colley, 'The Apotheosis of George III: Loyalty, Royalty and the British Nation, 1760-1820' in *Past and Present* 102, 1984

³⁰Clark, *English Society*, p 293

³¹ Monika Weinfurt, *Monarchie in der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft: Deutschland und England von 1640 bis 1848* (Göttingen, 1993)

aristocratic connotations of a military monarchy. Weinfort views George I as laying emphasis on constitutionality and wisdom; chapter two below in particular shall show how the picture of George I described to his subjects was somewhat more complex and not necessarily placed in opposition to the 'philanthropic', female monarchy of Anne. While Weinfort, like Colley, sees George III emerge as an embodiment of national virtues, she fails to explore the origins of this model of British monarchy in the reigns of the first two Georges. The resulting vacuum is one that I will try to fill.

A further question is whether it is possible to consider the way in which the House of Hanover was successfully assimilated into its role in Britain, without dwelling on the position of the House of Stuart and its claims. I argue that it can. As has been acknowledged, active Jacobites were not numerous enough to prevent the accession of George I, nor make the Fifteen, the Forty-Five or the other Jacobite rebellions triumphs. In addition, there were forces in eighteenth-century society that the Stuarts could have little distinctive to say on, such as trade; Jacobitism at its high points was still associated with isolation or French clientage. I hope to show how the Hanoverians asserted and developed their involvement with British society, through their involvement with charities, their tours and other public appearances; they would have had to develop an anchorage in Britain as an incoming dynasty had there been no 'James III' in Lorraine in 1714. Jacobitism will not be ignored when it arises, nor has it been pretended that it did not exist; but it is not the subject of this thesis and therefore has a comparatively marginal role.

I hope that this study will contribute to the debate surrounding the evolution of British identity in the following ways. Firstly, that it will outline the courses through which the members of the House of Hanover who settled at the head of British society after 1714 established the position of the monarch and his kin. Secondly, that it will acknowledge the significance of the multigenerational nature of the royal family, of a scale not known in the previous two centuries in England or Scotland. In this thesis I will also remember that court conventions and practicalities prevented royalty from becoming as separated from the population of the capital as happened in France. This thesis covers the activities of five generations of royalty between 1714 and 1789, and so it covers a relatively *longue durée*; I trust that it is found to provide both an accurate summary of some of the issues affecting the study of royalty and the eighteenth century and identify opportunities for further research, as well as come to some valid conclusions of its own.

Chapter One

The Changing Shape of Royal Benevolence in the Eighteenth Century

Royal benevolence remained an integral part of the active role of the British monarch at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The notion of the sovereign as the head of a society whose hierarchy was based on a family model was reinforced by Anne's declaration at her accession that she was the "nursing mother" of her subjects, a statement reinforced by the public acts of charity she made during her reign. However, by the beginning of her reign, the social structure to which Anne's rhetoric appealed was already being superseded by another. In addition, the all-encompassing personal monarchy, justified by a unique relationship with God, that Anne might be seen as hearkening back to was in the process of being replaced by a financially responsible, parliamentary monarchy which was no longer inherently the distributor of conspicuous largesse. Instead, its traditional roles had to be relocated in the post-1689 settlement, against a background of changing notions of property which challenged the dominance of landed wealth in the economy, based on new financial and commercial modes of operation which were encouraging the growth of a new moneyed class whose wealth was not directly dependent upon land.

The Lord's Anointed - the Sacral Connotations of Royal Benevolence

George I inherited from Anne her role as the benevolent alleviator of his people's ills, an aspect of his public function that had traditionally depended on a rhetoric of divinely-inspired monarchy that traced its origins as least as far back as the later middle

ages. At George I's accession the authoritative guide to the British Constitution, John Chamberlayne's *Magnae Britanniae Notitia*, continued to assert that George I was "a Priest as well as a King". This description endured not only to the close of George I's reign but also to the final edition of Chamberlayne's work in 1755.¹ Chamberlayne was to a large extent defining George I as his father and predecessor, Edward Chamberlayne, had Charles II in the first edition of what was then entitled *Angliae Notitia*. The most obvious omission by the time of George I is the last of the royal prerogatives in the earlier editions of the work, that which is "per-excellent, if not miraculous", the ability of the king to cure, by his touch, the King's Evil.²

Chamberlayne adopted the pose of the zealous believer in the supernatural powers of his sovereign. He ardently defends the miraculous healing powers of the king, repudiating the criticisms of nonconformists, declaring that Charles II had been seen to cure small children of their illnesses. The propagandists of the restoration monarchy were not the first to use the reputed power of the king to cure scrofula as a basis for establishing his legitimacy. Chamberlayne, or possibly his source, may have seen in the writings of Sir John Fortescue (whom Chamberlayne readily quotes) just such an exercise. Around 1462 Fortescue appears to have written in favour of the just claim of Henry VI to the English throne in two tracts, one in Latin and one in English, by the names of *Defensio Juris Domus Lancastriae*, and *Of the Title of the House of York*. In these documents Fortescue argues that as a woman could not, according to the practice of the Church, be anointed on the hands, Edward IV could not have inherited the priestly

¹John Chamberlayne, *Magnae Britanniae Notitia*, 24th ed. (London, 1716) p 42; 38th ed. (London, 1755) p 47

²Edward Chamberlayne, *Angliae Notitia*, 3rd ed., (London, 1669) p.158.

nature of the royal prerogative through the female line. By the time of Charles II, of course, such an argument could not be employed; Fortescue himself, in a later tract written in the service of the Yorkist monarch whom he had earlier defamed, had traced the history of the gift back to the anointing of Egbert.³

With more historical sense, perhaps, the commentators of the early Hanoverian period did not see fit to trace the thaumaturgical powers of the English monarchy beyond the reign of Edward the Confessor.⁴ As is well known, Queen Anne was the last reigning sovereign to touch for the King's Evil. There seems no reason to doubt that her intention in reviving the custom, which had lapsed under William and Mary, was to promote her status as the last Protestant member of the old royal line of England, the undisputed queen of her country. In doing so she continued the mode of public display of regality enjoyed by her uncle, Charles II, and her father, James II. The early Hanoverian monarchy inherited much of its ceremonial and religious discourse from that established by the later Stuarts. Yet the 'Royal Touch' failed to survive the death of Anne.

The frequency with which Charles II touched for the Evil was remarked on in print by a sympathetic author as late as 1748, two years after the Forty-Five had failed to restore a Stuart line whose representatives continued to protest their right to the British

³Raymond Crawford, *The King's Evil*, (Oxford, 1911) pp.45-47.

⁴William Beckett, *A Free and Impartial Enquiry into the Antiquity and Efficacy of Touching for the Cure of the King's Evil*, (London, 1722) p 8. Beckett cites William of Malmesbury as his source.

throne by practising the touch, and almost a generation after Anne's death.⁵ Anne herself touched as frequently as possible, her state of health permitting. A recent estimate is that she touched between one and two hundred people twice a week during the court season.⁶ Yet if William III and George I thought that by abandoning this practice they might place themselves in jeopardy, they did not show it. The accusations levelled at the Hanoverians and their Dutch predecessor, that they did not seek to cure scrofula through their royal prerogative because they secretly admitted their unfitness to do so, are well known.⁷ The existence of these allegations themselves may show that a demand for a revival of the royal miracle continued into the reigns of George I and George II. An advocate of the power of the touch, William Beckett, observed in the Hanoverians' favour that one of its most zealous practitioners was Henry VII, whose hereditary right to the throne was highly questionable; the same author argued that the efficacy of the touch had nothing to do with whether the monarch was Roman Catholic or not.⁸ In the absence of enthusiastic kings entrepreneurship seems to have tried to fill the gap. One manufacturer of medicines saw it as worth his while to advertise his remedy for the King's Evil in one London newspaper for some Easters, Easter having been the time at which certainly Charles II

⁵John Badger, *A Collection of Remarkable Cures of the King's Evil*, p 15 onwards, passim. Detailed statistics for the years 1660-64, and 1667-82, from the registers of Thomas Haynes, Serjeant of the Chapel Royal, and Thomas Doubleday, Keeper of the Closet to Charles II, respectively, at pp 58-62.

⁶R.O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court*, pp 210-12 (Stanford, 1993)

⁷Some versions are given in Helen Farquhar, 'Royal Charities - Touchpieces for the King's Evil' iii, published in *British Numismatic Journal*, iv, (London, 1918) p 118. See also Crawford, *The King's Evil*, p 150.

⁸Beckett, *A Free and Impartial Enquiry*, p 8

touched the most frequently.⁹ Yet there does not seem to have been a sustained outcry against the disappearance of the custom.

The later Stuart practice of touching for the King's Evil was itself something of an innovation and need not necessarily be seen as a tradition that had deep foundations. Crawford suggested that Charles II incorporated some aspects of the French ceremony, such as the ritual washing of the king's hands between each touch, that he would have witnessed Louis XIV perform during his continental exile.¹⁰ There is also evidence to suggest that the full-blooded ceremony of healing was dying out before the Civil War; Charles I apparently had little enthusiasm for ministering unto the unhealthier of his subjects in the customary fashion.¹¹ Although the practice of the touch endured in France to the Revolution, and was revived by Charles X after the restoration of the Bourbons, the French monarchy was not only more sheltered from the day to day life of the capital than its English counterpart, but could also claim greater dynastic continuity with previous centuries. Both the major historians of the royal miracle recognised that it was no coincidence that the principal codifiers of the English healing service were Edward IV and Henry VII, both of whose genealogical claims were open to dispute.¹²

⁹*London Journal* 296, 27 March 1725; 455, 20 April 1728; 505, 5 April 1729.

¹⁰Crawford, *The King's Evil*, pp 103-4.

¹¹Paul Hammond, 'The King's Two Bodies: Representations of Charles II' in Jeremy Black and Jeremy Gregory, eds., *Culture, Society and Politics in Britain, 1660-1800*, p 14 (Manchester, 1991); referring also to J. Richards, "'His Nowe Majestie" and the English Monarchy: the Kingship of Charles I before 1640', *Past and Present* 113, 1986

¹²Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch*, trans. J.E. Anderson, (London, 1970) p 66; Crawford, *The King's Evil*, p 49.

One can reasonably assume that William III, George I, and their advisers, would have been well aware of the political uses to which Charles, James and later Anne put their reputed healing powers. However, both means and ends may not have been attractive. The Protestant kings came from outside the traditions of the English Church and State; the description of the role of the King of England from *Angliae Notitia*, that he was "the Supreme Pastor of England, and hath not only Right of Ecclesiastical Government, but also of exercising some Ecclesiastical Function" would probably have seemed to them too much like a remnant from pre-Reformation practice, and not a role which they would have wanted to adopt in any shape or form beyond the administrative.¹³ Despite Anne's support for the traditions of the Church of England as represented by clerics such as Sharp and Atterbury, both George I and his ministers were more inclined to be seen to promote the cause of Protestantism in general, across denominations and across frontiers. Though George I and his successors did assert their control of ecclesiastical government, it was as kings in parliament rather than as priest-kings. George I and - perhaps to a lesser degree - George II reigned in a more European context of Protestant kingship than had Anne, whose reign had sought precedent in English forms.

George I has been described by his most respected biographer as "not of a religious temperament".¹⁴ This does not mean that he was an atheist, but as a product of seventeenth century Lutheranism at a German princely court he would have had little time for the notion that God worked miracles through crowned heads. Many of his

¹³Edward Chamberlayne, *Angliae Notitia*, 3rd ed. (London, 1689) pp 125-6

¹⁴Ragnhild Hatton, *George I, Elector and King*, (London, 1978) p 166

English subjects would have found this opinion comfortable. Although he wrote in George II's reign, John Douglas's views on miracles would have not been out of place among several divines of an earlier date.

...we absolutely deny there is an Evidence as good, or comparable to it, for the other Miracles, as for those which are recorded in the New Testament; nor is base Metal more easily detected when it would pass for Gold, than are the false Pretensions of Paganism and Popery when set up in Opposition to the Miracles of Jesus and his Apostles.¹⁵

The sensitivity to what was seen as a credulity more fitting to the errors of Roman Catholicism than Anglican Protestantism existed before the accession of George I or that of William III. Samuel Pepys thought touching for the King's Evil "an ugly office and a simple one," although he admitted that the king carried out the office "with great gravity".¹⁶ The Hanoverians received praise from quarters that looked to a monarch, or indeed a state, which championed rational inquiry over beliefs considered inappropriate to the early eighteenth century. William Beckett addressed his *Free and Impartial Enquiry* to George I's physician, Dr Steigertahl, and to Sir Hans Sloane, attempting to place the ancient practice in a more reasoned medical context.¹⁷ Sir Richard Blackmore, himself a former royal physician, also wrote on the subject of scrofula. He praised William III, George I and George II for their abandonment of the healing ceremony, and in contrast to Beckett rejected any attempt to give scientific

¹⁵John Douglas, *The Criterion: or, Miracles Examined with a View to expose the Pretensions of Pagans and Papists; to Compare the Miraculous Powers recorded in the New Testament, with those said to subsist in later times, and to shew The great and material Difference between them in Point of evidence: From whence it will appear that the former must be true, and the latter may be false*, p 5 (London, 1754)

¹⁶Crawford, *The King's Evil*, p 119; see also R.C. Latham and W. Matthews, eds., *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ii, 1661, (London, 1970) p 74.

¹⁷Beckett, *A Free and Impartial Enquiry*

credence to the traditional claims of the English monarchy. Indeed, any comment on the supposed royal gift he restricted to the Preface of his discourse on the subject, blaming the whole phenomenon on a priestly conspiracy, "crafty Jugglers fruitful in Invention of pious Frauds, legendary Wonders, and religious Knight-Errantry."¹⁸ This view is perhaps in keeping with the alliance with Commonwealthmen and radical Whigs that was a feature of the early years of George I's reign. A Hanoverian monarchy guided solely by these forces may well have rejected its spiritual antecedents altogether.

Whatever the wishes of some propagandists, this could never be a realistic prospect. George I was portrayed at his accession as an Anglican king to his English subjects and much of the propaganda surrounding his accession and coronation emphasised this.¹⁹ Displays of religious conformity became part of the battle between Hanoverian monarchs and their eldest sons. Both George II, when Prince of Wales, and his son Frederick, had chosen to be seen in public attending different services from those at the Chapel Royal when they were in opposition to their respective fathers. This was particularly important at Easter, with its associations with royal munificence. In 1719, certainly, the Prince and Princess of Wales attended the Easter service at St Anne's, Westminster, and although by 1721 they were sufficiently reconciled to George I to have returned to St James's, the Prince of Wales still made a donation to the poor of St Anne's parish in that year, as he may have done at Easters where he worshipped there.²⁰ Similarly, in the later 1730s and early 1740s Frederick and Augusta withdrew from the

¹⁸Sir Richard Blackmore, *Discourses on the Gout, a Rheumatism, and the King's Evil*, pp lx, lxiv-lxv (London, 1726)

¹⁹For greater discussion see chapter two below.

²⁰*Original Weekly Journal*, 28 March 1719; *Post Man* 3134, 20 April 1721.

ceremony at the Chapel Royal and attended St James's Church, where on at least three occasions the sacrament was administered by Thomas Secker, Bishop of Oxford, who at that time was out of favour with George II.²¹ If court religion in general became more distant from the public at large under the Hanoverian kings, in contrast to Anne's enthusiasm for involving her subjects in ceremonies in which she presided, then the appearance of the heirs apparent and their consorts at services attended by persons from outside the court must have gone some way towards redressing the balance.

Necessity dictated that the King of Great Britain would remain defined as a sacred figure throughout the century, if in broad terms. The king continued to be anointed in a religious ceremony. The Revolution had emphatically not reduced the king to the position of a secular chief magistrate. The Act of Settlement had bound the Electress Sophia and her descendants to uphold the Church of England as by law established. It would have been imprudent for either George I or George II to attempt to change too radically the nature of the Church they inherited from Anne; in practice the Whig bishops that were appointed under the first Hanoverians, occasional crises like that concerning Benjamin Hoadly notwithstanding, did not indulge in theological debate to the extent that it threatened the Hanoverian succession. However, the suspected sympathy of many churchmen to the exiled Stuarts must have affected the maintenance of the religious ceremonies of the later Stuart monarchy. George I and George II steered a path between parliamentary monarchy and hereditary sanctity. While George I argued at his accession that he had been brought to the throne by Providence, there was no

²¹*Daily Gazetteer* 857, 3 April 1738; 1497, 7 April 1740; 1804, 30 March 1741; *Gentleman's Magazine* viii, 1738, p 217.

suggestion that a religious cult around the monarchy should be encouraged. Attempts by pilgrims to venerate the shrine of Edward the Confessor were strongly discouraged. The custom was in any case the reserve of the proscribed Catholics.²²

Despite the unfortunate auguries, the possibility that the king would revert to touching for the King's Evil did remain for some time. The last English edition of the Book of Common Prayer to include the healing service appears to have been the quarto edition of 1732, although this was substantially a reprint of that of 1719. A Latin edition continued to do so until 1759, edited by the High Church cleric Thomas Pearsall and enduring until well after his death; one commentator has speculated that this should be ascribed to Jacobite sympathies on the part of the publisher.²³ Nevertheless, it would have been in the interest of the Hanoverian monarchy to keep open the possibility that they would one day demonstrate their royal authority to their subjects by inviting the sick to come forward and be cured by their touch.

The disappearance of the healing of the scrofulous from among the ceremonial activities of the British monarchy must have contributed to the rapid growth in significance of the Maundy ceremony. Until the edition of 1704, *Angliae Notitia* gave a detailed account of the service, the king, whose representative at this date was the Lord Almoner, first washing the feet of the chosen poor, and then distributing clothing, fish, bread, beer and wine. Two sums of money were awarded, representing the number of

²²*GM* xiii, 1743, p 551; xvii, 1747, p 494

²³Helen Farquhar, 'Royal Charities - Touchpieces for the King's Evil', iv , in *British Numismatic Journal*, v, (London, 1920) p 154.

years that the king had reigned and lived respectively.²⁴ A more mundane explanation for the sudden appearance of reports of this ceremony in the press after 1715 is the general increase in the number of pages of a newspaper from two to four during the middle of the decade. This was the result of changes in taxation, stamp duty being lower on folded half sheets without any clearly defined restriction on the size of the paper being introduced, at least at first.²⁵ Typographical advances also increased the space for news, the demand being filled by the doings of the court. The Maundy service looked to a Biblical text slightly more acceptable to Protestant sensibilities than that of Mark 16^{xiv++} quoted by Beckett as having been used by Charles I and Charles II, placing the line of English kings in the apostolic succession.²⁶ The model given for the Maundy ceremony is the washing of the disciples' feet by Jesus at the Last Supper, the Kings of England pursuing this rite "in Imitation of our Saviour's Pattern of Humility".²⁷ This ceremony projected the monarch as both pious and benevolent. However, the use of the Maundy ceremony to show the Hanoverian kings as involving themselves in the public aspect of the royal religious calendar is difficult, as the king stayed one remove from the ceremony throughout the period. The only report that at all implies that one of the Hanoverian sovereigns was actually present at a Maundy ceremony is in a 1715 edition of the *British*

²⁴John Chamberlayne, *Angliae Notitia*, 21st edition, (London, 1704) p 165

²⁵See Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole*, (London, 1987) pp 19-21

²⁶Beckett, *A Free and Impartial Enquiry*, pp 22-24

²⁷*London Evening Post* 56, 18 April 1728; 206, 3 April 1729; *Post Man and the Historical Account* 5148, 20 April 1728; *St James's Evening Post* 2166, 3 April 1729; *Whitehall Evening-Post* 1953, 15 April 1731, p 2

Weekly Mercury, and this is at variance with two other contemporary newspaper accounts.²⁸

One reason for the king keeping his distance from the ceremony, aside from reasons of security - Jacobitism and other forms of sedition might have been feared prevalent among the poor of London - may be its close relationship with the miracle-working that the Hanoverians eschewed. The Banqueting House, Whitehall, was one of the locations where the later Stuarts would have been expected to appear to touch for the Evil. The Maundy services continued to take place in the Chapel there, a relic of the days when Whitehall Palace still stood. Some reports, of the later 1720s, also describe the Lord Almoner or his deputy as distributing the king's charity to 'Lazars'.²⁹ This term probably carried stronger connotations of infirmity than the more neutral 'poor Person' or the later 'decay'd House-keeper' used in some reports in the early 1730s.³⁰ The *London Evening Post* has been identified as at the forefront of the opposition evening press, so it might be possible to infer that opponents of the Hanoverian succession were attempting to create mischief.³¹ There were opportunities in some early Hanoverian commemorations of Maundy Thursday for the Jacobites to exploit. Twice, Nathaniel

²⁸*British Weekly Mercury* 511, 16 April 1715; *Danks's News Letter*, 16 April 1715; *Weekly Packet* 145, 16 April 1715.

²⁹For example, *British Journal* 237, 1 April 1727; *Weekly Journal or the British Gazetteer* 99, 1 April 1727; *London Evening Post* 56, 18 April 1728, and 206, 3 April 1729.

³⁰For example, *St James's Evening Post* 2636, 6 April 1732; *London Evening Post* 828, 22 March 1733.

³¹Harris, *London Newspapers*, pp 88, 121

Mist was able to note that successive Lord Almoners failed to wash the feet of the poor.³² There are sufficient reports of later ceremonies including the washing of feet to imply that this practice continued for a little while beyond the reign of George I; whether or not it featured in the ceremony may well have been up to the sensibilities of the Almoner or Sub-Almoner concerned.³³ One historian of the service believed that footwashing ceased between 1731 and 1736, although the Almoner or Sub-Almoner and his assistant continued to be girded with white towels, as practised in later Stuart and Hanoverian times, into the revived ceremony of the mid-twentieth century practised by George VI and Elizabeth II.³⁴

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this expression of the religious duty of the king was that the ceremony does not appear to have changed between the accession of George I and the mid-point of the reign of George III, or indeed beyond. The ceremony continued, presumably because it acted as an intermediate channel between the court and the lowest section of the population, but it became more distant from the activities of the centre of the court, the king. During the reign of George II, it became the habit of the king to dine away from St James's on the Thursday before Easter, presumably as a repose from the centre of political activity, and also to prepare the royal summer residences for their use by the royal family during the parliamentary recess.³⁵ The Easter celebrations

³²*Weekly Journal: or Saturday's Post* 19, 20 April 1717, p 112; 17, 28 March 1719, p 100

³³*GM* i, 1731, p 172; *London Chronicle* iii, no 193, 27 March 1758, p 286.

³⁴Lawrence E. Tanner, 'Royal Maundy', in *Report of the Society of the Friends of St George and the Descendants of the Knights of the Garter*, 1958, p 15

³⁵*London Journal* 667, 8 April 1732; the pattern that seems to have been followed early in George II's reign was for the King and Queen to spend a few weeks in Richmond

were part of the last act of the court before it departed for more rural locations. The Maundy service was established as already irrelevant to the king and his personal role within the Hanoverian parliamentary monarchy, but it remained a part of the royal function, connected to but divorced from the reigning monarch himself. As if to emphasise that the personal connection between the king and his impoverished subjects endured, however indirect it had become, the Lord Almoner, or his deputy, had the office of preaching to the Royal Family at the Chapel Royal on Easter Sunday. The devotional aspect of the king's bounty was emphasised on Good Friday, when the Hanoverian kings continued to offer the Byzant. This offering had once been melted down and minted into angels, touchpieces used in the healing ceremony. The coins themselves were no longer minted, but it is suggested that the metals placed on the communion table by the king (or again, his almoner) eventually found their way in some form into the pockets of the poor.³⁶ It is very difficult to gain a detailed picture of what form the Maundy ceremony took until the late 1780s, but there are indications that it was an optional feature of the social round of the nobility in London in the earlier part of the period.³⁷ Later it was seen as an opportunity for royal largesse, as other poor people who did not actually have a place in the ceremony itself would collect outside the Banqueting House and receive money there.³⁸ As the manner of reporting changed towards the end of the period, more detailed accounts began to appear, revealing that anthems were sung between each

after Easter, before migrating for the main part of the summer to Hampton Court, or to Kensington in times of political crisis. See also *St James's Evening Post* 2485, 15 April 1731; 2879, 11 April 1734

³⁶*London Evening Post* 2088, 31 March 1741

³⁷*Post Man and the Historical Account* 5148, 20 April 1728

³⁸*LC* iii, no 193, 27 March 1758, p 286

separate distribution of items. The particular form of ceremonial appears well-established by this time. It may well be that the Maundy ceremony remained in Whitehall, almost a century after the bulk of Whitehall Palace had been destroyed, because it was a public event attended by all elements of the population that could not be accommodated in any other location.³⁹

The kind of almsgiving that the Maundy ceremony celebrated remained an important feature of eighteenth century British kingship. However, throughout the eighteenth century greater emphasis came to be laid on the voluntary association, of coordinated, constructive attempts to improve the lot of the poor and sick. This inevitably had effects on the way in which royal benevolence came to be expressed. The decline of the office through which royal charity had formerly been administered, that of the Lord Almoner, was probably only helped on its way by these changes. Anne's Almoner, John Sharp, Archbishop of York, has been portrayed as a very active Lord Almoner who played a decisive role within the patronage networks of Anne's reign, as well as jealously guarding the privileges of his post.⁴⁰ However, after Sharp's death (and against a background of political upheaval) his post changed hands very quickly, passing within the first few years of George I's reign from Sharp's successor, Bishop Smalridge of Bristol, through Bishop Nicholson of Carlisle (in his post by 1717) to Bishop Willis of Salisbury. This is not to say that the post did not remain important. Under George I, the Lord Almoner could on occasion be found performing other ceremonial duties for the

³⁹LC lxi, no 4740, 7 April 1787, p 330 (erroneously numbered 322); lxiii, no 4899, 22 March 1788, p 283

⁴⁰A. Tindal Hart, *The Life and Times of John Sharp, Archbishop of York*, (London, 1949), pp 217-223

king, such as the laying of the foundation stone of the church of St Martin's in the Fields.⁴¹ However, the rapid changes of office-holder, whatever the reasons for them, cannot have helped the Almonry. The tendency of Archbishop of York Lancelot Blackburn, Almoner from 1728 to 1743, to delegate his Eastertide duties in London to his Sub-Almoner, John Gilbert, Dean of Exeter and then Bishop of Llandaff, must also have harmed the public face of the institution.⁴² It has been suggested that Robert Hay Drummond, Archbishop of York and Almoner from 1762 to 1776, reformed the office by preventing the royal charity from being used in favour of dependants of the powerful.⁴³ If this was the case, then Hay Drummond's devotion to his duty might well have contributed to the Almonry's further decline as it ceased to be cater for the requirements of courtiers. The Almonry survived the reforms of 1782, but with its officers and functionaries divided before and after this date between the Chapel Royal and the Lord Steward's Department, any force it had must have depended on the personality of the Lord Almoner of the day. Its role in the age of collective philanthropy must have diminished as that power rose.

Royalty and the Charitable Institution

The monarchy had occupied the role of patron of charitable enterprises for some centuries. The older institutions with historic royal ties, such as St Bartholomew's and St

⁴¹*Applebee's Original Weekly Journal*, 24 March 1722

⁴²Gilbert is first recorded as officiating in 1731, in *London Journal* 612 and *Weekly Register* 53, both 17 April 1731, and in *Whitehall Evening Post* 1954, 17 April 1731. He was still being recorded as doing so in 1741; see *Daily Gazetteer* 1802, 26 March 1741.

⁴³*Dictionary of National Biography* xvi, p 39. The statement is not supported further.

Thomas's, and the Royal Hospital of St Katherine by the Tower had connections dating back to the dissolution of the monasteries and before and as such had something at least of the characters of royal peculiars, not unlike Westminster Abbey. However, the involvement of the king and his family with these institutions in the sense of a personal connection was in general low. It has been suggested that the only eighteenth-century patron of St Katherine's to take an active interest in the old charity was Queen Charlotte, who replaced the usually genteel widowed sisters of St Katherine's with noblewomen with close court connections.⁴⁴ As already indicated, whether St Katherine's could be described as a 'charity' dedicated to relieving the unfortunate is another matter. Although the poor of the St Katherine's area doubtless benefited from the hospital, it was through receiving alms from the well-born ladies and clerical gentlemen who were the principal beneficiaries of the establishment; a nineteenth-century defender of its traditions would declare that "St Katharine's Hospital is no more a 'Charity' than Westminster Abbey is a Charity."⁴⁵ As for the first two institutions mentioned above, reference works such as the *Court Kalendar* or the *Court and City Register* show that they had closer involvement by far with the City of London than government or court. This is not to say that monarchs had lost interest in issues of social welfare. Mary II has been credited with the initiation in 1691 of the commission that investigated abuses in hospitals and other charities, a body that included the future Almoner Sharp.⁴⁶ This move is probably best viewed as a social initiative on the part of government, rather than as a display of philanthropy by a

⁴⁴Catherine Jamison, *The History of the Royal Hospital of St Katherine by the Tower of London* (London, 1952) p 119

⁴⁵Frederick Simcox Lea, *The Royal Hospital and Collegiate Church of Saint Katharine near the Tower in its Relation to the East of London* (London, 1878) p 108

⁴⁶A. Tindal Hart, *Life and Times of John Sharp*, p.130, referring to Public Record Office, H.O. Warrant Book, 6, p 28

royal individual. However, the channelling of royal benevolence through philanthropic foundations which sought to relieve the various ills of the disadvantaged, would prove one of the most important contributions of the kings, queens, princes and princesses of the House of Brunswick to the public role of the British monarchy. In order to grasp this achievement some practical innovations had to be made in the execution of the ancient association of the monarchy with good works.

The philanthropic movement that emerged in the eighteenth century was based on principles distinct from the methods by which princely charity had been most commonly expressed in Britain hitherto. The king's benevolence had been part of his executive and sacral function, a matter of politics as well as almsgiving. When Henry VIII had taken over the patronage of St Bartholomew's he had been displaying the ability of the King of England to fill the spiritual and temporal shoes of the monastic foundations he had dissolved. Chelsea Hospital had been an instance of policy coinciding with beneficence, as Charles II proved sympathetic to the foundation of a public institution closely connected with the monarchy and with the welfare of those who had suffered in the king's service. As Wren argued, "Architecture has its political Use: Publick Buildings being the Ornament of a Country; it establishes a Nation, draws People and Commerce; makes the People love their native Country".⁴⁷ To some extent William III's Greenwich Hospital was another expression of the same coincidence of statecraft and benevolence. However, despite the occasional experiment such as that with the Foundling Hospital for a few years after 1756, "the Revival of the True Christian Spirit of Justice and Charity", as invoked by the founders of one general hospital, did not coincide with the operations

⁴⁷quoted C.G.T. Dean, *The Royal Hospital Chelsea* (London, 1950), p 44

or aspirations of government in a context where, for much of the century, the Crown - in both its personal and executive roles - was unenthusiastic for lavish expenditure on long-term institutional projects of the sort embraced by Charles II.⁴⁸ In the field of social endeavour this meant that individuals, rather than the body politic, were expected to be moved to assist the unfortunate. Eighteenth century Britain was faced with a rising consciousness of the contrast between poverty and rising 'luxury' that was particularly evident in the metropolis where aristocratic paternalism could no longer apply in anything like its operation in a rural context. The voluntary association of individuals motivated to assist the unfortunate became the principal manifestation of London charity, supported by merchants, financiers, aristocrats and - all but from the beginning - by royalty.

Active royal support for charitable institutions administered in accordance with the spirit of voluntary assistance appears to have begun in the reign of George II. However, the initiative in question was not one made by the king himself, but by his eldest son. In September 1734 the governors of St George's Hospital appointed Frederick, Prince of Wales as their president.⁴⁹ In some respects this was an acceptance of court patronage in a broader context, as simultaneously the Lord Chancellor was appointed a vice-president. Many of the medical practitioners connected to St George's also held court appointments, something they would do for much if not all of the period. Frederick's acceptance of the position had more enduring significance than the endorsement of the royal, noble and powerful for a new philanthropic enterprise. St

⁴⁸John Langdon-Davies, *Westminster Hospital - Two Centuries of Voluntary Service* (London, 1952), p 14

George's had, on its secession from the Westminster Hospital in 1730, selected Lanesborough House, adjacent to Hyde Park Corner and on the fringes of the fashionable new residential developments on the rural edges of London, as its home. It was well positioned to court patrons from among those who were retreating from inner Westminster into the healthier environs along Oxford Street and Piccadilly.

Frederick had been in Great Britain for only seven years and may have sought to fortify his social position by association with the new hospital, located in one of the newly-developed areas of London and thus to some degree having progressive connotations. In doing so he would set a precedent for royal patronage of charities that would endure for more than two and half centuries. The name of 'St George's' itself was a name that appealed to patriotic sentiment, which Frederick was beginning to cultivate more and more assiduously in opposition to his father. Frederick sought to identify himself both with fashion and with the future, advertising his own availability as the reversionary interest and evolving his own agenda of 'patriot' kingship, which arguably found its expression in the unpublished, but privately circulated, treatise of the proscribed Viscount Bolingbroke.⁵⁰ Frederick associated himself with what was expected not only of a gentleman but a Patriot gentleman, moved by the Protestant principle of individual action. Like his father, he continued to distribute alms in the traditional fashion. During the great winter of 1739-40 he is reported as travelling through London

⁴⁹ *GM* iv, 1734, p 570.

⁵⁰ For discussion of the literary-political background to Bolingbroke's *The Idea of a Patriot King*, with respect to the career of Frederick, see Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth 1725-1742*, (Oxford, 1994) in particular pp 185-229

in a Hackney coach, donating "large Sums of Money" to "poor distressed Watermen".⁵¹ That he did this incognito, and only allowed the information to be revealed some time after the event, in itself laid emphasis on private rather than public endeavour. Increasingly Frederick pursued the grounding of his own public image in the establishment of goodwill from royalty towards the constructive benevolence of voluntary associations. It would seem probable that this goodwill was intended to be a permanent feature of the Frederician royal character. This was marked not just by his continuing connections with St George's, but also by his parallel support for an existing relationship established by his parents. This connection was the royal patronage given to Thomas Coram's Foundling Hospital.⁵²

Mention should be made of the connections between the royal family and the Foundling Hospital, as the interest of George II and Queen Caroline in that establishment was near-contemporaneous with Frederick's in St George's. However, the manner of the support that George II gave and was expected to give differed markedly from that expected from Frederick. It is true that George II was the first 'patron' of the Foundling Hospital, a formal title adopted by royalty in subsequent years to mark their support for a charity, but he only adopted the title in 1758, nearly two decades after the royal charter incorporating the hospital had been granted.⁵³ Until then, aside from the charter, there

⁵¹*The Open Heart and Purse: or, British Liberality Display'd* (London, 1740) p 3

⁵²*GM* xix, 1749, p 235, records the attendance of the Prince and Princess of Wales at a concert of music "compos'd by George Frederick Handel, Esq., for the benefit of the foundation" at the chapel of the Foundling Hospital, tickets being half a guinea each. George II sent a gift of £2 000 to the Hospital.

⁵³Ruth K. McClure, *Coram's Children - The London Foundling Hospital in the Eighteenth Century* (New Haven, 1987) p 34

had been no explicit connection between royalty and the hospital. It would seem likely that in becoming patron George II was not so much acknowledging his own interest but that of parliament, which had undertaken to financially support the Foundling Hospital on the condition of a policy of general admission in April 1756.⁵⁴ This is not to say that George II was personally indifferent to the Foundling Hospital. The sympathy he had shown for the project had been evident from his earlier donation of £2 000 to the Foundling Hospital chapel and a further £1 000 to support the preacher there.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, it would seem that for George II, the monarch could only lend his name to an establishment if it was supported by parliament. One part of the sovereign legislature thus displayed his inability to bestow his name on Coram's foundation without the consent of the other two branches.

Royal Benevolence and National Priorities

A probable reason why George II gave his support to the efforts of Thomas Coram was Coram's record of supporting schemes which sustained and improved the self-sufficiency of Great Britain and the links with her colonies and also with the monarch's electoral possessions. Among Coram's projects could be counted his establishment of tar production in North America, enabled by an Act of Parliament in 1704, thereby reducing the reliance of the navy on imports from Sweden; an attempt to find suppliers for naval stores in the Electorate of Hanover during the reign of George I; advocating the settlement of Protestants in Nova Scotia to ensure the province's loyalty in case of an attempt at reconquest by the French; and a plan to set up a school for Indian

⁵⁴R.H. Nicholls and F.A. Wray, *The History of the Foundling Hospital* (London, 1935) p 49

girls in North America, with the aim of converting them to Anglicanism and in due course implanting English Protestantism in the native culture.⁵⁶ Coram's plan for the Foundling Hospital can be understood in a context that one can imagine a man with the preoccupations of George II appreciating. During the War of the Austrian Succession George II regularly subsidised the placing of orphan boys in the services out of his Privy Purse, and indeed careers in the armed forces were among those envisaged for Coram's foundlings.⁵⁷

The Foundling Hospital by no means set out to provide boys exclusively to the service of the Crown. Royal endorsement of its foundation nevertheless demonstrated that those who governed were to some extent appreciative of the argument that the success of Great Britain in the imperial arenas of commerce and politics and the maintenance of the social fabric at home were interdependent. This belief grew during the eighteenth century and has been particularly associated with the emerging 'middle class' involved in mercantile activities who profited - or felt that they did - from Great Britain's imperial possessions.⁵⁸ Among the early arguments of Coram and his adherents

⁵⁵Nicholls and Wray, *ibid.*, p 201

⁵⁶J. Brownlow, *Memoranda; or, Chronicles of the Foundling Hospital, including Memoirs of Captain Coram, &c. &c.* (London, 1847) pp 99-101, 123

⁵⁷BL Add. 27908, Privy Purse Accounts 1737-49, ff 77, 90, 97, 110: the donations take place between 1744 and 1747; Brownlow, *ibid.*, p 7: describing the figures seen on the headpiece on the Power of Attorney which authorised the governors of the Foundling Hospital to collect alms, "the next group, headed by a lad elevating a mathematical instrument, are in sailors' jackets and trousers."

⁵⁸ See Kathleen Wilson, 'Urban Culture and Political Activism in Hanoverian England: the Example of Voluntary Hospitals' in Eckhart Hellmuth, ed., *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford, 1990) pp 168-9; Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, 1995) pp 60-1, 76-7

had been that similar institutions to the Foundling Hospital already existed in France, to that country's economic and military benefit.⁵⁹ The action of William, Duke of Cumberland in sending the settlers in Nova Scotia six thousand pairs of shoes in 1750 can be understood as part of the same melding of social and imperial agendas.⁶⁰

The anxiety about the well-being of Great Britain during the Seven Years' War which provided the context for the parliamentary sponsorship of general admission to the Foundling Hospital probably contributed towards the growth of royal patronage from the 1750s onwards. The Seven Years' War provided plenty of opportunities for the expression of patriotic fervour that could be directed in favour of the House of Hanover. The same is true of the War of the Austrian Succession, but whereas in that conflict loyalist poetry and essayists concentrated on the martial exploits of George II and the Duke of Cumberland as heirs to the Protestant heroism of William III, there seems to have been a shift in emphasis away from martial glory, towards a less militant Protestant Englishness that glorified Elizabeth rather than or in addition to William.⁶¹ Certainly in the first Birthday Ode composed by William Whitehead, Poet Laureate from 1758, there is a change of emphasis from the overworked classical models used by his predecessor Colley Cibber, towards more 'Gothic' references to the dynasty's Teutonic origins, in keeping with the literary tradition of the 1730s that has been associated with Prince Frederick and Bolingbrokean ideals.⁶² A move towards more frequent depictions of the

⁵⁹McClure, *Coram's Children*, pp 5-7, 21

⁶⁰*GM* x, 1750, p 286

⁶¹See *GM* xxix, pp 283, 333, for evidence of this shift.

⁶²*GM* xxviii, 1758, p 558

royal family at their devotions can be perceived from some of the available evidence. The king and his family participated in the general fast of 16 February 1759, anticipating the return of 'solemnity' to religious festivals perceived by one sector of contemporary opinion during the American War.⁶³ These signs that the royal family were identifying with the troubles of the nation as a whole, rather than simply those of the court and high politics, might have been among the reasons why further charities sought the endorsement of members of the royal house.

Another reason was the more prosaic one that there were more mature members of the Royal Family. As the elder offspring of Frederick and Augusta approached their majorities, further potential patrons emerged, ready to put into practice, if only in supporting roles, Frederick's model of active kingship presaged by his progress of 1750.⁶⁴ The involvement of royalty in connection with the new charities was also the consequence of the increasing activity of the aristocracy in the foundations as they took a greater interest in bodies originally founded by those of more transient wealth such as Coram. Coram himself had lobbied within the royal household as part of his campaign to establish the Foundling Hospital by royal charter, four of Queen Caroline's Ladies of the Bedchamber being among the signatories of his first ladies' petition.⁶⁵ As suggested above, the relationship between the royal household and St George's Hospital was close throughout the century. Its senior surgeons and physicians from Tessier, Stuart, Amyand

⁶³*GM* xxix 1759, p 92; *London Chronicle* xli, no 3169, 29 March 1777, p 302; xlv, no 3484, 3 April 1779, p 318

⁶⁴See chapter three below.

⁶⁵McClure, *Coram's Children*, p 34

and Dickens in the 1730s, to the Hawkinses, Gunning and Hunter in the reign of George III, commonly waited also on the king or queen of the day.⁶⁶

Undoubtedly connections with a figure close to the royal family helped greatly in recruiting a member of the growing Brunswick clan as a patron. Dodd's Magdalen Hospital sermon of 1760, welcoming Prince Edward to the position of patron, also commends the president, the Earl of Hertford, a Lord of the Bedchamber to both King George II and King George III, for his role in obtaining the prince's services.⁶⁷ In the same year George III became patron of the Smallpox Hospital; the *Court and City Register* of the next year lists among the vice-presidents of the body two lords of the bedchamber to the king, the earls of Lichfield and Northumberland, and Sir William Beauchamp Proctor, a member of parliament for Middlesex.⁶⁸ Several other hospitals with which royalty was associated in the reign of George III had senior court or ministerial figures among their officers. In 1772 the Lying-In Charity was signalled as worthy to have the Prince of Wales as its president by having the Earl of Dartmouth, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Earl Harcourt, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as vice-presidents.⁶⁹ Although members of the royal family do not appear to have been extraordinarily active they did their part for fundraising. Prince Edward, Duke of York, regularly attended the commemorative services at the Magdalen Hospital and later at the

⁶⁶J. Bromfield, *St George's 1733-1933* (London, 1933), pp 9-11

⁶⁷William Dodd, *An Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Magdalen Charity, to which are Added, the Rev. Mr Dodd's Sermon...* 1st ed (London, 1761) p 29

⁶⁸*Court and City Register*, 1761 ed., p 234

⁶⁹*ibid.*, 1772 ed., p 232; see also p 48 below.

London Hospital (whose presidency he adopted in 1765) until his death in 1767. His brother William, Duke of Gloucester, who seems always to have been ready to officiate at major hospital events at which he appeared to be the main attraction, succeeded him in the latter post.⁷⁰ By the beginning of the reign of George III the protection of charities was becoming established as part of royal civic duty.

The expansion of royal patronage of this kind was of course more than a matter of supply. Winning a member of the royal family as a patron does appear to have enhanced the status of some bodies. The appointment in 1765 of the Duke of York as president of the London Hospital coincided with its first appearance in the gazetteer of public life, the *Court and City Register*, although the institution had existed as early as 1740.⁷¹ By the time that the duke died his sister-in-law Queen Charlotte had already superseded him as patroness of the Magdalen Hospital. Securing the personal approval of the consort of George III for the institution, which sought to reclaim prostitutes for a more respectable life, was another stage of the acceptance of the establishment at Goodman's Fields as one of the major charitable foundations of the metropolis.⁷² Some members of the royal family became patrons of institutions that could claim traditional connections with their positions. George, Prince of Wales, was in 1771 pressed into service as Patron of the 'British Charity... for the Maintenance and Education of Children born of Welch Parents', also known as the Society of Ancient Britons. The Society had

⁷⁰Bodleian Gough London 53 (54) is a bundle of documents consisting largely of invitations and tickets to Dr Richard Gough, asking him (and other governors and benefactors) to join the Duke of Gloucester either at divine service or the anniversary dinner that followed, between 1777 and the Duke's death in 1805.

⁷¹*Court and City Register*, 1766 ed., p 255

⁷²*Court and City Register*, 1765 ed., p 255; 1766 ed., p 258

approached Frederick Prince of Wales early in their existence but seemingly with less success.⁷³ In the same year the prince had already become president of the Lying-In Charity, 'for delivering poor married women at their own Habitations'.⁷⁴

The policy followed by George III of promoting his own children to the exclusion of his younger brothers was most famously exemplified by the nomination of the infant Prince Frederick to the Prince-Bishopric of Osnabrück in 1763; it evidently affected to some extent the distribution of honorary officerships between members of the royal family as well. At the time of his appointment the young prince was not in a position to carry out any duties in the name of the charity that he supported, but to the Lying-In Charity the endorsement of the activity as a worthy one, acceptable in the highest reaches of society, was more important than any activity that he might perform in their favour.

The association of ministerial and household figures with the bodies which sought and obtained royal patronage from the 1750s onwards suggests that some of the institutions concerned might have been wishing for a status similar to that which the Foundling Hospital enjoyed from 1756 to 1760. However, obtaining the support of court figures and eventually royal patronage may well in itself have been a validation of their work for the founders of the hospitals, enabling them to take their place as part of "an accepted social hierarchy" which "distributed roles and status to the middle classes"

⁷³*An Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Welsh Society, for supporting a Charity School, erected in Gray's Inn Road London* (London, 1789) p 7: no mention is made in an earlier edition of the same work (London, 1750) of royal connections; *GM*, i, 1731, p 80 - the Society invited the Prince to join them at dinner on St David's Day. They failed to obtain his company on the night, but were allowed to kiss his hand.

while providing for "a healthy, industrious and grateful working class".⁷⁵ In either case royal endorsement of voluntary associations could be seen as a sign that the hospitals represented at some level government social policy, the autonomous organisations administered by their governors claiming recognition as part of the political order.

The sphere of the royal family's charitable activity throughout this period was predominantly metropolitan. It can be argued that this metropolitan bias took two forms - the personal and the institutional. During the severe winter of 1740, which had affected the entire British Isles, the personal donations of George II do not seem to have stretched beyond the Cities of London and Westminster and the Parish of Kensington.⁷⁶ George II did grant a charter to the Edinburgh Infirmary but this should be seen more as a political gesture to North Britain than an attempt to make the royal presence felt in Scotland. Similarly, his grant to Winchester County Hospital could be viewed as an award to a town that on the fringes of living memory could have expected more from royalty, but which had been left disappointed by events. In 1746 Frederick had accepted the presidency of Bath General Hospital; the appointment can be compared with St George's, as Bath at this time remained a fashionable resort occasionally visited by members of the royal family, including Frederick himself. Late in the period George III made bequests on his tours of the western counties of England in the 1770s and 1780s, including donations to hospitals.⁷⁷ The larger proportion of royal charity, whether in the form of

⁷⁴*Court and City Register*, 1772 ed., p 232.

⁷⁵Wilson, 'Urban Culture', pp 179-80

⁷⁶*The Open Heart and Purse*, pp 3, 15.

⁷⁷Prochaska, *Royal Bounty*, p 5, pp 15-16; *GM* xvi, 1746, p 164; *Court and City Register*, 1779 ed., p 234

almsgiving or in a more institutional context, could be held to have had more in common with the behaviour of the great noble families. The Percy family provided a point of comparison in the London area. The first Duke of Northumberland had been an ally of the pioneer royal patron Frederick, and held several positions under the Crown early in the reign of George III. He and his sons all held several positions between them on the boards of London charitable institutions by the 1780s. As the House of Hanover discovered its royal heritage outside London, correspondingly their sphere of benevolent activity widened as well. George III and Queen Charlotte built a hospital for sick soldiers on the east side of the Long Walk at Windsor. It appears not to have had a long lifespan and by the middle of the nineteenth century had already been demolished.⁷⁸ Despite the above examples of provincial endorsement, London charities took up the larger proportion of royal patronage in the later eighteenth century; this not only reflected the royal family's regular sphere of social influence but also established the primacy of the metropolitan hospitals over their provincial equivalents or near-equivalents.

There were important differences between the royal house and their aristocratic counterparts. Firstly, the royal family for the most part held roles that were more honorary in their nature than the presidencies or vice-presidencies held by the Percies and other noble families. Secondly, the connections that the House of Brunswick built up with benevolent foundations often owed more to their causes than their locality. As previously described they had inherited institutions such as the Greenwich and Chelsea hospitals which catered for the special needs of members of the armed services, who were brought to the fringes of the metropolis and provided for, one might argue, as royal

⁷⁸R.R. Tighe and J.E. Davis, *Annals of Windsor* (London, 1858) p 340

dependants. One of the most noticeable features of many of the foundations to which the monarch or his family acted as patrons was that they represented the interests of a section of the sovereign's subjects not encompassed by existing statutory provision within England. The Scots Corporation had been founded in 1665 under the auspices of Charles II; in our period it was re-established with a charter from George III, with the aim of providing relief for impoverished Scots families in London with no parochial settlement.⁷⁹ The early eighteenth-century monarchy took active steps to portray itself as the protector of European Protestantism as well as of its loyal subjects within the British Isles and colonies, and it is in that context that the royal charter for the Hospital for Poor French Protestants was granted by George I in 1718.⁸⁰ The Society for Ancient Britons emerged at about the same time and it is perhaps an indication of the way in which Wales was not seen by its rulers in London as a distinct part of the kingdom that it had to wait until 1771 to gain a royal patron. The importance of royal patronage of institutions like the Magdalen Hospital, the Foundling Hospital, or the London Hospital was that the benevolence granted to the Crown's extra-territorial clientage (from an English point of view) was now extended to the socially and economically vulnerable: repentant prostitutes, abandoned children and the disabled 'manufacturers', merchant seamen and their families. In obtaining a royal patron, even if not a royal charter, these bodies were able to add weight to their claims that they were dealing with social evils which were

⁷⁹*A Summary View of the Rise, Constitution, and Present State of the Charitable Foundation of King Charles the Second, Commonly called, the Scots Corporation in London* (London, 1756); *Court and City Register*, 1779 ed., p 234

⁸⁰*The Statutes and By-Laws of the Corporation of the Governor and Directors of the Hospital for Poor French Protestants, and their Descendants, Residing in Great-Britain* (London, 1741) p ix

endangering the integrity of Great Britain in a manner comparable to diplomatic isolation, the loss of trade or military defeat.

The interest of the royal family in encouraging specific constructive actions against social ills is marked by a continuing commitment to the battle against smallpox. The struggle for greater understanding of the then endemic disease was one of the most prominent civic features of the dynasty's adherence to the rational movement. Only a few years after Anne last touched for the Evil, Caroline, Princess of Wales, can be found supporting the experiments in inoculation performed by the then Serjeant-Surgeon, Claudius Amyand, culminating in the inoculation of Princesses Amelia and Elizabeth Caroline in 1722.⁸¹ The experiment must have had the endorsement of George I to go ahead. The treatment was also performed on Prince Frederick in Hanover at about the same time.⁸² The early support for smallpox inoculation shown by both George I and Caroline indicated that the conflict between medical progress and resistance to the practice was not one over which the rival generations of the House of Brunswick would divide. The royal family continued to be inoculated throughout the century, and the practice was certainly maintained among their household in the early years of the reign of George III.⁸³ George III accepted the role of patron at the Smallpox Hospital at his accession, and later in his reign was to become patron of the Royal Jennerian Society.

⁸¹Blomfield, *St George's*, p 11

⁸²BL Sloane 4076, ff 98-99

⁸³see Mrs. Vernon Delves Broughton, ed., *Court and Private Life in the Time of Queen Charlotte: Being the Journals of Mrs Papendiek* i, (London, 1887) pp 41-2, for account of the inoculation of Prince William (later Duke of Clarence and King William IV), Prince Ernest of Mecklenburg, and the young Charlotte Albert (later Mrs Papendiek) c. 1770

The patronage given to the battle against smallpox by George III has been described as "one example of how the public can be converted into a cause by royal intervention, and of how royal patronage can turn an experiment into an institution."⁸⁴ Through such patronage did the Hanoverian monarchy adapt the demand for monarchical benevolence to an age which gave less credit to the supernatural in human affairs.

The importance of specifically religious devotion as a means of displaying the benevolent nature of the British monarchy altered throughout this period as royal activity in the charitable sphere grew. George III was known for his religious belief, but there are signs that in his reign emphasis on the ceremonial observance of holy days as upheld in the reigns of his grandfather and great-grandfather gave way to a more private piety. Towards the end of his reign George II had been occasionally absent from the Epiphany service and the royal offering had been made by proxy; the accession of the much younger George III does not appear to have noticeably revived declining royal attachment to that particular act of worship.⁸⁵ George III was attached to domestic worship, as seen at Windsor, and it was in virtue of his recovery that the biggest public religious commemoration was held - the 1789 Thanksgiving.

Nevertheless, displays of veneration at court appear, by the middle of the reign of George III, to have gradually lost the importance they had clung on to under George I and George II. George III's eldest son chose not to hold 'rival' services to those of his father's court in the same way as his forebears had done. Assuming that George Augustus

⁸⁴*Court and City Register*, 1761 ed., p 234; Prochaska, *Royal Bounty*, p 13

Frederick was careful enough of his position not to be conspicuously godless, during the 1780s his practice would seem to have been to hold a private service at his London residence, Carlton House, followed by a more conspicuous departure for the races at Newmarket, accompanied by other figures of fashion.⁸⁶ Other priorities might have eclipsed even the most tokenist religious observance: Lady Mary Coke, although not well disposed to the younger generation of the royal family, particularly the heir apparent, reported in 1785 that "The Prince of Wales on Sunday, instead of attending their Majesties to the Chapel, skated upon the Ice."⁸⁷ It does not seem to have been until 1790 that the prince returned to the Easter service at the Chapel Royal, St James's, for the first time since perhaps as early as 1781. Religious festivals had ceased to become an arena in which political and dynastic disputes were paraded. This was partly due to the solemn devotion of George III, but no doubt also because the idiom by which the Royal Family expressed their service to their country was changing. From the leaders of a nominally confessional state, members of the royal family were becoming the chief volunteers in a society where the unfortunate depended not on divine mercy but on individual beneficence.

The eighteenth century saw the traditional, overtly divine, inspiration for royal philanthropic activity moved to the sidelines. Although the relationship between God, king and Church remained it became at most implicit in the royal connection with

⁸⁵BL Add. MSS 6339, 'Cuttings Relating to the Royal Family as Assembled by Lady Banks', f. 27

⁸⁶LC iv, no 4283, 13 April 1784, p 354; lix, no 4589, 18 April 1786, p 365; lxiii, no 4900, 25 March 1788, p 291; *The World* 714, 13 April 1789, p 2

⁸⁷Lady Mary Coke, MSS Journal Books xx, 23 February 1785

charities. Ceremonies like the Maundy became part of the ceremonial machinery surrounding the Crown, somewhat divorced from the personal calendar of the monarch. Instead, the traditional association of the monarchy with charity combined with the desire of most members of the royal family throughout the period to be identified with the new and the fashionable and with the growing interest in the rational movement and the advance of natural science. This produced a royal family who might be seen as a 'civilising influence' on the new social structures in London, adding their support to that given by the aristocracy to the efforts of philanthropists such as Coram, and assisting the new institutions find a place in the existing order. The Hanoverian royal family was thus identified, slowly but effectively, with an emerging sector of British 'national life'. The monarchy had maintained its paternalist role, but now acted as the head of society rather than as an intermediary with God. Its function was now to give the blessing of the executive arm of the state to the collective action of fortunate individuals, seeking to remedy the social problems suffered by the country whose integrity the dynasty had come over to protect.

Chapter Two

"Loud and Repeated Huzza's": Celebrations of Accessions and Coronations and the Royal Image under the First Three Georges

Commemorations of accessions and coronations remained important in the Hanoverian period because they presented the aspirations of the monarch and his ministers in a way that was to some extent calculated to reflect the expectations of the king's new subjects. The accession was marked by the celebration of the initial promise of the new reign, leading up to the glorification of the sovereign at the coronation. Although the service remained unchanged (except to accommodate the presence or absence of a consort) following the coronation of William and Mary in 1689, it was still possible to make emphases particular to each individual event. This was achieved principally through the coronation sermon, the content of which appears to have remained strongly influenced by the king, proclaiming the monarch's own conception of his position, rights and obligations.¹ The celebrations occasioned around the country were far from spontaneous and often formulaic, both in their staging and their reporting. However, in that they reflected how those in authority at different levels of society and in different areas of the country wanted their king to be perceived, they also went some way towards illustrating the concerns of the country at large.

George I, his son George II and great-grandson George III all had to locate their

¹For the coronations immediately preceding that of George I, see Carolyn A. Edie, 'The Public Face of Royal Ritual: Sermons, Medals, and Civic Ceremony in Later Stuart Coronations', in *Huntington Library Quarterly* 53, 1990

kingship in the line of descent established by their predecessors. Hereditary succession was necessary to the survival of the 1689 Settlement which they were charged to guarantee; the Revolution had diverted the succession rather than replaced the monarchy with another order, and George I reigned as the senior Protestant descendant of James I rather than as a purely elected head of state. None of the first three kings of the Brunswick line were able to make an outright rejection of an unpopular immediate predecessor, even though it might have been in their interest to cultivate the expectations of constituencies in some way alienated by the perceived conduct of the recently departed sovereign. At the beginning of a reign, the monarch had to project himself as the embodiment of the nation, in as all-embracing a fashion as was possible in his individual circumstances. In this way stress could be laid on a particular definition of what and whom constituted the "Britons" over whom the monarch was to reign, by celebrating some aspects of the heritage of the Hanoverian monarchy over others.

It is perhaps unnecessary to elaborate on the differing circumstances in which the enthronings of the first three Georges were celebrated. George I had enjoyed very little first-hand contact with his new subjects or their institutions before his accession. It was popularly assumed that the chances of his reign enduring were precarious. A difficulty encountered by those who sought to promote a positive image of George I was that he was associated with a war party, while inheriting a legacy of new-made peace from the queen whose crown he had inherited. George II fared better, in that he had become a focus of opposition during the lifetime of his father. In doing so, he had assisted the dynasty by providing an alternative centre of dissent from the Stuart court, and a different language of political symbolism had emerged around his person, concentrating on the assumptions that he would cast aside the aspects of his father's conduct that were unpalatable to the popular taste. At his accession George III was the

focus of similar expectations from a public and press conditioned to expect a more active and vigorous monarchy by his late father, but he was also a young man, relatively unknown, succeeding to the crown of a country enjoying military success overseas. His suspicion of Whig ascendancy and party government manifested itself in his moves towards a more politically active monarchy that was 'popular' in the sense that it sought to represent all those whom George III and his advisers thought were neglected under George II, and this was displayed in his accession and coronation propaganda.

Establishing the Dynasty: George I

The succession of George I to the throne of Great Britain was perhaps the most anxiously manipulated of the first three Hanoverian accessions. This was essential if the accession were not to be endangered by the advocates of the Pretender in Lorraine, not only for the security of George I himself, but for those who were to succeed him and the endurance of the Revolution Settlement. Communications between George I's ministers on the continent and those who protected his interest in Great Britain under Queen Anne had already ensured that efforts had been made to make a king born on foreign soil acceptable to his future subjects. For example, following the death of his mother, the Dowager Electress Sophia, in June 1714, the Church of England had prayed for "George Elector of Brunswick Lunenburgh", whereas the Elector's style properly anglicized would have been George Lewis.² A potentially damaging identification of the first Hanoverian king with Great Britain's much-demonized enemy, Louis XIV, was thereby anticipated and avoided. The Elector's

²Wolfgang Michael, *England Under George I: The Beginnings of the Hanoverian Dynasty* (London, 1936) p 34, referring to BL Stowe MSS. 227, ff 117-20, 125-6, Bothmer to Robethon June 16 & 19, 1714 (at the Hague).

representative in London, Count Bothmer, rode with the Duke of Buckingham, Lord President of the Council, in the second coach at George I's proclamation, in a demonstration of the unanimity between ministers and between the Hanoverian king's dominions.³ The Lords Justices took firm steps to ensure that George I was placed firmly in the line of his predecessors; for example, they approved the design of the coronation medal and commissioned it on 10 September 1714.⁴ The design showed an enrobed George I in a shell-like coronation chair being crowned by Britannia holding her spear and shield. In this it bore some resemblance to that of Charles II, where the king is depicted crowned by an angel of peace from heaven.⁵ This echo of the restoration of 1660 signalled that the accession of George I fulfilled the restoration's early promise which had been compromised firstly by the crypto-Catholicism of Charles II, and then by the overt profession of the Roman faith by James II. George I was to be portrayed as a king in the purest traditions of his predecessors, representing the true order in England that had been threatened by recent political developments, but which was now buttressed by the arrival of the new sovereign.

Some of those who sent reports of the progress of George I from his electoral dominions to his new realm appear to have been enthused by the same spirit. It was noted in London that the States-General "have resolved to pay the same Honours to that King (George I) as they did to Charles II just before he embarked for his Restauration"; this statement

³Michael, *ibid.*, p 55

⁴Public Record Office, *Calendar of Treasury Books and Papers, Warrants not relating to money XXII*, p 298

⁵Edward Hawkins, ed. Augustus Franks and Herbert Grueber: *Medallic Illustrations of British History* ii (London, 1885) p 424; Carolyn A. Edie, 'The Public Face of Royal Ritual', p 315

encouraged the reader to compare the arrival of George I with that of the last British king to arrive peaceably in his kingdoms, perhaps in contrast to the armed incursion of William III.⁶ The makers of one civic address at least thought it suitable to draw attention to the day of George's birth, 28 May, the day before the Restoration of Charles II; they expressed the hope that George would emulate Charles, who "put a final period to those Black Times of Anarchy and Confusion."⁷ Some reports also help give the impression that efforts were being made to make George I appear less foreign to his new subjects before he landed in his kingdom, so he could arrive in as favourable a milieu as he could; for example, he was reported as dining, when still in the Netherlands, with his English escort Lord Strafford on his left hand, second only to the Electoral Prince on his right.⁸ Such items do not seem to have saturated the press, but there were some who saw it as necessary to stress that King George I, although born and ruling in Germany, was to be seen to sail up the Thames as if it were as natural to him as proceeding along the Elbe.

The accession of George I was not simply the succession of one individual to the throne, but that of a ready-made royal family. The Hanoverians may have been succeeding to the throne following the limitations prescribed by an act of parliament, but the emphasis throughout the preparations for the reception of George I and the subsequent coronation made plain that the new family on the throne, whatever its differences from the Stuarts, were directly continuous from the old. Precedents were examined far more thoroughly than had been the

⁶*Post Boy* 3008, 19 August 1714

⁷Address of Rochester, *Post Boy* 3030, 9 October 1714

⁸*Evening Post* 798, 18 September 1714

case, when traditional labels came to be applied to the newcomers. It was reported that orders had been received for the early instalment of the Prince of Wales at the end of August, following rumours concerning the possibility of a new settlement for the heir to the throne, consisting of the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall and the Principality of Wales, crowned with the new title of "Prince of Scotland".⁹ This tale does not appear to have been without foundation; the Attorney-General, perhaps acting out of anxiety for the Union, had suggested that the title of Prince of Scotland be introduced, presumably from the belief that Scotland, not Wales, was now the principal of England's junior partners within the united realm, but, probably wisely, this was not taken up.¹⁰ Wolfgang Michael states that there was some confusion over whether the title of Prince of Wales was automatically assumed by the king's eldest son; the understanding that it was not was actually a reversal of Stuart policy, as both the young Charles II and James Francis Edward had been styled Prince of Wales from birth without any patents having to pass the seals.¹¹ Hanoverian court procedure began by asserting that its authenticity was greater than that practised by the family George I was supplanting.

⁹*Flying Post: or, the Post-Master* 3535, 31 August 1714; *Weekly Packet* 111, 21 August 1714

¹⁰PRO: State Papers Domestic, George I, vol i, f. 32

¹¹Michael, *Beginnings of the Hanoverian Dynasty*, pp 56-57. The clarification of the circumstances in which the heir apparent was styled Prince of Wales does not seem to have eradicated confusion surrounding the title of Duke of Cornwall, which in 1714 seems to have been applied enthusiastically to the Prince of Wales's eldest son: see *British Mercury* 478, 1 September 1714. *Weekly Packet* 113, 4 September 1714, p 3, suggested that "Prince Frederick George" - again, perhaps deliberately, avoiding using the first name of the aspiring 'universal monarch' - was actually to be granted the title by patent. This may have arisen from the same investigation into the titles of the king's eldest son; George Augustus was the first Prince of Wales to have issue living within the lifetime of his father since the Black Prince. As it became clear that Prince Frederick was to have no part in English public life during his grandfather's reign, the issue was presumably shelved.

Even the overseas origins of George I could be paraded as a mark of continuity. "As no Nation ever receiv'd a prince from a Foreign Country with greater Chearfulness and Affection, so no Prince ever came to the Crown of a Kingdom with a greater Stock of Affection to his People, and Sincerity in his Royal Resolutions to make them happy", the pro-Hanoverian *Flying Post* declared in an expanded version of a report from the Electorate.¹² The precedent for the arrival of George I was not forgotten in London. J. Roberts of Warwick Lane printed an edition of the address of the Recorder of London to James I on his arrival from Scotland in 1603.¹³ The comparisons implied were not only between the Solomonic wisdom of James - on which great stress was laid in the speech - and that of George I, but also between the queens who had immediately preceded both newcomers, Elizabeth and Anne. Justice would again follow the reign of a woman and its great victories. The first civic address to be received by King George, from the Mayor and Jurats of Gravesend, developed this theme, appealing to the "mild and equitable Government of your ancient Subjects" alongside the "immemorial Race of Kings and Heroes" from which George I descended. The ambiguity of the last phrase, which could refer either to King George's ancestors in Great Britain or in Germany, was probably deliberate.¹⁴ The inherent message was that the two dynasties, of Britain and Hanover, were henceforward united around the same cause, the "firm Establishment of the Hereditary Monarchy" that the accession of George I, with his growing

¹²*Flying Post* 16, 31 August 1714; for a shorter version of the report, which does not go into the effusive partisanship of the Post, see *Dawks's News Letter*, 31 August 1714.

¹³*The Recorder's Speech to the King* (London, 1714)

¹⁴*Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3544, 21 September 1714

number of Protestant grandchildren, could make a reality.¹⁵

As mentioned above, there are signs that the Lords Justices wanted to promote the accession of George I as another restoration. To contemporaries, this did not necessarily imply comparisons with Charles II alone. To his advocates, William III, who like George I came from a Protestant country on the continent, had restored the balance of the constitution when it was threatened with the imposition of arbitrary power. The manner in which William III's intervention was mythologised has already been very well explored by historians.¹⁶ There was potential for George I to adopt the mantle of the "Great Restorer" as Locke put it, seeking to banish factionalism by presenting himself as the incarnation of Protestant, English and British unity. However, George I was probably too cautious a politician, bearing in mind the party struggles his predecessors' attempts at fair play had brought about, to pursue this consideration. As a question of image, he was fifty-four and probably lacked the energy to set about projecting a dynamic persona. The maintenance of royal power, and the stability of his government, was best brought about by taking the conservative path charted in the coronation sermon. In a manner similar to later identifications of the Hanoverians with Old Testament heroes such as in the operas of Handel, it depicted George I as David, having brought the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, "the Lord *having given him Rest round about from all his*

¹⁵The address from Hastings in *Post-Boy* 3024, 25 September 1714

¹⁶See, for example, Lois G. Schworer: Introduction and 'The Coronation of William and Mary, April 11, 1689'; and Stephen B. Baxter: 'William III as Hercules: the Political Implications of Court Culture' in Schworer, ed., *The Revolution of 1688-89* (Cambridge, 1992)

Enemies."¹⁷ George I does not seek to reunite the people, but protect those who support him against the tyranny of the Pretender. "We would have been rul'd, not by Law, but by Will, and have held our Lives and Fortunes at Pleasure only."¹⁸ The circulation of this sermon around the country, as parish clergy drew on its text in their own preaching, must have sounded a much harsher note than that sounded by the sermon at the coronation of Charles II. Although that sermon had remonstrated the people for their wickedness in rebelling against Charles I, it also emphasised that Charles II was "a Man of understanding and knowledge", who would seek to emulate Solomon's wisdom and prolong the happiness of his subjects.¹⁹ George I, in contrast, was David, in conflict with foes within and without Israel. Justice was available to those who were loyal to the new king, living "henceforth like a People saved by the Lord".²⁰ The king and his ministers were to steer a safe political course; the king, through the coronation sermon, informed his subjects that he knew who his friends were. Thus George I was from his public inauguration marked down in words as a partisan sovereign.

This line of rhetoric might be termed defensive, as it placed George I as a king triumphant but only over foes who might return to fight another day. It was most comfortable in calling on William III as its authenticating precedent. The 1714 coronation sermon was quite

¹⁷John Potter, Bishop of Oxford: *A Sermon Preach'd at the Coronation of King George* (London, 1714) p 5

¹⁸Potter, ...*King George*, p 19

¹⁹George Morley, Bishop of Winchester: *A Sermon Preached at the Coronation of the Most High and Mighty King Charles the Second King of Great Britain, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c.* (London, 1661), p 5; the text was Proverbs 28, ii: "For the Transgression of a Land, Many are the Princes thereof; But by a Man of understanding and knowledge shall the state thereof be prolonged."

²⁰Potter, ...*King George*, p 27

explicit in its near-canonisation of William III as a prince raised up by God to defend the "old Foundations of our envy'd legal Establishment in Church and State"; God was intervening directly in the history of the British Isles, firstly by sending William to eject James II and his Francophile Papists, and then in punishing the nation for its over-confidence after the victories of the War of the Spanish Succession by placing the Pretender in a position where he could reasonably expect to ascend his father's throne. George I was presented to the people as a second messenger of God, ejecting the implicitly ungodly ministry of Oxford and Bolingbroke and preventing the country from being subjugated by James Francis Edward's "great Patron", Louis XIV.²¹ This theme was promoted in the press. One pamphlet, a poem "by the Author of the Verses upon His Grace's Retiring into Germany", proclaimed George I to be at once "Saint and Hero", the "True Descendant of a Royal Line". The king amalgamated in his person "British Valour" and "German Truth", neatly recalling the address from Gravesend which welcomed the king into the Thames.²² Countless loyal addresses from around the kingdom professed the same faith in the resurgent Williamite qualities in the new monarch. "Proclaim aloud, another Nassau reigns" was the watchword.²³ George I's accession was to be conceived as a restoration, and it borrowed a few of the trappings that surrounded the return of Charles II in 1660, but pretensions to the inheritance of William of Orange had far more substance and consequently more favourable potential.

²¹Potter, *ibid.*, pp 14-16, 19-20

²²*A Poem upon his Majesties Accession, Inscribed to His Grace John Duke of Marlborough* (London, 1714) pp 4, 11

²³Leonard Welsted, *An Epistle to Mr Steele, on the King's Accession to the Crown* (London, 1714) p 2

It was not difficult for George I, coming to Britain as the established ruler of a continental Protestant power, to be presented as a King of Great Britain in the traditions of William III. The fact was, however, that he succeeded Anne. The intervening reign had sought legitimation in practices associated with William III's immediate pre-Revolutionary predecessors, such as the revival of the touch for the King's Evil, and with the heroic past of Elizabeth's reign, exemplified in Anne's use of Elizabeth's motto 'Semper Eadem'. Anne seems to have been conscious of the probability that her inheritance would be subject to conflict following her demise, and sought to reduce the opportunities available for the manipulation of her person after her death by leaving instructions in an unsigned and unsealed paper - apparently characteristic of the queen's response to her own mortality - requesting a private interment adjacent to the remains of her husband. While the Prussian resident in London told his court that the funeral was so private he could not write a report on it, the formalities seem to have been observed at a carefully judged level, Anne's twentieth century biographer Edward Gregg remarking that "the time and the cost involved suggest that proper pomp and circumstance due to the last Stuart monarch were rendered".²⁴ Neither George nor the Lords Justices were so crass as not to pay the departed queen the respect due to a dead sovereign. That Anne's funeral took place on 23 August, well before George's arrival in his new kingdom, may indicate that the first king of the Brunswick line felt it best to keep a respectful distance from the last Stuart that the Act of Settlement permitted to reign.

This did not stop others from seeking to connect Anne and George I more closely in the public consciousness. Some addresses gave less prominence to William III, or simply

²⁴Michael, *Beginnings of the Hanoverian Dynasty*, p 62; Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London, 1980) p 398

ignored him altogether, in favour of crediting Anne with securing the succession to George. "And we cannot doubt, but the great Aim of Her late Majesty in War and Peace, was the same which we have seen to be the Success of all her Endeavours, the making Your Majesty's Accession to the Throne peaceable and safe," was the verdict of the Bishop, Dean and Chapter of Salisbury.²⁵ The writers of at least one address seem to have sought to impose conditions on George I, Stirlingshire promising "Allegiance, Duty and Obedience" to George I, whom they hailed for his wisdom, but also reminded that Anne had "died enjoying the Blessings of Peace." It is tempting to see in addresses of this kind what might be labelled a High Church and Tory vision of the accession of George I. The new king, from this standpoint, owed his crown to the Act of Settlement only in the context of the mechanics of state. More authoritative was Anne's "Expiring Breath" through which, in a manner redolent of the supposed nomination of James VI of Scotland as her successor by Elizabeth I, the Hanoverian Elector became "the surviving Security of all our Rights, Religious and Civil".²⁶ Virtually every address of this type appeared in the *Post Boy*, a newspaper which regularly filled its columns with the achievements of the Duke of Berwick, James II's illegitimate son, on his campaign in Catalonia. This might suggest that the printing of such addresses was indeed a way in which the representatives of Tory opinion could display their willingness to accept George I as king, but also their reservations about how he might rule. It is tempting to read one address as an expression of Anglican Jacobitism, stating that George I was "now intirely English; and may You make those so, by Your pious Example, who, tho' born at Home, are Strangers to our Constitution", but a more obvious target might have been Anne's Tory ministers who the Whigs saw losing their grip on

²⁵*Post Boy* 3039, 30 October 1714

²⁶Address of Worcester; *Post Boy* 3035, 21 October 1714

office.²⁷

The more staunchly Hanoverian writers in the press occasionally showed a tendency to openly dismiss Anne. Samuel Croxall welcomed George I as freeing the country from slavery, Anne having been a "faint declining Star" whose realm now awaited protection from George I as Augustus saved Rome.²⁸ This form of propaganda appears closely allied to ministerial politics, George imposing a uniformly Whig ministry as Augustus imposed the principate. Other writers saw Anne's contribution to the new reign as being in an effective last minute conversion to Whiggery as "her Soul was most disengag'd from all Mortal Views," her heavenly perspective showing her the true nature of the "wicked Instruments" who had offered her counsel.²⁹ There seems to have been little place in the London press for any notion of the monarch as above politics. The impression gained from the larger part of the civic addresses that were printed is one of moderation. However, it was the aggressively Protestant and Revolutionary heritage bequeathed to the Hanoverians by William III that had the greater influence on the conception of British kingship that was set out by George I at his accession. There were few bridges available to cross for those who had reservations about the identification of the country and its new reigning family with the aspirations and achievements of William III, but who still wished to display their loyalty to the Hanoverian succession.

²⁷ Address of Great Marlow, *Post Boy* 3033, 16 October 1714

²⁸ Samuel Croxall, *An Ode Humbly Inscrib'd to the King, Occasioned by His Majesty's Most Auspicious Succession and Arrival. Written in the Stanza and Measure of Spencer*. (London, 1714) pp 2-4

²⁹ *Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3531, 21 August 1714

The characteristic of George I which is usually held to have recommended him most to his subjects was his religion. The Hanoverians were Protestants, albeit Lutherans rather than Anglicans in upbringing as Queen Anne had been, but they were not unattractively and resolutely Catholic like James Stuart. The frequent connection of the virtues of George I with those of William III itself demonstrates how acutely conscious opinion-formers were of the need to preserve the Protestant settlement. Public festivities surrounding the coronation of George I were reported in some locations as involving the burning in effigy of the Pope and the Pretender; a report of the Chichester celebrations commented on the quality of the wooden figures and also noted that a man clad as the Devil pushed them into the flames.³⁰ Such performances were effectively a realisation, for mass consumption, of the message contained in the coronation sermon, that the Catholics and their supposed allies were now driven out of the British state, and that George I would guard against their return. Assertions of this kind could only be supported at all levels in society if the king and his family were seen to be good Anglicans, and not importing any foreign doctrines. It would do the Protestant succession no good if the view became current that George I was as foreign in his religion as his Stuart kinsman lurking in Lorraine.

Something of a pamphlet war raged over how closely the Lutheranism of the Brunswick princely house complemented the teachings of the Church of England. Aspersions by Presbyterian ministers that they now had a king of their own number were rapidly subjected

³⁰For Chichester, see *Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3562, 2 November 1714; see also events at Trowbridge reported in same paper; and Northallerton in 3561.

to fierce polemics.³¹ An intervention by the Archbishop of York, William Dawes, couched Lutheran observances in what were almost High Church terms, noting their "Ceremonies, and Splendid Churches", drawing attention to the king's own practice of having Te Deum sung at chapel with music as proof of his not being a "slovenly" Calvinist (thereby absolving him from one of the drawbacks of William III) and further identifying George closely with Anne as "the Support and Nursing Father of the Church Establish'd," alluding to the scriptural text of Anne's coronation sermon.³² If the battle was hard fought in words in England, reports reached the South from Scotland of the violent clashes between Presbyterians and Episcopalians. The Episcopalians had for much of the seventeenth century been the favoured denomination of the Scots kings resident in London, who had left many of them in entrenched positions of power in their northern realm. Magistrates, university men and other figures in authority were able to display their hostility to the accession of the first Hanoverian king by disrupting the mechanisms by which the operation of the Protestant Succession was proclaimed to the subjects of George I in North Britain. This provided copy for the Whig press in London, where the half-hearted or hostile proclamations were dwelt on, many columns of the *Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* being devoted to reports of disrespectful ceremonies or outright proclamations of 'James VIII'.³³ Facts of disturbances were often disputed, the manically

³¹*Remarks on two Sermons, of Mr Ferdinando Shaw (who stiles himself M.A.) A Dissenter Teacher in Derby of the Presbyterian, or rather Independant Perswasion.* (?London, 1714) is one example, arguing against Shaw from a pro-Hanoverian but Tory perspective, praising the conduct of Anne throughout her reign, and also that of the Oxford ministry, in defence of the "illustrious House of Hanover", p 8.

³²'The Archbishop of York' (William Dawes), *An Exact Account of King George's religion: with the Manner of His Majesty's Worship in the English and Lutheran Church* (London, 1714), p 7

³³For example, in Dundee, Montrose and Inverness, 3537, 4 September 1714; Inverness, Dundee and Aberdeen, 3549, 2 October 1714.

Hanoverian *Flying Post*, whose masthead was a near-replica of its more enduring namesake, enthusiastically calling for the magistrates of Montrose to be charged with treason, worshipping as they did at a "Jacobite conventicle", while also describing how Presbyterians broke up a Jacobite meeting in an episcopalian church in Glasgow.³⁴ The dissenters appear to have to some extent been cast, either by themselves, the press or the authorities, as the 'shock troops' of the Protestant succession. Their zeal for the new dynasty was loudly displayed across the British Isles through preaching, and sometimes by more exuberant and even violent demonstrations of their loyalty, particularly in Scotland and Ireland.³⁵ Despite opposition, the alliance of Anglicans and Presbyterians as defined in the Union, and supported by the Toleration Acts, ensured that in the first few months of the reign of George I, the pro-Hanoverians were able to enforce their victory in the propaganda war.

The makers of George I's public image depicted him as the defender of Protestantism in Britain, the heir of William III, like him both military and European. George I and his son had both had military careers that could be celebrated even by the more cautious, such as Edward Young who referred to the involvement of the Elector and his son in the Rhineland campaigns.³⁶ Reports of the welcome given to the accession of George I were reported as coming from such centres of the Protestant cause as Amsterdam and Geneva.³⁷ Stephen

³⁴*Flying Post* 12, 21 August 1714

³⁵See *ibid*, p 2, for a comment on Ulster Protestant loyalty to King George.

³⁶Edward Young, *On the Late Queen's Death, and His Majesty's Accession to the Throne*, p 9

³⁷*Dawks's News Letter*, 2 September 1714; *Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3532, 24 August 1714

Baxter has pointed out how William III appears to have adopted some of the political legacy of his great-grandfather Henry IV of France; there is also one allusion which could point towards a recognition that George I was the grandson of Frederick, the Winter King of Bohemia, potentially casting George as the avenger of the wrongs done to his forebear and Protestant Europe during the Thirty Years' War, as well as those during the War of the Spanish Succession.³⁸

Without denying that considerable efforts were made, in a short space of time, to define George I in the political imaginations of his British subjects, there was by no means an attempt to build up a propaganda icon as the French court did with Louis XIV. It would have been inappropriate for the polemicists who sought to serve the cause of George I to have done anything other than sketch in the foundations of Hanoverian kingship's public image. There was very little established that was particular to the king, other than that his Lutheranism was closer to the Church of England than the Calvinism of William III. Evidently, some sort of personal impression was disseminated among the élite who would come into contact with the king. His business-like approach to government was noted and approved of, and, unlike the bedridden (and female) Anne, he was able to make visits to members of the nobility, ably incorporating himself into the headship of the political order.³⁹ George I was more interested in prudent management of his inheritance than in erecting monuments to his fame, and although

³⁸Baxter, 'William III as Hercules', p 97; address from Perth, *Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3547, 25 September 1714

³⁹Margaret, Lady Verney, ed., *Verney Letters of the Eighteenth Century, from the MSS at Claydon House*, ii (London, 1930) p 16 (Letter from Rev W. Vickers to Lord Fermanagh, 30 September 1714); S. Hervey, ed., *Diary of John Hervey, first Earl of Bristol* (Wells, 1894) p 62, entry for 1 November 1714.

he no doubt approved of the borrowing of the mantle of William III, justifying as it did his right to the British throne, his building projects appear to have been confined to works at the residences outlying London; his accession was commemorated by, for example, Thornhill in the painted hall at Greenwich, but this was in some respects the continuation and completion of a project begun by William III (although that is in itself of some significance) and there was nothing more grandiose that commemorated George I himself.⁴⁰ The dynasty was to be restrained and modest in its aspirations and marking of its achievements. The time was not ripe in the reign of George I for anything else; the death of Louis XIV inaugurated a period of minority in France which must have made the French monarchy's image less aggressive, quite apart from the friendlier line the Orléans regency was inclined to take towards Britain in foreign policy. The foreign policy of George I, whose principal opponent in the first few years of his reign was the Swedish king Charles XII, also weakened the basis for anti-Catholic rhetoric. Protestant triumphalism at home and abroad, centred around a middle-aged monarch's military virtues, would have seemed ridiculous and irritating in the circumstances.

The Evolution of the Template: Family and Heritage

One potential area for innovation that George I did not take up, but that was recognised by the press and by his successors as being of public interest, was the role taken by an expanded royal family in encouraging interest in and support for the House of Hanover. By 1760 a form of protocol had emerged which, at the accession of a new sovereign, recognised the migration of the headship of the royal house from one generation to another; within a few days of the death of George II, the Duke of Cumberland, the only one of his sons to survive

⁴⁰ See chapters four and six below.

him and the oldest male in the royal house, was handing over his apartments in St James's Palace to his nephew the Duke of York, heir presumptive to George III, thereby ceding his position as second man in the land to the younger generation.⁴¹ In doing so, Cumberland was following developments that took place in his father's reign. The opportunities presented by there being a "family on the throne", to anticipate Bagehot, first appear to have been realised by George II at his accession. This was a man who had fought to retain control of his children's education during the reign of George I; in addressing parliament with his three daughters as well as his wife at his side, he was emphasising the resumption of his paternal rights once he had assumed the crown. In addition, he gave expression to the perhaps more obvious symbolism contained in the promise to posterity of an enduring line of royalty issuing from his large family, a familiar ingredient in loyal addresses.⁴² The joint arrival of George I and the future George II in 1714 no doubt made a similar point, but further development under George I was hampered by the maintenance of two royal centres in London and Hanover, quite apart from the breach that opened up between father and son during the reign. Although hopes were expressed in the press at various times that both Prince Frederick and his great-uncle Prince Ernest Augustus would travel to Britain during the reign of George I, they never did so, and remained in Germany during the proceedings surrounding the accession and coronation of George II. While Princess Caroline followed her husband into England shortly before the coronation of her father-in-law, accompanied by her daughters, their arrival was not

⁴¹*LC* viii, no 600, 30 October 1760, p 419. Although it is difficult to know whether this was the intention, a few weeks later the Duke of York is reported as further encroaching on Cumberland's position by acquiring two houses in Pall Mall, adjacent to the new home of his uncle, in order to convert them into a larger residence. See *LC* viii, no 607, 15 November 1760, p 473.

⁴²*Post-Man and the Historical Account*, 27 June 1727

heralded as that of the king and prince had been. The princess landed at Margate rather than at Greenwich, and was formally welcomed into the country only when the Prince of Wales met her at Rochester with a guard and representatives of the nobility.⁴³ Nonetheless Caroline soon assumed a far greater prominence in the public eye.

At the beginning of a new reign, there seem to have been clear expectations of the roles that consorts would take alongside their husbands or fathers-in-law. Caroline had no official role during the ceremonies surrounding the enthroning of George I, as there was no precedent for a Princess of Wales being present at a coronation. The potential of her position was marked when the most loyally Hanoverian of the London papers printed a report ascribing to her the virtues of Mary II.⁴⁴ This was a valuable identification in the context of the parallels that had been made between George I and William III, and anticipated a position for Caroline in her father-in-law's royal pantheon which was never hers. Legitimately, Caroline was the nearest female figure that George I could have publicly presented as a consort. His wife was long-divorced and immured at Ahlden and his only daughter was Queen of Prussia. As for the king's mistress Melusine von der Schulenburg, who became Duchess of Munster and then of Kendal, whatever her virtues, she could hardly be the focus of loyal addresses or poetry in praise of the dynasty. At her husband's accession Caroline was more strongly connected with values of maternal virtue and piety, values that recalled the character of Queen Anne. For example, it was rumoured by the press that Caroline would take personal care of her children's

⁴³*Evening Post* 809, 14 October 1714; *Flying Post; or, the Post-Master* 3554, 14 October 1714

⁴⁴*Flying Post; or, the Post-Master* 3553, 12 October 1714

education, a privilege denied her by George I.⁴⁵ She was also reported as requesting that masquerades cease, the masquerade being associated by its critics with licentious behaviour, made the worse by its supposed origins in the decadent courts of foreign autocracies.⁴⁶ Caroline figured in local pageantry celebrating the coronation, and her influence was recognised as such that it was supposedly expected that her image would appear on some coinage.⁴⁷ At least one author explicitly praised her in terms more appropriate to a Queen Regnant, her chaplain William Bisset comparing Caroline to Mary II and Anne when remarking upon the preliminary articles of peace with Spain.⁴⁸ Caroline was thus, at least to the readers of pamphlets and newspapers, both consort to George II and a centre of regnal power in her own right.

In contrast to the well-defined image of Caroline disseminated through the press, Queen Charlotte was much more of an enigma when she arrived for her wedding in September 1761. Her wedding itself appears to have been celebrated quietly, presumably so as not to overshadow or distract the attention of the court from the coronation. "I forgive history for knowing nothing," wrote Horace Walpole, "when so public an event as the arrival of a new

⁴⁵*Mist's Weekly Journal* 114, 24 June 1727

⁴⁶*St James's Evening Post* 1939, 17 October 1727

⁴⁷*ibid.*; *Evening Post* 2841, 7 October 1727

⁴⁸William Bisset, *Verses Composed for the Birth-Day of our Most Gracious Queen Caroline: the First Birthday of a Protestant Queen Consort for One Hundred and Ten Years. Repeated the same Day in the Great Drawing-Room before several of the First Quality* (London, 1728), Postscript

Queen is a mystery even at the very moment in St James's St."⁴⁹ Charlotte had spent very little time in her new husband's kingdom at the time of their coronation, and as a result the only feature of her that could really be drawn upon was her status as a newly-married woman. An example of the way in which this was exploited was at Gloucester, where her wedding to George III was marked by the call for donations to be made at churches on coronation day. The money raised would be directed towards a fund established to provide grants for poor "young women of virtuous characters, provided they marry at or before the next birth-day either of the King or Queen". The collection proved successful, raising £89 11s. 6d., to be distributed by lady subscribers to the county infirmary.⁵⁰ Charlotte was thus early incarnated as a paradigm of maternal virtues, establishing her well in the public gaze for over two decades of childbearing, and complementing the desire of her husband for political harmony in his kingdom, with the domestic.

Aside from any attempt to play upon their individual qualities, the Protestant religion of the Queens Consort was praised as a virtue at the accessions of both George II and George III. The arrival of Charlotte in England caused tributes to be paid not only to the Protestant succession, but to the services done to the Protestant cause by the Dukes of Mecklenburg.⁵¹ Caroline's faith had a greater resonance, as she was the first non-Catholic Queen Consort since Anne of Denmark, wife of James I, had died in 1619. Furthermore, the Protestantism of Anne

⁴⁹Horace Walpole, ed. W.S. Lewis and others, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, 48 vols. (New Haven, 1937-83), xxxv, pp 311-12 (to the Earl of Strafford, 8 September 1761)

⁵⁰*LC* x, no 736, 12 September 1761, p 249; no 744, 1 October 1761, p 318

⁵¹For example, see addresses of the Lord Mayor and Corporation of London, and the University of Cambridge, *LC* x, no 738, 17 September 1761, pp 235-6.

of Denmark had wavered; that of Caroline was presented as resolute. It would be remembered throughout her career that she had turned down the hand of the Emperor Charles VI to wed the Electoral Prince of Brunswick-Lüneburg, which was presented in tributes to her as a mark of her devotion to "true Religion".⁵² The defence of the Hanoverian succession demanded that there be no lapses from the provisions of the Act of Settlement. In addition, the memory of Henrietta Maria and Mary of Modena as Catholic Queens who led their royal menfolk astray remained alive for much of the eighteenth century.

The importance given to the perpetuation of the royal line of descent, frequently made in addresses to the Hanoverian kings, might lead one to expect members of the royal family to be given prominent places in the coronation ceremonies. Accommodating families into the coronation ceremony was a problem as there were so few precedents in the previous two centuries for a monarch to come to the throne with offspring, let alone two generations of descendants as at the accession of George I. The coronation of George I was a hurried affair, occurring barely a month after George's arrival in Great Britain; the Lords Justices were more concerned with their efforts to ensure an untroubled ceremony, following the precedent established in 1689, than with innovation. Nevertheless room was made for the Prince of Wales, after a fashion, as he was given a special place in the ceremony, and wore the coronation crown of Mary II. The most prosaic reason for this was that there was nothing else suitable at short notice, but the use of the crown emphasised that the Hanoverian succession guaranteed the Revolution settlement, and in turn legitimised the future accession of George

⁵²*Whitehall Evening Post* 1379, 17 July 1727

II.⁵³ The inclusion of George Augustus in the coronation ceremony as Prince of Wales compensated for the abandoned investiture of the Prince of Wales, once mooted but probably never seriously considered in great depth.⁵⁴ A potential opportunity to glorify the dynasty was thus set aside.

The successors of George I, perhaps because they were more settled in their kingdom, found more ways in which to display their families as people of importance. The children of George II and Queen Caroline were integrated into the coronation ceremony. Their daughters carried Caroline's train; their son, the Duke of Cumberland, walked in the procession as a Knight of the Bath, even though he was only six years old.⁵⁵ In this the king was able to emphasise dynastic continuity and its attachment to British soil. The heir apparent, Prince Frederick, born and educated in the Electorate, was not brought over for the hallowing of his father's peaceful accession; instead, prominence was given to the first surviving son of the House of Hanover to be born on British soil. The young duke participated in balls alongside his eighteen-year-old sister, the Princess Royal, and appeared at military parades alongside his father.⁵⁶ George II established his second son firmly in the public life of his country from an early age, an advantage which would place Frederick under great pressure to compensate for

⁵³For George Augustus at the coronation, see Hatton, *George I*, p 125

⁵⁴*Flying Post: or, the Post-Master* 3535, 31 August 1714, suggests that an early "installment" of the Electoral Prince as Prince of Wales had been ordered; this is then qualified with *Weekly Packet* 114, 11 September 1714, where it is stated that, after consultation with the Attorney-General, all unnecessary ceremonial connected with the investiture is to be abandoned.

⁵⁵*Evening Post* 2840, 5 October 1727

⁵⁶*Applebee's Original Weekly Journal*, 4 November 1727; *Craftsman* 69, 28 October 1727

lost opportunities when he eventually landed in Great Britain in 1728.

Where George II emphasised dynastic continuity by pointing to his large family, George III was childless at the opening of his reign. The accommodation of mother and siblings posed different problems to those that George II had dealt with. Special provision was made for the Princess Dowager and her children by rearranging the seating in Westminster Abbey. The royal family took over the seats to the right of the throne that had previously been used by the foreign ambassadors. Sir Charles Cottrell Dormer, the Master of Ceremonies, recognised the innovation and its implications: it was "certy a precedent to Futurity it being certainly right that the Royal Family sho^d take place but I think if ever there should be none present the Master of the Ceremonies ought to claim and insist upon his former seat without which the Foreign Ministers will have great Reason to complain". Royal family members were enrobed in white and silver, the Princess Dowager's third and fourth sons carrying her train.⁵⁷ George III was able to emphasise, by formally associating his family with his coronation within the Abbey in this way, the princely status of his brothers and sisters, who were not the children of a sovereign nor (with one exception) peers.

That both George II and George III used the formalities surrounding their rise to the throne to indicate which members of their family enjoyed special favour was picked up by observers. The accession of George II provided an opportunity for the printers of John Gay's *Fifty One New Fables in Verse* to advertise the work, originally published a few months earlier in March 1727. The project was dedicated to the Duke of Cumberland as a means for Gay to

⁵⁷PRO: LC 5/4 pp16-17; *Annual Register*, 1761, p 228

gain favour with the court of his parents; he rejected Queen Caroline's offer of a place, when it came, as Gentleman Usher to Princess Louisa.⁵⁸ Other allusions to the duke, such as that in an edition of *Mist's Weekly Journal*, were more likely to be malign, suggesting that Prince William was also to be created Duke of Lancaster, conjuring up visions of a quasi-mediaeval palatine prince at odds with his older brother, envisaging dynastic crises favourable to *Mist's* Jacobite ambitions.⁵⁹

The accession of George I showed how important continuity with the past was to the new dynasty. The advantage of the succession of George's son within thirteen years of his father was that the dynasty could demonstrate its endurance and consolidate, while appropriating further elements from their Stuart predecessors as well as from the reign just passed. George II was able to combine the family's Protestantism with a legacy of success in foreign policy, and the withdrawn but paternalist monarchy praised in the various epitaphs printed by loyal papers on the death of George I.⁶⁰ Furthermore, as the century progressed, there arose more opportunities through which the accession of a new sovereign could be identified with the perceived virtues of the country. The military success of the Seven Years' War coloured the local festivities on the accession of George III in a way that seems more pronounced than the presence of troops at previous celebrations, military officers taking the lead in civic processions that in 1727 might have been taken by the members of trade guilds or

⁵⁸*Whitehall Evening Post* 1378, 13 July 1727; for Gay and the royal family, see David Nokes, *John Gay: A Profession of Friendship* (Oxford, 1995) pp 364-5, 378-82, 398, 401, 405

⁵⁹*Mist's Weekly Journal* 115, 1 July 1727

⁶⁰For examples, see *Weekly Journal: or, the British Gazetteer* 110, 17 June 1727; *London Journal*, 411, 17 June 1727

leaders of the corporation. The military were no longer simply present to fire volleys in salute to the new king, but were becoming themselves objects of national pride invited into the civic context on a great occasion. This change was probably facilitated by the militia acts of the 1750s, giving the army a firmer and more popular basis in the social structure. The accession of George I was of course not devoid of military connections but a full-blooded celebration of Britain's martial skill was out of the question following the recent peace and the divisions in the realm that could be opened up by such a reversal of government rhetoric. In addition, war in 1714 was closely bound up with the cult of the Duke of Marlborough, and although some celebrations identified George I very closely with the return of the Duke of Marlborough to a position of prominence in national life, George I was reluctant to encourage an alternative focus of loyalty within Whig political culture.⁶¹

Protestantism was the enduring thread throughout the propaganda surrounding the accessions of the first three Georges. The faith of the monarch guaranteed, in words used in loyal addresses and speeches from the throne alike, the religion, liberty and property of his subjects.⁶² However, the coming to the throne of the new sovereign offered opportunities for the frontiers of an emerging 'British' nationhood to be defined. Great Britain had been united through dynastic means and the whole required a hereditary monarchy to maintain the constitutional settlement as it had emerged at the close of the seventeenth century, guaranteed

⁶¹For examples of Marlborough's name being made prominent in local celebrations of the Hanoverian succession, see *Evening Post* 792, 4 September 1714 (Brigstock, Northamptonshire); also *Flying Post: or, the Post-Master* 3532, 24 August 1714 (Cardiganshire and Neyland, Suffolk); for editorial identification of George I with Marlborough, *ibid.* 3533, 26 August 1714. See also chapter six below.

⁶²For the speech of George II from the throne, see *Weekly Journal: or, British Gazette* 112, July 1 1727.

by the Act of Union. George I and his son were both Britons by adoption, but both were somehow intrinsically British by their identification with valour in the interests of religion and moderate rather than tyrannical government. Although it appears to have been unusual for the loss Hanover suffered in the migration of George I to have been dwelt upon in addresses, the king's benevolent character and adherence to constitutional principles within his electorate were often praised.⁶³ Reports of the festivities in Hanover to mark the coronation of George II, where the Prince of Wales distributed money from the balcony of the castle before attending a play and then leading a procession through the city, must also have contributed to the image of the Hanoverians as civilized, benevolent princes when governing their electorate, very suited to the role prescribed for them in the constitution of Great Britain.⁶⁴

Other considerations point towards the gradual elimination of traits by the successors of George I that might have harmed their image as British sovereigns. The assertion of his British identity by George III is well known. This conformed to what was expected of him; the City of London, for example, hailed him as of a truly English heart, consciously echoing the sentiments Anne expressed to her parliament at her accession.⁶⁵ Similar hopes that the monarch would treat all parties and ingredients within the polity had, however, been openly wished of George II when he succeeded his father, and, indeed, by Harley of George I before his accession. The removal from St James's of George I's family, in the shape of the Duchess of

⁶³For the sole example found of Hanover's loss being mourned, apart from the welcoming address given by Gravesend, see the address of Hastings, *Post Boy* 3024, 25 September, 1714.

⁶⁴*Flying Post or Post-Master* 5421, 31 October 1727

⁶⁵*LC* viii, no 600, 30 October 1760, p 418

Kendal and other German courtiers, contributed to an impression in the press that Britain's island virtues were being restored by George II.⁶⁶ The king's preference for the English language was remarked upon as a welcome feature of his conduct of business.⁶⁷ Even as late as October, when political hopes that the king would replace the Walpole ministry with another of his own choosing had faded, the press still presented George II as a man of predominantly English taste, supposedly replacing the paintings at Kensington Palace with those of his predecessors from Alfred onwards.⁶⁸ The Hanoverians may have claimed to incarnate the virtues of their kingdom, but they, and those who made their claims for them, were aware that these pretensions had to be substantiated on occasion.

George I, at his accession, had principally been represented as the successor of William III, replacing the more equivocal Anne with an assertively Protestant monarchy, ready to defend Protestant Europe where she was threatened. The greater the distance from the War of the Spanish Succession, and indeed, from the Revolution of 1688 that gave their house priority in the succession, the more the descendants of George I could draw on attributes associated with their pre-revolutionary predecessors. Elizabeth I was perhaps the most accessible of these. The seventeenth century calendar of public rejoicing had always given place to the significant events of Elizabeth's life; Elizabeth had become a royal and Anglican saint.⁶⁹ There

⁶⁶*Post-Man and the Historical Account*, 20 June 1727; *Mist's Weekly Journal* 114, 24 June 1727: "in the mean Time the Foreigners are moving from St James's, to make Room for the Royal Family." For Harley and George I, see Hatton, *George I*, p 130

⁶⁷*British Journal* 248, 24 June 1727

⁶⁸*Whitehall Evening Post* 1421, 21 October, 1727

⁶⁹For the popular canonization of Elizabeth, see David Cressy, *Bonfires and Bells* (London, 1989)

are indications that in 1727, observances of the coronation, the landing of William III, the deliverance of James I and parliament from the Gunpowder Plot, and the accession of Elizabeth I were all compressed into one celebration of the rescue of England, and by extension Great Britain, from domination by the foreign religion of Catholicism.⁷⁰ The inauguration of George II fed off the established popular holidays, lending the king and his family the lustre of their Tudor and Stuart predecessors, guardians like the Hanoverians against the onslaught of Popery.

Further changes during his grandfather's reign enabled George III to be hailed in terms broader than those used to praise George II. The renewed war against the French of the 1740s had caused some to recall the Hundred Years' War, associating George II and the Duke of Cumberland with their Plantagenet ancestors. This connection had been prepared for by the 'Patriot' Prince of Wales and his identification with the 'Henries and Edwards' of the past, and, perhaps revived by the Seven Years' War, was reflected in the antiquarian comparisons made. For example, the departure of the envoys to Strelitz in order to request the hand of Princess Charlotte occasioned the remembrance of a similar expedition to seek the widowed Queen of Naples as a bride for Henry VII; Charlotte's subsequent landing in Britain prompted the printing of a confused account of the arrival of a queen of Richard II.⁷¹ Other allusions were to monarchs less remote, and made more substantial statements about the intentions of the new king. The year of the accession of George III probably encouraged early comparisons with Charles II: it was commented in the royalist *London Chronicle* that, as Charles II

⁷⁰*London Journal* 431, 4 November 1727

⁷¹*London Magazine* xxx, 1761, pp 418-20; *LC* x, no 731, 1 September 1761, p 212

inscribed on some of his crown pieces that he was the first Englishman to be King of Great Britain, George III could fairly claim to be the first Briton to claim that honour.⁷²

A more detailed comparison with Charles I may have shed more light on the character and priorities of George III. The item's description of Charles's "oeconomy", his patronage of the arts, and uneasy relationship with a self-interested parliament that he had to do without, begged the reader to reflect on the obsession with financial prudence and respect for creativity and learning that George III displayed, alongside his suspicion of the Whig oligarchy that had dominated the politics of his grandfather's reign.⁷³ The first two Hanoverians had always observed the anniversary of the death of Charles I at court, but had preferred not to identify themselves with the Stuart king of unhappy fate. That Charles I could be appropriated as a virtuous precedent for George III, a king who unlike his two immediate predecessors was comfortably depicted at his accession as a king in a long line of English kings, indicates that two reigns had succeeded in incorporating the Hanoverians firmly into the publicly perceived royal lineage as if the Act of Settlement had never needed to be enacted.

The Press and the People

The unimaginative style in which local celebrations of state occasions were reported in the press makes assessment of how any court trends affected them difficult. The press reports had their own, changing, priorities throughout the period. In 1714 it was very necessary to report declarations of loyalty from the provinces, if London was to be assured that it was safe

⁷²*LC* viii, no 604, 8 November 1760, p 456

⁷³*LC* x, no 741, 24 September, 1761, pp 294-5

in embracing the Protestant succession, and that there was no army of Highlanders rising in the north intending to place the Pretender on the throne of his father. It is true that the Highland chieftains represented in one report as pledging the outlying areas of Scotland to the service of George I were members of the Commons and dependants of the Whig magnate the Duke of Argyll, but their names would have been just as foreign to their English audience as any Jacobite leader from the extremities of North Britain.⁷⁴ By the time that George III came to the throne, the newspapers seemed less willing to print reports of rural and provincial rejoicings, perhaps because the press was then coming to distinguish between the commonplace and the remarkable. What reports there are suggest that greater attention was paid to the fact that such festivities were organised; early practice could be made to suggest that villages and towns had turned out spontaneously, without any prior warning or preparation for what were practically major holidays.

Changing attitudes to the way in which public celebrations should be conducted must have had some relationship with the perception of the monarch's dignity. Most of the festivities reported in 1714 and 1727 appear to have been 'rough' events, encompassing all levels of the community among the bell-ringing and bonfire-burning, along the form established in the sixteenth century. There are isolated examples of there being balls as entertainment for ladies in 1714, but these were not common, or at least not considered as being worthy of comment.⁷⁵ The emphasis appears to have been on reporting mass devotion to the new sovereign so others could be encouraged to hold similar events, or at least persuade the doubting that the House of

⁷⁴*Post Boy* 3029, 7 October 1714

⁷⁵For example, Liverpool: *Flying Post: or, the Post-Master* 3562, 2 November 1714.

Hanover was secure in popular affections. In 1727, festivities surrounding the coronation of George II were caught up with electoral politics, adding additional complications when assessing the outpourings of the press. It is clear that coronation celebrations were excuses for victorious members of parliament to entertain their patrons and corporations.⁷⁶ In seats that had been disputed, there might be rival festivities to mark coronation day, or the credit for them might be called into question, as in Pembroke, where one report named Joseph Rickson, Collector of Customs, as the leading light in celebrations, another the recently ousted member and Lord-Lieutenant of the county, Sir Arthur Owen, defeated by government candidates from the Pelham and Campbell families.⁷⁷ The spectacle of party men appropriating royal festivals for their own interest must have done little for promoting the benevolence of the new monarch if his representatives were so factious.

Reports of festivities in some localities in 1727 suggest that a sense that royal occasions must be marked with dignity was emerging. The celebrations at Bristol, as reported in London, called for a thirty-four gun salute, a parade of coaches carrying civic dignitaries, and a ball in the evening paid for by subscription. Instead of a display of the crowd's enthusiasm for their new sovereign, the emphasis in Bristol appears to have been on the identification of the élite there with the prosperity of the country. A similar report about events in Liverpool, although still giving some place in the occasion to "the common People",

⁷⁶A good example being the dinner given at Tamworth by the Earl of Inchiquin and Thomas Willoughby to the Mayor and Corporation at Tamworth, *Evening Post* 2844, 14 October 1727.

⁷⁷*St James's Evening Post* 1940, 19 October 1727; 1941, 21 October 1727

appeared alongside the Bristol narrative.⁷⁸ National festivals were becoming a means for those inhabitants of high wealth and status to proclaim their own gentility and the cultured quality of their town to the surrounding area and to London. In smaller cities and towns events were closer to those that marked the traditional calendar of celebration. In Lincoln, the coronation was marked by "publick Dinners" for inhabitants of all stations, and the running of wine in the conduits, alongside the more refined "Ball and Musick Meeting" "for the Entertainment of the Ladies", and the impression is that this combination of refined and popular elements was more commonplace.⁷⁹ In October 1727 bonfires and fireworks, and even in Ipswich the hanging of green boughs to welcome the new sovereign (a display which early in the reign of George I would have earned disapprobation as indicating Jacobite tendencies) remained staple ingredients of civic and county festivities throughout the country.⁸⁰

There are definite indications that by the accession of George III, this form of celebration would no longer meet with approval from those who sought to set the tone of the rejoicings. The tone was set by the Privy Council, a committee being appointed with the task of preventing accidents occurring at the queen's arrival and at the coronation. Bonfires were prohibited in Westminster until seven days after the coronation; the only torches allowed under the scaffolding for the procession and spectators were lanterns.⁸¹ Some quarters of the press joined in enthusiastically: the *London Chronicle* denounced street bonfires as "a shameful

⁷⁸*Evening Post* 2845, 17 October, 1727

⁷⁹*ibid.* 2846, 19 October 1727

⁸⁰For Ipswich, see *Whitehall Evening Post* 1421, 21 October 1727

⁸¹*Annual Register*, 1761, p 219

nuisance, and a scandal to government" and fireworks as offensive to ladies, causing them to miscarry and be disfigured by burns. More restrained customs were endorsed as more suitable "compliments to our Monarch, and signs of fidelity and affection", such as the hanging of lamps as practised by the nobility.⁸²

It was not the case that those of 'quality' had rejected the former patterns of celebration en masse as the *Chronicle* might appear to suggest. The Duke of Newcastle, for example, held a bonfire outside his house and had "strong beer" given to the populace as he might have done at the coronation of George II, or as Bolingbroke and other politicians had lit bonfires to mark the accession of George I.⁸³ George I had inherited the expectation that the king would mingle with his subjects as Charles II had done, and there are suggestions that he on occasion he did just that.⁸⁴ George III, however, inherited a position that appears to have demanded more distance from the public. A report that King George and Queen Charlotte served incognito at an entertainment given by the Duke of Newcastle to celebrate their marriage could still be printed and presumably expect credence from its readers. Nonetheless, it is difficult to imagine such an appearance being to more than a select company, or anything more than a formal show by the royal couple of concealing their status.⁸⁵ The demand that may have been

⁸²LC x, no 733, 5 September 1761, p 226

⁸³LC x, no 741, 24 September 1761, p 290. For Bolingbroke see Nicholas Rogers, 'Popular Protest in Early Hanoverian London' in *Past and Present*, 79, 1978, p 71, referring to J.J. Cartwright, ed., *The Wentworth Papers* (London, 1883) p 409.

⁸⁴Rev W. Vickers informed Viscount Fermanagh that George I "is often abroad incognito, has been seen at some Coffee Houses...": Verney, *Verney Letters*, 30 September 1714, p 16; Rogers, 'Popular Protest', p 76, refers to L'Hermitage's report that the king sometimes mingled with spectators at public appearances.

⁸⁵LC x, no 736, 12 September 1761, p 256

emerging in 1727, that the monarchy should take the lead in upholding refined manners, appears to have taken firmer hold in the conduct of public commemorative events by 1761.

The coronation itself was a focal point of celebration for all levels of society. Spectators seem to have converged on the capital from all across the country. The migration of 1761 was not welcomed by all provincial worthies: the advocate of the Gloucester marriage-portion scheme urged those planning to journey to London to view the coronation not to neglect their own cathedral service in favour of a poor vantage point of the ceremony or procession.⁸⁶ In the early part of the period in particular, those with the means to travel to London would have been anxious to be seen at the coronation as an expression of their loyalty to the Hanoverian succession, and claim their place in the political establishment. Within the British Isles, the London coronation had no rivals. The subordinate kingdom of Ireland had no coronation ceremony of its own. The development of the Scottish rite had been impaired by successive minorities in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, which had been followed by attempts from episcopalian monarchs and presbyterian Covenanters alike to make the ceremony conform to their respective agendas. With this history, it can be little surprise that nothing of the Scottish coronation survived the Union. The English ceremony continued alone as the unquestioned inauguration rite of the sovereign of Great Britain.

Although the English ceremony seemingly incorporated nothing from other parts of the kingdom of Great Britain, the coronation did change during the Hanoverian period. Little seems to have been done to accommodate George I, the priority being to rapidly enthrone

⁸⁶*LC* x, no 736, 12 September 1761, p 249

George I in case of popular doubts as to his right to reign and to forestall any attempt to replace him with James III. In 1727, an effort appears to have been made to make the coronation of George II and Queen Caroline an occasion worthy of attention. It was not just "the Business of every walker there... to conceal Vanity and gain Admiration" but the business of the ceremony itself.⁸⁷ There are many signs that ceremonial was consciously reinvented with a view to leaving a more splendid impression. New anthems by Handel were introduced, and the robes of peers and peeresses redesigned. Other advance publicity in the press laid stress on there being not just visitors from elsewhere in the British Isles come to London to see the coronation, but from overseas as well, including rumours of a "Sovereign Prince".⁸⁸ "The Concourse upon this Occasion is like to be exceeding large; and the Appearance more splendid than ever was known in Great Britain before, perhaps than ever any other Kingdom in Europe was witness to."⁸⁹ The continuance of the Hanoverian dynasty in the person of George II had proved that the Protestant succession would endure, and that fact was to be glorified in the coronation in the eyes of all Europe. The new monarch was taking control of his inheritance by remaking its symbols, without altering the coronation service itself, bequeathed by William III. The splendour of the coronation received some criticism, its "Brilliant Gems" being rejected as overshadowing the proper virtues of kingship, but "R.C., Clergyman" appears to have been in a minority.⁹⁰

⁸⁷Robert Halsband, ed., *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* ii, 1721-1751 (Oxford, 1966), to Lady Mar, p 85.

⁸⁸*St James's Evening Post* 1933, 3 October 1727; *Evening Post* 2840, 5 October 1727; *St James's Evening Post*, 1934, 5 October 1727

⁸⁹*Flying Post: or, Post-Master* 5412, 10 October 1727

⁹⁰'An Epigram of the Coronation', *St James's Evening Post* 1938, 14 October 1727

Accounts suggest that the coronation of George III attracted numbers to Westminster that were almost beyond management. It was anticipated that the gates of St James's Park would have to be locked to stop crowds from obstructing the king's route; in the end, this did not happen, although it was reported that it was impossible to journey down Whitehall by coach on the day of the coronation, such was the congestion.⁹¹ One writer noted that the king and queen had difficulty in making their way to the Abbey, the crowds not having been taken into account when the procession was planned.⁹² The reform-minded John Gwynn produced his *Thoughts on the Coronation* not long after the event itself. Asserting the necessity of the coronation as a means of demonstrating royal power and responsibility and obtaining a show of public acclamation for a new sovereign, Gwynn was nonetheless critical of the way in which the ceremonial was conducted. Special criticism was directed towards the narrowness of the route: "Our Kings, with their Train, have crept to the Temple through obscure Passages, and the Crown has been worn out of Sight of the People... This Evil has proceeded from the narrowness and shortness of the Way through which the Procession has lately passed. As it is narrow, it admits of very few Spectators; as it is short, it is soon passed."⁹³ Horace Walpole commented on the density of the throng that the age was "the *Century of Crowds*".⁹⁴

⁹¹*LC* x, no 740, 22 September 1761, p 285; no 741, 24 September 1761, p 290

⁹²*London Magazine* xxx, 1761, p 448

⁹³John Gwynn, *Thoughts on the Coronation of his present Majesty King George the Third. or. Reasons offered against confining the Procession to the usual Track, and pointing out others more commodious and proper. To which are prefixed, A Plan of the different Paths recommended, with the Parts adjacent, and a Sketch of the Procession* (London, 1761) p 3

⁹⁴*HWC*, ix p 386 (to Montagu, 24 September 1761)

A combination of wartime exigency and royal encouragement for financial constraint may have resulted in a less well-executed coronation than that of George II. While Walpole was predisposed to look for failings with which to amuse himself and his correspondents, his story that on the day of the coronation itself "they had forgot the Sword of State, the chairs for King and Queen, and their canopies" is not beyond belief. Last minute borrowings from the Lord Mayor of London and emergency work by craftsmen at Westminster Hall saved the day.⁹⁵ The chief difficulty would seem to have been that the population of London had grown at a rate since the previous coronation that had not been completely taken into account. The limited space in the environs of the Abbey for spectators caused seat prices to rise to unprecedented levels: the party of twenty which included Caroline Lybbe Powys had to pay 120 Guineas for a room in Broad Sanctuary, and elsewhere it was reported that seats in houses near the Abbey cost between one and five guineas, and land £3 13s 6d per foot in ground rent to erect scaffolding in Broad Sanctuary.⁹⁶ Conditions cannot have been comfortable for spectators, although those with privileged places in Westminster Hall had at least the benefit of "an admirable contrivance, for the reception of urinary discharges."⁹⁷ The coronation of George III appears to have been noted by contemporaries for poor planning and inflated prices; the impression they leave posterity is of a mobile and commercially acquisitive society to which the coronation had not been sufficiently adapted, with the result that "Of the Multitudes, whom Loyalty or Curiosity brought together, the greater Part has returned

⁹⁵*ibid.* xxxviii, p 121 (to Conway, 25 September 1761)

⁹⁶Caroline, Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys, *Passages from the Diaries of Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys* (London, 1899) p 88; AR, 1761, p 218

⁹⁷AR, 1761, p 217

without a single Glimpse of their Prince's Grandeur, and the Day that opened with Festivity ended in Discontent."⁹⁸

Despite the confusion the occasion still provided a potent opportunity for propaganda. The King's Champion, Charles Dymoke, rode the horse that George II had used at Dettingen, thereby adopting the martial valour shown by the late king in a previous conflict against the French on behalf of the young King George III, untrained in battle, who would continue the ongoing war begun in the name of his grandfather. The war theme was also applied to the Gloucester marriage-portion appeal described above. It was explained that the subsidy of marriages would lead to the expansion of the country's human resources through a higher number of British births, matching the schemes advanced by "Popes and Cardinals" in enemy countries. The subjects of other thrones were by no means ignored; a levee on September 16, 1761 saw "the greatest number of foreigners ever... with grand equipages."⁹⁹ Visitors from hostile countries, though, would be sure to see the "gentlemen, who had put on the dresses of common soldiers, for what purpose I need not mention," illustrating how high war feeling was to be seen running.¹⁰⁰ The numbers who thronged to see King George III and Queen Charlotte crowned at Westminster in 1761 did not just see the glorification of a dynasty, but also a ceremony that to some extent was a commemoration of military triumph and an anticipation of future victory in the new reign.

⁹⁸Gwynn, *ibid*, p 3

⁹⁹LC x, no 739, 19 September 1761, p 278; 738, 17 September 1761, p 270

¹⁰⁰*London Magazine* xxx, p 447

Commemorations in general appear to have been designed to reduce disaffection, and the growth of national self-confidence and self-expression revealed by 1761 assisted this. The disruption of celebrations in some parts of Great Britain, such as in Scotland or in remote areas of England, were presented in 1714 as attempts at breaking up popular expressions of support for the Protestant succession. For example, reports were printed from Liverpool, where disturbances were blamed on a Sacheverellite rector, and from Newton Abbot, where the parson is reported as having made the sexton take the clapper out of his church bell, so the parishioners could not ring it to welcome the coronation of George I.¹⁰¹ The shapers of opinion could encourage the participation of large numbers in events which could potentially intimidate the disaffected into remaining quiescent. By 1761 the press was used to encourage and perhaps spread a growing sense that restrained celebrations were in order. The urgings of the *London Chronicle* seem to reflect as well as encourage a mood that the people should show their respect for George III by refraining from violent protestations of their loyalty. Official sanction was given for the exclusion of fireworks from the traditional location of Tower Hill, which complemented the efforts of the Privy Council to prevent accidents in Westminster; that such a restriction was considered a practical possibility might show that the spirit of festivity in London was by 1761 gaining the sense of propriety that the *Chronicle* approved.¹⁰² Those in power had long appreciated the willingness of the people at large to be engaged by a festivity involving respite from labour and the free distribution of meat, wine and ale; once such events were firmly associated with loyalty to the Hanoverians, then perhaps by 1761 they no longer had to be promoted in the manner that an older political figure such as

¹⁰¹*Flying-Post: or, the Post-Master* 3548, 30 September 1714; 3563, 4 November 1714

¹⁰²*LC x*, no 741, 24 September 1761, p 290

Newcastle might revive. At the opening of the reign of George III, confidence in the outcome and conduct of the war was underpinned by the secure establishment of the House of Brunswick as the royal family in the public imagination.

Despite their shortcomings, the Hanoverian monarchs and their advisers had successfully established the English coronation as a symbol of a united and assertive Great Britain. Although some elements were still underplayed, suggesting that for many involved the coronation was always primarily a function for the court, the coronation was celebrated throughout the land and by 1761 it was perceived in some quarters that the event was not meeting its potential as defined by the rhetoric that surrounded and justified it. The presence of government representatives throughout the kingdom, whether in the form of landowning magnates, members of parliament, customs officials or military officers guaranteed that there would be some local figure ready to promote some form of the royal image in every part of the country. It was perhaps this 'universalising' of the crown through the celebration of the person of the new monarch that was the most important feature of coronation and accession celebrations. The reading public were reminded of the peculiar characteristic of the British monarchy at coronation time by articles commenting on the coronation oath, remembering English liberty in Church and State long after the Revolution of 1688 had faded from living memory.¹⁰³ As the traditional design on George III's coronation medal illustrated - showing the king being crowned by Britannia - their parliamentary title by no means hindered the Hanoverian kings from taking representations of the pre-Revolutionary English monarchy in order to enhance their own images with the endorsements of the past. This they did not only

¹⁰³*London Journal* 428, 14 October 1727; *London Magazine* xxx, 1761, p 449; *Edinburgh Magazine* v, 1761, pp 520-524

for themselves, but for the European and world role into which Britain expanded throughout the eighteenth century.

Chapter Three

Royal Appearances in Public in Eighteenth-century England

When discussing the ways in which eighteenth-century royalty met with the monarch's subjects, it has to be remembered that for the most part posterity is reliant on the accounts of the privileged of the time. This does not necessarily distort the picture too much. The House of Hanover had been brought over to Great Britain by the governing élite and its identity in the country at large was based on the assumptions encouraged by that élite. It remained important to members of the upper strata in society throughout the period that royalty should, in a sense, 'know its place' and not betray the position in society set up for it by inappropriate behaviour, such as the excessive personal generosity displayed by King Christian VII of Denmark during his visit to England in 1768.¹ The heritage that represented the constitutional history of England, of which the Hanoverians were the beneficiaries, was similarly to be handled carefully. Although perhaps an extreme example, George III's remodelling of Windsor was in one point held by Lady Mary Coke to be an affront to the received perspective on history. To Lady Mary, his removal from a prominent position in that castle of a tapestry made by Mary, Queen of Scots, displayed a doubtful appreciation of the roles played by his ancestors.² The opinions of such people were of value, as they had been brought up to believe that their role in Society was dependent on the stability of the Revolution Settlement that the House of Hanover incarnated. However, as has already been seen in chapter two, crucial occasions such as

¹*Autobiography of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, ed. Rt Hon Lady Llanover, 2nd series, i (London, 1862) p 188

the accession and subsequent coronation of a monarch were not just the province of the metropolitan upper class, but the opportunity for different kinds of celebrations in which the populace at all social levels participated. The king of Great Britain and his family did not lead remote lives, but were frequently to be seen around London and its environs, and on an increasing number of occasions throughout the period further afield, whether travelling from one residence to another, exercising some official duty, or on their way to an entertainment of some sort. They appear to have been scarcely more protected than any non-royal grandee of the time, being vulnerable on occasions to attack. On one occasion during the reign of George I, his daughter-in-law Caroline, Princess of Wales, was assaulted in the street near St James's Palace by an "Irish Fellow", an "Execrable Wretch"; over five decades later it was still possible for George III and his attendants to be besieged in the street by a "vast concourse of People, who made the most horrid noises".³ The subsequent assassination attempts on George III are well-known, that by Margaret Nicholson in 1786 indeed taking place in the street outside St James's Palace.⁴ Nevertheless, these were risks the Royal Family had to take. They were obliged to make appearances, both formally as the executive arm of the government, surrounded by the family that would guarantee the continuation of that executive arm, and also to meet the social expectations their subjects still had of the court. Even their most modest doings would receive attention from the press in a way that was not accorded on a regular basis to anyone else in eighteenth century British society.

² BL Add. MSS. 35520, Hardwicke Papers xviii, f. 224

³ *St James's Post* 654, 30 March 1719; *LC* xxix, 2730, 30 March 1771

Ways and Means of Meeting Subjects

The scope that the monarch and his family had for meeting their subjects was limited. There were things that eighteenth-century royalty could not do. Although monarchical progresses in the manner of Elizabeth I had to some extent still been undertaken by William III and Anne, these do not seem to have been completely successful.⁵ There were persistent rumours that George I and then George II would make progresses, but even the most written about never materialised.⁶ Such suggestions may have been spurious, inspired by promoters of struggling provincial centres, but alternatively they could have emerged from court circles. It became acceptable for junior members of the Royal Family, as the number of mature members increased, to make provincial tours, calling at towns and country houses. However, the reluctance shown by the royal household to assist the Prince of Orange in his proposed visit to Bath as part of his recovery early in 1734 showed that enthusiasm in court circles for royal tours was limited at this point. The reports in the press printed in 1768 illustrated the lengths the English nobility had to go in order to entertain Elizabeth I and could suggest that the provinces regarded the visit of a reigning prince with trepidation, largely on the grounds of expense.⁷

⁴For assassination attempts on George III, see John Brooke, *King George III* (London, 1970) pp 314-6

⁵ Bucholz, *The Augustan Court*, p 34 (for the reluctance of William III to engage in progresses), pp 221-3 (for the unhappiness of Queen Anne to be seen to support the Whigs' war policy, and later, her ill health)

⁶ See *Weekly Journal, or Saturday's Post* 70, 12 April 1718, p 415; *St James's Evening Post* 2519, 3 July 1731; *London Evening Post* 563, 8 July 1731

⁷ PRO: Lord Chamberlain's Department, Miscellaneous Records: Master of the Ceremonies, vol. 3, p 262 (Sir Clement Cottrell finds Lord Scarborough, Master of the Horse, is unable to give him the required details of the Prince's coaches and lodgings, despite the claims of the Duke of Grafton, Lord Chamberlain, that the orders had been given). For the comparison with Elizabeth I, see *Lloyd's Evening Post* 1747, 16 September 1768; *LC* xxiv, no 1834, 17 September 1768, p 271

That a royal visit should be regarded with apprehension was not surprising, considering it was still usual in the earlier part of the period for kings to travel with a large body of attendants. The difficulties encountered by the court when it moved to Windsor for a Garter investiture in 1730 illustrate this. Accommodation in the Castle could not be provided for everybody, placing a burden on the resources of the town; it proved impossible for the authorities to maintain court etiquette at the ball in the evening, to which "all the Mob of the Town" were invited, leading to foreign ministers and servants rubbing shoulders, to the great distress of the Master of the Ceremonies.⁸ Subsequent installations at Windsor appear to have been by proxy, until the rediscovery of Windsor as a royal residence by George III and Queen Charlotte. When in 1762 George III held his first Garter installation at the Castle, although his ministers came with him to Windsor for the ceremony, they did not remain there with the king in the succeeding week. The king and queen then took time to acquaint themselves with the locality, visiting Eton College and generally showing themselves to their Windsor neighbours.⁹ Although this early activity of George III might have given the impression that the new king was to return to the itinerant patterns of an earlier age, it is just as telling that, in the coronation year of 1761, it was the king's brother the Duke of York who made a tour of the towns of Yorkshire.¹⁰ The king himself remained at the accession of George III a metropolitan figure.

For the greater proportion of the time they spent in Great Britain, the Hanoverians did

⁸ PRO: LC 5/3, p 214

⁹ *HWC* xxii, p 79 (to Mann, 26 September 1762) pp 83-4 (to Mann, 3 October 1762)

¹⁰ *GM* xxxi, 1761, pp 331, 379-80

not stray far out of the London area. London - including Westminster - was the only city that could think of itself as 'royal'. It has already been noted that the majority of royal charitable activity was in London. The City and its urban sprawl were a royal enclosure. Other areas of the country had their great magnates whose authority, if in many cases diffused so that it did not concentrate on a single individual or family, was in some however theoretical way delegated from the monarch at St James's. In some ways the authority of the monarch was likewise diffused through his family too. London's relationship with the royal family was recognised implicitly by the many informal appearances that the monarch and his family made, such as rides in Hyde Park. It was also formally expressed on occasion by the participation of two successive sovereigns in the first Lord Mayor's Day of their respective reigns. George II, with members of his family, saw the Lord Mayor's parade of 31 October 1727, from Bow Church. Formal commemoration of the sovereign's birthday had been moved to 1 November to accommodate the king's wish to see the parade, which led one newspaper to praise George II for effectively sharing his real birthday with the city, describing the king as:

"A Prince who takes Pleasure in promoting their Happiness, and who thinks it gives the greatest Lustre to his Crown, to preserve the Religion, the Laws and Liberties of his People."¹¹

In November 1761 George III and Queen Charlotte went further by attending the Lord Mayor's banquet.¹² This concession may be viewed as a natural progression from the freedom of the City that his father had enjoyed. Prince Frederick's appreciation of the world of trade had been marked in a variety of ways, notably his governorship of the British Herring Fishery

¹¹*Evening Post* 2852, 2 November 1727; see also *Evening Post* 2851, 31 October 1727; *Post Man and the Historical Account*, 31 October 1727

¹²*London Magazine* xxx, 1761, pp 598-99

company, a position which had been inherited by his son.¹³ It was also a recognition by George III of the interests of the City, usually outside the traditional ambit of the court as it was understood in the later Stuart period. The Hanoverians had early identified their kingship with the cult of trade. George III was popularly identified with the values of the Stuart kings, and in overtly asserting that he would maintain the liberties of the City as his two predecessors had done he assured one section of his people that he would not forget the values they held particularly dear, as well as calm fears that he might revert to the seventeenth-century court culture of popular mythology.

Despite this it would appear that the relationship between London and the monarch did change during the reign of George III. It ceased to be virtually the sole arena for royal public activity, while remaining the major one as the site of the king's principal seat of business. George II had effectively drawn what royal ceremonial there was outside London closer to the capital. Garter installations moved to Kensington, with only a shadowy function for proxies remaining at Windsor. Military reviews, where many spectators would have seen the sovereign, had also taken place in London, often in Hyde Park. With the peace of 1763, there were fewer excuses for them to be held. When they did return in force during the American War, the king chose to travel out himself to Wiltshire and Hampshire to see the regiments

¹³ For freedom of the City, see *GM* vi, 1736, p 746; on 11 January 1737, the Prince paid £500 for the release of debtor freemen (*GM* vii, 1737, p 57). For Herring Fishery governorship, see *General Advertiser* 4918, 26 July 1750; *Read's Weekly Journal* 1353, 28 July 1750

there, rather than concentrate on those nearer the metropolis.¹⁴ George III carried out the same kinds of public engagements as his grandfather had done, but placed them in different contexts and took them further afield.

Travelling on Business: The Call of Duty

George III's increasingly frequent excursions were not entirely innovations. Although the kings had been largely confined to London (except where travelling abroad to attend to continental affairs), this was not so true of their families. Without the business of government to care for, and in the eyes of several of them the social world of the nobility and gentry to lead, the princes and princesses of the House of Hanover - and their spouses - had had more opportunities to visit parts of the country outside the environs of London. They did not travel far. The only excursion made to Scotland in this period was that of the Duke of Cumberland in order to quell the Jacobite rebellion in 1745-6, a campaign on which the duke's devotion to his interpretation of his public duty became notorious. Wales and Ireland might as well not have been within the king's dominions as far as royal notice of them went in terms of personal appearances, although at least the last prince of Wales of the period, through the Welsh interest in London, took an indirect involvement with the principality as patron of the charitable activities of the Society of Antient Britons.

The journey of the Duke of Cumberland to Scotland in 1745 was an example of one of the royal family travelling on the business of the Crown. The growing number of family

¹⁴For the visit of the King and Queen to the encampments at Windsor and Salisbury, see *HWC* xxviii, p 448 (to Mason, 11 October 1778); for those to Portsmouth in 1773 and 1778, see W.H. Saunders, *Annals of Portsmouth* (London, 1880) pp 65-6; Lake Allen, *History of Portsmouth* (London, 1817) pp 67-71; *The Correspondence of George Prince of Wales* i, p 25 (George III to the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick, 3 May 1778)

members in the eighteenth century, after two centuries in which the immediate royal family had been very small and on the verge of extinction, raised the question of how younger sons of the royal house should be employed. From an early age the Duke of Cumberland had been associated with military matters, appearing alongside his father at military reviews.¹⁵ A Stuart precedent existed. James II had been Lord High Admiral before his accession to the throne, an office that rumour had associated with Frederick at the beginning of his father's reign.¹⁶ However, the duties of Cumberland were taken much more seriously than those of James, Duke of York had been.¹⁷ What visits he made to towns during his northern campaign were brief; it was usual for him to barely acknowledge the welcome given him by the civic authorities. In York the contribution made to securing the Hanoverian cause made by Archbishop Herring and the York Association was hardly recognised.¹⁸ The tour was designed to be one of business rather than of leisure; the two were mutually exclusive. The Duke of Cumberland became the model for subsequent generations. The beginning of the Seven Years' War saw the young Prince Edward embark upon a military career in imitation of his uncle, receiving commendation from George II for doing so.¹⁹ Subsequent younger sons, however reluctantly in the majority of cases, followed the same path, a course that was to endure as the recognised training of princes, and in a later century of kings.

¹⁵For example, *Craftsman* 69, 28 October 1727

¹⁶*London Journal* 413; *Mist's Weekly Journal* 115, both 1 July 1727; *Applebee's Original Weekly Journal*, 15 July 1727

¹⁷For further discussion see chapter six below.

¹⁸William Hargrove, *History and Description of the City of York*, (York, 1818) p 225; see also W.A. Speck, *The Butcher* (Oxford, 1981) p 111 for Cumberland's similarly unappreciative six-hour nocturnal visit to Newcastle upon Tyne.

¹⁹*GM* xxix, 1759, p 448, reporting that on Edward's return from his ship at Portsmouth George II "received him graciously, and encouraged him to behave valiantly".

Even if they were not on active service, it was common throughout the period to expect that royalty would show an interest in the military achievements of Great Britain. This was as true of foreign visitors as it was of the dynasty on the British throne. The importance of exhibiting the country's armed might to a foreign prince differed according to the origins of the visitor. Christian VII of Denmark visited the docks at Woolwich and launched a British man of war named after him; the mark of esteem may have been intended to impress an erratic, youthful absolute ruler who was believed at the time to be tempted by the possibility of an alliance with France.²⁰ In contrast, the visit of William Charles Henry, Prince of Orange, to Chatham was that of a prince already established on his arrival on English shores, at least in the words of the propagandists, as the heir of William III, representative of the Protestant interest in Europe of which Britain was often presented as the principal defender.²¹ The earlier visits of Francis Stephen, Duke of Lorraine, to the Chatham and Woolwich dockyards in 1731 combined elements of the two; they may have been intended to assure someone who was already widely identified as the future consort of the Habsburg heiress that the forces at the disposal of Austria's ally were substantial. For domestic consumption, the visit identified the Catholic power with the British maritime authority that was already part of the myth of the Protestant kingdom encouraged under George II.²²

The 'Social Visit' and Obligation

Parallel to the symbolically valuable occasions where royalty paid tribute to the armed

²⁰*LC x*, 1839, 29 September 1768, p 310

²¹*General Evening Post* 76, 26 March 1734

wing of the state was the complementary form of the tour that was social in character. In a sense, these were the closest to the royal progresses of former years, enjoyed by Anne in the first few years of her reign, before her health gave way. As has already been mentioned, there was definitely reluctance throughout the royal household to embark on tours on the grand scale that might have been expected, on account of the expense that would have been incurred both by the household as a body and by individuals. Horace Walpole remarked upon the limited accommodation and inflated prices in Portsmouth during one of George III's visits there, which he alleged forced Elizabeth, Duchess of Northumberland, to share a bed with her chambermaid.²³ With this in mind, it is unsurprising that the kings before George III did not travel far in Britain. The state in which it was held appropriate for a king to travel would have incurred too many inconveniences. Furthermore, as the political power of the monarch lost its potential to be absolute, paying personal visits on the nobility in their country houses could have proved hazardous, implying that the monarch was becoming a client of one or other of his mightier subjects.

Despite this, just as the House of Brunswick inherited precedents from the Stuarts of active involvement in public service, they also inherited an expectation that they would visit parts of the kingdom outside their London base. Under George I and George II the king was bound to the seat of the executive power of the realm. If the king moved, his ministers had to move too. Princes and princesses required fewer attendants, and without a share in the executive were free to adopt with more ease the manners of the nobility and gentry, without

²²*London Evening Post* 607, 21 October 1731; *Daily Post-Boy* 6789, 29 November 1731; *Evening Post* 3482, 30 November 1731

²³*HWC*, xxxii, pp 128-9 (to the Countess of Upper Ossory, 21 June 1773)

ceasing to be royal in the eyes of society. Royalty could bestow approval on fashionable spa towns such as Bath, which may well have been anxious after the death of Anne to make acquaintance with the new dynasty. Despite rumours of a progress to the west by George I, it appears to have been Princess Amelia who was the first Brunswick to see Bath, in 1728. The city's reaction, in so far as it is recorded, seems to have been based on its reception of Queen Anne in 1702, involving echoes of pageantry and a ceremonial welcome from the civic authorities. The princess, like Anne before her, was ostensibly visiting the town for health reasons, although this did not stop her from welcoming the attentions of the corporation.²⁴

Amelia's visit inaugurated an enduring connection between the Hanoverians and Bath. The town became established as a base for tours of the west by the children of George II and their spouses. In 1728 Amelia's arrival and stay at Bath echoed the style of the later Stuarts, with which George I had been uncomfortable, but George II and Caroline to some extent assimilated. The resort was the choice of the Prince of Orange as a suitable place to restore his health away from the intrusions of London in winter 1734, and although his regimen was closely scrutinised by the doctors and Sir Clement Cottrell, this did not stop the prince from indulging in expeditions which might have been considered socially strenuous. Chief among these was his visit to Bristol, reportedly stage-managed by Richard Nash and involving a musical entertainment on his welcome and a pageant of the wool-combers. These complemented the more customary reception by the civic dignitaries which had been likewise accorded to Amelia when she, too, had visited from Bath in 1728.²⁵ Frederick, Prince of

²⁴Richard Warner, *The History of Bath*, (Bath, 1801) p 209

²⁵*Whitehall Evening Post* 2469, *Daily Post-Boy* 7471, *St James's Evening Post* 2860, all 26 February 1734; John Latimer, *Annals of Bristol*, p 164

Wales, also chose to show himself in Bath, on at least two occasions, in 1738 and 1750.

Visiting a spa not only associated the prince or princess with the fashionable world that frequented it, but also subtly allowed the guest to illustrate the particular character of the monarchy at the time of the visit. Amelia's later visit to Bath in 1752 could have been seen as more restrained than that of 1728. There was no civic pageantry to mark her arrival, and the princess's stay in the town attracted little press comment. It could be said that little extraordinary play on her royal status was involved, but in another it was more pervasive. Amelia was accompanied by the Scots Greys and the Oxford Blues as her guardian regiments, and the visit culminated with a review of the troops by Amelia's brother the Duke of Cumberland, encapsulating the most obvious interest of George II and his only surviving son, already mythologised after the War of the Austrian Succession.²⁶

A royalty whose members inhabited the same social world as the 'quality' who formed the social group from whom the public servants of the monarch were drawn, could not afford to acknowledge that fact by merely visiting spa towns when it pleased them. There were other arenas in which members of the royal family could meet their nobility and gentry outside the formal world of the court and government business. One that appears to have risen in frequency through the period is the private visit to the houses of the great magnates. In the early part of the reign of George II, Queen Caroline is reported to have paid at least one visit to a London house of Sir Robert Walpole; before this, George I would call on his British

²⁶*Read's Weekly Journal* 1459, 15 August 1752; *ibid.* 1464, 30 September 1752

ministers.²⁷ The appearance of a tour of great houses outside the London area does not emerge as a feature of royal existence until the 1760s, when as part of his second tour of Yorkshire, Edward, Duke of York took in Wentworth Castle, seat of the Earl of Strafford.²⁸ Although in 1731 the Duke of Lorraine had visited the East Anglian residences of the Duke of Grafton and Sir Robert Walpole, it was understood by some commentators at the time that these visits were of diplomatic rather than social significance, several other figures from the ministry attending during the week spent at Houghton.²⁹ The itinerary of King Christian VII included calls on great houses, such as that of the Duke of Ancaster in Lincolnshire; the duke was a household officer at the time, as Master of the Horse, and as such may have been obliged to entertain the Danish king as an attempt to keep the errant monarch within the limits with which George III was comfortable.³⁰ Within ten years, however, George III himself was lending the royal presence to the houses of the nobility, to great symbolic effect, such as his levée at the Catholic peer Lord Petre's in 1778; or, particularly following the first signs of his illness in 1788, his more restrained calls on the nobility and gentry of the west country.³¹ The levée was used again to effect in Worcester in 1788, the king in this way favouring local

²⁷*HWC* xv, p 333, quoting from Faringdon's *Anecdotes* for Friday August 5 1796, referring to events quoted in note 108 on same page as occurring on 27 August 1729, with *Monthly Chronicle*, ii, 1729 p 175, as source

²⁸Lady Mary Coke, *Journals*, i, pp 22, 71

²⁹For visit to Euston Hall, *London Evening Post* 617, 2 November 1731; for visit to Houghton, *Evening Post* 3481, 9 November 1731; for speculation about the visit, *Daily Post-Boy* 6775, 12 November 1731

³⁰For Grimthorp visit, see *LC* xxiv, no 1828, 3 September 1768, p 219

³¹See M.D. Petre, *The Ninth Lord Petre* (London, 1928), referred to in Colin Haydon, *Anti-Catholicism in Eighteenth Century England* (Manchester, 1993) p 167; for Plymouth visit, see Llewelyn Jewitt, *A History of Plymouth* (London and Plymouth, 1873) pp 364-368

society in a tour of the western counties otherwise noted for its modesty.³² The emphasis was on the domestic rather than the participation in the fashionable leisure activities of the great, but the king was following precedents set forward by others of his family. In doing so, he gave the notion of the tour of England added importance at a time, during and after the American War, that the assumptions on which the political settlement was based were under threat. On these visits George III was accompanied by the queen, or by a combination drawn from the queen, his daughters and his younger sons. The royal family appeared as a single unit, as unchanging as the constitution, and likewise not to be tampered with by the presumptuous. What had begun as an acknowledgement of the relative social positions of royalty and the nobility had always been by default a means of reinforcing the foundations of the Hanoverian dynasty in Great Britain; under George III this became more overtly the case as the monarchy adjusted itself to new constitutional situations.

Royal visits to the provinces were given more significance by what the princely visitor actually did. It was generally expected that the guest would be able to appreciate the finer points of the town to which their attention would be drawn by their hosts. The tours that William Charles Henry of Orange and Christian VII of Denmark were given of Oxford seem to have been conceived to show the university as the home of both scholarship and breeding. Entertainment by the colleges in the former case took the shape of lavish provision of food, a tour of the architectural highlights of the university, and a recital of poetry. In addition the merits of the princes were recognised by the granting of a Doctorate in Civil Law. The Prince of Orange was also taken to Blenheim to be entertained at the ducal palace of the

³²Valentine Green, *History and Antiquities of the City and Suburbs of Worcester* (London, 1791) p 297

Marlboroughs. This signified both the Prince's role as the inheritor of the virtues of William III, and the role of the Dukes of Marlborough as aristocratic guardians of the university, the family living as it did at the heart of the royal manor of Woodstock.³³ In cathedral cities it was expected that the royal visitor would be impressed by the ecclesiastical architecture. York Minster was the first item on the itinerary of Edward, Duke of York in 1766, when he paid his second visit to the city. This second visit gives the impression of having received greater consideration than his first, more hurried visit in 1761, allowing more time for a tour of the city and for public acclamation.³⁴ The duke was able to show both his appreciation for the buildings of the city, for religion and for the people of York, and also perhaps a broader sensibility of the obligations of royalty to appear in public. Prince Edward showed the affinity of his house to those qualities which they were bound to defend, the Church and the liberties of the people, in a way which his elder brother in London did not seem to understand so well at this point in his reign.

With the responsibility of representing the monarchy to the provinces, came also the stresses of supporting social life there. After a few days in Plymouth in 1788, George, Prince of Wales and Frederick, Duke of York withdrew from the balls at the Long Room held to commemorate their visit to the Devonian port, leaving their brother Prince William, more familiar with the town, to remain as the focus of attention.³⁵ Even more remote from London was Berwick upon Tweed, visited in August 1771 by Henry, Duke of Cumberland. The effect

³³ For the Prince of Orange, *St James's Evening Post* 2862, 2 March 1734; *General Evening Post* 66, 2 March 1734; for the King of Denmark, see *LC* xxiv, 1833, 15 September 1768, p 262; 1834, 17 September 1768, p 266

³⁴ William Hargrove, *History and Description of the Ancient City of York* (York, 1818), p 236 (for 1761 visit), p 238 (for 1766)

his visit had on the social life of the Borders was dramatic, bringing a member of the royal family to the north not just as a representative of the House of Hanover but of London society and also of controversy, arising from the revelation of his marriage some years before. Bishop Thomas Percy wrote to his wife that the newspaper-reading public expected to see

"a lame deformed Creature, with half his face eat away with the evil; and were much surprized to see such a fine blooming young fellow; and still more to see him dance in the Evening, for he is one of the best Dancers I ever saw, and warmed with the Exercise and glowing with pleasure, he looked remarkably handsome."

Prince Henry arrived in a train of ten carriages, was greeted with full military honours, and proceeded to a dinner and ball with the corporation and local aristocracy and gentry, sponsored at least partly by the Duke of Northumberland, the prince's host at Alnwick. Percy also remarked that the Border families were unfamiliar with London protocol and were over-familiar with the Prince, which the visitor however welcomed.³⁶

Although the Duke of Cumberland appeared to have little difficulty in coping with the social life of the provinces, his brother Edward, Duke of York had expressed his exasperation with his position in Southampton during the Seven Years' War to Lady Mary Coke, when he was fulfilling the role of a younger brother of the king and seeing active service. For all the pretensions of Southampton, whose claims to the status of a spa town had been encouraged by Frederick during his visit in 1750, Edward wrote that he found the balls insipid and the company without glitter, the town being "inhabitted at present only by Cripples and Invalids, West Indians, & Clergymen and their Wives." The Duke of York politely abbreviates his

³⁵*GM* lviii, 1788, p 77; also Jewitt, *History*, p 363

³⁶BL Add. MSS. 39547 ff 7-12 (letter of Bishop Thomas Percy, 30 August 1771)

complaints about his position, although implying that he could have gone further.³⁷ It appears that metropolitan refinement may never have reached the provinces in the eyes of even this generation of royalty.

Princes and princesses could only do so much. The monarch was the head of state and a visit by the king would have greater impact than those of his children or siblings. After the forays of George II in the early part of his reign, such as the visit to Cambridge and Newmarket in 1728, it was left to George III to realise the potential royal visits to provincial centres could have. The first royal involvement with a major provincial cultural event was that of George III with the Three Choirs Concerts in Worcester Cathedral in 1788. George III, who had been actively involved with the Handel commemoration of 1784 and the subsequent 'King's Concerts' in London, viewed the emerging classical canon as an instrument of moral improvement. His daily attendance at the cathedral, which was credited with increasing the numbers attending the festival, allowed him to show his approval in the country for the cause he had been upholding in London.³⁸ George III can be compared to George I and his family in following the centre of gravity of royal cultural patronage away from the court, but George III was not really diminishing London or even accepting any loss of status there. Instead he was able to enclose a broader section of the country within the limits of the outer court to which members of an theatre audience, of which the king was the most prominent, belonged.

³⁷ Letter from Edward Duke of York to Lady Mary Coke in the collection of the Earl of Home, dated Southampton, August 3, (?1761)

³⁸ Valentine Green, *History and Antiquities of the City and Suburbs of Worcester*, (London, 1796) pp 296-300; for the support given by George III to the Handel Commemoration of 1784, and the subsequent 'King's Concerts', see William Weber, *The Rise of Musical Classics in England*, (Oxford, 1992) pp 223-242

The developing interest of royalty in the trade of the kingdom also allowed the royal family to come into contact with those of the king's subjects who were yet more removed from the doings of the court than the members of a civic corporation. The writers who praised the Hanoverians on auspicious occasions celebrated the family's respect for commerce, and when royalty did pay visits to towns some representation of local industry would be made. These endured throughout the period. The displays by woolcombers that greeted Amelia in 1728 and the Prince of Orange in 1734 in Bath, were matched during the tour made by Christian VII, when, in Manchester, the Danish king travelled along the Bridgwater canal, which was lined by the local workers in the cloth industry.³⁹ During his tour of the north, however, Christian took a more active interest than either Amelia or William Charles Henry had in the actual manufacturing process. He inspected the products of the workshops of Leeds, where "his Majesty shewed great satisfaction at the sight of such quantities of cloth".⁴⁰ In paying such close attention to the engines of British prosperity Christian's actions could have been seen at the time as an application of the paternalist principles of the autocratic monarchy of Denmark to the country of his parliament-bound host. However, they also reflected an emerging appreciation in the context of British royalty of the contribution made to the country by flourishing industry.

The interest shown by Frederick, Prince of Wales in 1750 could almost be portrayed as the first example of patronage of industry by a British monarch. Although he was excluded from executive responsibility Frederick's activities during the summer of 1750 amounted to an

³⁹For the Prince of Orange, see *Daily Post-Boy* 7471, 26 February 1734; for the King of Denmark, *LC* xxiv, no 1833, 15 September 1768

⁴⁰*LC* xxiv, no 1833, 15 September 1768

advertisement for the more active kingship anticipated in the eventually unrealised reign of Frederick I. Prior to his tour of the west that summer, Frederick visited the workshops of "several eminent weavers" in Spitalfields, and there pledged himself and the princess to the encouragement of manufacture.⁴¹ This contrasted with the martial emphasis in the public life of George II and his second son, as well as with the earlier, 'ornamental' court during the lifetime of Queen Caroline. After the prince's death his widow chose not to lead so public a course. Nevertheless, in a sense George III would occasionally make good the pledge of his father, through his generous patronage of local businesses when travelling away from London. During their visit to Worcester in 1788, the king, queen, princesses and their entourage visited the china shop of Messrs Flight and Barr, and then to Michael and Watkins's carpet factory, making orders from both establishments. Shortly before his departure George III was conveyed to the Town Hall, where he drank to the prosperity of Worcester.⁴² Although this was not an uncommon feature of a royal visit, the fact that the king and his establishment had actively participated in increasing the revenues of the town's industry gave the toast an added resonance that the Worcester worthies cannot have missed. However rare his appearances in the workplace, George III was in effect extending the model of reserved paternalist kingship practised by his father, and more usually associated with his celebrated tours of his Windsor tenantry, to the employees of provincial merchants and manufacturers removed from the formalities of the City of London, and yet more so from the military preoccupations of George II.

⁴¹*GM* xx, 1750, p 281

⁴²Valentine Green, *History and Antiquities*. p 298-9

Incognito

A problem that faced royal visitor and civic or noble host alike was the question of the visitor's status. The arrival of a member of the royal family demanded certain formalities. A way of politely declining excessive displays of welcome, and excusing a noble household or a corporation expense, was to adopt the form of incognito. This was well-established at the beginning of the period. Its use by royalty, whether British or foreign, did not entitle their hosts to forget their guests' rank, but emphasised the unofficial quality of the visit. A good example of this is the arrival of the Prince of Württemberg-Mömpelgard ('Mombeliard') in 1710, who was presented to Queen Anne not by her Secretary of State, but by the Lord Chamberlain to recognise that the prince came as a private visitor.⁴³ Once a visitor had arrived in an official rather than a private capacity it was held impossible for that status to be changed, whatever the circumstances. As Master of the Ceremonies, Sir Clement Cottrell insisted that the Prince of Orange could not avoid returning the visits of the nobility present in Bath who waited on him at his arrival there in January 1734. The prince's privacy was compromised, as he was not incognito, even though he was unwell and his activities would cause an unwelcome drain on the resources of the royal household.⁴⁴ The prince had arrived as the future husband of the Princess Royal and could not be transformed into a private visitor for his own convenience. In contrast, in 1768 Christian VII of Denmark arrived incognito, but appears to have taken full advantage of his novelty status, a foreign king travelling on his own income on his kinsman's territory, a situation which cannot have amused George III.

This did not mean that incognito had always been a flag of convenience for visiting

⁴³PRO: LC 5/3, pp 2-3

⁴⁴PRO: LC 5/3, p 269

dignitaries intent on drawing attention to themselves, or that its force of anonymity, so to speak, was dead by the reign of the third Brunswick king. Incognito continued to be used with sincerity to obscure the identities of foreign visitors. Prince George of Hesse-Darmstadt, for example, wished to avoid a formal introduction to King George III and Queen Charlotte; he and his family eventually met the king and queen in an informal encounter at Kew apparently engineered by the queen's brother Prince Ernest of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.⁴⁵ The term therefore retained an amount of flexibility, representing in differing situations an alternative formality to that of state diplomacy, or a more complete abandonment of the form imposed by rank among eighteenth-century European royalty.

The use of incognito was a way in which royalty could participate in social situations which might have been considered inappropriate for them. Members of the royal family were frequently seen at the pleasure gardens such as Ranelagh and Vauxhall throughout the period. Ranelagh was opened by King George II, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the Duke of Cumberland on 24 May 1742.⁴⁶ Frederick, Prince of Wales, was among the first to be invited to Vauxhall Gardens at its reopening, and his father also attended regularly.⁴⁷ The appeal of the pleasure gardens was summarised by a Hanoverian courtier in London for the coronation of George III:

"Everybody here can choose the society he prefers, as, contrary to the custom which generally prevails in England, no distinction is made between the several classes; so that you never know, unless you actually come across them, whether the Duke of York (who is seldom absent), or any other member of the royal family, is present or not; and you are not expected to take off your hat to

⁴⁵Lady Mary Coke, *Journals*, iii, p 265 (29 July 1770)

⁴⁶*HWC* xvii p 434 (to Horace Mann, 26 May 1742)

⁴⁷Richard Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978) p 94

them."⁴⁸

The appeal of incognito, as shown at the pleasure gardens, was that it allowed royalty to move in fashionable circles that were part of the commercial world outside the court, and take part in rituals that had nothing to do with royal ceremonial. In time, certain of these circles could become firmly identified in some respect with royal appearances. One such was the London theatre.

Theatre and the Masquerade

The advantage of the theatre for George I, his son and his daughter-in-law was that it allowed them to appear in public without drawing too much attention to themselves. This avoided increasing the number of performances at St James's or whichever residence the king happened to be using, while strengthening the connection of the monarch with the theatre, a connection which had been weakened by Anne's infirmity. In addition, the participation of the sovereign and the heir apparent in the London theatre, without increasing the role of the court, would have signalled to the public that George I had Whig leanings. Instead of accelerating the construction of the much-mooted royal theatre at Hampton Court, George chose to participate with the rest of moneyed London, taking his place as part of a commercial society. Although he was arguably less successful than Anne had been in promoting the royal image generally, George I was initially helped by an enthusiastic theatre; one of the king's favourite genres, the Italian opera, manifested itself in the form of *Arminius*, the story of the Germanic chief who

⁴⁸ Count Frederick Kielmansegge, trans, Countess Philippa Kielmansegg, *Diary of a Journey to England, in the Years 1761-1762*, (London, 1902) p 24

resisted Roman conquest.⁴⁹ The parallel with the advertised role of the Hanoverians as defenders of Great Britain and Protestant Europe from the universal monarchy of Louis XIV was clear. More generally, whereas it was common for the 'quality' to sponsor performances by subscription, it was usual for the king or his family to be able to command a performance on their own. The appearances of George I and his kin in the boxes of the London playhouses made it plain to both the nobility and the more general theatrical audience that the new reigning dynasty had no intention of being relegated to a social sideshow.

This being said, the early Hanoverians also displayed caution regarding their commitment to the stage. The absence of any member of the royal family from the London theatres for several months in the later part of 1715 was attributed at the time to their fear of mob violence during the Jacobite rebellion of that year.⁵⁰ Their enthusiasm for Italian opera and continental comedy provided material that could be exploited by their critics.⁵¹ The sensitivity of the issue may be illustrated by the decline in the number of appearances George and Caroline, Prince and Princess of Wales, made at the King's Theatre during the 1726/27 season. The theatre, as well as opera, was playing host to a succession of Harlequin pantomimes performed by Italian players. After approximately two months of performances, with George I usually attending once per week, the performers fell subject to rumours that they were about to depart for their homeland.⁵² Following this gossip the Prince and Princess,

⁴⁹ Arminius was seen by the Prince and Princess of Wales, at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, 23 October 1714; George I followed them on 26 October. See Emmett L. Avery, *The London Stage*, Part II, i, p 330 (Carbondale, Il., 1960)

⁵⁰ See Avery, *London Stage*, i, p 363

⁵¹ *ibid.*, p clxxvi, quoting from *Weekly Journal, or Saturday's Post*.

⁵² *ibid.*, p 893, quoting *Daily Journal*, 23 November 1726

who had on occasion accompanied the king to the Italian shows, withdrew somewhat from the theatre, ceasing to attend the King's Theatre for the rest of the season. They went to a far fewer number of performances in general, but demonstrated a broader taste, beginning with the opera *Camilla* at Lincoln's Inn Fields, and taking in a comedy by Etheredge and a historical drama, *Jane Shore*, by Nicholas Rowe.⁵³ George I maintained his devotion to the Italians for the remainder of the season, the last that he would attend before his death.

The attachment of the first two Hanoverian kings to forms of entertainment which were perceived as originating on the continent was one of the more controversial aspects of their public social life in the capital. The manager of the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, where George I found his Italian operas, was John Jacob Heidegger, remembered as the man who popularised the subscription masquerade in eighteenth-century London. Although George II, when Prince of Wales, seems to have chosen to play the more patriotic card and attend more English plays during the 1726/27 season, he had a reputation for enjoying masquerades which left him open to satire. Hogarth's 'Masquerade Ticket' shows the royal arms in disarray among rams heads, antlers, 'lecherometers' and jelly and cake 'PROUOCATUES' while a portrait of Heidegger presides over all.⁵⁴ George II appears to have been so fond of masquerades that he may even have pursued the entertainment when out of season or fashion, as Horace Walpole observed: "I am going to a masquerade at the Ranelagh amphitheatre; the King is fond of it and has pressed people to go, but I don't find that it will be full."⁵⁵ The masquerade was not without its propaganda value; on at least one occasion George II

⁵³See Avery, *ibid.*, ii, pp 893, 898, 913

⁵⁴BM Prints & Drawings 1799, 'Masquerade Ticket' no 1

⁵⁵*HWC* xvii, p 487 (to Horace Mann, 7 July 1742)

appeared "in an old fashioned English habit", and although this was hardly an unusual masquerade costume it could be held to represent George II identifying with his kingdom's traditions.⁵⁶

Unfortunately for its royal devotees, the masquerade was always open to attack from those who sought to be guardians of the nation's integrity. George II himself was forced in 1727 to issue a proclamation condemning masquerades shortly after his accession, and in 1729 the Middlesex Grand Jury proceeded against Heidegger as the "principal promoter of vice and immorality". The Lisbon earthquake of 1750 led the bishops to successfully obtain the prohibition of masquerades.⁵⁷ Although by the end of the decade there was something of a revival - Theresa Cornelys held her first subscription masquerade at Carlisle House in 1760 - the various objections to masquerades accorded with the character and agenda of George III. George III, glorying in the name of Briton, could not be expected to be sympathetic to something regarded as a foreign pursuit. Furthermore, the king's attachment to a virtuous life, respecting the institution of marriage and the established social order, was opposed to the sexual libertinism associated with the masquerade as well as its social intermingling - 'a "strange Medley" of persons - a rough mix of high and low'.⁵⁸ George's resistance to masquerades was a factor in his conflict with his kinsman Christian VII of Denmark in 1768. Christian even called on Mrs Cornelys and attended one of her balls, which George III could

⁵⁶ *HWC* xx, p 49 (to Horace Mann, 3 May 1749). A similar costume is recorded as having been worn by George III's brother William, Duke of Gloucester, in 1770 - see J.P. Malcolm, *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London during the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1810), ii, pp 273-4.

⁵⁷ Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilisation* (London, 1986) p 95

⁵⁸ Castle, *ibid*, p 28

not have done.⁵⁹ However, royal involvement in masquerades, if they did indeed "promiscuously" mingle the classes, bringing together men and women from all social ranks' as Terry Castle argues, probably helped the public image of royalty in at least the earlier and middle parts of the eighteenth century. It involved them in a popular form of entertainment which subverted the established order and involved all-comers in a shared levity.

Whatever the importance of the masquerade in assisting the intermingling of royalty and public, it had the potential to involve its royal participants in potentially compromising situations outside their control. Royal attendance at theatre performances was less controversial in its essentials and was acceptable to all generations of the House of Hanover during the period. Despite the good relationship that had been established between the royal family and the theatres - chiefly those which enjoyed a formal status under royal patents - it was evident at the end of the reign of George I that the relationship was not being exploited as it might be. However, by the 1740s this appeared to have changed. The rise of 'God Save the King' as an anthem sung by audiences is well-charted; indeed, it was by the label of a song "lately sung in theatres" that the *Gentleman's Magazine* first identified it.⁶⁰ Despite periods of unpopularity for the monarch, the custom was still alive in the 1760s, when it was noted by Count Kielmansegge, and by the 1790s and the height of the popularity of George III it was being played as many as eight times at some performances. The change may be accounted for by the increased activity of the royal family in the decade following the accession of George II. The growing number of young, mature members of the royal family led to a rise in the number

⁵⁹LC x, no 1832, 13 September 1768, p 234

⁶⁰GM xv, 1745, p 552. For the emergence of 'God Save the King', see Arthur H. Scouten, *The London Stage*, Part III, i (Carbondale, Illinois, 1961) p clxxxvii

of command performances as they took their place in society. In addition, there were new opportunities for the glorification of the family in the form of two royal weddings, occasioning elaborately staged tributes both inside and outside the theatres. The decoration of Ludgate by Henry Vander Esch with figures and related songs illustrating the attachment of the Prince of Orange and the House of Brunswick alike to Liberty, Protestantism, and the prosperity of Great Britain, was matched by Handel's serenata *Parnasso in Festa*. This was first performed on 13 March 1734, the day before the long-postponed union of the Prince of Orange to the Princess Royal was to take place. The bride and bridegroom heard the serenata, appended to *Ariadne*, three nights later.⁶¹ This was the culmination of a series of attempted commemorations since the Prince of Orange had arrived the previous November, public expectations having been built up by the delays caused by the prince's ill-health.⁶² The length of time that the prince spent in England was probably beneficial to all concerned.

There followed a few years of royal theatre both inside and outside the playhouses. The public demand for a sight of the royal participants in the 1734 wedding was marked, one paper estimating that the streets of St James's were crowded one and a half hours before the prince passed by on his way to the Chapel there, in order to see him in his diamond-speckled wedding suit.⁶³ Frederick, Prince of Wales recognised public interest in his impending marriage in 1736 to Augusta of Saxe-Gotha by dining in public at Greenwich, "the Windows being

⁶¹*The Corn-Cutter's Journal* 25, 19 March 1734

⁶²For a survey of the theatrical entertainments planned and executed for the marriage of the Prince of Orange and the Princess Royal, see Emmett L. Avery, 'A Royal Wedding Royally Confounded', in *Western Humanities Review*, x, no 2, (Utah University Press, Salt Lake City, 1956) pp 153-64 (unfortunately unreferenced)

⁶³*Weekly Register, or Universal Journal*, 210, 16 March 1734

thrown open, to oblige the Curiosity of the People".⁶⁴ Those who saw the prince and princess in person could also have seen them represented in the scenery of Handel's *Atalanta*, where the couple were depicted praised by Fame, their coats of arms on a Triumphal Arch.⁶⁵ Less auspicious occasions also received responses from the theatre. Queen Caroline's hermitage in Richmond Park, Merlin's Cave, was formally opened by a reading from Stephen Duck, the 'thresher poet', but it also inspired the return to the repertory of *King Arthur*, the 'semi-opera' by Dryden and Purcell, which appeared for several seasons.⁶⁶ One could also argue that royal courtships became part of the theatrical programme. Sir Clement Cottrell noted that before their marriage, the Prince of Orange and the Princess Royal sat in separate, but adjacent, boxes, positioned so that the prince could converse with ease to his intended.⁶⁷ Once married, they presumably sat together. Whether the arrangements regarding Princess Augusta and the Hereditary Prince Charles of Brunswick were similar is unknown, but they too, thirty years later, appeared in each other's company before a playhouse audience, to an enthusiastic response from the crowd.⁶⁸

It is impossible to forget that royal appearances at the theatre were connected with political events. When the Prince of Brunswick was hailed by members of an audience, the people in the theatre were showing their disaffection with the ministry of the day by welcoming the newcomer more enthusiastically than they did George III and Queen Charlotte. Revivals of

⁶⁴*GM* vi, 1736, p 280

⁶⁵*GM* v, 1735, p 281; Scouten, *London Stage*, p cxxiii

⁶⁶Scouten, *ibid.*, p lxxxiii

⁶⁷PRO: LC 5/3 p 256

⁶⁸*HWC* xxxviii, pp 288-9 (to Hertford, 22 January 1764)

court theatre as such could not escape the attribution of political symbolism. George I saw seven performances at the royal theatre at Hampton Court, by players from Drury Lane, in 1718. This was an effect of the split in Whig ranks in the middle of the reign, the king going in some measure towards reviving court culture as a social focus, as had been attempted by Anne.⁶⁹ The staging of *Alfred*, by Thomson and Mallet, at Cliveden in 1739 by Frederick, Prince of Wales, can be viewed as a foray by the Prince into endowing his own court with a similar function, and thus providing a more vibrant centre of opposition to his father.⁷⁰ It has been observed that the royal family were less interested in the theatre in the middle of the century, at a time of relative political tranquillity, when the public were perhaps less involved in affairs of state.⁷¹ This is probably true, insofar as disputes within the family were closely bound up with affairs of party at the time. But it did not mean that theatre was neglected. Royal appearances in seasons following the fall of Walpole still brought court etiquette and royalty to them; perhaps the absence of the Duke of Cumberland and George II himself on the continent prevented more frequent attendance by the unchaperoned princesses.

It is clear that a consistent advantage of royal participation in the theatre was that it both recognised and engendered loyalty. The absence of 1715 may have reflected an assumption that, as a royal habit of theatregoing was not yet established, it would have been unwise to expose the royal person to a potentially hostile audience. By 1764, the weekly routine of George III, as king, was such that despite the hostile crowds encountered at the time of his eldest sister's wedding, a withdrawal was unthinkable. The final turning point has

⁶⁹Louis D. Mitchell, 'Command Performances During the Reign of George I', *Eighteenth Century Studies* vii, 1974, p 346

⁷⁰*GM* x, 1740, p 411

usually been identified by historians as the identification of London with the Hanoverian monarchy during the Jacobite rebellion of 1745-6. The return of the royal family to the boxes of the theatres has been attributed to the royal family's appreciation for the loyalty shown them at this crucial moment, and also to the appearance of James Quin and David Garrick together in the same company at Covent Garden perhaps also marking a rapprochement with the English stage after years where Italian opera and music had received the stronger marks of royal favour.⁷²

As has been seen, the stage was never wholly deserted by the House of Hanover. It was recognised as having been a friend to the dynasty in the time of its greatest need, proving its worth as a feature of London life that enclosed its population within the royal entourage. The theatre could reveal to London those members of the expanding dynasty who were to be considered within the core of the royal family, and which were not. While in the reigns of George I and George II it had been common for several members of the royal family to order command performances, by the second decade of George III's reign that privilege seems to have been reserved for the king and queen alone. The alienation of George III from his brothers, and they from him, might have been part of the cause.⁷³ Following the revelations of the secret marriages of the two royal dukes, George III was estranged from his brothers for many years, and was never totally reconciled to them. At least one of the king's brothers seems to have used the theatre to lay emphasis upon his status and that of his wife; in December 1774

⁷¹Scouten, *London Stage*, p clxiv

⁷²*ibid.*

⁷³See Lady Mary Coke, *Journals*, iii, p 17, for a discussion between Lady Mary and Princess Amelia, who averred that "the two Dukes, her nephews, hated Lord Bute... they disliked the Queen as unreasonably, and still more improper than their hatred of Lord Bute."

Henry, Duke of Cumberland reportedly ordered his box at the opera furnished in white satin with gold trimmings, which was taken as presaging a grand entrance on the evening in question. In the event, he and his duchess failed to appear.⁷⁴ In a fashion complementary to his treatment of his brothers, George III sought to restrain the attempts by his sons to lead the public lives they may well have felt were expected of them by excluding them from the royal party. Thus, while his visits to the theatre helped George III include theatre audiences in his entourage, the same visits excluded close family members from the same.

Problems of Presentation

In *George I: Elector and King*, Ragnhild Hatton deals with the events of the first few years of her subject's reign under the chapter title 'Settling Down'. In contrast to what this might imply, 'settling down' was a lengthy process not merely confined to the first few years of the reign of George I.⁷⁵ Instead, it took decades and could only be said to be considered over after the children of George II and Caroline had found their feet as the first generation (with the exception of Frederick, brought up by his great-uncle in Hanover) to have spent most or all of their childhoods in Great Britain. The process evolved into an ongoing one as the institution of the British monarchy struggled to cope with a large royal clan whose social limits were constantly changing, and who needed to be found new things to do. The tours of Christian VII showed that when royal status was nonetheless recognised the court convention of the incognito could become obsolete, when that incognito was faced with the enthusiasm of both royal person and crowd alike for acclamation. It must be acknowledged that, even in the later part of the period, royal appearances in public did not always receive a jubilant reception.

⁷⁴Coke, *Journals*, iv, p 445

⁷⁵Hatton, *George I*

Although Horace Walpole commented on the large crowds of the rural population which came out to see Princess Amelia during her visit to Stowe for an entertainment being staged there by Earl and Countess Temple, Lady Mary Coke, who attended the same event, regretted that she was unable to enthrone the masses into singing "God Save our Noble King" when the Princess appeared.⁷⁶ It is difficult to believe that the habit of singing the royal anthem had not spread beyond London by 1770. It is easier to believe that the arch-royalist Lady Mary misjudged her moment. Amelia was after all the king's aunt rather than the king himself. Nevertheless, the incident underlines the suggestion that open public acclaim for visiting royalty was difficult to arrange without some element of forward planning, which Lady Mary Coke had not been able to carry out.

Developments following the accession of George III clearly changed the expression of the relationship between the sovereign, his family and his people. The establishment of the 'Queen's House' as a largely domestic residence marked a change in the pattern of the royal year, which aside from the regular visits of George I and George II to Hanover, was not at the close of the 1750s very far removed from the habits of William III, or of Queen Anne in her invalidhood. As has been seen, George III maintained royal visits to the theatre, but with an emerging change in emphasis, as the excursions became less events at which individual members of the royal family appeared with their retainers in the social life of London, but more affairs at which the king and his immediate kin participated in an event enjoyed by a number of the king's subjects. Although perhaps a fine distinction, the impression remains that George III appreciated his role as monarch of Great Britain in such a way as would eventually allow him to relate to his subjects in a manner laying emphasis upon the symbolic alongside the executive

⁷⁶*HWC* x, pp 313-5 (to George Montagu, 7 July 1770); Coke, *Journals*, iii, p 253

role of the sovereign, that could be put into effect inside and outside London.

George III deserves credit for successfully blending two approaches to the public face of kingship, the armed and mounted one of his grandfather with his father's English gentleman prince. These were quite different ideas. George II was a businesslike king, doing his duty as he saw fit. Frederick, in searching for a meaningful role in Britain, effectively took the personal presence of the monarch, or rather the monarch-in-waiting, to the 'people': to society outside the confines of the court, to the corporations of the boroughs he visited in the south and west. If this was a model of itinerant Patriot kingship, then it was one that George III did not adopt immediately. Inheriting his grandfather's throne at twenty-two, his wish to be attentive to the minutiae of government business probably precluded any travels beyond London and Windsor until that attentiveness took him to Portsmouth as war approached in the second decade of his reign. In addition, until 1767 George III still had three brothers, and after that date two, active in the country, who could be seen as representing the monarch wherever they went. However, following the royal marriages scandal, for a lengthy period in the 1770s and 1780s George III scarcely communicated with his brothers, and thus was unable to delegate duties to them. The king himself, consequentially, had to visit military encampments and the ports. There was no one else in the family who could fill this role. When the king himself took over these tasks, however, such visits took on additional significance as their status was enhanced.

Arguably, the fierce insistence by George III on the moral tone of the royal family did damage by alienating his brothers and later his sons from his conception of the royal dignity. Despite opposition from the monarch himself, the exclusion of the Duke of Gloucester and the Duke of Cumberland, with their belatedly acknowledged duchesses, did not prevent royalty

from continuing to penetrate a social world that was disapproved of by the king himself. Royal involvement with racing continued under George III. Although George III never visited Newmarket himself, the king's horses continued to race there. The support of George, Prince of Wales for the turf in the 1780s ensured that the tradition of royal involvement with horse-racing endured. This had been to a great extent revived by William, Duke of Cumberland in the 1750s, royal participation in race meetings having more or less become extinct after the visits of King George I to Newmarket in the middle of his reign.⁷⁷ The 'exile' of the royal dukes, which included periods spent on the continent, allowed royalty to maintain connections with fashionable society, and so counterbalanced any dullness that might have been perceived at the court of George III.

Royal participation in public entertainments had made the monarch a patron of the same leisure pursuits as his subjects. This level of participation in events that were not in themselves a part of court activity was such that it could be used assertively to promote royalty and the causes that they favoured. Thus royal support for the King's Concerts of the 1780s, and earlier musical events such as that for the Foundling Hospital in 1749, associating the monarchy with good works while also showing them participating in society at large. Royal tours of provincial centres gave members of the family the opportunity to extend this mingling of court and public to the country outside London. In doing so they could display the concern of the reigning family for the interests of the towns they visited, both in terms of traditions and trade, and in doing so building up relations with that oft-identified engine of the extra-parliamentary political nation, provincial commercial urban society, allowing themselves to be

⁷⁷For royal involvement with racing, see Frank Siltzer, *Newmarket* (Cassell, London, 1927)

entertained by the nobility, gentry and corporations. In doing so, members of the royal family in effect showed the monarchy as the effective arm of the British constitution, identifying themselves to some level with influential segments and manifestations of the public. Without the appearances that his siblings and relatives of previous generations had made, George III would not have been so able to develop the more active public persona that began to emerge during the 1770s and would flourish in the middle of his reign.

Chapter Four

"Alas, not a Palace"

Royal Residences in the Eighteenth Century

When one is attempting to assess the interaction of royalty and public, an examination of the residences of eighteenth-century royalty is just as important as one of their excursions outside them. In an age of largely sedentary monarchy, when the sovereign was to a great extent tied to his court and his administrative function, the image that the monarch projected from his palaces was potentially of great importance, not only for the surrounding locality, but for the image of the country in the eyes of the king's subjects and the wider world. One polemicist writing in the early years of the reign of George III argued that the English were the Romans of the eighteenth century, and as such not only should they "procure the conveniences of life and health of the inhabitants" but also construct great public buildings, including at least two new royal palaces.¹ This message was not new. George I and George II were presented with successive plans for new palaces, whether at Whitehall, Kensington, Richmond or St James's, and further plans would be proposed, and construction even begun, for George III.

Calls for royal residences went hand in hand with demands for new buildings to house the other arms of the constitution, such as new Houses of Parliament. However, in a Europe which was generally governed by princes, the royal palace was an important emblem of emergent national pride. It was there that the official representatives of foreign powers were

¹John Gwynn, *London and Westminster Improved*, (London, 1766) p xv

entertained, there that the king and queen held drawing rooms and levées, there where a good deal of official business remained transacted. Additionally, the number of frequently-reprinted books aimed at visitors to London and its environs included the abodes of the royal family as prominent attractions for tourists. The manner in which they commended or (more likely) criticised what were at some level always both the homes and offices of the monarchs who were claimed as the greatest in the known world is a useful avenue towards understanding how at least the upper strata of the 'generality' might have appreciated this aspect of the royal image.

The Residences

The House of Hanover inherited a motley collection of royal residences in 1714. Chief among them was St James's Palace, about which nobody seems to have had a good word to say. "The palace of St James's is an object of reproach to the kingdom in general, it is universally condemned, and the meanest subject who has seen it, laments that his Prince resides in a house so ill-becoming the state and grandeur of the most powerful and respectable monarch in the universe," wrote one commentator on the capital's buildings in 1766.² This view was not the product of any anti-monarchical sentiment in the first decade of George III's reign; a guide for visitors to London first published in 1729 had been similarly unfavourable to the palace, as its "outward appearance is in no way answerable to the Grandeur of the British Court, being an irregular Building."³ It appears true to say that St James's appeared a somewhat haphazard construction. Although it included "large and commodious"

²Gwynn, *ibid.*, pp 10-11

³*The Foreigner's Guide*, 1st ed, (London, 1729) p 20

accommodation for the eighteenth-century court, chiefly thanks to an extension built by Anne, writers who wrote descriptions of London were continually embarrassed by it as the seat of the sovereign of a major European power. In the 1770s it was even used in polemic: *The Ambulator*, whose first edition appeared in 1774, declared "St James's is so disagreeable a habitation, that even some tradesmen would disdain to reside in it, unless it was on account of business", and called for the construction of a new palace. "Both the honour and dignity of the nation require it; for how disgraceful it is to see the Sovereign of Britain keeping his court in an old ruinous building, worse than the mansion of a Turkish bashaw." The book also attacked the state of the public buildings of London in general, the erection of new palaces being almost a metaphor for projected economical reform.⁴

There were, of course, elements of unfairness in the way that contemporaries viewed the treatment of St James's by the Hanoverians. St James's had originated as a subsidiary royal dwelling, taken over in Tudor times at the dissolution of the monasteries, and had featured little in the aspirations of seventeenth century kings for grander royal residences. An entire district of London had grown up around its walls, and one wonders if it was really far too haphazard a building for the substantial remodelling that would have been required. The importance of St James's as a London centre for the king and his family was widely recognised. John Gwynn thought it the best location for his principal royal palace, to be built at right angles to the existing structure, facing east and west with its gates in alignment with new or existing streets. A terrace was also envisaged, twenty feet above the park, from which the king could review troops or "at particular times be seen by his subjects without

⁴J. Bew, *The Ambulator*, 1st ed, (London, 1774) p xxii

inconvenience."⁵

St James's Palace was, when Gwynn wrote in 1766, neither an example of opulence in itself nor a stage on which the king could display his grandeur to the people. Royalty had made the occasional attempt at improvement. Queen Caroline made some alterations in the mid-1730s, chiefly the addition of the pavilion-like library overlooking St James's Park, which no doubt had the effect of integrating the palace and park more closely. The residents of the palace were given an improved view of the park, and those walking there were allowed to catch a glimpse of the sovereign and his family. Any further schemes intended by Caroline were precluded by her death.⁶ Furthermore, Whitehall, before its destruction in the disastrous fires of the 1690s, had had its problems. That palace, too, had by no means been a uniform structure, but a collection of administrative and residential buildings of varying styles and functions, as well as different levels of architectural merit. It is difficult to envisage any British monarch having the political or financial resources to clear an area of Westminster in which a new royal residence and administrative centre - for the household if not for the government as a whole - could have been built. The fiscal structure of the realm demanded piecemeal restoration and reconstruction in Whitehall so that government officers had space to live and carry out their business; the reality of administration could not wait for grand monarchical statements.

Arguably, then, the further out from Westminster, the more potential for impressive

⁵Gwynn, *London and Westminster Improved*, p 86

⁶See Colvin et al, *History of the King's Works*, v, p 242

building works. This was certainly the case with great houses such as Canons in Middlesex, seat of the Dukes of Chandos, which flourished briefly in the reigns of George I and George II. Like other houses of the period Canons was celebrated in verse which praised both the estate and its owner. Canons demonstrated the "rich Profusion of a Royal Mind", compared to the sun - but the poem appeared to refer to Chandos as the centre of its solar system rather than to the monarch to whom the duke was subject.⁷ Kensington could be viewed as a test case for the attitudes of the Hanoverian kings towards such potential, and so, if they wished, win the plaudits enjoyed by their mightiest subjects. The house had been bought by William and Mary in 1689 from the Earl of Nottingham, and given additions during their joint reign and in that of William alone to make it more suitable for royal habitation. Queen Anne continued the gradual evolution of the palace, including the building of the Orangery. George I decided upon more drastic alterations, involving the demolition of what remained of Nottingham House. However, when it came to designing what should replace the seventeenth-century gentleman's suburban residence to which the immediate post-Revolution monarchs had added, George I appears to have rejected plans by Sir John Vanbrugh and possibly also by Sir Christopher Wren for a large palace at Kensington, instead urging the Surveyor-General, Sir Thomas Hewitt, to proceed in the "cheapest and plainest manner".⁸ Although George I's commissions at Kensington eventually involved decorative paintings and sculpture glorifying the king's reign, he does not seem to have considered the opportunity to construct a palace that could apotheosise the new dynasty one worth pursuing. Kensington Palace was not to be a new Whitehall on the western edge of Hyde Park, but a suburban house not too far from

⁷Samuel Humphries, *Cannons. A Poem. Inscribed to His Grace the Duke of Chandos* (London, 1728) p 6

⁸*HKW* v, pp 195, 198

Westminster and away from the urban sprawl, as William III had intended when he bought it. George I was simply adapting it to his own satisfaction, and left posterity with a building of which *The Ambulator* would later write that it "has none of that grandeur which ought to appear in the residence of a British monarch".⁹ The absence of opulence of which the guide complained was more the result of calculation than neglect.

The potential Kensington had to magnify the Hanoverian royal family's public standing was not entirely neglected. George I continued the policy of Anne in enclosing the acreage of Hyde Park to form an enlarged Kensington Gardens, the first Brunswick king envisaging the establishment of a reserve for wild animals in the part of it until then designated the royal paddock. Caroline and George II instead adopted a plan which would entice the leisured section of the populace away from the eastern areas of Hyde Park where the fashionable walked. The gardens were laid out anew and eventually decorated with ornamental buildings such as a temple and a summer house, the whole being complemented by the completion of the Serpentine.¹⁰ An innovation of more public utility dating from the reign of George I was the placing of lamps along the road from St James's to Kensington, to be lit when the king was in residence, alongside the improvement and maintenance of the road to the village. There are frequent references to the lanterns throughout the period, one commenting that they appeared "very magnificent" when lit.¹¹ This would alert all London to the king's location, and associate the improvement of a public highway with the sovereign; the road west through Kensington

⁹Bew, *Ambulator*, p 98

¹⁰Peter Willis, *Charles Bridgeman and the English Landscape Garden* (London, 1977) pp 94-97

¹¹For example, see *The Foreigner's Guide*, 1st ed, (London, 1729) p 26

was probably of more use to many sectors of the population than the King's Road through Chelsea, access to which was limited, though open to abuse, during this period.

Kensington was usually inhabited during the summer in the reigns of George I and George II, but the principal summer residence in the first few decades of Hanoverian kingship remained Hampton Court, as it had been under William III and in the early part of Anne's reign. Unlike Kensington and St James's, its design appears to have been thought favourable by the guidebooks. "For Splendour, Convenience, beautiful Workmanship and curious Painting, &c. few Palaces in Europe exceed this" gushed *The Foreigner's Guide* throughout the century.¹² Another guide asserted that Hampton Court was, apart from Windsor, "more agreeably situated... than any other of his Majesty's Royal Recesses."¹³ Although to the populace of London the King's residence at Hampton Court must have made the royal family more remote than if they were at St James's or Kensington, it was clearly prominent on the itinerary of the tourist, both *The Foreigner's Guide* and *The Ambulator* devoting several pages to a description, tracing its history from the days of Cardinal Wolsey. Its attraction, at least before the death of Queen Caroline and the subsequent scaling-down of the court of George II, lay also in that its scale allowed it to play host to entertainments of a sort that the eighteenth-century British court rarely staged. This was most apparent between 1718 and 1721, after George I had expelled his son and his daughter-in-law from the royal palaces. A battle of courts ensued between that of the Prince and Princess at Lancaster House and at Richmond, and the King at St James's, Kensington and Hampton Court. It was during this

¹²*ibid*, 1st ed, p 170

¹³George Bickham, *Deliciae Britannicae*, 2nd ed, (London, 1755) p 55

period, as mentioned in the previous chapter, that George I built the much-mooted theatre there; a range of other entertainments were also mounted, for which Hampton Court seems to have been well-suited, such as balls, concerts and assemblies. After his father's death George II lived at Hampton Court, but his periods of residence there became less frequent after the death of Queen Caroline.

Hampton Court was neglected by the royal family in the reign of George III. It ceased to be a functioning royal residence and was turned over to grace and favour apartments for members of the household and pensioners of the Crown. George III's dislike of the house extended to a wish that a fire there in 1770 had not been contained and that the whole palace should have burned down, reportedly to the horror of his aunt Princess Amelia.¹⁴ Despite this Hampton Court remained a symbol of the Olympian status of the British monarchy even when it was clear that a direct connection had passed into history, George III seeking a country residence elsewhere. "If e'er a Briton what is wealth don't know, let him repair to Hampton Court, and then view all the palaces of the earth, when he will say, Those are the residences of Kings, but this of the Gods."¹⁵

In addition to the above, there were a number of other locations which had the status of royal palaces but were progressively losing their functions as royal residences. These included Greenwich Palace and Somerset House, ruins and shells such as Richmond Palace and Winchester Palace, and to some extent Windsor Castle as well. Windsor, Greenwich and

¹⁴Coke, *Journals* iii, pp 242-4

¹⁵Bew, *Ambulator*, p 77 (quoting Grotius)

Somerset House could almost be grouped together as they all retained a role in royal public life after the monarch had ceased to treat them as houses or even, in the case of Greenwich, after it had been handed over to other purposes. This was not a new phenomenon, of course, as the Palace of Westminster bears witness. Windsor, before the second decade of George III's reign, was really only used for Garter installations and as a sight to take foreign dignitaries to, seemingly with relatively little involvement by their royal hosts: "The Duke of Lorraine, the Prince of Wales, and the Duke of Grafton went afterwards to Windsor, and saw the Castle, &c. and their Majesties, with the Duke and the Princesses, returned to Hampton Court to Dinner."¹⁶ Greenwich too had a long royal connection, although not as long as that with Windsor. Charles II had begun to build a new palace there, but had only initiated one block by the time of his death. Although a scheme to hand the project over "for the service of impotent sea Commanders and others" had been proposed by James II, the foundation of Greenwich Hospital with its board of trustees was the work of William III. William retained the older Queen's House for potential use, but this was handed over to the trustees of the Hospital in 1710. However, the position of Greenwich on the Thames, between the Thames Estuary and the City, made it once more a centre of royal ritual in 1714, when George I was received there from the continent, and a complex of temporary buildings was set up to accommodate the king and his household before he made his formal entry into London. The Queen's House was put to similar use in 1736, by which time it had returned to the Crown as the trustees could not maintain it. The house, adjacent to Greenwich Park, was an ideal place for the public reception of Augusta of Saxe-Gotha as bride to Frederick, Prince of Wales. In addition to the theatrical dining in public mentioned above, the water-borne location of the palace allowed Frederick to

¹⁶*Evening Post* 3475, 26 October 1731

treat spectators to the vision of himself and the princess travelling along the Thames by barge, to the Tower of London and back, accompanied by musicians.¹⁷ This appears to have been the last royal spectacle staged at Greenwich, after which the palace site settled into its role as the location of maritime institutions.

A word should also be said about Somerset House. It appears to have been in disrepair even at the beginning of the period, and must have been used for receptions of visitors such as the Prince of Orange in 1733, Prince Frederick of Hesse in 1746, and Prince Charles of Brunswick in 1764 largely out of desperation. The British monarchy lacked a multi-apartmented Versailles in which to accommodate such guests, and when the court was at St James's, Somerset House was really the most convenient option available, as being the closest and unlike Kensington, considered as part of the 'town'. Despite the opportunities it offered, its decay was not arrested. *The Ambulator* informed its readership that "The garden is totally ruined, and the apartments are become suitable to their new guests". The hangers-on of successive ministries had by the 1770s been joined by soldiers, and so the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century palace was effectively transformed into a barracks.¹⁸ Its official role as the Queen Consort's dower house having been transferred to Buckingham House in 1762, there was nothing to stop it being removed soon after the *Ambulator* wrote, to be replaced by the new Somerset House whose function was administrative.

¹⁷*GM* vi, 1736, p 230

¹⁸Bew, *Ambulator*, p xviii

Home, Court and Locality

From the above, one might almost think that the story of at least the older royal palaces under the Hanoverians was one of a progressive withdrawal by the dynasty from properties inhabited in the previous century. This was not the case, even early in the period, as can be demonstrated by Richmond. Although the Richmond Palace of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had finally fallen out of use after the flight of James II, the seat of royal activity in Richmond moved to the Old Lodge, enlarged under William III, partnered from the reign of George II (not always amicably) by the 'White House' built at Kew for Frederick, Prince of Wales.¹⁹ The old palace, and aspirations to the appropriate grandeur, were again replaced by the dignified but unostentatious style of a nobleman's suburban-country house. Richmond Lodge came to the Hanoverians early in the reign of George I when it was acquired by George, Prince of Wales from the Commissioners of Forfeited Estates following the attainder of the Duke of Ormonde. The prince was moving into an area which was described in 1729 as a "Neighbourhood of so many Gentlemen who live constantly here".²⁰ Richmond had become fashionable as a spa since the discovery of a chalybeate spring there in 1689. The assembly rooms at 'Richmond Wells' had sprung up by 1696, and balls are recorded as taking place there in the 1720s.²¹ Richmond and the Prince of Wales must have found their relationship mutually beneficial.

¹⁹*HKW* v, pp 217, 227

²⁰*The Foreigner's Guide*, 1st ed, p 164

²¹John Evans, *Richmond and its Vicinity*, 2nd ed., (Richmond, 1825) pp 108-9; Richard Crisp, *Richmond and its Inhabitants from the Olden Time* (London, 1866) pp 358-361

After his accession, George II intended to continue his acquaintance with the village which had proved a suitable centre for his summer activities during his father's reign. He appears to have considered plans for a larger palace on or near the site of the Old Lodge, but these were set aside. In any case, royal attentions to Richmond were already the subject of comment without the introduction of a new palace. Queen Caroline's ornamental gardens in Richmond Park, with its hermitage, dairy, temple and Merlin's Cave, became an attraction with their own literature.²² These seem to have been very much Caroline's project, like so many of the ornamentations to the royal physical landscape under George II. Caroline stated that her aim was to "help nature"; by these words Caroline was most likely asserting that her gardens helped reveal the rational, ordered universe rather than opposing the shaping of nature into the geometric patterns fashionable in gardening in the early part of the century.²³ Three decades or so after her death, however, opinions about the expression of the natural world in the planned garden had changed, and Caroline's efforts were set aside by George III in favour of Brown's landscaping, "their stiff grandeur and formality annihilated, and the beauties, for which they were once so celebrated, are lost in the refinements of modern taste."²⁴ The role of the former Richmond Gardens under George III was not to perpetuate the echoes of the age of Caroline and Walpole into the 1760s and beyond, but instead to offer a 'natural' background to the more recent ornamental gardens set up by Sir William Chambers under his mother's patronage at neighbouring Kew.

²²See, for example, E. Curll, *The Rarities of Richmond* (London, 1736)

²³*HKW v*, quoting from HMC *Egmont Diary*, iii, p 138; for discussion of early eighteenth-century attitudes to the natural order and the garden, see Tom Williamson, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in Eighteenth Century England* (Stroud, 1995) in particular pp 48-9

²⁴Bew, *Ambulator*, p 182

Kew itself was perhaps the most enduring addition made by the eighteenth century royal family to the national landscape. Frederick, Prince of Wales had found gardens there when he acquired the property, and continued to attend to them, apparently incorporating the maintenance of the gardens into the routine of his entourage.²⁵ However, the development of the gardens as a place of botanical interest seems to have been the work of his widow Augusta, influenced by her son's botanist tutor Bute. The gardens caught attention not only by the growing variety of flora planted there, but also through the constructions erected by Sir William Chambers. The publications that emerged celebrating Kew Gardens included reportedly 'best-selling' catalogues of plants there, such as those by Hill and by Aston.²⁶ They also included a book consisting of plans of the gardens and the buildings in it, subsidised by George III, and with a preface by Chambers which became the basis for subsequent guides to Kew.²⁷ The coverage that Kew Gardens received helped it retain public attention even though

²⁵E. Beresford Chancellor, *The History and Antiquities of Richmond, Kew, Petersham, Ham, &c.* (Richmond, 1894) quotes Dodington as writing that he, the Prince, and others "worked in the new walk at Kew". Chancellor comments "This appears to have been the way of the Royal Family, to labour in the garden themselves, and press all their friends into the work as well." Dodington's modern editors sketched Frederick's conduct at Kew thus: "where each of his children had a plot assigned to cultivate, he had the unpleasant habit of setting his courtiers to work on the landscape". *The Political Journal of George Bubb Dodington*, ed. John Carswell and Lewis Arnold Dralle (Oxford, 1965) p xix; for Chancellor's quotation, see p 59 (entry for Tuesday 27 February 1750)

²⁶Published in 1768 (second edition 1769) and 1789 (sold out by 1791), according to Sir W.J. Hooker, *Kew Gardens: or, A Popular Guide to the Royal Botanic Gardens of Kew* (London, 1855) p 8

²⁷William Chambers, 'A Description of the Palace and Gardens at Kew, The Seat of the Princess Dowager of Wales', reprinted in *Royal Magazine*, September 1763; *A Description of the Gardens and Buildings at Kew, in Surrey; with the Engravings belonging thereto in Perspective* (Brentford, ?1770)

they remained a private botanical garden with limited access.²⁸ The gardens continued to retain the attention of George III even after the royal family reduced the time they spent at Kew Palace and gradually moved to Windsor.²⁹

The royal return to Windsor in the reign of George III could be compared to the activities of George II and Caroline at Richmond. Both were old royal properties from which the court had become disconnected, and were given new life by the agendas of the monarchs who 'rediscovered' them. Windsor was used for Garter ceremonies throughout the reigns of George I and George II, whether or not the monarch and the new knights appeared in person or by proxy. It appears that by the end of George II's reign this infrequent attendance had failed to stop the state apartments from becoming uninhabitable as far as lengthy residences were concerned. Although George II's second son, William, Duke of Cumberland, resided at Cumberland Lodge in the Great Park of which he was ranger, the structure to which the park was attached seems to have held little interest for him. Windsor Castle itself was put to all sorts of uses during this period. During the War of the Austrian Succession it was the prison of Marshal Belleisle. According to one source the 'Tomb-House' was by the end of the reign of George II about to be converted for another use: "In a short Time however, as we are credibly informed, it will be converted into a free-school; and is now repairing for that Purpose".³⁰ This

²⁸Before the gardens were handed over by Victoria to the public in 1840 the 'Pleasure-Ground or Arboretum' was open twice a week during summer. During the reign of George III Kew was at first open on a Thursday, and after 1787 on a Monday, from June to September. Ray Desmond, *Kew: the History of the Royal Botanic Gardens* (London and Kew, 1995)

²⁹For George III's role as promoter of science see chapter five below

³⁰Bickham, *Deliciae Britanniae*, 2nd ed, p 142

conversion, of a part of the castle which had once been used by that palace-builder, Cardinal Wolsey, does not seem to have been carried out, preventing Windsor from moving closer to the institutional fate of Greenwich or Somerset House.

A further comparison between Windsor and Richmond, which is at least valid for the earlier part of George III's reign, is that George III and Queen Charlotte did not at first seek to move into the Castle itself. George II and Caroline had not sought to recolonise the old site of Richmond Palace, and had left the remains to be converted into riverside houses for members of the nobility. George III, at first, left the Castle alone, living in the Queen's Lodge rather than in the Castle itself, and expanding by acquiring Lower Lodge, further from the Castle, from the Duke of St Albans for his younger children. One might see the Hanoverians living in the shadow of former grandeur rather than seeking to adopt that grandeur and expand upon it. One could also apply this reasoning to Buckingham House, lived in by George III and Charlotte as a detached private annexe to the old formalities of the Court of St James's. Records indicate that George III had shown an interest in reviving Charles II's project of Winchester Palace, which had been for the last remaining practical purposes been terminated by George I, as well as considering a new palace at Richmond.³¹ The advantage that Windsor probably had for George III was that he could associate the eighteenth-century throne with a residence that was recognised as meeting the expectations of a palace as demanded by the critics of eighteenth-century royal residences, without compromising his desire for prudent managing of the royal finances by the mounting of expensive building projects.

³¹*HKW v*, pp 224-7

The absence of palatial splendour, of course, did not prevent each residence from having its own associations, which bore on how royalty wished to be seen by their subjects. Richmond was a 'country' residence, perhaps ironically recommended for that purpose by its closeness to London. As already mentioned, Richmond was already popular with the wealthy seeking rural retreat without the disadvantage of isolating themselves from London society. George II and Caroline, before and after they ascended the throne, were not only identifying themselves with the prosperous community there, but also building up something of a court culture. The decision not to proceed with a vastly expanded palace, whether in the Old or New Parks, can perhaps be held to illustrate how this court played on the social and political status of the second generation of royal Hanoverians, without magnifying them unduly by the erection of some little Versailles. The princely and later royal image appears to have been disseminated more subtly throughout the district, through such innovations as William Penkethman's theatre on Richmond Hill. This was opened in 1718 with a display of animated images of members of the royal family, accompanied by music. It was probably not dissimilar in some respects to other shows in London (and perhaps elsewhere) that could have been seen by many sectors of the population. However, this one was set apart by its (inevitable for the time) concentration on the children of George II, Penkethman's theatrical pedigree, and its seizure of the moment, opening as George and Caroline began to develop Richmond as a rival to Hampton Court.³² The shows mounted by Penkethman almost set a precedent for the allegorical figures that would be placed in Richmond Park by Caroline, but their purpose was substantially different. Penkethman was both winning the favour of the Prince and Princess of Wales, but also portraying them as a focus of loyalty for the well-to-do inhabitants of

³²Avery, *London Stage Part Two*, i, p xxxi; Richard Altick, *The Shows of London*, pp 58-9

Richmond; Caroline's figures repaid the compliment, featuring rationalist philosophers alongside members of her household who may well have been familiar to visitors from the locality.

Although Windsor had many advantages from the image-maker's point of view for George III and Queen Charlotte, their residence there revealed that priorities had changed in two generations. As has already been described, following the Garter installation of 1762 the king and queen stayed in Windsor after the bulk of the court had left. Increasingly, royal travel in the reign of George III appears to have involved fewer attendants as the king, queen and their family took what were officially private visits rather than royal progresses. Windsor had probably fallen out of use because it was too far to travel from London to Windsor and back again in a day and spend meaningful time there. George I and George II had needed to be within reach of the centre of government activity, and that government was too vast, and the king's practical constitutional position too weak, to move wherever the king went. The fact that George III began to look seriously at establishing himself and his family at Windsor in the 1770s may indicate his confidence in his own position by this time, relative to any fear of opposition power he may have had in the 1760s, and in his support for the ministry under North. George III, in his search for a retreat that wasn't associated with the character of his grandfather, may have felt in such circumstances that he could loosen further the ties that bound him to the seat of government, even if only for short periods of time.

In choosing Windsor as a place of temporary retirement from the cares of state, George III was following the recent precedent of the Duke of Cumberland. As previously mentioned, the duke had not actually lived at the castle, but at Cumberland Lodge and at the

Belvedere, where his existence could be idealised by his admirers. One writer depicted Cumberland as an eighteenth-century Scipio Africanus, having retired at "the height of his power" to "his delightful villa near Windsor, where he displayed the generosity of a patriot prince, by employing the industrious poor in works of public utility."³³ At Windsor both Cumberland and George III could act as landlords of a great estate, laying out parkland and undertaking 'improvements'. They could also demonstrate royal duty to the nation on a smaller scale. This sensibility was not shared by all members of the family; when William, Duke of Cumberland, died the Rangership of the Great Park was granted by George III to his brother Henry, also created Duke of Cumberland in 1766. The Park apparently fell into neglect under his rangership, and required substantial restoration when it reverted to the crown in 1795.³⁴

Windsor was also close to the country retreat of George III's father Frederick, Cliveden, rented by the Prince of Wales from his ally the Earl of Inchiquin, who had inherited the property through his wife the Countess of Orkney. Frederick seems to have done little to Cliveden during his period of residence there. This was probably because the first Earl of Orkney, his daughter and son-in-law had "lavished large sums of money on the grounds in the 1720s and '30s and were thus, one presumes, reluctant to indulge in substantial alterations just as the planting was coming to maturity."³⁵ An additional reason, one might speculate, was that Frederick intended to end his arrangement with the Inchiquins as soon as his father died and

³³Dr Campbell, *Historical Memoirs of his Late Royal Highness William-Augustus, Duke of Cumberland* (London, 1767), p 474

³⁴James Hakewill, *The History of Windsor and its Neighbourhood* (London, 1813) p 75

³⁵Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, p 71

then establish his 'Gothic' base at Windsor; the dedication of *The History and Antiquities of Windsor Castle* to the Prince by Joseph Pote in 1749 would seem to support this interpretation.³⁶ However, the role of Cliveden in Frederick's lifetime, apart perhaps from the performance of *Alfred* there in 1739, seems largely to have been as an escape from the formalities that surrounded business and the prince's political agenda, without altogether escaping nor explicitly embracing the imagery that surrounded his cause.

Richmond was also a retreat for George II and Queen Caroline, but - at least at first glance - it has left the impression that it was much more of an ornamental rustic tableau than an attempt to depict the royal couple in some sort of 'retirement'. Caroline, in escaping from the city into her gardens, was seen to be lending royal endorsement to the fashionable 'hermitages' placed in their grounds by those of wealth or public position, such as Pope. At Richmond, Caroline was calling to public attention that here was her escape from the world of practical statecraft with which she was so identified; but the iconography that she deployed fixed her firmly to the Whig dominance and the revolution settlement. Her use of personalities from her household to form the models for the mythological and historical figures of Merlin's Cave, completed in 1735, was not only a conceit to display her patronage, but also a statement, allowing Caroline to supersede the personalities in the Tudor and British lineage that she claimed. The Revolution monarchy that George II and his wife represented was implicitly portrayed as fulfilling the prophecies that were still a feature of popular literature in the eighteenth century, Merlin, Elizabeth of York and the other figures in the tableau being

³⁶Joseph Pote, *The History and Antiquities of Windsor Castle, and the Royal College, and Chapel of St George: with the Institution, Laws, and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter* (Eton, 1749)

given the historical function of serving the future interests of Hanoverian Britain. The literature that followed the opening of the 'Cave' made this message explicit. Aside from the satirical references to Walpole as Merlin returned in the *Craftsman*, Edmund Curll's *The Rarities of Richmond* acted both as guidebook to Caroline's gardens and also as an exposition of the Cave. The history of Merlin himself was accompanied by dedications to the 'originals' of the figures in the grotto and by a collection of prophecies ascribed to Merlin which showed the seer as having foretold the necessary details of British history that underpinned the Protestant succession, from the reign of Vortigern to the accession of James I. These were probably drawn from a variety of sources but were dignified with the scholarly reputation of Geoffrey of Monmouth, whom a majority of educated opinion at the time seems to have at least given the benefit of the doubt, for the want of any other sources.³⁷

Caroline had been hailed in 1727 as the princess who had rejected the hand of the Catholic Emperor Charles VI to wed the Protestant Electoral Prince of Hanover, so proving her loyalty to the Protestant cause over the Imperial diadem. Curll's book also praised her in a dedicatory verse as the most learned princess since Elizabeth, and she was also portrayed as sharing the same virtues as the figures whose bustoes appeared in the Hermitage.³⁸ Caroline's historical significance as the first unquestionably Protestant Queen Consort since the reign of Henry VIII allowed her to be portrayed as the incarnation of a Protestant Britannia in a similar

³⁷*Gentleman's Magazine*, v, pp 532-533 quoting *Craftsman* 481, 13 September 1735; p 660, quoting *Craftsman* 489, 15 November 1735; Curll, *Rarities*, fifth part. Mentions in the text are also made of Nixon, the 'Cheshire prophet', and Duncan Campbell, the 'North-British conjurer', representatives of both superstition and of regions remote from the court.

³⁸Curll, *ibid.*, pp 14-18

way to that in which the queen regnant Anne had been; some of the prints that depicted Caroline during her life and at her death used imagery that may have been intended to invoke Anne's memory, and beyond her that of Elizabeth.³⁹ Richmond Gardens need to be seen in this context, as to some extent to Caroline's changes at Kensington, which could have been presented as the culmination of Anne's project to transform the grounds around the palace. The changes that George II made at Hampton Court appear to have been complementary to developments at Richmond before his wife's death, for he re-faced the extensions made to the palace by William III and his successors to give them a sixteenth-century appearance.⁴⁰ The gardens at Richmond, then, represented not just royalty participating in the affected desire for a retreat from the complications of the city, but also their enduring commitment to the ideal of a Great Britain that was both rooted in a particular interpretation of English history and secure at the head of a triumphant Protestant Europe. The interpretation of Merlin's Cave as a peace offering to Frederick would reinforce this stance, fixing in effigy the succession of the Hanoverian line for another generation.⁴¹ The Protestant succession was depicted by Caroline and her designers - chiefly William Kent and Charles Bridgeman - as the fulfilment of ancient prophetic insight, and the product of a rational natural order as illuminated by the gardens of the royal palaces.

³⁹BM Prints and Drawings 2331, 'The Glory of Old England', depicting Caroline as the statue of Queen Anne at Blenheim Palace, is one example.

⁴⁰*HKW* v, pp 180-1

⁴¹Judith Colton, 'Merlin's Cave and Queen Caroline: Garden Art as Political Propaganda' in *Eighteenth Century Studies* x, 1976. The model for Merlin was one of Frederick's household; Merlin is thus counsellor to the Prince and is foretelling the marriage to Augusta of Saxe-Gotha that George II was negotiating in Germany while Caroline constructed the grotto in England.

Windsor was for George III a more genuine escape from the pressures of the court than Richmond or Hampton Court had been for George II and Caroline. George III had bought Buckingham House to be his London residence, a move which has been seen as the culmination of a lengthy process of withdrawal.⁴² However, even George III could not divorce the function of his place of residence from his public office. There are some indications that George III prevaricated between projects for grand and modest residences, inheriting as he did his father's quasi-Bolingbrokean notions of a visibly active kingship but also a commitment to economy. Lady Mary Coke's comments on plans she learned of for George III's house in Richmond Old Park - "Alas not a Palace" - are revealing, for the proposals she describes involve a building of some architectural presence. It would have been built on arches to give the occupants a prospect of the Thames, but would evidently not have been on the same scale as the proposed palace of George II.⁴³ George III's interest in Winchester Palace, the materials dedicated to which had been given away by George I, may have been inspired by its distance from London, as his interest in Windsor seems to have been, although it was probably that same distance that forced any plans for the revival of Winchester as a palace to remain in abeyance. Although George III was clearly protective of the royal claims on the shell of Charles II's Hampshire Versailles, whether he seriously intended to fulfil his Stuart predecessor's plans in full must be considered doubtful.⁴⁴

Nonetheless George III drew as much on precedent-evoking imagery in his move to

⁴²*HKW v*, pp 129-30

⁴³Coke, *Journals*, iii, pp 268-9; for various Richmond plans see *HKW v*, pp 220-1, 224-7

⁴⁴*HKW v*, pp 312-3

Windsor as Caroline had done at Richmond. This appears to have been drawn from a broader span of the past than Caroline had allowed herself, George III accommodating Stuart and Plantagenet references as well as Tudor and Hanoverian ones. George III was certainly not ashamed of his Hanoverian inheritance. Although his accession speech had famously used language redolent of the patriotism of Queen Anne, in his more mature years he considered retiring to Hanover, and would praise the example set by George I to his son, with reference to a mail coat seen by Prince Augustus in the electorate.⁴⁵ However, his determination to break with the habits of his grandfather's court did not waver. There was some continuity with his father, for although he had never lived at Windsor, Frederick had erected monuments to Edward III and the Black Prince in London. George III revived the cult of the Garter, Edward III's foundation, by remodelling St George's Chapel in a style intended to be as appropriate to the fifteenth century as the eighteenth. Henry Emlyn, Carpenter to the Board of Works in under George III, has been praised by one twentieth-century writer on Windsor for his "remarkable and almost mediaeval skill as a carpenter, allied with a felicity of invention which together made it difficult for Sir William St John Hope himself to distinguish fifteenth-century saints, prophets and carved poppy-heads from the new."⁴⁶ What was just as important as Emlyn's skill was the content of his work and that which he supervised, carving scenes from not only the lives of Edward III and St George into the chapel panelling, but also those of George III and Charlotte themselves.⁴⁷

⁴⁵A. Aspinall, ed., *The Later Correspondence of King George III*, i (Cambridge, 1962) p 240 (no. 316, the King to Prince Augustus, 21 July 1786)

⁴⁶Shelagh M. Bond, 'Henry Emlyn of Windsor: A Craftsman of Skill and Invention', *Report of the Society of the Friends of St George's*, iv:3, 1962, p 101

⁴⁷Bond, *ibid.*; Jane Roberts, 'Henry Emlyn's Restoration of St George's Chapel', *Report of the Society of the Friends of St George's*, v:8, 1977, p 333

This symbolic content in George III's activity was not wholly continuous from that of his father. Frederick's mediaevalism in practice had a much more party political content. One painting, 'The Knights of the Round Table, The Prince of Wales presiding', shows him chairing the 'Harry the Fifth Club, or the Gang' which seems to have included many men of Tory leanings such as Sir Hugh Smithson and Lord Inchiquin, Frederick's landlord at Cliveden.⁴⁸ George III was, of course, a reigning monarch and his priorities were different from those of his father, who had sought to carve an independent role in public life for himself in the face of the hostility of his parents. George III, in contrast, was safely on the throne and had a broader sense of his responsibilities. These involved royalty setting a moral example to all levels of society. The message conveyed by the reconstruction of St George's Chapel was not only that George III was interested in restoring Windsor to the place it had held in the mythologised fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but also that George saw himself as the leader of the community rather than a power outside it. Charles II had built a pew for the monarch and his immediate entourage to sit in that overlooked the rest of the congregation, the king's person almost becoming an object of worship. George III and Queen Charlotte, in marked contrast, took their seats without wearing any robes at the front of the congregation; a comparison with a country squire and his wife leading the worshippers in a village church may well have pleased them.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the formal opening of the chapel on 1 January 1787 was a very public event. Fanny Burney has been quoted as having great difficulty in entering the chapel, and the service involved King George III making an offering of gold and silver "according to the order

⁴⁸Edwards, *Frederick Louis*, plate i, opp p 24

⁴⁹Olwen Hedley, 'Court and Chapel, 1760 to 1873: Part I' in *Report of the Society of the Friends of St George's*, iv:1, 1960, p 22

of the original institution".⁵⁰ With much of the work in St George's Chapel taking place in the 1770s and 1780s, George III had already by 1789 gone a long way towards incorporating, in wood and stone, the Protestant succession and English monarchy's mediaeval past in a way that had been far less credible when either George I or George II had come to the throne.

When at Windsor George III used the Queen's Lodge as a private dwelling, although he and his family made appearances on the Castle terrace from an early stage. The progressive alterations at Windsor, extending under George III into the nineteenth century, nonetheless were designed to establish the Castle as a palace that encapsulated the values of the British monarchy as George III saw them: leading the nation in prayer through the family chapel, showing respect for the monarchs of past ages, and acting as the centre of a royal estate where George III could paternally supervise the welfare of his tenants and experiment with new farming techniques.⁵¹ Buckingham House, acquired by the Crown in 1762, did not seek to be so palatial. Its relationship with the formal court at St James's was never well-defined, but it reflected George III's desire to be able to distance his family life from the business of government. There were some court events at Buckingham House, such as the 'surprise' birthday event for George III in 1763. However, George III seems at times to have regarded such events as causing too many complications, which affected functions at St James's. A ruling of George III in 1769, following a dispute over the precedence of diplomatic representatives at a court ball, declared that balls at St James's were henceforth "private" and

⁵⁰R.R Tighe and J.E. Davis, *Annals of Windsor* (London, 1858) p 341

⁵¹H.B. Carter, *His Majesty's Spanish Flock*, (Sydney, 1964)

that there was to be no precedence there.⁵²

Comments by travellers and authors of guidebooks suggest that access to the majority of residences was reasonably open; far less detail is given in such books about "the Queen's House". From early in the reign of George III Charlotte was established as a more private person than Queen Caroline had been, closer perhaps to the retiring persona of Augusta, Princess of Wales in her widowhood than to the politically and culturally active Queen Caroline, and the character of Buckingham House reflected this. Built as the residence of a duke, George III did not see fit to make any major extensions for the purpose of court entertainments and ceremonial. Instead, most of the alterations instigated by George III appear to have been to accommodate his expanding library, the two new wings the king added including several rooms devoted to this purpose.⁵³ Although George III did have Buckingham House adopted as the official residence of the queen, he did not ask parliament to make the necessary settlement until 1775, thirteen years after the king and queen had first started to live in the building. Indeed, for those thirteen years the queen's dower house was still officially the crumbling Somerset House. It may only have been the pressure on the administration to find suitable accommodation for its officials that persuaded George III to dedicate Somerset House to the government, and bring Buckingham House formally into the list of royal palaces.⁵⁴

⁵²*HWC* xxiii, pp 126-7 (to Sir Horace Mann, 14 June 1769): "This declaration is ridiculed, because the ball at Court is almost the only ceremony observed there, and certainly the most formal, the Princes of the Blood dancing first, and everybody else being taken out according to their rank - yet the King, being the fountain of all rank, may certainly declare what he pleases, especially in his own palace."

⁵³*HKW* v, p 136

⁵⁴*GM* xlv, 1775, pp 203-5

Image, Ideology, and Intellectual Life

It is impossible to isolate George III's pursuit of a gentlemanly interest in learning from attention to his public image. Early in his reign it appears to have been made known that the King was actively interested in the arts both within court circles and without, and his cultural patronage was made evident not only in his purchases but also in his remodelling of Windsor.⁵⁵ The growth of the royal library (anew, the library of George II having been granted to the British Museum) complemented these displays of initiative. However, the libraries built by George III drew attention as libraries, unlike the hermitages and belvederes of Caroline, which showcased the Queen's literary and political tastes by associating them with fashionable images of past and present. It would probably be a valid comment that in his addition of a 'Marine Gallery' to Buckingham House in 1774 George III was following public taste just as much as Caroline had been, if not more so. The king could be viewed as belatedly taking active measures to identify himself with British naval glory over a decade after Hayman's paintings at Vauxhall, commemorating the Seven Years' War, had depicted him among the victorious naval commanders of that conflict.⁵⁶ However, unlike the public displays of the paintings at Vauxhall and the ornamental work favoured by Caroline, George III's temple to British maritime skill and power remained closed to the view of all but selected outsiders, a reflection of the king's private interest in his country. If it was meant as an inspiration to anyone but the king, it was

⁵⁵*HWC* xxi, p 449 (to Mann, 1 November 1760)

⁵⁶See Brian Allen, 'Rule Britannia: History Painting in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *History Today* xlv:6, June 1995; the frames used by Hayman were originally to have been used for portraits of the royal family, a project halted by the death of Frederick in 1751. See *A Description of Vaux-hall Gardens. Being A proper companion and guide for all who visit that place*, (London, 1762) p 24

for his family, his household and his ministers.

To return to the demolition of Old Somerset House, its replacement by an imposing building designed specifically to hold government offices is a reminder of the processes that inhibited the building of great new royal palaces. To the chagrin of those with grandiose plans, the governments of the eighteenth century were concerned with financial prudence as never before. The guidebooks blamed the prolonged warfare that imposed financial stringency for the absence of grandeur in the royal residences. "The Palace of White-hall being burnt in 1698, and the continual burthensome War the Nation has been so many Years since engaged in, put aside the Thoughts of rebuilding that or any other" were the sentiments of the author of *The Foreigner's Guide* in 1729, and these opinions were reprinted through the decades into the reign of George III, while material adjacent to them was removed or otherwise edited.⁵⁷ The first edition of *The Ambulator* in 1774 expanded upon the criticisms of *The Foreigner's Guide*, denouncing the "nation" for having "squandered away millions in unnecessary expences to little insignificant German Princes, merely to prevent their ragged soldiers from giving any disturbance to Hanover, when a few of our own regiments would have sent them into eternity."⁵⁸ This kind of anti-Hanoverian comment was nothing new, and was commonplace in periodicals for much of the eighteenth century. George I and George II had been as associated with Hanoverian subsidies as they were enthusiasts for fiscal prudence. It is not a groundbreaking statement to admit that the public profile of the monarchy and royal family seems to have reaped few advantages from their stances. George I and George II rarely lived

⁵⁷*The Foreigner's Guide*, 1st ed, p 20; 2nd ed, p 20; 4th ed, p 22

⁵⁸Bew, *Ambulator*, 1774 ed, p xxii

away from the heart of administration, particularly not during the height of what was the governmental as well as the social season. Although bold strokes such as embarking on foreign wars did win the image of George II and his martial second son lustre, the advantage wasn't carried through in terms of physical evidences of triumph, for triumph as such had conspicuously not been won. Possibly neither the monarch nor his ministers could allow themselves self-congratulation in brick and stone until the threat to British interests from foreign powers had been seemingly vanquished.

After 1763, and the most conclusive victory of all the wars Great Britain fought after the accession of William III, it is not surprising that attitudes appear to have changed towards new public building. Although Somerset House was something of a test case, its detail celebrated the glories of eighteenth-century Britain in a way that the large royal palaces mooted but never built by the Hanoverians might have done. It has been suggested that the model for Somerset House was the Hôtel des Monnaies in Paris.⁵⁹ As such taking inspiration from a building in the capital of Great Britain's chief rival, which it had humbled in the Seven Years' War, represented an assertion of Britain's primacy, won through the wars of which those who demanded higher architectural standards in London had long complained. *The Ambulator*, which in 1774 had attacked the standards of royal and public buildings, appeared more than satisfied by the new Somerset House, lovingly cataloguing the adornments to each architectural progression, including reliefs of Ocean and "eight great rivers of England, Thames, Humber, Mersey, Dee, Medway, Tweed, Tine, and Severn"; portraits of George III, Queen Charlotte, and George Prince of Wales; and the "Arms of the British Empire" with the

⁵⁹*HKW* v, p 369

Genii of Fame and England as supporters.⁶⁰ Somerset House was effectively the first major edifice, with the exception of the New Horse Guards, built by and for the state since the late seventeenth century, and very probably the first in the century to be so conscious of the need for display. As such, it was the first that could be included in guides to London and its surrounding area, rivalling previous royal and governmental endeavours, from St James's Park to Charles II's Tilbury Fort.

The reconstruction of parts of Windsor Castle under George III, and the contemporaneous building of Somerset House, could together be seen as helping reinforce the monarch as the public focus of the state. George III's 'rediscovery' of Windsor fulfilled the expectations of the descriptions of the Castle published by Joseph Pote and his imitators from 1749 onwards; the first and most lavish incarnation of the book had been dedicated to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and was adorned with his portrait.⁶¹ The subsequent less lavish and abridged versions were dedicated to William, Duke of Cumberland, but Cumberland represented a different strand of the Hanoverians' image. As George III had begun to take up residence in Windsor around the same time as he began to pursue an more active existence, visiting more places further afield from London than he had in the first decade of his reign, Pote's dedication to Frederick may simply have been an attempt to exploit that prince's attempts to ensure a higher public profile for himself, such as in his progress of 1750. Nevertheless, both the works of Pote and his followers, and of George Bickham, recognised what may have been an emerging tourism that was particularly concentrated on historic

⁶⁰Bew, *Ambulator*, 1787 ed, pp xxi-xxiv

⁶¹Pote, *History and Antiquities of Windsor Castle*

buildings, and those with royal connections in particular. In the first part of George III's reign, travellers and guides seem to have concurred that the most impressive building in London was the British Museum, Montague House, a private town mansion appropriated in 1753 for public purposes. "But of all the public structures that engage the attention of the curious, the British Museum is the greatest"; "it appears to be rather a royal palace, than the house of a private nobleman".⁶² From the 1780s onwards, though Montague House was not overshadowed, there were at least rivals with new interest for the potential visitor, that could be represented as symbols of national pride and that were directly associated with the current reign.

The rediscovery of royalty's 'historic past' in terms of its visitable physical relics appears to have been one aspect of a broader development of a historical consciousness in the eighteenth century, that also affected other institutions. When Caroline had built her Hermitage and Merlin's Cave, she may have been drawing on the same sentiment that singled out Isaac Newton among the dead departed buried in Westminster Abbey.⁶³ These grottoes emphasised the scientific rather than the historic or the literary; as previously mentioned, Merlin appeared as the representative of a bygone age of prophecy, superseded by the age of reason in which George II reigned, his consort at his side. However, from the middle of the century onwards a broader sense of cultural appreciation was popularised. One aspect of this was the rise of the

⁶²*The Ambulator*, 1774 ed, p xix; Peter-John Grosley, trans. Thomas Nugent, *A Tour to London, or, New Observations on England, and its Inhabitants*. (London, 1772) i, p 41

⁶³*The Foreigner's Guide*, 1st ed, refers to Newton as a "great Man" (Fr., *l'Illustre*), p 32; by 1752 he has become the "Glory of the British (*Angloise*) Nation", 2nd ed, p 30.

cult of Shakespeare, supported by Garrick and others; the 1763 edition of *The Foreigner's Guide* was the first to mention the existence of 'poet's corner' in the Abbey, singling out the monument to Shakespeare, with the effect that the Stratford playwright was, through prose and typesetting, allotted the place in the national pantheon which the publication had previously given to Newton, who retained his mention, but enjoyed less prominence.⁶⁴ Though George III was an enthusiast for scientific advances, he also actively promoted classical music and continued to attend the theatre, as referred to in chapter three.

The Abbey where he was crowned also seems to have paid attention to its own attractions. The 'ragged regiment' of royal funeral effigies kept by the Abbey from the fourteenth century onwards, with little regard for their preservation from the elements, continued to be added to as it had been in the days of the later Stuarts, but with perhaps more selectivity. The late seventeenth century had seen Charles II's effigy followed by those of assorted members of the nobility, usually those prominent at court such as the last Stuart Duke and Duchess of Richmond and the Villiers Duke and Duchess of Buckingham. The eighteenth century displayed more restraint and reflection. The funeral effigy of Queen Anne in 1714 was joined in 1725 by effigies of William III and Mary II, twenty-three and thirty-one years after their deaths respectively, and in 1760 by either a wholly new or dramatically reconstructed effigy of Elizabeth I, presumably a conscious attempt to restore one of the principal relics of the defender of Protestant England against her enemies, answering the call for propaganda made by the Seven Years' War.⁶⁵ In the work he oversaw at Windsor, George III was

⁶⁴*The Foreigner's Guide*, 4th ed, p 38

⁶⁵Altick, *The Shows of London*, p 93

participating in a movement to reclaim elements of England's past for the demands of the later eighteenth-century public. The sentiment had existed from earlier in the century than the reign of George III, if it can be connected to the Patriot appeals to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and to George II and Cumberland as martial heirs to the Plantagenets made during the War of the Austrian Succession, but others took the lead in taking advantage of it until George III and Queen Charlotte effectively made it their own.

Mention of Patriot sentiment leads one towards the most obvious and useful point of comparison for royal gardens and palaces, the garden and house at Stowe. These had been transformed during the eighteenth century by the Temple and Grenville families, political allies of successive generations of the royal house. The instigator of the gardens at Stowe, Richard Temple, had received the title Viscount Cobham from George I; he and his nephews, among the 'Boy Patriots' of the 1730s, broke from George II and Walpole during the Excise Crisis of 1733 and became allies of the Prince of Wales. Cobham's nephew George Grenville was Prime Minister to George III in the 1760s; Grenville was brother-in-law to Pitt the Elder and his son the third Earl Temple facilitated the formation of Pitt the Younger's ministry. At his accession to Stowe the second Earl Temple, nephew to Cobham, was pronounced by his cousin George Lyttleton "the richest man in England", and although this was certainly an exaggeration of his wealth it reflects the importance the family held in the eighteenth century political firmament.⁶⁶

The statement also illustrates the contrast between the capabilities of the public purse and the

⁶⁶L. Dickins and M. Stanton, eds. *An Eighteenth-Century Correspondence* (London, 1910) p 193, quoted in John Beckett, *The Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles* (Manchester, 1994). Beckett estimates the landed revenues of Temple in 1752 as being between £7 000 and £8 000, "no more than moderate for a peer" but Temple increased his income from his Buckinghamshire estates to £12 000 gross per annum by the 1770s. See Beckett, *ibid*, *inter alia* pp 28, 32, 53-59.

richest private ones during the period. The gardens at Stowe, begun when George I was on the throne, were still being altered, with the addition of new features and buildings, in the middle of the reign of George III. They celebrated British victories and imperial triumph in a manner that no directly comparable royal or public works did in the eighteenth century.

One feature of the Stowe gardens was that they celebrated key events and personalities in the history of Great Britain as perceived through the political agendas of Lord Cobham and his successors. The Temple of British Worthies as rendered by Gibbs in the 1720s combined busts of William III, Locke, Elizabeth I, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Hampden and Newton; alterations by Kent in the 1730s added Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange, Inigo Jones, Alfred the Great, the Black Prince, Raleigh, Drake and Sir John Barnard.⁶⁷ Anglo-Saxon, chivalric and Protestant princes, merchants, scientists, literary figures and parliamentarians were thus united as what in its 1730s guise was clearly a Patriot Whig pantheon, calculated for the admiration of the Prince of Wales at his visit in 1737. The Hermitage and Merlin's Cave were Queen Caroline's answer to the political lineage that Cobham claimed at Stowe; the Temple of Modern Virtue, built as a ruin with a decapitated figure recognisable to those with the required background knowledge as Walpole, rejected the pretensions of the court to be the sole and legitimate inheritors of the Whig tradition. Stowe was perhaps the most important laboratory for Patriot ideology in the 1730s: not only was Pope an annual visitor, and the Patriot poet (and author of a poem on Stowe) Gilbert West Cobham's nephew, but the gardens borrowed iconography previously employed by Tories - the first appearance of a garden monument dedicated to Alfred, for example, was Alfred's

⁶⁷Colton, p 19; *A Description of the Gardens of Lord Viscount Cobham, at Stow in Buckinghamshire*, 2nd ed, (Northampton, 1746) pp 18-22

Castle at Cirencester Park in 1721.⁶⁸ Cirencester was the home of Lord Bathurst who would be restored to favour in the later years of his life first by Frederick, and then more securely by George III. The Temple of Friendship was constructed following the Prince's visit in 1737 to show the alliance of Cobham and his connexion with the Prince of Wales. Additions to the gardens after the death of Cobham continued to be in the Patriot tradition in the broad sense, such as the Temple of Concord and Victory, marking British triumph in the Seven Years' War, and the monument to the explorer Captain Cook.⁶⁹

Mention has already been made of Caroline's use of Richmond as a retreat from London and the business of government. Stowe was a retreat for Cobham, but the most consequential work on the gardens was that made when he was in what amounted to self-imposed exile, following his break with Walpole during the Excise Crisis. From the 1730s, gardens "represented... a new attitude to the relationship between ideas and philosophies on the one hand, and landscape on the other."⁷⁰ In Cobham's case the reinvention of Stowe amounted to an assertion of political potency in opposition, contributing to the political debate through the garden and ornamental art of which he was patron. Ideological symbols were deployed with the intent of reworking the political landscape as Gibbs, Kent, Bridgeman and later Brown showed they could shape the physical. It would have been extremely difficult for George II to have pursued a similar path. Had he constricted a royal equivalent to Stowe he would have conferred legitimacy on the oblique and hypocritical political system he at times

⁶⁸Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, p 64

⁶⁹For a recent short history of Stowe, see Michael Bevington, *Stowe: The Garden and the Park*, 2nd ed (Stowe, 1995)

⁷⁰Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, p 65

expressed his dislike for. Furthermore, George II would have expressed in earth and stone royal political opinion in a manner that ran the risk of either setting down a rigid royal iconography that could have been interpreted as defining a narrow orthodoxy, or otherwise lowering the position of the monarch to the level of those who competed for his favour. The remark recorded by Hervey, that Caroline's efforts at Richmond were to her husband "childish silly stuff", was not necessarily that of an uncultured philistine, but an expression of the view that Caroline was taking her passion for iconography to lengths that embarrassed the royal dignity with unbusinesslike and self-regarding frivolity.⁷¹

Whatever the opinions of her husband on the matter Caroline considered that she had more freedom of expression as consort than he had as monarch. As queen, even when exercising the royal power on behalf of her absent husband, as in 1735 when Merlin's Cave was constructed, she was always at a remove from her husband's position with regard to affairs of state. Richmond's status as a summer palace, used when parliament was in recess, confirmed the essential recreational aspect of the royal gardens there. However, Caroline's work was as two-edged as Cobham's, for it also asserted her grasp of the political debate and drew attention to the dynasty's regard for the fundamentals of the English constitution as restored by William of Orange in 1688 and guaranteed by the Protestant succession. As consort, sharing the throne by marriage rather than by statute and hereditary right, she could pour flattery upon her husband and the claims of his dynasty in a way that George II himself could not. Without Caroline, the gardens could not be continued because no-one else in the royal family was

⁷¹John, Lord Hervey, *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick, (London, 1931): for George II's views on the English political system, see ii, p 456; for his views on his wife's work, ii, p 501

capable of adopting her agenda or her perspective.

Richmond and Kensington, as has been noted, were attempts by Caroline and George II to identify themselves with the fashionable public, the 'quality' and those who sought to emulate and join them. Their method was firstly to adopt locations already favoured by those whose allegiance they sought, and then to construct new attractions for them to enjoy there. The aristocracy at their stately homes arguably went further. Stowe was always intended as a public attraction. Cobham built the New Inn to accommodate tourists there as early as 1717. His nephew Earl Temple added a Corinthian entrance arch over the new Grand Avenue between Stowe and Buckingham, intended as the first attraction that new visitors would see as they approached the house.⁷² The mansion and park of the Hoares at Stourhead was also attracting large numbers of visitors by the third quarter of the century, "crowds of country people" as well as the fashionable from the town.⁷³ Merlin's Cave itself reached a wide audience, its cultural ripples including inns which perhaps were originally built around miniature replicas of the grotto.⁷⁴ All these works contrast with the work of George III at Windsor. Although his building work was indeed calculated to attract the attention of the public, the improvements of George III to Windsor, as indeed to Somerset House, lack the brashness of the works commissioned by Cobham or Caroline, and at Stowe continued by the

⁷²Bevington, p 49; see also *Stowe. A Description of the House and Gardens of the Most Noble and Puissant Prince, George Grenville Nugent Temple, Marquis of Buckingham* (Buckingham, 1797) p 9

⁷³Kenneth Woodbridge, *Landscape and Antiquity: Aspects of English Culture at Stourhead 1718 to 1838* (Oxford, 1970) p 67

⁷⁴For an account of one of these inns see Warwick Wroth, *The London Pleasure Gardens of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1896) pp 54-5

Earls Temple. Where the work at Richmond and Stowe differed from that of George III was that George III was able not just to point to the tradition from which Caroline and the Temples claimed legitimacy, but actively moved into what could credibly be identified as its heart. Richmond, Stowe, Stourhead and other country seats had to encourage the tourist to see them as attractions; Windsor was established before George III moved there. As the Marine Gallery at Buckingham House mentioned above encouraged ministers to remember the claims of scientific discovery and overseas trade in their deliberations, George III's embrace of Windsor called on his subjects to defend their country's institutions and integrity rather than follow the factional self-interest that could be seen both in the colonial conflict of the 1770s and in the rival gardening enterprises four decades earlier.

George I and George III faced dramatically different public expectations and were the centres of courts that behaved in manners three generations removed from one another. The principal concern of George I was to secure the place of Great Britain and its ruling family at the head of Protestant Europe, and when his son and daughter-in-law were attempting to show that they could more effectively secure that position than George I could. The creative efforts of George I and his kin towards their physical environments were largely directed towards stating their own ideological points of view to the governing classes in London. George III played to a somewhat broader domestic audience in an age when the only non-royal effigy mounted in Westminster Abbey was that of the Great Commoner and Patriot minister of the Seven Years' himself, William Pitt the Elder, and the literate, periodical and newspaper-reading class would have included a good number who knew and recognised the significance of that

fact.⁷⁵ Yet there were constants. As there were continual demands that the king should live in a larger palace suited to the monarch of a great nation, so attitudes continued to prevail that the King of Great Britain should not surround himself with the attitudes and accoutrements of foreign royal houses. A French traveller noted that "coachmen and carmen, never stop at his approach, and that they take a pride in not bowing to him. 'Why should we bow to George? say the insolent rabble: he should bow to us: he lives at our expence.'"⁷⁶ George III managed to answer these seemingly contradictory sentiments in a fashion suited to the time. At Buckingham House the king appeared as a domestic, earnest, moral man. His growing commitment to Windsor Castle laid emphasis on his position as the representative of the unchanging constitution at a time when the American War threatened it. It also returned the town associated with historic sovereigns such as William I, Edward III, Charles II and Anne to the sphere of the head of the dynasty, and so potentially prevented any mischief being made by George III's estranged brother Henry, Duke of Cumberland, should he have chosen to make more of his role as Ranger.

It is perhaps ironic that the models of non-autocratic kingship in Europe were called on to build palaces that may well have done their position harm. Anything resembling a *petit Versailles* would surely have proved a gift to successive opposition politicians. Royal rural retreats remained that, a position probably ensured by the death of Caroline in 1737, the one early Hanoverian who showed an active interest in beautifying the monarchical seats. In the latter part of the period, however, George III could prove the 'Patriot' credentials inherited

⁷⁵In 1775. See Altick, *Shows of London*, p 93

⁷⁶Grosley, *A Tour to London*, p 224

from his father by his adoption of Windsor as his country palace. The adoption of Montagu House as the British Museum could well be interpreted as the decisive moment when the state accepted what had been true for some time. In taking over a private house, the British Museum marked a change in emphasis in the state's relationship with the buildings it used and also with the image it projected to the subjects of the Crown. Not only would the house be open to the public, as many great houses such as Stowe were, but the British Museum became in effect a public monument to the acquisitive state, a state that desired expansion of knowledge and of its commercial empire. Furthermore, and on a different note, the state quietly accepted that the lead in using architectural grandeur to promote its importance and that of its leaders was no longer its - or the monarch's in an individual capacity - to lose.

The erection of statues of George I in the grounds of Canons, and of both George I and his son when Prince of Wales in the grounds of Stowe, could be viewed as the acknowledgement by the builders of great private houses that the monarch remained head of the polity that they honoured in their constructions, even if the ability of the state and its head to regain the architectural initiative remained largely theoretical. The state bedrooms of the great houses remained unused by the intended occupants for generations, if at all, as the eighteenth-century royal family feared both the stigma of clientage and the consequences of expending large sums on royal progresses. Despite these fears, the scions of the House of Brunswick took their places in the stone company of the denizens of Olympus because they remained integral to the political theology of Great Britain, and they periodically took steps to intervene personally in its iconography. The shape that these interventions took depended on circumstance and personality, and some agendas had more far-reaching effects than others. Caroline's gardening and grotto-making were largely concerned with the high politics of the

court in the early part of the Hanoverian period and they were of little relevance and some repugnance to her grandson. The palace-building of George I and George III, on the other hand, helped give shape to the changed status of the monarchy after the Revolution Settlement.

Observing the efforts of eighteenth-century royalty with regard to their residences, it is possible to comment that they managed to make a surprising impact given the limits they were under. The royal family was unable to live off its estates and investments to the same degree as the mightier of the king's subjects and was constrained by the constitutional position of the monarch. The construction of great houses and public buildings in eighteenth-century Great Britain was no longer the monopoly of the sovereign and his government, for neither fiscal arrangements nor the arguments with which the prevailing order justified itself allowed it. Contemporary critics of the state of the royal palaces lacked the hindsight to fully appreciate that royal and administrative modesty where monuments were concerned were among the foundations of the assertiveness on the international stage which they wished the British monarchy to celebrate in its residences. By the time that Somerset House was built, the processes of securing both the Hanoverian British monarchy and the country's dominance overseas were well advanced. The new building could be portrayed as the coming together of the different branches of the constitution to build, on the site of a disused palace, accommodation both for state officials and for the non-governmental bodies, such as the Royal Society, which benefited from royal patronage. Aspects of the national consciousness of eighteenth-century Britain were thus expressed in a broader context than that of conventional royal and state authority alone. George III and his ministers were thus able to assimilate the iconography of patriotism to both monarchy and government as Queen Caroline had

attempted. The endurance of the Brunswick line on the throne and its association with imperial endeavours had by the second decade of George III's reign made the incorporation of patriotic emblems in royal iconography an assertion of stability rather than an aspiration towards royal cultural ascendancy.

Chapter Five

Royalty and Improvement

In including the word 'improvement' in a chapter title one runs the risk of involvement in what current academic debates there might be concerning the concept. Using the term demands definition. There is something to be said for one recent explanation: "The ideal of improvement came to embrace a wider and wider range of activities, but its origins were closely linked with an activity which was at the heart of landed society: the practice of agriculture."¹ As will be outlined and discussed below, much of George III's 'improving' activity related to agricultural developments, such as his project of importing merino sheep into Britain, and his expansion of the botanical gardens at Kew. However, to only concentrate on this interpretation of improvement would be to ignore the tradition of interest in scientific and technological developments that existed before George III, or indeed his father Frederick, became interested in the question of the enlightened use of their estates. These included royal patronage, such as that of the Royal Society or of medical advances, that went back to the seventeenth century and the early part of the eighteenth, and they also included attention to traditional royal duties such as the defence of the realm. On these grounds it seems reasonable to assume that improvement, with regard to the royal family, must be understood within the framework of these responsibilities.

One of the obvious stereotypes used to portray the House of Hanover by their contemporaries was that of the family of soldier princes. "Messieurs d'Allemagne roll their

red eyes, stroke up their great beavers, and look fierce - you know one loves a review and a tattoo" wrote a young Horace Walpole disparagingly in 1742.² While this was often used to indicate a lack of sophistication, indeed stupidity, in fact it can be argued that they showed an interest in the improvement of military technology that accorded with the leadership of an expanding European power. Many of the occasions at which members of the royal family displayed their commitment to the development of Britain's military power were of a formal nature, such as the innumerable reviews that all the kings in this period attended. A great number of these were during wartime, and the focus of the event on many occasions seems to have been some new piece of technology that could assist the British army on the battlefield. For example, the last review that George II attended included as its focal point an experiment with "fuming combustibles" designed to cover a retreat.³ Not all such experiments attended by royalty occurred as part of the institution of the review. In 1756, at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, the Duke of Cumberland was present at a demonstration of a machine designed by one Myers to assist in the scaling of fortifications.⁴ Royal visits to military bases, too, involved examinations of the latest hardware: the Duke of York, visiting Woolwich shortly after the death of George II, escaped injury when a new smoke bomb - perhaps of the same type as the 'fuming combustibles' mentioned earlier - exploded without warning.⁵ It would seem reasonable to assume a personal interest in the development of armaments on the

¹John Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment: Useful Knowledge and Polite Culture* (Cambridge, 1994) p 185

²*HWC* xvii, p 410 (to Mann, 29 April 1742)

³*GM* xxx, 1760, p 485

⁴*ibid.*, xxvi, 1756, p 485

⁵*ibid.*, xxx, 1760, p 540

part of George I as well as George II, as both had experience of European battlefields. However, to a great proportion of the public, royal interest in military technology must have seemed of an official nature, with little to distinguish personal involvement in the devices being demonstrated.

This was not the case for all members of the family, though. William, Duke of Cumberland, is recorded as having set up an experiment in his grounds at Windsor in 1749, to compare the strengths of British and Saxon artillery. Whether the British cannon was of a new design does not seem to be recorded, but the duke and those with him were convinced of the superiority of their country's guns: "In the experiment of quick firing, the English piece was twelve minutes in firing eighty-six times; and the Saxon was discharged forty-six times in five minutes: on which his Royal Highness ordered both the guns to be dismantled, and loaded with five pounds of powder each, which broke the Saxon gun; but the English gun stood the firing afterwards with six pounders."⁶ Although such a display may have attracted spectators, it would appear that involving them (aside from a few selected persons of rank, such as the Earl of Sandwich) may well have been a secondary priority to that of meeting the curiosity of the duke and those who attended him, suggesting some degree of enthusiasm for experimentation, even if only on a dilettante level.

In fact, a good deal of what can be described as 'improvement' among the activities of successive generations of the Hanoverian royal family can be held to have been of a

⁶Dr Campbell', *Historical Memoirs*, pp 461-2

decorative nature. As previously described, the Hanoverians inherited or acquired a number of properties which accompanied their royal status, and at times these would be altered in ways which were commensurate with prevailing currents of thought. Ornamental gardens were justified in terms of improvement: Queen Caroline, as has been said, argued that she was working with the natural world when laying out Richmond Gardens in the reigns of George I and George II; her grandson George III would have said the same when he destroyed Caroline's formal park and replaced it with wilderness. Only the assumptions about man's relationship with nature had changed. Caroline's propagandists implied that her work celebrated the culmination of the Age of Reason and its triumph over superstition.⁷ As we shall see, George III increasingly looked towards those who believed that the land should be used as a resource to benefit society as a whole. However, within the royal tradition improvement was not just a matter of economic policy, but an expression of the royal family's assimilation of the exotic as they progressively became more aware of the growth of empire, and its relationship with the commercial world embraced in early dynastic rhetoric.

Royalty, Botany and Agriculture

The support of first Frederick, Prince of Wales, and then his widow Augusta, for the architectural efforts of William Chambers and other architects demonstrated the interest of the royal family in innovation as well as provoking public interest and comment. Frederick and Augusta provided those prepared to experiment with styles imported from outside the English architectural experience with a space to work with in the princely gardens at Kew. The refashioning of older royal enclosures was also praised as demonstrating the enlightened

⁷E. Curll, *The Rarities of Richmond*, *passim*

nature of the prince concerned, as in the case of Cumberland's work at Windsor. From shortly after his triumph at Culloden until George III moved there in the 1770s, some years after Cumberland's death, Windsor was most closely identified with the second son of George II, and it seems with his improvements to Windsor Great Park and Forest, earning him comparison from one biographer with Scipio Africanus, who retired to the countryside at the height of his power, to devote himself to the management of his estate and, importantly, the practice of agriculture.⁸

It was but a short step from the largely ornamental improvements to royal estates to developments that were agricultural in character. Agriculture was at the heart of the economic structure of Great Britain and the eighteenth century saw an increased awareness that economics were of importance to government, and thus to the monarch as the embodiment of the executive branch of the legislature. Towards the end of the period the monarch was called on publicly to do more to assist agricultural development. Arthur Young, in the first volume of his *Annals of Agriculture*, requested that George III "send a message to the House of Commons, desiring to be invested with a power, on my own personal examination in any progresses I might make through my dominions, of ordering the necessary inclosures, buildings, and expenditures for the establishment of farms in tracts now waste..."⁹ Young must have known he was preaching to the converted, although it is unlikely that George III would ever have desired to take on such autocratic powers to himself.

⁸(Campbell), *Historical Memoirs*, p 474

⁹Arthur Young, *Annals of Agriculture*, i (London, 1784) p 61

The shadow of Patriot rhetoric looms over Young's words. George III came from an established heritage of royal involvement in economic projects. His father had declared his interest in 'manufactures' during his lifetime and, as has been shown, George III would eventually make visits to small workshops in the towns he visited as well. A more specific inheritance of George III relating to food production had given new relevance to the words of 'Rule, Britannia' - the Governorship of the British Herring Fishery Company, originally granted to Frederick a few months before his death. Frederick had been installed in what seems to have been a lavish ceremony in the City of London, culminating in the consumption of a dinner apparently consisting, significantly if not predominantly, of Shetland pickled herrings.¹⁰ George III continued this patronage throughout his reign, at least displaying an awareness of the food industry on the part of the monarch, even if it was a passive one.

If his sponsorship of the herring fishing industry was less than active, George III took a more personal role in other agricultural affairs. The transformation of much of Windsor, turning it over to pasture for cows and merino sheep, was an initiative of the king. Although his interest in stimulating the wool trade has been shown to have precedent in Spain and in France, the sphere of action of a King of Great Britain was of a different character from those of his Bourbon counterparts.¹¹ George III's actions in obtaining merino sheep to breed the beginnings of a new wool stock on were indeed assisted by the diplomatic servants of his

¹⁰*GM* xx, 1750, p 474

¹¹Philip V of Spain had begun a woollen factory on the Dutch model at Guadalajara in 1718; his son Charles III had reformed it in 1760. In the 1780s Louis XVI was made aware of experiments in cross-breeding by Louis Daubenton, whose pamphlet was also read in Britain by Joseph Banks. See H.B. Carter, *His Majesty's Spanish Flocks*.

ministry, as the efforts of the French and Spanish kings were by their ministers. However, this was far less a ministerial project than the act of a man whose interpretation of his role involved setting an example of moral and patriotic duty to his subjects. The improvement of the country's economic health was an accompaniment to its spiritual; the King's activity was broadly complementary to government policy rather than an integral part of the detail. Support given by the King to wool production would not only set an example to other potentially enlightened landowners but make Britain less dependent on continental fine wools, leading to a greater self-sufficiency on the part of British manufactures - it could be said that the king was seeking in this case to reinforce the country's economic moral fibre.

The interest displayed by George III in agricultural improvement was also inspired by the requirement to prove his financial competence. This was itself a legacy of his father's policies when Prince of Wales. In 1747, Frederick had promised that he would accept a fixed sum in exchange for the surrender of the traditional revenues of the Crown to the Treasury. George III committed himself to implementing his father's scheme, fixing the Civil List at £800 000 p.a., with surplus revenue accruing to the Treasury rather than to the sovereign's expenses. This sum was almost £80 000 less than that enjoyed by George II at the end of his reign, and was based upon unrealistic expectations of government and court expenditure. Had George III been able to keep surplus revenue as his grandfather had, he would have enjoyed a Civil List income of £1 000 000 p.a. by 1777, when North had to go to the Commons and overcame resistance to obtain a new settlement of £900 000 p.a.¹² The Privy

¹²For the Civil List, see E.A. Reitan, 'The Civil List in Eighteenth-Century British Politics: Parliamentary Supremacy v. Independence of the Crown' in *Historical Journal* ix, 1966; E.A. Reitan, 'The Civil List 1761-1777: Problems of Finance and Administration' in *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* xlvii, 1974

Purse, the revenue which came under the king's direct control for his own use, took up only a small fraction of the Civil List allocation, but it was this area in which George III had most scope to make savings. In 1760 the king had been allowed a Privy Purse of £48 000 p.a.; this was increased to £60 000 in 1777. From the mid-1770s onwards George III sought to make his personal estates more financially successful, moving his agricultural interests from Richmond to Windsor and acquiring property in Windsor, London and Weymouth. The rearrangement of his estates was successful, as by 1811, when the property was handed over to trustees, it was making over £2 000 a year, compared with £300 in 1771. Obviously, the king must have made considerable investments but George III must have believed the additional revenue, however small, at least a worthwhile gesture towards his early wish not to be as great a burden on public finance as his predecessors.¹³

The devotion of George III to the improvement of his own estates combined the virtues of good husbandry with the preservation of impeccable administrative standards. However, it was possible to see contradictions in the king's personal policy. From one standpoint the involvement of George III with the cause of agricultural improvement contradicted his inherited position over the herring fishery company. Governmental sponsorship of the fishing industry was held by some critics, such as Arthur Young, to be detrimental to the general welfare of the economy, an economy whose central base was still held to be the 'landed interest' in the reign of George III.¹⁴ However, each represented the concerns of different royal generations and indeed of the different roles of the monarch.

¹³John Brooke, *King George III* (London, 1972) pp 206, 211-12

¹⁴See Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman* (Oxford, 1991) p

Frederick's embrace of the fishing industry was itself an act of Patriot rhetoric; Britannia did not only rule the waves by force of arms but by dominance in trade, and Frederick was making public his understanding of that, as well as demonstrating that the heir to the throne wished to encourage this line of government policy. George III was conscious of the agrarian revolution, particularly when growth in that sector of the economy stalled during the American War. While as constitutional sovereign he doubtless accepted the advice of his ministers on the subject of the wool trade, it was presumably not against his conception of his role to make the efforts, as an individual, that he hoped his subjects would make too in the future. The advisers of George III were among those who "exploited the contemporary tendency to connect commercial monopoly with moral malpractice" when dealing with the perceived imbalance between the interests of wool producers and merchants.¹⁵ The intervention made by George III in importing merino sheep and thus improving the British wool stock may be interpreted as an attempt to please both sides of the wool argument. Wool producers were placated, as the national stock was raised to a level of quality that they could better export should restrictions on the sale of British wool abroad be lifted; while manufacturers and merchants were given a domestic product that was a viable alternative to expensive, duty-ridden foreign wool.

The message that George III may have been intending to convey was that agricultural improvement was progressive and beneficial to all elements of society without upsetting the constitutional balance. His involvement with Banks developed naturally from his enthusiasm for matters naval. Although scientific figures such as Banks communicated with the king in

¹⁵Langford, *ibid.*, pp 325-6

writing through his ministers or through other attendants George III kept copies of letters concerning the difficulties that Banks faced in the king's service, such as the facilities allowed Banks and his colleagues at the beginning of Cook's second expedition.¹⁶ Through the connections Banks had in the scientific community - which George III himself fostered - the king could pursue his personal interests beyond the limits imposed on an eighteenth-century British monarch. While, as already stated, he did use his government's representatives to gather intelligence on the subject of the wool trade on the continent, with the help of Banks he could make contacts with the subjects of foreign powers that would have been otherwise diplomatically controversial. Banks became the botanic consultant to George III at Kew in the way that Chambers had become the royal adviser on architecture. The question of the British presence in the South Pacific was closely entangled with the personal interest of the king in exotic flora; the voyages in which Banks and others took part sought plants that might prove useful trading commodities for British ships. Banks was in effect George III's personal minister for science, operating outside the confines of ministerial government but within established vehicles for royal patronage such as the Royal Society.

Improvement and Britain's Global Wealth

Royalty were almost of necessity interested in the economic and military benefits gained by the sponsorship of scientific progress, but they were equally expected to be interested in scientific advance for its own sake. This is as far as any dispassionate objectivity could ever be disentangled from the partisanship of national interest, however mild it may

¹⁶Sir John Fortescue, *The Correspondence of King George III from 1760 to December 1783*, ii (London, 1927), no. 1068, Sir Joseph Banks to Lord Sandwich, 30 May 1772. For other examples see Aspinall, ed, i, no 372, Sir Joseph Banks to Henry Dundas, 15 June 1787

have been. It is difficult to believe that George III did not absorb an interest in the study of the natural world from Bute, who was a distinguished enough botanist to be compared with Linnaeus.¹⁷ However, Bute was obviously aware that he was educating a king, and may well have couched his instructions on botanical matters to his princely charge in terms that made it a worthwhile study for monarchs. In an earlier generation, Cumberland's expertise as a military strategist was attributed by one biographer to his having absorbed the principles of geometry from the conversations his mother had with Sir Isaac Newton, at which he was apparently present as an infant.¹⁸ Caroline herself, as Princess of Wales, was credited with the patronage of experiments in smallpox inoculation, a frightening innovation in the time of George I which did not have a wide degree of public support.¹⁹ The mythology that surrounded Caroline during and after her lifetime emphasised her intelligence and her "useful views", combining prudence in matters of state with her interest in extending the boundaries of knowledge.²⁰ Thus by the middle of the period the activities of leading members of the house had ensured that there was an established folklore of royal intellectualism and involvement in 'progress', and the achievements to support it.

It was far more common for the king or his family to be expected to support some furtherance of knowledge because it benefited the interests of the nation than purely because it advanced man's knowledge of the natural world. In petitioning George III to support an

¹⁷Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment*, p 81

¹⁸Andrew Henderson, *The Life of William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland* (London, 1766) p 18

¹⁹see chapter one above, p 28

²⁰see, for example, *Epitaphium Reginae Carolinae* (London, 1738) pp 5-8

expedition to observe the Transit of Venus in 1769, the Royal Society laid emphasis on the competition between the great powers of Europe to maintain the lead in the field of astronomy.²¹ This appeal was made as much to the institution of the Crown as to the person of the king, and one can discern echoes of the same sentiments that were used to justify George Anson's circumnavigation of the globe in the 1740s, the purpose of the voyage being to expand the Royal Navy's navigational knowledge while more pragmatically seeking to cut off the overseas markets of rival powers and gain new ones for Great Britain.²² A reception by the king for both Anson and later for Cook, the commander of the expedition that resulted from the Royal Society's appeal over the Transit of Venus matter, signalled to the public that the pursuit of greater knowledge of the world was close to the heart of the government, and thus to that of the king, and it is accepted that in the case of George III this concern was a real one.

While remembering the importance of global priorities it is also worth remembering that in the eighteenth century there was much to encourage the notion that one of the proofs of gentility was some level of interest in science. This was something that the Royal Society had encouraged since its inception by Charles II, and throughout the period its members included representatives of the nobility and gentry as well as of the royal family. None of the royal and few of the noble members could have been described as scientists. However, George III was the patron of botanical science at Kew, and of agricultural improvement at

²¹Royal Society Miscellaneous Manuscripts, v, no 38 - 'Memorial to the King about the Transit of Venus, 1769'

²²Richard Walter, *A Voyage Round the World in the Years MDCCXL, I, II, III, IV. by George Anson, Esq.*, 5th ed., (London, 1749) p 2

Windsor, to a level that exceeded that of the dilettante. The shell collection of the Duke of Cumberland leaned more in that direction, but Cumberland was presumably interested in land use as well, and his older brother Frederick showed an interest in advancing architectural technique, if only as a patron rather than a practitioner.²³ It is questionable whether royalty could ever be well cast in the role of dilettante, for their activities too often had a bearing on the business of government and the advancement of scientific knowledge proper. The interests of royalty, particularly the king, could not help but be of consequence.

Public acts of devotion to the causes covered by the term 'improvement' often demanded the use of the various royal residences. The estate was as important to royal improvers as it was to the agricultural encloser at large. As previously stated, in the latter part of the reign of George II, Windsor was firmly identified with William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, up until his death five years into the reign of George III and beyond. Cumberland's practices at Windsor included some hints of the past. His military experiment mentioned earlier could be placed in a tradition of military associations including Charles II's re-enactment which occasioned the construction of the mock fort of 'Maestricht', some remnants of which, if only earthworks, survived until 1849. In the reign of William III his sister-in-law Anne had used the castle for a mock battle between two groups of Etonians, one led by her six-year-old son William, Duke of Gloucester.²⁴ However, Cumberland's presence at Windsor was felt more through his alterations to the estate than the military shows favoured there by his royal predecessors, whether the emphasis was on the propagandist or

²³Henderson, *Life*, p 338

²⁴Olwen Hedley, *Windsor Castle*, pp 111, 132

the technical. These included alterations to what became known as Cumberland Lodge, and the addition of a new residential building, Fort Belvedere, both of which aroused comment in the guidebooks. Most importantly, however, Cumberland greatly altered the appearance of Windsor Great Park. It is difficult to find anything substantial about the changes that Cumberland made.²⁵ However, his biographers noted that he employed poor former soldiers and others that might have found difficulty finding employment: "He enlarged and cleansed the canals, and added a new one, more grand and convenient than any of the former"²⁶; Cumberland "greatly improved the natural Beauties of this Park, and by large Plantations of Trees, extensive Lawns, new Roads, spacious Canals, and Rivers of Water, made this *Villa*, the most delightful Habitation of Princes."²⁷ In a sense princely works such as these could still be regarded - if it is not too anachronistic to do so - as public works, the son of the King, an active part of the constitutional arrangement, providing for those made destitute by actions made in the name of the King's government. Cumberland was thus in one sense an improver in the sense that he was the landlord of a great estate, enclosing the land and assigning specific uses to each portion, but his actions were given additional weight by his princely status and the agenda he is presented as having been following during his lifetime by his admittedly eulogising obituarists.

A possible comparison with Cumberland's activity can be found at Kew, where

²⁵One sparse reference in *GM* xxxiii, 1763, p 617: "Windsor great park is to be walled round at the expense of the Duke of Cumberland", suggests that the Duke did not actually enclose the Park until well into his second decade of activity there.

²⁶Henderson, *Life*, p 337

²⁷Pote, *Les Delices de Windsore*, 3rd ed., (Windsor, 1769) pp 82-3

Frederick and Augusta similarly worked on changing the environment around their house. The work associated primarily with Augusta, but initiated during Frederick's lifetime, of developing the gardens at Kew operated in different circumstances to Cumberland's activities at Windsor. The measure of improvement was to be found not in the grandeur of the project, but in its intention. The garden of Frederick and Augusta was a private one but demanded attention as awareness of its public purpose grew and perhaps was clarified. This purpose at first seems to have been primarily architectural, as Frederick sought to make an artistic and cultural statement to rival the gardens of his mother on the other side of Kew Foot Lane. Under the direction of Augusta, Bute and George III the purpose of the gardens changed in emphasis until they became largely botanical, dedicated to the accumulation of as broad a variety of plants as possible. These were drawn principally from territories within the dominions of the crown of Great Britain or else found upon the voyages made by the King's vessels.²⁸ For members of Frederick's household, the garden was also a self-improving one, Dodington remarking in his diary how Frederick involved his staff in humdrum tasks.²⁹ If Cumberland played the hero prince whose qualities were proved by the nobility of his birth and his triumphs on the battlefield, setting those less fortunate than himself to virtuous toil, Frederick sought to show himself and those closest to him as gardeners themselves. It is tempting to see William Augustus in this context as a director of national improvement, the leader above the people; Frederick would not have been displeased if he was taken as someone partaking in the collective effort and improving the lot of the people by his

²⁸For Frederick's early intentions see John Harris, *Sir William Chambers, Knight of the Polar Star* (London, 1970) pp 33-34; also Ray Desmond, *Kew: the History of the Royal Botanical Gardens*, pp 26-7

²⁹E. Beresford Chancellor, *The History and Antiquities of Richmond*, p 296

involvement.

Royal estate holding was of course by no means universally exemplary, and nor was it received as such. There is a difficult path to be trod between the accounts of the panegyrists and those of royalty's critics. Although Cumberland's alterations to the Windsor area were welcomed by the guidebook author Joseph Pote, Horace Walpole expressed his disfavour and implied that he was not alone in doing so: he intended to write a paper dealing "particularly of his behaviour in his rangership of Windsor Great Park, where he disobliged the whole country."³⁰ The context in which Walpole was writing regarded Cumberland's activity as another example of his exercising arbitrary power, applying the rules of military command to the country at large, and in doing so overturning ancient liberties. Walpole was of course drawing on one of the regular charges against enclosure, that it reduced the number of free, landholding Englishmen and contributed to the depopulation of the countryside, which it was feared would lead to disastrous consequences for the economic and constitutional order.

The royal family were expected to take care when acting as local landlords, but there were several occasions when members fell short of the mark. The most celebrated case is probably that of Princess Amelia, who became Ranger of Richmond New Park in 1751. She soon closed the Park to through traffic, the passage of which had been guaranteed when King Charles I created the park in 1637. Although the princess throughout the dispute argued that she was within her rights, a lengthy campaign ensued against her decision, involving a petition

³⁰*HWC* xx, p 73 (to Mann, 25 June 1749)

which on its refusal was printed in the *Evening Post*. A local champion was found for the cause in the form of brewer John Lewis. The petition located Amelia's actions as direct attacks on custom and on practicality. It pointed out that the king's subjects had the right to pass freely along roads through the park, as had been guaranteed by Charles I; furthermore, the park straddled the boundaries of many parishes, robbing several communities of their resources of water, wood, and gravel for repairing roads.³¹ If this was 'improvement', it was with the bluntest of tools and not for the highest of motives. Lewis was successful in proceedings to defend the right of inhabitants to enter the park on foot in 1758, and it appears that his heroic status lasted a quarter of the way into the nineteenth century. This was despite the fact that further attempts to completely undo Amelia's regulations met with disappointment, Lord Mansfield judging that the Princess, as Ranger, was within her rights to prohibit the passage of carriages through the Park.³² The publication of *Merlin's Life and Prophecies, &c, with his Prediction relating to the late contest about the rights of Richmond Park*, in 1755 may have confirmed the Princess and her adherents in the view that their opponents were reactionaries whose 'rights' were based on outmoded practices.

It is difficult to classify Amelia as an improver in the real senses among which her mother, her brothers and her nephew George III can be admitted. It appears that the Park was enclosed for her own personal pleasure with scarce other excuses. However, the case did illustrate the kind of local opinion, justified on the grounds of tradition, that the plans of royalty could face. There is a story claiming that George II on one occasion led his protesting

³¹ *London Evening Post* 3861, 18 July 1752

³² John Evans, *Richmond and its Vicinity*, 2nd ed, (Richmond, 1825) pp 77-81; Chancellor, *ibid.*, pp 219- 221

subjects of Richmond against his daughter's gardeners in the New Park, ordering that the gate be opened with the words "My subjects, sir, walk where they please". At the workman's objection that visitors pulled the flowers, the King's response was allegedly "Plant more then, you blockhead". Whatever the truth or antiquity of this tale, rendered into print in the nineteenth century, it does illustrate the point that the monarch was expected to act as a conservative force when traditional ways of proceeding were threatened, and that by extension his family were expected to have the same scruples.³³ George III's administration of the Richmond area, though containing many more positive features than Amelia's rangership of the New Park had done, also faced opposition on traditionalist grounds. King George and Queen Charlotte desired to remove Kew Foot Lane so as to unite two historically distinct royal enclosures, a scheme in which they were opposed by the local inhabitants, again under the headship of John Lewis. The changes were eventually made by Act of Parliament but the legislation did not have the easiest of passages.³⁴ Although it appears that George III made material improvements to the Richmond area, for example by developing a farm between East Sheen and Richmond and by sponsoring the construction of a workhouse for the destitute, much of the improvement was also destructive to the previously existing character of the area, such as the demolition of the remains of the priory at West Sheen, and the village attached to it.³⁵ While George III would preserve the remains of history if they accorded with his notions, he was no slave to any cult of the past. One of the

³³Chancellor, *ibid.*, p 221

³⁴Crisp, *Richmond and its Inhabitants in the Olden Times*, (London 1866), pp 258-9; Fortescue ed, ii, no 1206, James Sayer to ?, Old Palace Yard 11 March 1773, p 459-62

³⁵Evans, *Richmond and its Vicinity*, pp xxiii-iv; Crisp, *ibid.*, pp 428-9; *Kew, Richmond, Twickenham and Hampton Court*, (London, 1849), p 29

reasons why he moved his country seat to Windsor in 1775 may well have been the freedom there to indulge his ideas of country living as a conscientious modernising landowner, without the significant opposition from an articulate body of townsfolk that could be found in the more metropolitan district of Richmond.

Royal Patronage and Science: the Case of Herschel

The impact of the Hanoverian court on the localities in which it dwelt may be thought to be not dissimilar to the influence of grandees on their estates and neighbourhoods. The demands of the landowner in the eighteenth century could move canals, roads, and villages; the local economy, already no doubt to a great extent subordinated to a magnate's interests, could be harnessed to particular whims if the landowner thought it necessary. Although royalty were in a comparable position on their estates, the results of their patronage was of much greater national significance. George III's adoption of the astronomer William Herschel went to such an extent that much of the environment within the king's sphere of influence around Windsor, first in Datchet, then in Slough, was altered to suit the demands of astronomy. A succession of telescopes were constructed to the specifications of Herschel, supported not only by a private pension of £200 a year from the king, but also from a succession of grants, often it seems of £2000 a time, for their development and upkeep.³⁶ The king's 'discovery' of Herschel allowed the Bath music master to enter the scientific establishment, placing him much closer to London and the debates of the Royal Society and the learned community, while at the same time adding another feature to royal existence at Windsor. Herschel's pension not only supported scientific endeavour but also made him

³⁶J.B. Sidgwick, *William Herschel: Explorer of the Heavens*, (London, 1953), p 89

available to any member of the royal family at their convenience; his efforts were subject to inspection by parties from the Castle.³⁷

Herschel was in many ways something of a court entertainer, and clearly knew how to play this role. Anticipating that the Princesses had “hopes of seeing Jupiter or Saturn” one evening shortly after his removal from Bath, but knowing that the sky would be too overcast to make this objective feasible, Herschel prepared instead “a picture of Saturn (cut out in pasteboard) at the bottom of the garden wall. The effect was fine, and so natural that the best astronomer might have been deceived. Their royal highnesses and other ladies seemed to be much pleased with the artifice.”³⁸ This practice was a small price to pay for royal patronage, particularly that as lavish as Herschel received. It was one step further towards making support for the advance of scientific knowledge among the central concerns of court figures. Earlier, royal connections with scientists appear to have been limited to the special demonstrations of suitably entertaining experiments mounted by the Royal Society for new royal fellows, such as the experiments with phlogiston and electricity mounted for the visit of the Duke of Lorraine and the Prince of Wales in November 1731, and the demonstration of a planetarium by Desaguliers to the Prince of Orange in March 1734.³⁹ Formal connections with the Royal Society otherwise fell into neglect under George I and George II: for example,

³⁷for one such, concerning the tube of his forty foot telescope in August 1787 see Constance A. Lubbock, ed, *The Herschel Chronicle*, (Cambridge, 1933), p 157

³⁸Letter from William to Caroline Herschel, 3 July 1782, printed in Mary Cornwallis, Mrs John Herschel, ed. *Memoirs and Correspondence of Caroline Herschel* (London, 1879), p 48

³⁹Royal Society, 'Journal Books of Scientific Meetings', xiv, pp 27-29, p 400; 'Minutes of Council Meetings', iii, pp 100-1, 102 (planning reception of Duke of Lorraine with the Duke of Richmond as intermediary)

supervision of the Astronomer Royal seems to have lapsed following the appointment of Halley, and it took a petition to George III and a renewal of the regulations originally laid down by Charles II for the position to be seemingly rescued from a descent into sinecure.⁴⁰ The interest that George III showed in the discoveries of Herschel was a product of the same spirit that had prompted the Royal Society to begin to press for attention to be paid to science once more. This spirit perhaps arose from the conjunction of the foundation of the British Museum in the 1750s and the ascendancy of British power after the Seven Years' War, and the arrival of Banks and others who were willing to use the enthusiasm of the king and the potential of Britain's international position to advance the cause of scientific endeavour.

George III received particular attention from the scientific community. The Royal Society erected a bust of him in their premises. He was recognised in the dedications to several works as having shown a real interest in the furtherance of natural knowledge. Herschel named his "comet", later recognised as a planet, 'Georgium Sidus'. This was a classical allusion to Virgil's 'Georgics', the following line being 'iam nunc assuesce vocari'. This told Caesar he must accustom himself to being called upon in oaths, for in the future he would be a God.⁴¹ Through this act of perhaps obvious flattery, to which royalty must have had to become accustomed, immortality was claimed for George III through association with the expansion of natural knowledge, and in the same breath with the apogee of Roman Imperial greatness. Astronomy was a field of specific interest to British imperialism because

⁴⁰Royal Society, 'Minutes of Council Meetings', v, pp 44-51

⁴¹see Lubbock, *Herschel Chronicle*, pp 122-5

of its relation to oceanic navigation.⁴² Implicitly, the British Empire was presented as an improved, idealised version of Ancient Rome with correspondingly greater achievements.

Dynastic Patronage

George III was the first monarch of the House of Hanover to make his obviously personal support for the pursuit of knowledge appear part of the furniture of British kingship, but we have already seen that he was not the first in his family to show such sympathies and to have them recognised. His uncle William, Duke of Cumberland, had been the dedicatee of several works, some with obvious military applications but also a treatise on mines which was bound with a collection of military works dedicated to Frederick the Great, suggesting that an emphasis on the military applications of technology was seen as a worthwhile route towards patronage.⁴³ As has been discussed earlier in this work, Frederick, Prince of Wales was active in initiating the tradition of royal patronage of medical institutions, and in the support of manufacturing industry. He accompanied the Duke of Lorraine on his visit to the Royal Society, and several years later made a visit to Sir Hans Sloane's Cabinet of Curiosities, an account of which survives in handwritten form, as if to be circulated to the press.⁴⁴ Although

⁴² For examples of state support of astronomical advances, see Richard Sorrenson, 'The state's demand for accurate astronomical and navigational instruments in eighteenth-century Britain' in Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, eds. *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text* (Routledge, London, 1995)

⁴³BL King's 256: 'Nouvelle Théorie sur la Science des Mines' by Bernard Forest de Béliador, 1753, dedicated to Cumberland; other works in the volume dedicated to the King of Prussia.

⁴⁴Royal Society, 'Journal Books of Scientific Meetings', xiv, pp 23-29; BL Egmont 834 ff 252-255: 'A relation of that magnificent Philosophical entertainment, which Sir Hans Sloane gave to their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, on the 7th of June 1748; containing a short account of his most Surprizing Museum...'

isolated examples they accord well with Frederick's long term preoccupations and occur at times when Frederick was most keen to define his public image.

Frederick was also an enthusiastic art collector, and it would seem that to many in Frederick's branch of the family, the advancement of the cause of art and science went hand in hand. The architectural follies which complemented the botanical discoveries of Kew have already been noted, and fine art was by no means forgotten; rather, embraced. The engraver George Vertue appears to have acted as artistic adviser to Frederick in much the same way that Sir Joseph Banks was scientific consultant and intermediary for George III. He arranged the purchase of works of art for the Prince of Wales, and his papers preserve the Prince's own attempts to catalogue what the royal art collection consisted of, some of it from memory, as well as undertaking commissions of his own work.⁴⁵ George III, too, expanded the royal art collection, particularly it seems in his acquisition of works from Italy. Walpole advised Mann, early in his reign, to enquire about works of art in Tuscany that might be appreciated by the new king.⁴⁶ The collection of Joseph Smith, the retiring British Consul in Venice, was an early acquisition.⁴⁷ Joseph Banks was sent with John Zoffany to Italy by George III on a joint scientific and artistic expedition.⁴⁸ The tastes of George III for the promotion of all kinds of

⁴⁵BL Add. 19027: 'Miscellaneous Papers of Vertue', ff 1-13, 20-25

⁴⁶*HWC* xxi, p 449 (to Mann, 1 November 1760): "I will tell you something; the King loves medals; if you ever meet with any thing very curious in that way, I should think you would make your court agreeably by sending it to him. I imagine his taste goes to antiques too perhaps to pictures, but that I have not heard. If you learn any purchases that may be made in either kind, and that are beyond your own purse, you may acquaint him through the Secretary of State."

⁴⁷Fortescue, ed., i, pp 29-32 (Joseph Smith to ?, 13 July 1762)

⁴⁸see H.B. Carter, *Sir Joseph Banks 1743-1820*, (London, 1988) p 104

learning were demonstrated in the 1770s by the creation of accommodation for several learned societies with royal patronage within Somerset House, which confirmed the renewal of meaningful contact with the Royal Society pursued by the king and his ministers; and by the establishment of the Royal Academy for the advancement of artistic learning, appreciation and endeavour.

The establishment of the Royal Academy by George III was not without precedent as an institutional innovation in the world of learning personally instigated or sponsored by a reigning monarch. The Royal Society had of course been founded under the auspices of Charles II, in the fervour of the Restoration, as the scientific community sought the support of the throne and the aristocracy. The Royal Academy emerged from the assertive spirit of post-1763 British government being applied to the various artistic societies that had existed up to the Society's foundation in 1769; it was expected to promote cultural excellence in the field of fine arts, and its responsibilities towards teaching must have been viewed by some as an answer to calls for some sort of national standard in British art to be set. The Academy was shown to be under particular royal patronage when George III turned over the royal apartments in Somerset House to the Academy in 1771, and they were the first non-administrative body to be envisaged as having rooms in the new Somerset House whose construction was initiated in 1775. The claims of the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries were not acknowledged until slightly later, although they all moved in to their assigned places in the new structure in 1780. The king and his ministers were all no doubt keen to avoid accusations of partisanship towards one branch of learning while maintaining

the co-operation of the others.⁴⁹

As the interests of George III were with the expansion of human knowledge and its application to national policy, George I had been concerned with the question of whether there was a sufficiently skilled élite to apply such policy in the first place. The address of the University of Cambridge on his foundation of the Regius Professorship of Modern History emphasised the need for Great Britain to be able to educate its governing class itself, without the need for "foreign Tutors" to be engaged. George I presumably hoped to graft his innovations on to the existing universities of England and thereby gain acceptance for them. Although the new chairs failed to transform Oxford and Cambridge into schools of European *realpolitik*, teeming with "Academical Persons well versed in the Knowledge of foreign Courts" they did at least signal that some recognition should be made in those institutions of the need to apply "English Probity" to the study of the "weighty Affairs and Negotiations" of early eighteenth-century Europe, as well as to "the solid Learning of Antiquity".⁵⁰ If George I attempted to further harness the existing institutions of civil life in Great Britain to the demands of the developing state machine, then these attempts did not reach the statute book; in any case, the first of the Brunswicks was probably too astute a politician to want to stamp an indelible mark on the order he had come to Britain to protect. Although George II established Göttingen University within his continental dominions no similar foundation was made in the British Isles, suggesting that the King either simply didn't see the necessity for it, or that it lay outside his role. The question that faced the Hanoverian kings was how they

⁴⁹See *HKW v*, pp 261, 366, 369

⁵⁰BL Add. MSS 5843, f. 129; see also Hatton, *George I*, p 290

could accommodate their personal agendas within the constitutional framework of Great Britain; of the first three, it was surely George III who was the most successful, firstly in establishing an interest, and then in pursuing paths that did not obstruct the constitutional balance.

The actions of George III are recognisable as outgrowths of the voluntary spirit which had come to characterise royal philanthropic endeavours from the early part of George II's reign onwards. The legislative measures of George I are unusual in that they demonstrate a universal concern with educational matters. More often the relationship with schools and universities enjoyed by eighteenth-century royalty was of a specific and local nature. The monarchy continued its connections with schools set up under its patronage. George I was acclaimed in song by "charity-children" on his entry into London, perhaps coming from an institution wishing to make sure its established credentials were recognised by the new dynasty.⁵¹ Under his successors, the visit of the blue-coat boys was part of the ritual of the New Year at court, and was scrupulously maintained by George III, although this custom was sometimes found the cause of inconvenience by the more elevated of the King's subjects.⁵² George III also maintained and would, particularly after his move to nearby Windsor, strengthen the connections of the royal family with Eton. These had been encouraged in the youth of his uncle, William, Duke of Cumberland, who appears to have

⁵¹*Flying Post* 25, 21 September 1714

⁵²Coke, MSS Journal Books xiii, 1 January 1778: "in the guard Chamber where the blue coat Boys stand with all their drawings my hoop threw one of them down, not the Boy, but his performance which he availed himself of by bring it to me the next day and desiring a Christmas Box, as I shall be more careful the next year I comply'd with his request."

visited at least one election of scholars to the college.⁵³ The royal family also had connections with their London near-neighbours, Westminster School, the pupils of whom also had occasion to address the monarch or his family. There were also occasional visits made by royalty to the university towns, usually by junior members or by visiting princes. George II did, however, visit Cambridge in 1728, but it was not until 1785 that a reigning monarch visited the less favoured of the English universities, Oxford. Such visits, however, could do little more than express royal approval of the status quo, and accepted the position of the monarch as an integral part of the institutions of the kingdom, to be honoured and entertained, but hardly recognised as all-important.

The importance of the support given by George III to the Royal Society and the Royal Academy was that it gave the monarch an active role as patron of organisations that were not part of the government as such but shared broadly in the aim of establishing and maintaining British pre-eminence in as many quarters as possible. The charter of the Royal Academy submitted to George III for his approval clearly indicates the body's role as defining and expanding a creative élite, by establishing a society of fellows and endowing them with the responsibility for the education of new generations of artists.⁵⁴ As for the Royal Society, although it succeeded in recovering lost influence with government, it is tempting to suggest that most of its strength in the middle of the reign of George III lay in that its President was

⁵³See BL King's 315, *Exercitia Etoniae habita, in Solenni Scolari Electione, quum interesse dignaretur, Quâ est erga Literatos omnes Voluntate, Wilhelmus, maximae Spei Princeps, Cumberlandiae Dux*; and also BL Add. MSS 5832 f. 163, *On Prince William's coming to the Ram Hunting at the Election at Eton College*.

⁵⁴Fortescue ed, ii, no 1179, the Royal Academy to the King (December 1772) pp 425-8

Sir Joseph Banks, and its influence lay more in his personal energy and close relationship with the king than in royal intervention in the Society's affairs. After all, even the Royal Academy, George III's creation, could by no means be bent to the king's personal inclinations. It has been said that George III would have preferred Chambers as the first president of the organisation but instead deferred to advice and accepted Joshua Reynolds, although Reynolds would complain of the freedoms the king's support gave Chambers as Treasurer.⁵⁵ George III can be said to have wielded influence but it was certainly finite.

As in all their activities during the eighteenth century, in the sphere of improvement the royal family were looking for a role. An interest in improvement complemented both the Hanoverian dynastic identification with trade and commercial prosperity made when George I came to the throne, and the need for royalty to perform acts of benevolence. It is probably fairest to say that the influence that they eventually came to wield most successfully was one of social influence, setting an example in the support of scientific improvement in the fields of agriculture and medicine, at one remove from the fiscal stringencies of administration and the fears of constitutional impropriety which would have set a limit on initiatives in the field of formal education, as experimented in by George I. George III improved as the head of society, not the head of government, extending his influence through personal example which complemented, rather than governed, trends in the country as a whole. When projects were successful they lent prestige to Great Britain and to its monarch, placing George III in the tradition begun by his parents and by his grandmother. However, what George III did was complementary to and a development from the actions of his great-grandfather as well; both

⁵⁵Harris, *Chambers*, p 12, quoting HMC Charlemont, i, 292.

sought to exercise influence over the cultural destiny of their realm. Whereas George I sought a class of educated men who understood European diplomacy to bolster the Hanoverian succession in Great Britain and that country's place in continental affairs, George III wished to repair the nation's scientific heritage as part of his desire to make his kingdom more efficient, morally, politically and commercially. In extending its interest in scientific discoveries and the welfare of scientists, the royal family responded to changes in British society during the eighteenth century which called on the monarchy to extend its traditional benevolence to the support of new institutions as much as it had done when its members assumed the roles of patrons of charitable associations.

Chapter Six

Precedent and Public: Shadows of Past and Present and the House of Hanover

So far we have seen the development of the public role of the Hanoverian royal family through matters of overt public ritual such as coronations; events that included some elements of ritual such as the older manifestations of royal benevolence, and the public tour where strands of the old royal progresses threaded the cloak of the private visit. Throughout the period eighteenth-century royalty was faced with an amount of public expectation, which was only occasionally met with episodes that were calculated to gain attention. As previously discussed, early in the period it was expected that if the King was spending the summer in England, he would make a progress, on the lines of his Stuart predecessors, but too often George I and George II seem to have found the option inconvenient, whether in terms of financial expense or political expediency. There were of course many occasions when precedent was turned to advantage, such as in Queen Caroline's Merlin's Cave, many of the activities of her son Frederick, and the projects of George III at Windsor. Manipulation of precedent was equally important for each generation of the House of Brunswick, for they had an indeterminate number of past legacies to contend with, which were often brought up by the press. In many cases these were as much to do with the practical role of leadership as with the decorative, for example in the matter of the royal house's military identification.

The Inheritance of the Sword

For many contemporary observers the adoption of the military pose by royalty was

the stereotypical feature of the dynasty. They were often depicted as a line of soldier princes, particularly before the accession of George III. However this penchant for military service was not an innovation which came across from the continent in 1714. The armed defence of the realm had always been a part of the monarch's role as leader of the nation; the rise of the equestrian portrait could perhaps be seen as a way of asserting this role as the monarch moved further away from the battlefield. This retreat from the realities of war was accentuated by the move towards depicting the armed monarch in classical costume. Rysbrack's marble statue of George II in Roman dress at Greenwich was following the example set by Charles II at Windsor, who had been presented with a copper statue of himself "in the habit of a Roman Caesar" by his yeoman of the robes, Tobias Rustat, in 1680.¹ It became fashionable to attire kings in elements of classical dress in combination with contemporary costume, for example in Thornhill's painting at Greenwich, in which George I wears his breastplate beneath court dress and a thick unwarlike wig. It has been argued that this representation further showed that the role of the defenders of Protestant liberty was as iconic as it was a practical means of defending the Revolution Settlement, borrowing from portraits of the Bourbons as well as from the Stuarts.² This was one way of emphasising the legitimacy of the Hanoverian kings in the eyes of their subjects, if principally those of the ruling class who were most frequently exposed to these images. Continual representation of the Hanoverian kings in military dress also marked them as the representatives of William III,

¹Arthur Byron, *London Statues* (London, 1981) p 12; Joseph Pote, *Les Delices de Windsore*, 1st ed. (Eton, 1755) p 4; Olwen Hedley, *Windsor Castle*, p 118. Rustat was also a benefactor of Charles I's favourite Oxford college, St John's, perhaps suggesting a wish to perpetuate Stuart dynastic traditions on the part of a court servant.

²See Simon Schama, 'The Domestication of Majesty: Royal Family Portraiture 1500-1800' in *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* xvii:1, 1986 p 167, for a discussion of Thornhill's painted hall in the context of the Stuart and Bourbon monarchies.

who had led his armies across the British Isles and Europe in defence of the Protestant cause. The final portrait of George II by Pine shows how the monarchy clung to this identification, George II being portrayed as an old officer with his two loyal guards standing behind him, one slightly turned towards him as if in awe. It has been suggested that Pine's portrait indicates the instability of the Hanoverian dynasty even as late as the 1750s. This is by no means the only interpretation that can be found for the image of the elderly George II. The portrait - which entered circulation as an engraving in 1766, perhaps as an expression of nostalgia during the troubled first decade of the new reign - can be viewed in a positive light, anticipating the images of the later part of the reign of George III.³

The emphasis placed on the military role of the monarchy as a symbol of continuity, legitimacy and stability was favoured by portrait painters and by sculptors, but although the connection continues in the realm of the popular print, it did not always have the same celebratory connotations. Where it appears in satirical prints, the depiction of the soldiering activities of princes was treated at best equivocally. In one, 'Political Kalendar for the Year 1740', the nineteen-year-old William, Duke of Cumberland, is shown punishing a soldier; a later print, 'The Screen', identified the King and his martial second son closely with the government's war policy, as they distributed "Cockades for Boys at 300 £ a peice" from the top of a pile of arms marked "useless".⁴ This being said, there appears to have been at least one crude representation of George I as a military conqueror available, one literary reference

³Colley, *Britons*, pp 204-5, Millar, *The Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, (London, 1963) p 188 (no 569)

⁴BM Prints & Drawings 2440, 2539

indicating that such prints were to be seen in inns.⁵ Statues and official portraits encouraged the view that the Hanoverians, like the Caesars, were 'tribunes of the people', defending against tyranny, but of course this was not universally embraced. For the first few decades of Hanoverian kingship, engravings of royal portraits seem to have preferred to take as their models images of royalty that laid emphasis on their position at the head of the constitution, such as the much-copied studio portraits by Kneller of George I, George II and Queen Caroline.⁶ This might have been, admittedly, because these were the images the royal family took a direct hand in promoting. Certainly they could not have been made without access to the originals, whether at the studio or, when royal commissions, at the palace.⁷

It does not seem to have been until the 1740s, in the wake first of Dettingen, and then Culloden (a battle more immediate to the British audience) that an explicitly martial portrait was engraved for the buying public, presumably a more sophisticated one than that which enjoyed triumphalist (and presumably anti-Jacobite) images like those alluded to above. That portrait was of William, Duke of Cumberland, by John Wootton and Thomas Hudson,

⁵See Harold Williams, ed., *The Poems of Jonathan Swift*, 2nd edition, ii (Oxford, 1958), pp 459-69, 'Directions for a Birth-day Song', ls 37-38:

As Overton has drawn his Sire
Still seen o'r'e many an Alehouse fire.

A print of 'King *George*, Triumphant over his enemies', appears as no 111 among the woodcuts in William and Cluer Dicey, *A Catalogue of Maps, Prints, Copy-Books, Drawing Books, &c* (London, 1754) p 31. My thanks to Tim Clayton for this reference.

⁶Oliver Millar, *Early Georgian*, pp 144-145 (nos 343-345), pp 148-9 (nos 360-361)

⁷'The Apotheosis of Prince Octavius' by Benjamin West, was published as an engraving by Sir Robert Strange in 1786, with the statement that the plate had been worked on at Buckingham House itself. Oliver Millar, *The Later Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (London, 1969) p 130 (no 1149)

depicting him on the field at Dettingen.⁸ His brother Frederick, who although stranded away from the European field of battle in the 1740s, still sought to identify himself publicly with the military when they were popular, originally commissioned the portrait. Two engravers made plates of 'The Children of Frederick, Prince of Wales' by Barthelemy du Pan, in which the Prince's two eldest sons were depicted in military uniform, out of the 'coats' in which their younger brother William was clad and being prepared for the duties of the adult prince.⁹ Thirty years after the arrival of the House of Hanover the martial image of kingship, inherited from their predecessors but coloured by the military experience of the royal family themselves, at last had gained relevance and some level of comfortable assimilation into the public image of the monarchy.

The legacy of the previous century's political upheavals ensured that the quality of military leadership, and its relationship with the headship of state, remained an issue in the eighteenth century. The Hanoverians scrupulously observed the royal calendar of religious festivals, including the anniversary of the execution of Charles I, but to some they had more in common with Cromwell than with the royal martyr. Obviously to the Jacobites George I was as much a usurper as Cromwell had been, and so it was hoped that James III would be the new Charles II, to be welcomed with the oak boughs of yore. The literature that printed assurances that the religion of George I was not that of the Presbyterians associated with regicide has already been mentioned in connection with coronations and accessions. Cromwell, William III and, to a less dynamic extent, George I and George II were all soldiers, from a tradition that was viewed with suspicion in some quarters. When planning the

⁸Millar, *Early Georgian*, p 183 (no 554)

⁹Millar, *Early Georgian*, p 188 (no 572)

careers of his children Frederick, Prince of Wales, was careful that his eldest son should not be "bred among Troops" and adopt manners and attitudes that his father thought would be injurious to his success as a monarch.¹⁰ In contrast, the Navy was seen as more wholesome and more acceptable, less associated with Hanover and with continental wars - the future George III was to be Lord High Admiral during his father's reign, and his younger brother Henry was to be "entirely dedicated to the sea".

Frederick's projected embrace of the Navy was only partly a break with dynastic tradition; in fact, as heir of the Royal House of Great Britain, he could have been said to be returning to it. The Brunswick line inherited a commitment to military service from both their German and British antecedents. In Britain, James II had seen active service on land when in exile, but was Lord High Admiral during the reign of Charles II, a position later held by Prince George of Denmark as Queen Anne's consort. Royal connections to the army in Britain admittedly already had a continental flavour in the seventeenth century. The most eminent soldier-prince within the British royal family in the seventeenth century was Prince Rupert of the Rhine, nephew of Charles I, cousin of Charles II and James II, son of the Winter King and Queen, and uncle of George I. Soldiering was an accepted career pattern for cadets and minor princes in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the ducal family of Brunswick were no strangers to it. One of George I's brothers, Maximilian, had a successful career in the Austrian service, in which George I himself had fought as a young man, joining the forces defending Vienna from the Turks in 1683.¹¹

¹⁰A.N. Newman, ed.: 'Leicester House Affairs, 1750-60, From the Papers of John, Second Earl of Egmont' in *Camden Miscellany* XXIII, 4th series, vii (London, 1968) pp 175, 192, referring to BL Add.MSS 47097/8

¹¹Hatton, *George I*, pp 43-4

One of the differences between the British and for example the French royal families, which had an effect on the career patterns of the younger sons of the Hanoverian kings, was that the British Crown could not provide *apanages* for its cadet branches.¹² In truth, the Tudors and Stuarts had not had younger sons of the monarch reaching maturity and begetting adult male heirs to provide the equivalents of the various branches of the Bourbon family in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century France. In promoting the military career of his second son from an early age, George II was behaving as a responsible constitutional monarch. The assumption he seems to have proceeded upon was that the state would provide for his younger son only if the prince fulfilled a useful role. Cumberland was to be found attending reviews at an early age; when only eleven years old he led a 'young Company of Grenadiers'.¹³ Frederick's children were to engage in similar performances when yet younger, but it was with Cumberland that the demonstrations of precociousness had greatest resonance, for he had the most active military career of any of the eighteenth-century royal family, and his public and political image was always characterised as that of the soldier, for good or ill. There seems to have been an attempt to continue Cumberland's career pattern into the next generation. Prince Edward, second son of Frederick, saw action in the Seven Years' War, as soldier and sailor.¹⁴ His brothers and his nephews, the younger sons of George III, also underwent some level of military training.

¹²Horace Walpole, ed. John Brooke, *Memoirs of King George II*, ii (New Haven, 1985) p 21: "The Children of the Crown in England have no landed appanages: they naturally covet them: rangerships for life are the only territories the King has to bestow."

¹³*GM* ii, 1732, p 772

¹⁴*GM* xxviii, 1758, p 449: Prince Edward returned from Portsmouth to Kew, from whence he was to re-embark to join military action against the French.

At first glance the commitment of the royal family to its military roots appears to have wavered under George III, but this is probably the result of changed circumstances, both political and personal. Possibly there was less incentive after 1763 for the princes of the blood to adopt a martial role; the great enemy, France, had been defeated, and by the accession of George III it was far less frequent for European conflict to be characterised to British audiences as one between the forces of Catholic universal monarchy, and Protestant national liberty. George III's second and third brothers did have military careers of a sort, but that of Edward foundered, perhaps on his own lack of inclination, and that of William, Duke of Gloucester, was compromised by his marriage, which led him to spend a lot of time in exile on the continent during the 1770s. The duke had a military career but it was a confined one, governed by the limitations of royal siblinghood in the reign of George III. Options such as the post of commander-in-chief and a post in the Prussian army were rumoured to have been considered by William, Duke of Gloucester, but could not be taken up, presumably because of the evident social, procedural and diplomatic objections.¹⁵ George III probably shared his father's distrust of the military's role in British constitutional life, which, alongside his tendency to promote his own infant children at the expense of his adult siblings, also led him to leave his brothers effectively without a career. Although several of the sons of George III were entered into the military life, they usually (with the sole exception, it seems, of Prince William Henry, the future William IV) began these careers on the continent, seemingly dedicating their lives to the electorate rather than to Great Britain. Again, this was partly the

¹⁵The Duke of Gloucester visited at least one military camp during the American War, (see *LC*, xliv, pp 48-51, quoted *HWC* xxxiii, p 24, note 1) "The Duke of Gloucester was considered as commander-in-chief of the army, but HW was "persuaded... that he would not have accepted, unless the King would have received the Duchess." Walpole, *Last Journals* ii, p 434, quoted in *HWC* xxxiii, p 331 note 12. As for the Prussian connection, Lady Mary Coke understood that this had been the Duke's intention but that it was impossible. *MSS Journal Books* xiii, 31 July 1778.

result of personal tensions within the royal family, as George III did not want his younger sons to follow the dissolute path of his eldest child. However, it may also have been the result of the king not wishing to place an additional burden on the British state in the years following the American War, and his wish to build a connection with the old family dominions he never visited.

One of the more continual appeals to the military genius of the House of Hanover was the almost routine depiction of George II as the hero of the Battle of Oudenarde. One suspects this line of propaganda was at first a response on the part of supporters of the Act of Settlement to the heroism of the Duke of Marlborough during the War of the Spanish Succession. With Jacobitism always in mind a threat from the Whig side was not to be encouraged. In the years leading up to the accession of George I, pamphlet literature accused Marlborough of planning to be the next Lord Protector, either on Anne's death or by supplanting her during her lifetime. This was not an incredible proposition within a half-century that had seen England go through a series of constitutional upheavals¹⁶. In 1714, on the accession of George I, there seems to have been an anxiety in the press to establish the Duke's loyalty to the new sovereign.¹⁷ In the reign of Anne, following that of the warlike William III, Marlborough brought a masculine edge to the leadership of Britain that Anne could not. As uncomfortable as this may have been under Anne, the cult of Marlborough was

¹⁶The title of *Oliver's Pocket Looking Glass, New Fram'd and Clean'd, To give a clear View of the Great Modern Colossus, Begun by K. C—; Carry'd on by K. J—; Augmented by K. W—; And now Finish'd, in order to be thrown down in the Glorious R— of Q. A—* (London, 1711) points to Marlborough as the enemy of the entire Restoration settlement. *A Faithful and True History of the Life and Actions of K. John* (London, 1708) depicts Marlborough as a king who would govern entirely in the military interest.

¹⁷See, for example, *The Duke of Marlborough's Speech to the King* (London, 1714)

a potential threat under George I. Marlborough had been planning his return from exile in Germany as the saviour of the Protestant succession as soon as the Earl of Oxford fell from office and the accession of George I made his triumphal return to the head of political affairs impossible. The propaganda that was planned to welcome Marlborough in 1714 would presumably have undergone hasty remodelling before publication in order to depict the Duke as loyal to the Hanoverians, and thus to give Marlborough some hope of controlling the government as he had hoped to had Anne survived.¹⁸ Marlborough's return to the political scene in 1714, although not to the degree for which he had hoped, helped ensure that while William III remained the most comfortable precedent for an ideal of military kingship, any act of warlike leadership in the eighteenth century was bound to invite comparison with Marlborough.

Although the evidence is by no means conclusive, it is tempting to view the propagandists who supported Marlborough during Anne's reign as setting precedents for the way in which the princes of a subsequent generation were projected. To one poet Marlborough was "The British Chief for mighty Toils renown'd", set in a 'Gothic' context that follows on from the identification of William III with a pseudo-historical Arthur by Dryden and Blackmore, and anticipates the flirtations of the Hanoverians with figures from Geoffrey or Spenser.¹⁹ There are obvious connections with Queen Caroline and her Merlin's Cave, and with Prince Frederick's support for Gilbert West's *Institution of the Order of the Garter*,

¹⁸Frances Harris, *A Passion for Government: the Life of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough* (Oxford, 1991) pp 202-210

¹⁹*Bridle for the Tories: or, the Duke of Marlbro's Publick Entrance No Tumultuous Cavalcade. In Answer to a Scandalous and Factious pamphlet, Intituled The Republican Procession* (London, 1714) p 7. To a large extent the work is plagiarised from Joseph Addison, *The Campaign, A Poem to his Grace the Duke of Marlborough* (London, 1713)

which associates Frederick with Edward III and with Arthur through the Order of the Garter and Windsor Castle, and also for *Alfred*, establishing the prince's Anglo-Saxon credentials. *Alfred* was staged in 1740, when Great Britain was on the verge of military conflict, and during a period when Dryden and Purcell's *King Arthur* was enjoying a revival.²⁰ Frederick's brother William was also presented as the culmination of a line of descent from Marlborough by one panegyrist, although this one looked to classical models rather than British or English heroes, tracing Cumberland as the heir of Cyrus, Alexander and Caesar, outshining them all and thus becoming the "perfect Patriot" deserving his own monument like that to Marlborough at Woodstock.²¹

Whether identification with heroes from the recent, distant or mythological past lent itself to promoting a glorious image for an eighteenth-century prince or not was of course the task of the particular propagandist, relating his subject to the context of the times. At moments such as the Regency Bill discussions of 1751, the Duke of Cumberland's military career left him open to attacks of much the same kind as those which Marlborough received. As Marlborough was accused of seeking to rule in the interests of the army rather than the whole kingdom, a pamphlet by Richard Bentley in 1751 accused Cumberland of too great an attachment to the study of military science than was appropriate to an Englishman, and of maintaining a private army in embryo at Windsor under the cover of his hunting

²⁰For fuller discussion of literary context see Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry and National Myth 1725-1742* (Oxford, 1994) particularly chs. 5, 6, 7, pp 108-229

²¹("Painter, fellow of St John's Oxford" most probably James Pointer, fellow 1741-49), *A Panegyric to His Royal Highness The Duke of Cumberland* (London, 1746), pp 9, 21

establishment.²² Although the connections are not made explicit in the work the contrasts that must have occurred to the contemporary reader would have been with the 'Patriotism' of the deceased Frederick, patron of the arts, sciences and trades rather than of the military powers. Bentley also accused Cumberland of sending his troops into battle against the French in Flanders in the face of unacceptable risks, under the mantra "that the Soldier, who comes off alive, has done nothing for us", and even of cannibalism during his Highland campaign.²³ Arguably Bentley's satirical pamphlet carried his argument to excess, but he did play on the fears present about Cumberland's position as the only adult male member of the royal family aside from George II after Frederick's death. These were also drawn upon by opponents of Cumberland in parliament in 1751, when Cumberland was presented to as the possible leader of a Cumberland faction in a new series of dynastic wars, a sort of combination of Cromwell and Plantagenet.²⁴ Thus did the spirits of the favoured and unfavoured predecessors of the House of Brunswick on the British throne vie to adopt the family as their heirs in the minds of the political and reading classes, as if a more cynical version of West's masque was being played out.

The promotion of British royalty in military guise very much depended on British royal 'heroes' being produced by successive generations. Although the War of the Austrian

²²Richard Bentley, *An Attempt Towards an Apology for his R--- H--- the D---* (London, 1751)

²³Bentley, *ibid.*, pp 13, 10

²⁴William Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* xiv, cols 1000-1057, concerning the debate on the Regency Bill, 1751. Cumberland is depicted as a wicked uncle, particularly in the speech of Thomas Prowse, likening him to the Duke of Gloucester in the reign of Edward V. He was supported by Solicitor-General Murray: "can we suppose that in future times the people will have more virtue, or that a prince possessed of all the power and all the revenues now at the disposal of the crown, will have less influence than Richard III did." (col 1036)

Succession and the Forty-Five provided events suitable for the immortalisation of Cumberland and the further glorification of George II, by the Seven Years' War George II was too old to campaign, and Cumberland's activities failed to match the expectations created by the early stages of his career. There are indications that as if to compensate for this, what was close to an official cult of Frederick the Great emerged. Frederick had been Britain's enemy in the 1740s but became her ally in the 1750s. The Prussian king's birthday, 24 January, became the subject of "great rejoicings and illuminations throughout the cities of London and Westminster" and "other demonstrations of joy" in the years 1758 and 1759.²⁵ Despite Cibber's birthday ode of 1756 depicting George II as heir to the virtues of Edward III, the vigour of the monarch was clearly fading; Cibber's successor Whitehead by 1760 confined himself to proclaiming, rather lamely:

"And thus the bard his song shall end,
The Prussian hero was great George's friend!"²⁶

The Frederician cult endured beyond the death of George II and the end of the Seven Years' War. It was reported in 1768 that "a powerful and very enterprising Monarch has this Summer visited London in the Habit of a Quaker" but that he was recognised by a "Military Gentleman" as "the King of P--".²⁷ It is tempting to see Frederick the Great as having become a quasi-magical figure; if he enjoyed this status in the England of the 1750s and 1760s, in a way that his kinsmen in London did not, then it shows how directionless the figure of the King of Great Britain might have become to some of his subjects by this time.

²⁵*GM* xxviii, 1758, p 24; xxix, 1759, p 43

²⁶*GM* xxx, 1760, p 31

²⁷*Public Advertiser* 10584, 30 September 1768

Foreign Fashions and Domestic Kingship

The varying levels of approval given to military identifications of the royal family reflected the ongoing, but often circumscribed, debate in eighteenth-century Britain about what kingship actually meant. This has already been seen in some of the reactions among press and public to the enthronements of new kings. Expectations remained divided throughout the period. The king would be expected to take a direct role in affairs but could open himself to criticism that he was threatening the constitution, and thus his own position, if his activities or those of his ministers attracted attention from the guardians of 'liberty' inside and outside parliament. When such criticism arose it could open the question of the definition of British kingship. An episode that shows up this problem is the visit of King Christian VII of Denmark in 1768. The brother-in-law and first cousin of George III, he was the highest-ranking royal visitor that the Hanoverians had so far entertained.

Earlier visits by foreign princes had caused fewer problems. That of the Prince of Orange in 1733-34 had been to marry Anne, eldest daughter of George II, and had been relatively uncontroversial politically, for the Prince, as hereditary Stadholder of Friesland and Groningen, held a position in those provinces not dissimilar to that of George II in Great Britain, and British policy at the time was to encourage those forces in the United Provinces that wanted to restore the House of Orange to the Stadholderate of the entire Dutch Republic, as enjoyed by King William III. The Prince of Orange was not personally favoured by George II, and there were attempts to exploit him for opposition purposes in a country where the opposition was still fired by the issue of the excise, but the wedding and the celebrations it occasioned ultimately secured the position of George II and the ministry. Another reigning prince to visit the country had been the Duke of Modena, who visited in

1749. Duke Francis III, had already visited England before his accession and was welcomed as a relative of the royal family and as an ally from the recently concluded War of the Austrian Succession. As such, he was an honoured guest at the Royal Fireworks on the Thames.²⁸ It was rumoured that he also had business with the ministry, hoping to win British support against unhelpful territorial redistribution in Italy; this rumour was substantiated when he was further entertained by the dukes of Bedford, Newcastle and Richmond.²⁹ Christian, however, was a less reliable ally, believed to be flirting with a French alliance in a reversal of the policy of his father Frederick V. He also had a taste for ostentation which affronted not only the personal tastes of George III but also flaunted his personal power. A foreign absolute monarch visiting Britain could conjure up all kinds of unhelpful historical identifications as George III continued to face hostility from the press and the mob in connection with the Wilkes crisis, and this is what happened regarding Christian VII.

The impression that Christian seems to have given was not only divergent from the public postures of George III, but also (unsurprisingly) from those established by George I and George II. Christian's itinerary while in London included such haunts of eighteenth-century British royalty as the theatres, but he appears to have cast quite a different impression to his British equivalents, acting with little respect for those of lower rank than himself.

"During the greatest part of the first act he never sat down. We all stood for some time, but not knowing how long it might last, we sat down. I can't say I liked his behaviour so well at the Opera... 'twas in many particulars very Boyish: he lean'd over the Box with both his elbows and head, and that several times, which made me think on what the Princess of Hesse had said: that he had not the manners of a King."³⁰

²⁸ *London Evening Post* 3360, 16 May 1749

²⁹ *Whitehall Evening Post* 504, 13 May 1749; 505, 16 May 1749

³⁰ Coke, *Journals* i, p 335

Lady Mary Coke may well have been prejudiced against the Danish king from the outset but he seems to have not provided her with any cause to change her mind on this occasion. Not only did he behave uncouthly but he also broke the rules of royal self-presentation at the theatre as established by George I. The impression one receives is that for most of the eighteenth century the king and the royal family had made an effort to appear as 'incognito' as was possible, maintaining awareness of their status but not allowing it to overwhelm the audience and the production. Christian VII, by contrast, displayed a lack of humility and an exaggerated sense of his own importance.

Christian's royal absolutism struck directly at the comparatively recent historical circumstances that had shaped the eighteenth-century British monarchy. It was widely reported that "When the King was shewn an original picture of Oliver Cromwell by Cowper, belonging to Sidney College, he turned to one of his nobles, and said, *il me fait peur* [He makes me tremble]." It was judged that this was "A proper sensation for a despotick Monarch, on the sight of that fierce republican".³¹ Cromwell was of course credited with the beheading of Charles I, who in popular political mythology at least had much in common with the visiting Danish autocrat in his use of the royal prerogative. At his accession in 1760 George III had been associated with Charles I in a positive light, as a patron of the arts; it seems that for more of the decade it was fashionable to view him as seeking to restore pre-revolutionary prerogatives, and the report of Christian's alleged remark in Cambridge could have been a thinly-veiled warning. The prominence of Christian's favourite, Count Holke, provided ammunition for critics who saw evidence of the continuing but secret influence of

³¹*LC* xxiv, no 1830, 8 Sep 1768, p 234

Lord Bute at the heart of government, by-passing the constitutional apparatus of parliament and official appointments. Exaggerated importance was given in at least one report to Bute's movements, alleging that he had departed to the Netherlands to avoid the visit of the Danish king; the supposed reason is not stated, but it might have been to avoid the inevitable comparisons.³² These continued throughout the Danish king's visit: "Mr Selwyn says," wrote Mrs Delany, "that the King of Denmark and his favourite are strollers that act the part of our King and Lord B."³³ Christian's behaviour led to fears of what could happen if secret influence became overt, and a British monarch became free to publicly indulge his whims if unchecked, over and above constitution and custom, as James II had allegedly done.

Christian aroused these fears not just because of his behaviour but because he seemed to invite interest in and approval for royal absolutism. Though Horace Walpole thought him "a very silly lad", he noted "the mob adore him, though he has neither done or said anything worth repeating".³⁴ Walpole failed to appreciate the significance of the way that Christian VII demanded attention. One action of the visiting Danish monarch was to make a tour of his brother-in-law's kingdom on a near-unprecedented scale. Although he never went beyond England, he did spend some days in the north, an area only previously enjoyed by royal siblings in the eighteenth century, and in comparatively recent times as well; apart from Cumberland's Scottish campaign only Edward, Duke of York, of the royal family had ventured as far north as Yorkshire by the time of Christian's visit. Christian caused more

³²*LC* xxiv, no 1822, 20 Aug, p 169

³³*The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, ed. Augusta, Lady Llanover, 2nd series, i (London, 1862), p 169 (to Miss Dewes, 17 October 1768)

³⁴*HWC* xxiii, p 57 (to Mann, 22 Sep 1768)

problems, as his schedule seems to have been changing constantly, leaving some local authorities, such as Portsmouth, on alert for his arrival in vain, while others, such as Manchester, were taken by surprise when the monarch arrived on their doorsteps.³⁵ The greetings that awaited Christian in some parts of the country confirmed the worst fears of his critics. When in Buckinghamshire, Christian was welcomed by a triumphal arch at Stowe, in which Earl Temple appeared to praise the benefits of the Danish sovereign's absolute monarchy.³⁶ Similar sentiments seem to have been displayed at nearby Buckingham, prompting 'Aruspex' to write:

"Do the people of Buckingham then acknowledge the unbounded power of the King of Denmark over them? And therefore do they withdraw their allegiance from their lawful Sovereign..? Or do they imagine that his Danish Majesty is the universal monarch, or the King of Kings? and that on that account such loyal acknowledgements are consentaneous with their duty to the King of Great Britain?"³⁷

There were those who wrote to the press to defend the monarchy of George III as well as those who wrote to attack that of Christian VII. A letter from the Kensington physician and royal sinecurist Dr John Hill in the *London Chronicle* contrasted the vulgar displays of benevolence that Christian engaged in with the anonymous donations to the genuinely worthy made by King George and Queen Charlotte.³⁸ Christian, however, had his adherents, and there were many who lauded him as an enlightened monarch, whose principles were not far removed from those of the English gentleman, and as such proved no threat to the established order in Great Britain. A backlash against the reports of Christian's fear of

³⁵ *LC* xxiv, no 1831, 10 Sep 1768, p 246; no 1833, 15 Sep 1768, p 258

³⁶ *LC* xxiv, no 1835, 20 Sep 1768, p 274

³⁷ *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser* 12342, 21 Sep 1768

³⁸ *LC* xxiv, no 1830, 8 Sep 1768

Cromwell included a letter claiming that Christian was "A Prince who abhors Despotism, and hates and scorns, even the Name of a Despotee", who had no fear of falling under the axe of a Danish revolution.³⁹ The debate was one which could not expect to be satisfactorily resolved; but at least the press had no trouble filling their columns while Christian was in England, providing readers with novelty while continuing and reviving contemporary themes relating to the historical justification for contemporary political ideas. The importance of Christian was that his activities raised questions of the nature of monarchy itself.

With the exception of the visit of the Archduke Charles under the style of King Charles III of Spain in the reign of Queen Anne, Christian was the first king to visit England during the eighteenth century. This did not stop precedents for his visit being sought by the press from earlier periods. These included one from a period the Hanoverians usually felt safe in adopting, the fourteenth century, although it was not necessarily the most auspicious for a visitor, having been the residence of John II of France in the Savoy when a prisoner of Edward III. Nonetheless, it did provide the opportunity for remembrance of pageantry past, which was appropriate to the conduct of Christian VII; it was remembered that one Lord Mayor had not only entertained Edward III and John II but the latter's fellow-prisoner David II of Scotland and the visiting King of Cyprus, Peter I.⁴⁰ Christian's nationality was used by some commentators as an opportunity to remark upon the close ties between the English and the Danes. Christian's visit to some traces of the Danish settlements in England near Cambridge were remarked upon; the relationship between the English and Danish royal houses was dated back to the reign of "Gormo III, 75th King of Denmark", who married

³⁹*Public Advertiser* 10570, Wed 14 Sep 1768

⁴⁰*Public Advertiser* 10578, 24 Sep 1768

Thyra, daughter of Edward the Elder of England, in the tenth century.⁴¹ A more recent alliance had been that between James I and Anne of Denmark, whose brother Christian IV had visited in 1606. Christian VII was reported to have commented upon the earlier visitor's portrait at Hampton Court, and other details of his forefather's visit were reproduced for the benefit of the 1768 readership.⁴² Such comparisons might have been unhelpful for George III and his court; George III had first wished that Christian would avoid visiting Britain, and later attempted to control him as far as was possible.

A nervousness about the projection and exercise of royal authority undoubtedly existed in Britain in the 1760s. As seen at Buckingham, the requirements laid on provincial authorities to entertain Christian in an appropriate manner often entailed the celebration of the visiting monarch in a manner that endorsed his autocratic rule. Such endorsements could embarrass the Hanoverian monarchy not only politically but also in that it displayed an appetite from localities for royal progresses of a kind that had not been made in the eighteenth century - there were calls for Christian to visit Wales, and it was rumoured that he would depart for the continent from Scotland.⁴³ There were expectations that Christian's visit would set a precedent for more protracted excursions by members of the British royal family, following his example.⁴⁴ However, other press remarks indicate that public opinion was still

⁴¹*Lloyd's Evening Post* 1746, Wed 14 Sep 1768, p 258

⁴²*LC* xxix, no 1832, Tue 13 Sep, p 234; *Lloyd's Evening Post* 1737, 24 Aug 1768, quoting from Sir Edward Peyton's *Divine Catastrophe of the Kingly Family of the House of Stuart*.

⁴³*Public Advertiser* 10544, 15 August 1768; *LC* xxix, no 1843, 8 October 1768, p 339

⁴⁴*LC* xxix, no 1828, 3 September 1768, p 218

expected to be hostile to a more flamboyant and publicly assertive monarchy. A saying attributed to the actor Quin, "that all the Kings in Europe, one only excepted, walked every 30th of January with a stiff neck", indicated that the reading public was still expected to take pride in George III as the defender of their liberties.⁴⁵ George III may not have enjoyed great popularity in his capital, but the basis on which his throne had been held to rest remained strong in the memory of those who sought to express popular opinion.

The visit of Christian VII came at an inopportune time for his British host, and it is difficult to see how George III could have used the visit to increase his own popularity. The use of such occasions to magnify the popularity of the monarch and his kin was unusual. Although the marriage of Anne, Princess Royal, to William Charles Henry, Prince of Orange-Nassau, in 1734, was used with some success to remind the public of the connection of the House of Brunswick - and the Walpole ministry - with the 'glorious deliverer', William III, this was unusual. Many other royal weddings were celebrated abroad or, where another foreign prince came over to marry a British princess, exposed the unpopularity of the host, such as the visit of the Prince of Brunswick in 1764. For a dynasty whose myth rested on the incarnation of the national saviour of Great Britain in a prince who came from abroad, visiting royal males with high profiles were dangerous.

Furthermore, Christian struck at the standards of royal behaviour that George III was attempting to entrench in Great Britain. Towards the end of his visit he held the first masquerade ball since the earthquake of 1750. This act potentially insulted his host as Supreme Governor of the Church of England; masquerades were technically prohibited,

⁴⁵*LC* xxix, 1831, 10 September 1768, p 242

although the ban imposed by the episcopate had been something of a dead letter for some time. Nonetheless, masquerades had been viewed as one of the foci of immorality plaguing Georgian England, and there seems to have been a level of anticipation regarding the known enthusiasm of Christian VII for the entertainment, and the corresponding lack thereof associated with George III.⁴⁶ The masquerade ball, held at the Haymarket, attracted a great deal of attention, receiving several columns worth of coverage not just in London but also in the *Scots Magazine* in Edinburgh.⁴⁷ Christian returned to the social calendar of the ruling classes forms of entertainment that did not rank highly in the favour of George III, but which accorded with entertainments enjoyed on the continent. In doing so he lent masked balls a form of legitimacy George III had denied them. He also involved the king's younger brothers in his activities, and in doing so Christian set a precedent for the sons of George III, the eldest of whom would become the embodiment of social and political opposition to his father, and whose younger sons would frequently write to their fathers with complaints that the provisions their father and parliament had made for them did not allow them to maintain their princely status.⁴⁸

The Confirmation of the Reign: the Thanksgiving of 1789

Coronations were probably the best opportunity for the monarch to receive public acclaim, but could not be repeated within a royal lifetime. Of the monarchs of the eighteenth

⁴⁶An anecdote, printed *LC* xxix 1836, 22 September 1768, runs: 'A morning paper says, a certain great Personage having asked another great Personage for his permission to give a Masquerade, was answered, "I have no objection, but how will you satisfy our Bishops?" To which he replied, "Sir, I will send them all Tickets."'

⁴⁷*Scots Magazine* xxx, 1768, pp 552-4

⁴⁸For example, see letters by Frederick Duke of York and William Duke of Clarence in Aspinall, ed, i (Cambridge, 1962), nos 517 (23 May 1789) and 518 (28 May 1789) p 417

century, George III came closest to having two coronations, in that he enjoyed a Thanksgiving Service for his recovery from madness in 1789. This contained many of the features of a coronation, in both its content and the public and press reaction to it, but unlike a coronation it was a unique event for a unique circumstance. Whereas the coronation marked the assumption of the throne by a new sovereign, and the continuance of divine approbation from one king to another, the recovery of George III was closer to a restoration, the king's incapacity having amounted to an interregnum in which the ship of state was grounded on a constitutional sandbank. "The present is a memorable aera in the British annals -" exclaimed the *London Chronicle*, "the nation at large presses forward with unbounded profusion in expressions of universal joy for the restoration of a beloved Monarch, and for the happy consequences attendant on the interesting event."⁴⁹ When banners at celebrations referred to the king being 'restored', it is likely that they referred to more than just his health; the terminology was used from the Pantheon, London, to Colebrook near Abergavenny.⁵⁰ It was as if the king's subjects were to be restored to health alongside the king. As has been noted in an earlier chapter, the accession of George I appealed to the restoration of Charles II for identification. The recovery of George III from madness used the word but did not seek so absolute a precedent, although it is arguable that his passion for Windsor made it for him. The Thanksgiving of 1789 was based far less around the dynasty and its succession than around the person of the king himself.

⁴⁹*LC* lxxv, no 5077, 21 April 1789, p 384

⁵⁰"Our beloved King is restored", situated above a transparent portrait of George III at Martindale's Club gala at the Pantheon (see *Lloyd's Evening Post* 4954, 3 April 1789, p 314; "The King restored! ye Cambrians rejoice!" on an illuminated inscription at the home of Mr Hanbury Williams (see *LC* lxxv, no 5059, p 302)

One area of comparison with accession and coronation celebrations that presents itself is the way in which the London press reported provincial celebrations of the king's recovery. As with the coronations, the London press informed the capital that the nation was unified behind its recovered king, and through London the news was diffused throughout Great Britain. Several columns in informative periodicals of various kinds were dedicated to detailed accounts of the various illuminations in London on the king's recovery, interpreting the whole as a kind of contest between various dignitaries to display their loyalty to George III.⁵¹ As for the country at large, a few days later comes "Advices from EVERY PART of the country are filled with particulars of the rejoicings and illuminations on the happy event of his Majesty's recovery. To particularize only the names of the places, would make our pages an *Index Villaris*. "⁵² What is noticeably different is that the prevailing theme is not the securing of the dynasty, or even of the king as the representative of the dynasty, but of the king himself. Among the many examples of displays and festivities recorded, perhaps the most expressive was that of Mr Silvester of Cannon Street, Manchester, who displayed slogans including "The King lives; Glory to God in the highest, on Earth Peace, Good-will towards Men; G. III^d. R. glories in the name of Britons; Britons glory in the name of G. III^d. R." as well as a large medallion depicting the genii of England, Scotland and Ireland presenting their shields to the king, illustrating that the realm was only united by the recovery of George III to health.⁵³ The Britain that Silvester depicted was not so much the parliamentary monarchy with its constitution constructed so as to best guarantee English liberties, but a dynastic union of territories which could not function without the personal

⁵¹*GM* lix, 1789, pp 270-1; *Lloyd's Evening Post* lxiv 4944, 11 March 1789, p 238

⁵²*GM* lix, 1789, p 273

⁵³*LC* lxv, no 5060, 31 March 1789, p 308

involvement of George III.

As described in the chapter dealing with the celebrations of accessions and coronations, the theme prevalent in 1714, 1727 and 1760-1 was that of the House of Brunswick as the heirs of William III and the Williamite tradition of the kings of Great Britain as the defenders of Protestantism, an emphatically European role for George I and George II, and a more national one for George III. In 1789, the dynastic element, which could happily have been applied, seems to be almost exclusively the province of the gala held by Brook's Club at 'the Opera House'. Ostensibly to celebrate the king's recovery, a more accurate description of it might be that it was a wake for the Regency that never was. While George III was a prominent subject of the gala decorations, supported by the goddess of health, George I and George II also featured, in a fashion associating them with Britannia and the country's naval power; the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York appear to have figured twice, once held aloft by Concord with the motto 'Quis separabit?', the second time paying tribute to the Glorious Deliverer himself, William III.⁵⁴ The symbolism came dangerously close to identifying George III with James II, the Prince of Wales becoming the true representative of dynastic principles betrayed by his father's exercise of arbitrary power. The event's political agenda was made emphatic by the ode written by Merry for Mrs Siddons, which praised the Prince of Wales and commended the Irish for offering him the Regency of their kingdom with more alacrity than their counterparts in the British parliament.⁵⁵ These contrasted with the greater number of celebrations in the capital, which emphasised George III and his renewed enjoyment of the royal power, George III appearing in conjunction with

⁵⁴*LC* lxv, no 5078, 23 April 1789, p 392

⁵⁵*Lloyd's Evening Post* 4963, 24 April 1789, p 390

various combinations of Britannia, the royal arms, the Union flag and the goddess of health, or, in the case of Sir Joseph Banks - ever eager, no doubt, to advance the cause of scientific knowledge - the Genius of Physic.⁵⁶

This is not to say that the Protestant icons of the earlier part of the eighteenth century had been wholly cast aside by those wishing to express their loyalty to George III in 1789. Queen Elizabeth remained a major figure in the historical armoury of the propagandist. One newspaper sought a precedent for the service for George III's recovery in that for the defeat of the Spanish Armada under Elizabeth I.⁵⁷ The same item listed other visits made by Elizabeth to St Paul's, conjuring the Spirit of a lost Merrie England, perhaps, for George III. However, no mention of Elizabeth as a defender of the Protestant religion is made. The recovery of George III is the focus, rescuing the country from the possibility of internal strife rather than from a foreign threat. Allusions to the past are made in terms that complement the other activities of George III; as the *London Chronicle* reported, Windsor was to be made the sovereign's "entire summer residence", and that improvements to the apartments would shortly be underway.⁵⁸ The report in which Monmouth stressed its special position in English royal history, as a town "whose boast and glory is that of having given birth to a Prince" in the shape of the chivalric Henry V, was entirely in keeping with the trend taken by the work commissioned by George III at Windsor.⁵⁹ Windsor became the focus for two major commemorations by the royal family of the king's recovery, in the form of two galas, one

⁵⁶*GM* lix, 1789, p 270

⁵⁷*Lloyd's Evening Post* 4958, 13 April 1789, p 349

⁵⁸*LC* lxxv no 5059, 28 March 1789, p 304

⁵⁹*ibid.*, no 5081, 30 April 1789, p 413

hosted by the queen, the other by the Princess Royal.⁶⁰ These events not only served a political purpose, as ministerial figures such as Pitt and Thurlow received invitations to both galas to compliment them on their continued loyalty during the king's malady, but also served to emphasise that George III and his family drew their authority from a particular historical context that the statute laws of 1689 and 1701 confirmed rather than transcended.

Although, as we have seen, the Thanksgiving was portrayed as taking place as part of the broad sweep of dynastic tradition, stretching back to Tudor and Plantagenet times, the press indicates that attention was paid to eighteenth-century precedents. Many of the thanksgiving services in the eighteenth century had not involved a royal procession; George II had chosen not to attend services at St Paul's in the 1740s, for example. In the light of the equivocal position of George II, caught between British and Hanoverian interests, and the concessions made to Britain's enemies at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the king's failure at this juncture to take credit for British triumphs is understandable. The nearest precedents were the public entry of George I on his arrival from the continent in 1714, and most importantly those three of the many thanksgiving services under Queen Anne which had involved processions to the City, in 1702, 1706 and 1713. Curiously, little seems to have been said on the subject of the Thanksgiving of 1715 for the peaceful accession to the throne of George I, the only ceremony of its nature which a Hanoverian monarch had attended until 1789; perhaps the occasion no longer seemed sufficiently momentous to warrant study.

With this apparent exception, the early eighteenth-century Thanksgivings were

⁶⁰*Lloyd's Evening Post* 4954, 3 April 1789, pp 317-8; 4966, 1 May 1789, pp 409-10; *GM* lix, 1789, pp 459-60

studied at the highest level. George III himself was personally concerned with questions such as whether or not the peers walked in their robes in Anne's reign.⁶¹ This had been the case, but as Thurlow explained in opposing a motion in favour of following that precedent by the Duke of Cumberland in the House of Lords, the king "would be better pleased, if their Lordships went unrobed."⁶² There was disagreement in the press over whether George III would be using the chair built for Queen Anne, but one report stated it was being repaired and enlarged to be placed in the middle of the choir, before the organ, a move which would reinforce continuity with the past as well as emphasise a certain economy on the part of George III, consistent with the policies of thrift adopted at his accession.⁶³ A further matter which amused the *London Chronicle* was whether or not there were any witnesses of the 1713 procession alive in 1789; to their satisfaction, they found the suitably anachronistic Mr Ellis, the last money-scrivener in London, and an unidentified woman in Shoreditch workhouse.⁶⁴ Mention of the public entry of George I occasioned not only a brief description of his procession, but also an anecdote about his character that complemented the praises written to George III at this time: "It was this Monarch who told the Recorder of London (Sir Peter King), That it was his maxim 'never to forsake a friend - to do justice to every body - and to fear nobody'."⁶⁵

Despite the clear sense that the recovery of George III was an event without

⁶¹Aspinall, ed., i, p 410 (20 April 1789)

⁶²*LC* lxxv, no 5079, 25 April 1789, p 398

⁶³*ibid.*, no 5076, 18 April 1789, p 370

⁶⁴*ibid.*, no 5077, 21 April 1789, p 378

⁶⁵*ibid.*, no 5072, 11 April 1789, p 345

comparison in history, an argument that the Thanksgiving was also conceived as being without precedent cannot be sustained. Features of the Thanksgiving owed much to the coronations and royal weddings of the previous decades: children from the royal charity hospitals and schools were included in the procession, for example, with regulations being introduced so that it was they, rather than an excessive number of governors and subscribers, who took the seats reserved for them in St Paul's.⁶⁶ Medals were also issued, though they seem to have been made in smaller numbers and only distributed to the 'charities'. One design, with a bust of George III on the obverse and a depiction of St Paul's on the reverse, was worn by the charity patrons at the service itself.⁶⁷ Another was reported to have been presented to the charity children of Windsor in a presentation at the Queen's Lodge the Sunday after the Thanksgiving, including the motto (ascribed to Lord Thurlow) "When I forget my King, may God forget me." The presentation was made by Princess Mary, the king's recovery being used to promote his sedate and tradition-bound domestic image, here located at Windsor, where he retreated from the cares of state.⁶⁸ The retired public persona of George III was also emphasised by his decision not to travel to the service in a 'chariot' in the fashion of Anne and George I, but instead in the coach he used to travel to the Handel commemoration concerts at Westminster Abbey. The coach, however, was adapted for the purpose of a formal occasion, the leather areas in its bodywork being replaced by glass so that the king and his people could have clear views of each other. This was presented as a compromise between the king's inclination to shun unnecessary grandeur in his public

⁶⁶ *ibid.*, no 5074, 16 April 1789, p 362; *Lloyd's Evening Post* 4961, 20 April 1789, p 373

⁶⁷ *Annual Register* XXXI, 1789 (London, 1792) p 231

⁶⁸ *LC* lxxv, no 5080, 28 April 1789, p 408

appearances, and an appreciation of his subject's affection for him.⁶⁹ George III had learned to project the private, dignified and business-like idea of kingship he had already had in the 1760s, by appropriating a similar attitude to that at times displayed by his grandmother Queen Caroline, for example, when she constructed her library overlooking St James's Park. The king remained constitutionally and personally active, but was able to express this in a manner not wholly confined to the narrow business of state affairs, of parliamentary sessions and foreign campaigns.

In some respects George III's illness and sudden recovery together formed a happy accident, allowing the monarchy to enjoy for the first time the results of the changes in the public position of the king that had taken place during the 1770s. As has already been discussed, George III did not so much innovate as develop more fully features of the monarchy that had existed during the careers of previous members of the royal house, partly as a result of the disenfranchisement of his brothers in the 1770s and the demands of the American War. George III returned in 1789 to a higher public profile than he would have experienced in 1769. Nonetheless, this profile was delineated in the press in comparisons that would have been familiar in earlier decades. Appeals to Plantagenet and Tudor precedent had always been a 'safe' historical comparison for the House of Hanover when they wanted endorsement from the past, for George I, George II, Queen Caroline, Frederick, Prince of Wales, and William, Duke of Cumberland. The Thanksgiving was accompanied by public trappings, which included participation by the military. This was in accordance with practice in Queen Anne's reign; the Horse Guards lined the King's route from St James's to Temple Bar, the Artillery Company of the City of London replacing them when the King crossed the

⁶⁹*LC* lxxv, no 5077, 21 April 1789, pp 377, 383

border from Westminster.⁷⁰

It appears that there were fewer military displays in the provinces than there were in 1761, probably more because Great Britain was not involved in a major conflict at this time. However, the weeks of the king's official resumption of business and the Thanksgiving service were marked by reviews of the second battalion of Coldstream Guards in St James's Park by the Duke of York; although these were not central to the festivities royal reviews were next to unknown during the king's illness and their return marked that the recovery of George III was also that of the seat of government.⁷¹ The grand field day of the first Foot Guards in Hyde Park on 21 April, under the supervision of the Duke of Gloucester, might have carried a similar resonance.⁷² Perhaps the most explicitly celebratory of the military displays at this time was that of the 23rd regiment when they welcomed George III on his return to Windsor after he was judged fit to leave Kew.⁷³ As this took place at some remove from the capital, it showed that although the army continued to have a role in royal celebration, it was no longer so firmly identified with the heart of the monarch's constitutional and political function as it had been in the times when George II was regularly present at military parades; furthermore, royal vigour was no longer encapsulated by the monarch appearing as the active head of his soldiery.

The shadow of the seventeenth century that had darkened impressions of royalty

⁷⁰ *Annual Register* xxxi, p 250

⁷¹ *Lloyd's Evening Post* 4945, 13 March 1789, p 245; 4961, 20 April 1789, p 373

⁷² *LC* lxiv, no 5077, 21 April 1789, p 383

⁷³ *Lloyd's Evening Post* 4945, 13 March 1789, p 241

during the visit of Christian VII, and that had also affected how the Duke of Cumberland was perceived during his military career, appeared to have been neutralised by the time of the 1789 Thanksgiving. Comparisons between George III and the autocratic rule of the Stuarts would continue to be made, particularly in the light of the revolutionary period, but during the period from 1714 to 1789 the royal family and their supporters in print and among the population during festivities were able to draw on a wider range of historical identifications which meant that even at its lowest ebb perceptions of the House of Hanover were not solely conditioned by the events of the seventeenth century which had brought the parliamentary, Protestant monarchy into being. The personal characteristics of individual members of the royal family helped. The personal charm and willingness to identify with the English and British past helped Queen Caroline bring lustre to her husband George II, as George III's lack of military experience allowed him to adopt something of the aura of soldier-princehood enjoyed by George II and by Cumberland without being stigmatised by it. The personal style of Christian VII, on his visit, evoked a reaction that can in general be characterised as confused; on the one hand he could be seen as a centre of opposition to George III, then unpopular, but on another he represented the despotism of the continent that Great Britain had shaken off. Any serious argument in the press about Christian had to contend with this; his Danish origins could be used only so far as an excuse for Gothic sentimentality. In the end, precedent was best exploited by royal events which expressed political as well as dynastic harmony that was understood by a wide section of the populace, and this is the significance of the Thanksgiving of 1789.

Precedent and Practice

The appearance of the monarch as the symbol and restorer of political harmony was

the culmination of attitudes and policies to royal presentation under George III. Yet these were in marked contrast to reactions to George III in the earlier part of his reign. In the 1760s George III was regularly accused of betraying the political nation. As mentioned above, it was thought that he was in league with his former tutor Bute for most of the decade, long after Bute had left the ministry. A plate of 1767, 'The Duumvirate', expressed the views that prevailed in many politicised quarters. George III and Bute were joined together in a serpentine frame over a depiction of the execution of Charles I.⁷⁴ George III nonetheless succeeded in finding means to express and find public recognition for his positive qualities.

In 1789 George III was represented as a patriotic sovereign, restoring the constitutional balance of the kingdom that had been threatened by the activities of the contending parties in the Regency Crisis. The most obvious parallels are with the events of 1715 and 1745-6, during the Jacobite rebellions. While the celebrations occasioned by the defeat of the Jacobites in 1715 are most frequently identified with coercion and organisation, it has been recently argued that there was substantial public support for George I outside the governing élite: "As the street theater and demonstrations suggest and loyal addresses and electoral results demonstrate, there was a fairly broad, socially heterogeneous base of support in the nation for the Whigs in the early succession years, one that included not only Whig gentry, big merchants and their middling commercial allies but also lesser tradesmen and artisans, in both London and the provinces."⁷⁵ Both George I and George II could be

⁷⁴Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People*, p 216: the plate appeared in Almon's *Political Register* for August 1767.

⁷⁵Wilson, *ibid*, p 97

successfully portrayed as defenders of Great Britain against foreign influences that would threaten their subjects' way of life and their prosperity. Likewise, in 1788-9 the recovery of George III seemed to some strands of opinion the only thing standing between the kingdom and the subversion of the nation by cultural and political currents alien to Britain. Fox and the Prince of Wales had both been conspicuous followers of French fashions in their time. While Fox in the 1780s appears to have cultivated a dishevelled appearance the Prince, some thirteen years younger than Fox, at times lavishly entertained guests from the French aristocracy, and was reported by Lady Mary Coke (admittedly no great admirer of the Prince) as having horrified George III in 1785 by appearing at court in French mourning.⁷⁶ The morals of the Foxite set, in contrast to the rectitude and piety displayed by the king and queen, were notoriously decadent.⁷⁷

The combination of moral decay and Francophilia proved an inspiring one to the caricaturists. A strand of anti-Fox propaganda depicted him as 'Charley', in one print returning, as in the Jacobite ballad, 'from over the Water', his supporters kneeling to receive him with one bearing the crown and sceptre. The presence of Burke in his accustomed cartoon guise as an Irish Jesuit, and the naming of Fox's barge as the 'Prince of Wales Cutter', conflated Foxite Whiggery with Jacobitism, and tenuously identified George Augustus Frederick with Charles Edward Stuart.⁷⁸ Although there were other drawings in which the Prince of Wales represented the imprisonment of British liberty by the usurper 'William IV', it is arguable that the identification of Fox and the Prince of Wales with the Jacobite Pretenders

⁷⁶Coke, MSS Journal Books xx, 8 December 1785

⁷⁷For Foxite morals see L.G. Mitchell, *Charles James Fox* (Oxford, 1992) pp 92-107

⁷⁸BM Prints and Drawings 7379

was the more comfortable one in terms of the representation of political conflicts during the period and of acceptable historical authentication. Pitt as the new King William, barring the rightful Prince of Wales from the throne, was surely in itself conceding the point.⁷⁹ The irony of the heirs of William III making arguments based on legitimism and hereditary right was not lost on the contemporaries of George III and his son in 1788-89. The bankruptcy and anachronism of their position was well illustrated by Gillray's 'The Funeral Procession of Miss Regency', where the Foxite coffin is followed by his supporters in the guises of Jacobites, Catholics, macaronis and demons.⁸⁰

The commemoration of 1789 was, then, not unlike earlier occasions of royal public expression in the eighteenth century in that it was born out of political discord. Frederick's tour of the western counties in 1750 operated against a background of discontent with the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle and with George II. While his father was away Frederick could advertise himself to the towns and industries frustrated by the closure of possible imperial markets as the future monarch who in the near future would govern in their interests rather than his own. As he was reported as telling the people of Cirencester,

"this ancient Town, where now (through Industry) Trade and Manufactures flourish in some Degree, may extend itself beyond the bounds of where the Roman Emperors designed to fix it: Limits may be fixed by the Despotick Will of a Roman Emperor, but none will be set by a British Prince who measures his own Grandeur by the Standard of his People's Posterity."⁸¹

⁷⁹BM Prints and Drawings 7479, 'The Modern Egbert, or the King of Kings', by Rowlandson, 8 January 1789, depicts Pitt as 'Egbert' (*recte* Edgar) being rowed on a river by four 'kings' - Thurlow, Buckingham, Dundas and Richmond, representing England, Ireland, Scotland and France, while the Prince of Wales, chained, sits in a small boat towed behind.

⁸⁰BM Prints and Drawings 7526

⁸¹*General Advertiser* 4910, 18 July 1750

The notion that the Brunswick line must continue into the distant future to guarantee the liberties of the British people was reciprocated, Frederick promising to reign in the interest of his subjects and their descendants. While the tour stated Frederick's personal manifesto it was also a partisan activity, as Frederick took advantage of his father's absence to promote himself at the same time as he was intriguing with the opponents of the ministry.⁸² The earlier visit of the Prince of Orange and the subsequent royal wedding of 1734 had been also manipulated for partisan effect. Sir Robert Walpole had used the marriage to help provide an alternative focus for the press and for public festivities at a time when there were still mass demonstrations of support for the opposition following the Excise Crisis. As has been shown, the tour of Christian VII provided opportunities for comparison and contrast with the model of British kingship as exemplified by George III; Christian, as a despotic foreign ruler, was almost an anti-Wilkes, an example of the benefits and horrors of absolute monarchy while George III was implicitly caught in a shrinking middle ground between the will of the people and tyranny.

While there were royal public occasions such as the above which sought to exploit discord, there were others which instead advocated conciliation and unity. Arguably, the construction of Merlin's Cave by Queen Caroline was one of these.⁸³ If so, then it was successful as Frederick's antipathy towards his parents and their court was sufficiently ameliorated for a successful royal wedding to take place in 1736, allowing a restatement of dynastic rhetoric concerning the revolution settlement and the Protestant succession, and a

⁸²Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy* (Cambridge, 1982) pp 257-60

⁸³See Colton, 'Merlin's Cave and Queen Caroline', and chapter four above, p 145, note 41

waterborne marriage procession that must have been one of the grandest royal spectacles in London of the eighteenth century, as the Princess proceeded from Greenwich to Lambeth before making the journey to St James's by land.⁸⁴ From the 1770s George III worked in his public activities to overcome and dispel disunity, for example by his visits to army camps during the American War, a task that would otherwise have been undertaken by his disgraced brothers. This was something of a dangerous strategy considering that there were prominent strands of opinion that sympathised with the colonists if not, as the war proceeded, their policies. In 1789 George III displayed his recovery to his people and while, as in the 1770s, he was identifying himself with ministerial policies, the ministry was this time vindicated as their defence had been that they were keeping faith with the king's recovery, a duty that the Prince of Wales and Fox had failed in.

It has recently been stated that George III could not gain recognition as a national symbol in the first decade of his reign because he presided over the unification of the political élite and so forces within the governing classes no longer had need to seek support from outside parliament.⁸⁵ While this is probably true, another reason that George III was unable to make a positive public figure was that he inherited the structure and style of British kingship from his grandfather. George III was not a revolutionary; he believed his task was to restore the constitutional balance upset by his grandfather's ministers, unaware of the ways in which George II was in some circumstances able to manage his ministers and ensure that in some situations he retained ascendancy over them.⁸⁶ The concerns that George III held for

⁸⁴*GM* vi, 1736, p 230

⁸⁵Wilson, *Sense of the People*, p 209

⁸⁶See John B. Owen, 'George II Reconsidered' in A. Whiteman, J.S. Bromley.

his own privacy and for the principle of economy in public life contributed towards a royal image that tended towards the unextraordinary once the Seven Years' War was over. As has been seen, opportunities such as the wedding of Princess Augusta were missed, and Christian VII's visit effectively written off before he arrived.

Yet the Thanksgiving of 1789 was consistent with what had preceded it in the reign of George III and in earlier reigns. The king's insistence on proceeding to St Paul's in relative modesty is reminiscent of comments on his behaviour at chapel in Windsor. The remodelling of Windsor begun in a small way in the 1770s and developed in the 1780s and beyond was at this stage a balance between the modesty of the present reign and the grandeur of the past. The royal family lived outside the castle walls while St George's Chapel was redesigned and work began on refurbishing the state rooms. In turn, the imperial triumphs with which the reign of George III had begun and in whose development the king took an interest through his patronage of voyages of discovery and of technological improvements were reflected in the alterations to Windsor, with its agricultural annexes and its astronomer in the grounds. The attachment to a royal grandeur that was remote from the centre of power both in its location at Windsor - or behind the gates of Buckingham House - and in its involvement with activities on the frontiers of British political and economic influence and human experience, complemented the gradual shift in presentation among the king's ministers, from the beribboned North to the more austere Pitt the Younger. The centre of the British state basked in its reflected glory rather than in the act of radiation.

P.G.M. Dickson, *Statesmen, Scholars and Merchants - Essays in Eighteenth-Century History presented to Dame Lucy Sutherland* (Oxford, 1973), pp 121-4

The most basic precedent, though, that made the initiative of the 1789 Thanksgiving acceptable was one that it acknowledged in itself - that royal participation in all manner of public events was commonplace and had a bearing on the spirit of the occasion. The emergent personality of the monarch as seen, for example, in prints satirising the visit to Cheltenham, shows that even when the metropolis mocked the king he was seen as plain and without airs, and was almost 'non-élite' in that he was depicted as a country farmer with nothing of kingship about him.⁸⁷ A similar image appears as a detail in a print of the 1790s depicting the debauchery of the Prince of Wales, affecting a contrast between the prince, neglectful of his wife and intent upon luxurious living, and his settled parents.⁸⁸ As has been seen, the Foxite Whigs congratulated George III on his recovery in traditional terms, emphasising the dynasty and the virtues of the constitution rather than the person of the king.

The master stroke of the 1789 Thanksgiving was that it took an act of private worship and combined it with popular celebration to create an act of royal theatre with St Paul's as a stage. It was successful, however, because it built on royal and public familiarity with members of the royal family being seen in informal settings, established since the reign of George I and earlier. Particular precedents included the various concerts that the royal family had been associated with such as the Handel Commemoration series, which in the Thanksgiving were blended with the neglected strand of public ceremonial. 1789 might have seen eighteenth-century popular enthusiasm for the royal family reach its climax; but it was an apogée with a long history and unachievable without several decades of invention and

⁸⁷BM Prints and Drawings 7355: 'The Happy Couple, or a Visit to Cheltenham'

⁸⁸BM Prints and Drawings 8810: 'Future Prospects, or Symptoms of Love in High Life'; commented upon in Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Age of George III* (New Haven, 1996) p 102

accommodation on the part of many generations of royalty

Conclusion

Theory and Opportunity

The Theory and Practice of Royal Self-presentation 1714-1789

In a sense the Thanksgiving of 1789 had seen the final exorcism of the constitutional demons that had haunted both the conduct and public perception of the royal family and also eighteenth-century political culture as a whole. If they returned, they returned transformed by the new political alchemy of the French Revolution. The recovery of King George III authenticated the political stability that had been threatened by the political battles during his illness; the restoration of the country to constitutional harmony was marked publicly in language that was not unlike that which had welcomed George I on his arrival from Hanover. The fact that no direct comparisons with the return of Charles II from exile seem to have been made might indicate that, by the middle of the reign of George III, what it is tempting to call the 'Long Restoration' was over. This period had lasted from 1660, as the monarchy and the royal family adapted to the rapidly evolving society that was Great Britain. They attempted to find a balance between the traditional prerogatives of English kingship as the Stuarts had understood them and as they would probably have been understood elsewhere in Europe, and the demands of an increasingly commercial society. This society was a Britain which was becoming less and less reliant on traditional social and economic structures, but where other political institutions could still justify their autonomous privileges with historical precedents just as the monarch could his own. As those institutions depended on the monarch to confirm their legitimacy, they were dependent on the continuation of the monarchy as an institution; thus its reinvention after

1688-89.

Some might find that the idea of a 'Long Restoration' potentially misleading, obscuring the changes wrought in England and Great Britain following the Revolution of 1688. However, I find that it provides a shorthand explanation for the elements of continuity that existed between the legacy of the seventeenth-century British royal family and the practices of their eighteenth-century successors. George I and George II faithfully followed the letter of the later Stuart court calendar, observing religious festivals doggedly. They followed some of the habits of Charles II, even if tentatively. Both made occasional visits to Windsor Castle, George I even taking up residence there for a short period, as well as to Charles's horse-racing resort of Newmarket.¹ The practice of royal self-presentation under King George II and Queen Caroline came close to Anne's attempts at reviving court splendour. As has been seen in chapter four, when discussing the state of the royal palaces, under the first two Hanoverian monarchs innovation was based upon foundations laid by William III. The habits of George I and George II, then, reflected and perhaps reinforced their dynastic propaganda; it was more important to follow in the footsteps of both 'restorers' than to assert that one was setting new precedents.

Indeed, the circumstances of the royal family were such that they were in danger of appearing to ape their subjects rather than demonstrate their ascendancy over them if they

¹ Mrs Delany remembered visiting Windsor with her first husband Alexander Pendarves in 1722, and walking early in the morning to avoid meeting anyone from court as George I was resident there. *The Autobiography of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, ed. Rt. Hon. Lady Llanover, 1st series, i (London, 1861) p 89

did attempt innovation. Although Caroline may have thought the experiment worthwhile, George II seems in the end to have considered a profusion of decorative projects damaging to the credibility of the monarchy. The aspirations that George III seems to have held towards Winchester Palace proved impossible to execute and the king's country residence was eventually settled at Windsor, initially in relatively modest accommodation as George III reconstructed parts of the castle to fit his aspirations and needs. The relationship between royalty and its public appearance was no longer dependent on building a splendid court and developing the institutions of the state around the personality of a dominant monarch, but instead was based on the individual efforts of members of the royal family. In effect the image of a collective royal family began to emerge, of individuals representing the sovereign rather than a monarchy that depended on the personal stamp of the king alone. The monarch remained the leading figure, even if he was rarely reported outside the capital. Nevertheless, the realities of the eighteenth-century settlement, including the grandiosely flaunted power of the greater members of the nobility, could enable the junior members of the family to have more freedom of movement as a practical consideration.

Eighteenth-century British royalty were no longer automatically the focus of social life in the capital, a factor which weakened their position and that of the monarchy as a social as well as a political institution. The active involvement of members of the Brunswick dynasty in functions such as theatrical performances, masquerades and in visits to fashionable spas such as Bath and Tunbridge Wells from one standpoint confirmed the sterility of the court. From another, however, it showed that the royal family could reinforce their position in the country by participating in fashionable public entertainments. Anne had visited Bath, but in

the manner of a royal progress; her Hanoverian kin would visit on a smaller scale and were in any case more vigorous than the sickly Stuart queen. When he visited the theatre, George I was able to immerse himself in an activity shared by paying members of the public and at the same time maintain his dignity and his rank in society. The fact of his appearance at the theatre influenced the material being performed and in doing so allowed aspects of his personality to become known. His descendants continued this practice and established a tradition. Most of the appearances of this nature were made by junior members of the royal family, rather than by the reigning monarch. This was because they had no constitutional role other than as heirs to the throne, and only successive princes of Wales were impelled by their immediacy to the throne to act on this position. The relative informality of the position of the minor princes and princesses enabled them to have social relations with a broader circle. This could and did have consequences that could appal the monarch of the day, such as the unorthodox marriages of William, Duke of Gloucester, and Henry, Duke of Cumberland, revealed in 1771. However, their relative social availability in comparison with their brother no doubt contributed to the approaches made to them to become patrons of worthy voluntary associations.

The fragmentation of the royal family was a fact of the eighteenth-century situation, but its effects were not all negative. The rivalries between fathers and sons enabled alternative plans for the roles of the British monarch and his family to be laid out and acted upon. The sons of Frederick, Prince of Wales, to some extent inherited their father's interests and agenda and also benefited from the increasing acceptance of the identification of British royalty with imperial glories. The triumphs of George II and his son William, Duke of

Cumberland during the 1740s were remembered in the 1750s at the onset of the Seven Years' War even though the military glory of that campaign was to shine on non-royal generals and on Britain's ally Frederick the Great. Nonetheless, association with the war further increased the prestige of the royal family as a whole, an aura enhanced by the accession of the youthful George III. When members of the royal family accepted hospital patronships and presidencies, or were welcomed on visits to the provinces, in the late 1750s and 1760s, it was against this background and climate of acceptance of the family's importance. 'Rival' members of the royal family, such as the brothers Frederick of Wales and William of Cumberland, covered different social areas and had different career patterns. In this way the royal family ensured that it, and by extension the monarchy, was involved with a wide spectrum of enterprise in Great Britain, even if only peripherally. If it was reported in the press, and the news was distributed around the kingdom, then this was enough to contribute towards the impression of an involved reigning house.

The reasons why the opportunities for patriotic display that Linda Colley looks for were never taken up lie in the circumstances in which members of the royal family mingled with other sectors of eighteenth-century British society. In the reigns of George I and George II at least, the monarch by himself was unable to appear as a father of all his people, because of the politically partisan role which the first two Hanoverian kings felt was the most effective way in which they could retain a personal interest in affairs of state. The monarch was in no position to determine the unity of his people by staging lavish ceremonial events; they would run the risk of attracting and focussing opposition, and further identifying the king with one party. By allowing members of the royal family to pursue their own careers and itineraries,

the monarchy was enabled to take a representative role for a broad section of interests within the population. This was most realistically the case for the male members of the family, with more independence from the court than their aunts, sisters and nieces, a court which could no longer act as a focus for loyalty to the monarch by its own powers of attraction alone. The opportunities for an unchallenged, court-led celebration of the monarch and the country were not present for most of the period because the nature of the court, and the monarch's headship of the nation, precluded it. They were present, up to a point, in 1749 because George II and his second son had gained some popularity from their conduct in the War of the Austrian Succession, almost the last hurrah of a depiction of British monarchy that was primarily cast from a martial mould. In 1789 the recovery of George III could be celebrated because the opposition of his eldest son had been neutralised.

The festivities would not have been practical, however, had George III in the first twenty-eight years of his reign not appropriated those aspects of royalty's role in Britain developed by members of the family other than the monarch and applied them to himself. The process had begun at the beginning of the reign, when George III had maintained the patronage of voluntary associations that he had inherited from his father when Prince of Wales. In the first decade of his reign what might be considered the more overt aspects of the embryonic Frederician monarchy were absent. There was no progress to the West Country as Frederick had made in 1750, nor was there an immediate flowering of a 'patriotic' court culture, as some might have hoped Frederick would provide until his unexpected death. However, as Frederick's younger sons reached maturity they became connected to hospitals as their father and brother had been, as well as pursuing military careers of a sort closed to

Frederick and George III, but encouraged in William, Duke of Cumberland. Although none of the brothers of George III were as assiduous nor as influential military men as their uncle they were the most likely figures by the close of the 1770s to be the representatives of royalty at military reviews and at visits to camps. They also followed the patterns of social leadership and integration established by their father and his siblings, appearing in fashionable society in London and outside it in provincial towns or country estates as Frederick, Cumberland or Princess Amelia had done. Amelia, of course, survived well into the reign of George III, continuing to make public appearances during her social engagements for some time.

While it has become conventional to view the emergence of the royal family as a concept as a product of the reign of George III, it already existed in such a fashion by that king's accession that it could condition the way in which the style of kingship associated with George III evolved.² His assumption of the patriarchal role over the royal family was asserted most obviously through the Royal Marriages Act. One of the consequences of this piece of legislation was that George III took over activities which had not been carried out to the same degree by kings earlier in the century. Actions such as his visits to military camps during the American War thus effectively extended the boundaries of his sphere of paternal responsibility. The disgrace of his brothers had of course resulted in their availability for such tasks being compromised if not drastically reduced. Nevertheless the brothers and their wives continued to appear in society, as the sons of George III would with their irregular spouses

²For a recent article on the nature of the royal family in the period immediately following the conclusion of that covered by this thesis, see Marilyn Morris, 'The Royal Family and Family Values in Late Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of Family History* xxi, 1996

and mistresses. The assertion of a morally proper royal family model alongside the less domestically correct realities manifested by the conduct of most of the princes of the blood royal in the reign of George III might have been a dichotomy, but the parallel existence of the two patterns probably helped ensure that the royal family retained the social lead in the late eighteenth century both for libertines and for moralists.

The nature of the relationship between eighteenth-century royalty and the public world was not a continually consistent one. The British royal family that emerged from the Hanoverian succession in 1714 had to find its feet in an age of radically changing political and social assumptions, when codes of behaviour no longer necessarily matched the realities of their position. When George II pined for Hanover he was not only wishing for the country of his birth, but for an atmosphere of courtly deference which was permissible in an enlightened continental despotism but not in the oligarchic parliamentary system he had inherited in Great Britain. When the state of the royal palaces was regretted during the eighteenth century, the critics were to some degree unwittingly in sympathy with George II. That king recognised that the age in which the activities of the court merited the construction of fine buildings in which to frame them could not be recreated without seeming to compete too consciously with the wealthy magnate subjects of the monarch. Royalty might compromise its position at the apex of the constitutional settlement if it failed to match aristocratic magnificence. Instead - as that king himself had done while Prince of Wales - the family of George II went out into the world, if not to seek their fortune, then to show themselves as useful individuals and part of the society at which their father and later grandfather was placed at the head. It was this activity which provided as much of a

precedent for George III as the Stuart court of the previous century.

While the personal characteristics and circumstances of George III were obviously of importance in defining how he reached the levels of popularity attained in 1789, they could not have had the effect that they did without the precedent of several decades of royal involvement with numerous public causes and entertainments. Such events were reported by the expanding press and circulated so that, even though the centre of royal life was very definitely London, the public image of the monarch and his family remained current in remote parts of the country. What were to a wide public the defining characteristics of royalty - attention to trade and commerce, interest in improving the moral and physical welfare of the unfortunate, and a focus for celebrating the triumphs of the nation - were eventually personified and developed by George III. The activities of his parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents and great-grandfather established the public sphere of influence for the British royal family, independent from and yet inter-relating with the constitutional role of the monarch. The emergence of the 'family monarchy' under George III was the result of slow evolution rather than sudden political trauma. It relied on the emergence of a royal family that consisted of individuals of whom the king was the head, rather than on the glorification of a court which was only one of many centres of social and political intercourse for the powerful and those who sought their attention.

Opportunities for Further Investigation

The court has been one of many features in this thesis which have largely been silent participants in the discourse. The reasons for not devoting more space to a thorough analysis

of the court and the royal household have been outlined in the introduction; however, there are avenues for exploration of these subjects that this thesis leads me to suggest.

The court of the early eighteenth century has been well explored in two books: J.M Beattie's *The English Court in the Reign of George I*, and more recently *The Augustan Court*, by R.O. Bucholz, dealing with the court of Queen Anne. These books reveal courts with varying levels of effectiveness and indeed, contrasting aspirations. It might be possible to argue that the court of George I was a more successful institution because the aims of that monarch for the court were principally that it should operate as a sphere in which the king could establish and develop his political influence, whereas Anne's were less clearly conceived, more wide-ranging, and took the interest of the governing classes in the court for granted, as if it would always remain an effective arena for their political and social ambitions.³ Whether or not the court succeeded in attracting persons of weight may have depended to a very large extent upon the personality and ability of the monarch. Horace Walpole complained about the moribund atmosphere of the court of George II towards the end of that king's reign:

There is a Court indeed as near as Kensington, but where the Monarch is old, the courtiers are seldom young; they sun themselves in a window like flies in autumn, past even buzzing, and to be swept away in the first hurricane of a new reign.⁴

George III incorporated into his household (as Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte) the novelist Fanny Burney, an appointment complementing the informal role of

³ R.O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court*, (Stanford, 1993) pp 249-50

⁴ *HWC*, xx, p 438 (to Sir Horace Mann, 5 July 1754)

court astronomer given to Herschel. George III clearly welcomed into his company people of learning such as Georg Christoph Lichtenberg and Sir Joseph Banks, and artists such as John Zoffany, Benjamin West, or the engraver Sir Robert Strange, who produced at least one print glorifying the royal family with the monarch's blessing.⁵ Such appointments can give the impression of a vibrant court but this was also a court in retreat from the world of active politics and the *beau monde* of London. A possible course would be to explore how great an impact the intellectual interests of George III had on household appointments as a whole, and in that case how far such appointments could be viewed as matters of royal presentation. While it is undoubtedly the case that the duties assigned to Fanny Burney as an attendant to Queen Charlotte were onerous and real ones, her accomplishments were always remembered in the household. The king and queen did not seem to be able to fully comprehend that the situation they provided was not one from which new works could emerge, but it is clear that in their own eyes, and those of the press, they benefited from having the authoress in their company.⁶ It might be worthwhile to see how many household appointments fell into a similar category, and what precedents they had in earlier reigns, when the court is considered to have been more closely tied to high politics.

The conclusions of this thesis could be further tested by approaching the issue of

⁵ *The Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, ed. Charlotte Barrett (London, 1891) ii, p 310; the engraving in question is that of Benjamin West's 'The Apotheosis of Prince Octavius', for which see Oliver Millar, *The Later Georgian Pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen* (London, 1969) no 1149, p 130; also p 209 above

⁶ *ibid*, ii, pp 418-21 – *The World* claims that Fanny Burney is to resign from her place as Keeper of the Robes in order to become governess to the royal princesses, a claim which she vehemently disavows to Queen Charlotte.

royal self-presentation from a non-metropolitan position. In this thesis I have looked for the emergence and application of a practical ideology for eighteenth-century royalty among visits by members of the royal family to the provinces, but has largely looked at the subject from a metropolitan standpoint. This is because it has concentrated on the London press (for reasons explained in the introduction) and because the manuscript sources used have come principally from authors who were close to the court. The visit of a member of the royal family to a provincial town must have involved a great deal of preparation; it would be a remarkable civic event, and reflected well on the local administration of the day. Points of comparison could be found by studying in closer detail than I felt possible in this thesis the forms of celebration used to celebrate occasions in the eighteenth-century commemorative calendar. These included not only the monarch's birthday and similar royal anniversaries, but also marked historical events such as the Gunpowder Plot. Acts of commemoration across the country were repeated throughout the year, each locality having its own variations on the form according to socio-economic determinants which themselves varied through the century, as referred to in chapter two. In this context the arrival of a member of the royal family in a provincial centre could be examined in terms of the town's existing celebratory framework, accommodating the visitor within local expectations and the provincial social scale where royalty momentarily brought everyone closer to the metropolis.

The mechanics of household appointments and the world of the royal visit lead on to another area in which London-centred royal life interacted with the provinces. This thesis has concentrated on appearances by royalty in parts of the country outside London, and the way in which they were reported to a wider public in the press. For the provincial official, their

visit to the capital, to be received at court by the sovereign and to receive an honour such as a knighthood, was perhaps a more worthwhile sign of royal pleasure than a potentially troublesome royal visit. Excursions by civic representatives would usually be in order to present a loyal address to the king, that congratulated him on a personal event such as the birth or wedding of a child or grandchild, or on a particular measure carried by the ministry. Obviously the circumstances of such addresses depended on the political context, both at national and local level; the interests of provincial landowners, town merchants, members of parliament, members of the corporation and other categories of people would all have their part to play, depending on the locality concerned. The dignifying of provincial representatives helped garner loyalty to the Crown. An investigation of this process could explore the course which corporations took to have their leaders received by the monarch and which particular occasions during the period encouraged the greater number of loyal addresses. From there, it would be possible to compare different boroughs and periods within the duration of the thesis, and see how far, when and where emphasis was placed on the virtues of the monarch as distinct from the measures of a particular ministry, and indeed if that distinction is ever appropriate.

In this thesis I have not devoted a great deal of attention to the effects that conjunctions of royal events and ministerial politics had on the representation of the monarchy. This is because, as stated above in the introduction, I was anxious not to write a history of royalty and ministerial politics, but instead look outside the arena of Whitehall and Westminster to discover how the Hanoverians were represented to the wider population. Having evolved an approach, it would be useful to see how public opinion concerning

members of the royal family was affected by paying greater attention to the actions of ministers. The thesis has included some examples of royal events, which occurred at politically climactic junctures. For example, the royal wedding of 1734 assisted Sir Robert Walpole in his attempt to redirect popular politics away from opposition to the Excise and towards patriotic expressions of support for the Protestant settlement as another William of Orange arrived, this time to claim a bride rather than a kingdom. The tours made by the Prince of Orange during his extended stay in the country proved in some cases of assistance to Walpole in that they could help neutralise foci of opposition. The visit of the Prince to Oxford University was preceded by the reception by George II of the Earl of Arran, Chancellor of the University and brother of the exiled Jacobite leader the Duke of Ormonde.⁷ This was a significant event given the prejudices of both Oxford and the Earl's family against the Hanoverian dynasty. The attempts by George III to bring an unprecedented harmony to the political world of the 1760s were in part frustrated by the odium in which several sections of opinion held him and his mentor Lord Bute, particularly in the capital. A recent article has shown that members of the court assumed the much-caricatured alleged romantic liaison between Bute and Augusta, Princess Dowager of Wales, to be underway from the mid-1750s, and how the mistake came to be made. The assumption that the Princess and Bute were having an affair was made by members of the court who should have known better, but allowed their suspicion and disdain of Bute to cloud their judgement on the issue.⁸ In this case court politics and gossip together created an atmosphere of innuendo which was

⁷ *London Evening Post* 978, 26 February 1734

⁸ John L. Bullion, 'The Origins and Significance of Gossip about Princess Augusta and Lord Bute, 1755-1756' in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 21, 1991

detrimental to the place of George III in the opinions of his subjects.

I have identified the withering of the monarchy's formal quasi-priestly role with the rise of the voluntary charities, administered by elected boards on which members of the nobility played their part alongside representatives of the medical profession and those who had prospered from trade. This provided an outlet for the monarch's traditional association with almsgiving, dramatically extending the base on which this custom was exercised. There would appear to be room for exploring how far the public perception of royal authority and dignity had rested on the church in the seventeenth century, and then examining the extent to which perceptions of royalty in the eighteenth century were affected. Certainly religious issues were closely bound up with the needs of government; if too many people embraced what was after all an explanation of the universal order that was different from that approved of by the government then the constitution of the kingdom was threatened. The expressions of anxiety over the Lutheranism of George I have been discussed above in chapter two. The neutralisation of Convocation by the ministry under George I might have seemed to hasten what appears with hindsight to have been a secularising process, but the preoccupation of successive members of the royal family with the improvement of natural knowledge can itself be seen as the product of a widespread desire to learn of a universe at which God was still central.

Indeed, the British monarchy seems to have been more certain of its relationship with God than the French monarchy was. Successive measures in the eighteenth century to reform Catholic life, in order that it would not hinder the effective operation of the centralised state,

eventually undermined the ideological basis on which the absolute monarchy of Louis XIV and his descendants rested.⁹ In England and to a differing degree in Scotland the Church was integrated into the parliamentary monarchy, where in France the Catholic Church was another ancient institution claiming its own legitimacy and rights in the face of competing interests. Closer attention to published sermons at occasions where royalty was being commemorated or some military victory celebrated could shed light on how the Church accorded significance to the monarch and his family in Great Britain. Regard should also be paid to Protestant Dissenters, who were very much part of the pan-Protestant coalition to which the literature endorsing the Hanoverian succession appealed. Roman Catholicism in Great Britain is also important as it was a potential source of opposition despite diminished numbers and status. Acquiescence in, if not support for, the continuation of the Brunswick line on the British throne must have preceded by some years the crucial endorsements of George III which came from Quebec and then from Rome in the 1760s.

Further exploration of the subject covered by this thesis could also involve examining royalty's depiction in material culture. Although prints have been consulted at particular junctures there is still space for a more detailed study of royalty in popular engravings, whether in portraits or political satires. In addition, the eighteenth century saw the development of commemorative wares. These included fans, which were certainly produced for the wedding of Princess Anne to the Prince of Orange in 1734. Commemorative pottery was also produced during the century. A study could involve a survey of centres of

⁹ See Jeffrey Merrick, *The Desacralization of the French Monarchy in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge, 1990)

production and attempt to establish circulation areas and numbers in relation to the particular events being celebrated. Greater attention could be devoted to the depictions of members of the royal family in portraiture and in statuary, taking note of locations, dates, and choices of subject. Study of these subjects could compare treatment of royalty between different parts of Great Britain and Ireland and also the priority allocated to royalty in comparison with local dignitaries or alternative national figures.

This thesis has identified several of the ways in which royalty was perceived in the eighteenth century, and also how those perceptions changed during the century as the priorities of monarchs and their relatives accommodated new developments. It has laid emphasis on continuities because it has been too easy for previous historians to assign priority to sudden shifts in the public depiction and self-presentation of royalty without recognising the bases on which these changes rested. Fanny Burney wrote in 1789 that

"The recovery of the King is a blessing unspeakable both in its extent and force. He little before knew the general loyalty and attachment of the nation. The nation knew it not, indeed, itself.¹⁰

Fanny Burney's comments are a pardonable exaggeration in the circumstances. Throughout the period various media had grown up through which the notion of monarch and people was imprinted on the landscape of the political imagination. These channels, be they institutions or print media, enhanced the traditional forms of displaying loyalty to the sovereign and ensured that the three Hanoverian monarchs of the eighteenth century were able to remain the centres of popular ritual and relevant figures at the apex of the social and

¹⁰ *The Diary and Letters of Madame D'Arblay*, iii, p 176

political hierarchy. Not only did they establish themselves but the preoccupations of the dynasty with what might be thought of as the 'efficient' - technological and cultural advance - was from an early date complementing the achievements of Great Britain overseas. George I might have been a continental prince with European concerns, but it was his entanglement and that of his descendants with Great Britain that moulded the interests of a German princely family into a form which already by mid-century seemed appropriate to the imperial identity of an increasingly assertive nation.

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