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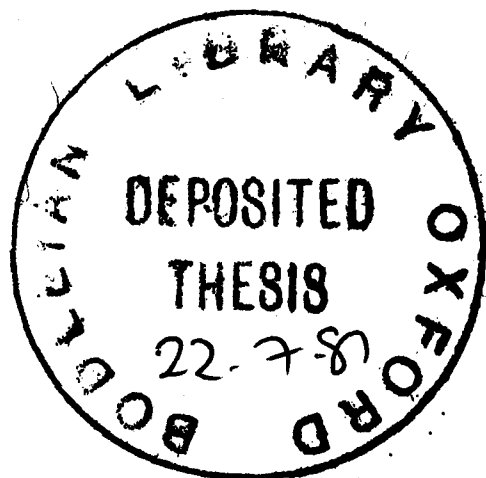
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ABSTRACT

The fifth Earl of Carlisle's name appears regularly in works dealing with English political history of the later eighteenth century, but our knowledge of his life and works is nevertheless scanty. Accordingly this thesis seeks to furnish a fairly complete picture of Lord Carlisle, placing special emphasis on his contribution to politics and dealing at some length with his public offices, in particular his position on the Peace Commission which went to America in 1778, his presidency of the Board of Trade from 1779 to 1780, and his viceroyalty of Ireland from 1780 to 1782. His official life, however, was brief, but contrary to received opinion it will appear in this thesis that for the rest of his life he was by no means politically inactive. Liberating himself to some extent from the influence of more powerful political characters, he deliberately refused office on several occasions and seems to have established himself consciously as a disinterested independent. Such a condition, especially in an aristocratic context, has received little attention from historians, preoccupied with the growth or collapse of party. Aside from politics, some time has also been spent on Carlisle's involvement in local politics and in other traditional practices of the time, and where possible these have been used to illustrate his political attitudes. In particular, for example, there was a direct correlation between his estimation of the value of local political influence and his conception of the structure of politics at Westminster. Finally, it is not claimed in this thesis that Carlisle was an historically influential figure in the official political establishment of his day. Independents do not seek political power. But it is suggested that he was uncommon in his conscious independence, and that he was probably only one of a more numerous body of principled independents than is generally acknowledged.



ABSTRACT

An Abstract of a Thesis entitled 'A Study of the Life and Public Career of Frederick Howard, Fifth Earl of Carlisle, 1748-1825', by A.I.M. Duncan of University College, Oxford, submitted in Hilary Term, 1981, for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of Oxford.

In 1976 a professional archivist began the cataloguing of the Carlisle family papers at Castle Howard in Yorkshire. At the same time members of the public were granted more freedom of access to the Muniment Room than had previously been the case. It seemed a good opportunity to investigate the life of the fifth Earl of Carlisle, a subject which had then received no treatment at all beyond the usual notices in works of reference. Four obvious problems immediately attracted attention. First, the question of Fox's debts. It was known that this was one aspect of the financial difficulties which beset Carlisle in the mid 1770s, but it was not known exactly in what financial relationship Carlisle actually stood to Fox, whether or not he was ever obliged to pay anything on his behalf, or whether the affair had any identifiable political implications. Secondly, it seemed extraordinary that a man of Carlisle's inexperience should have been chosen to lead such a potentially historic embassy as the Peace Commission to America in 1778. It therefore seemed likely that an examination of his appointment would reveal something of the Government's attitude towards reconciliation at this stage. Thirdly, Carlisle had been immortalised by some vindictive lines on him written by his ward, the poet Lord Byron, whom he was accused of neglecting. It seemed possible, considering Carlisle's own poetical leanings, that there might be some more substantial explanation for the neglect than simple fault of character. Lastly accounts of Carlisle generally concentrate on his early years because of both his

undeniably colourful youth in the 1770s and the fact that his official political career was brought to an end before he was thirty-six yearsold. Another forty-one years passed before he died, however, and the bare bones of his voting habits told us little about the man as a politician, and nothing at all about him outside politics.

Answers, more or less adequate, have been found to all these various questions, and they have been, where possible fitted into the broader scheme of his life, especially where there was a relationship to be discovered with his politics.

There was, of course, the general question of his politics. Works on the period notice him occasionally, usually in lists of supporters of or dissenters from this or that group, party or policy, but historians have been as unsure of his politics as were some contemporaries. He was a close friend of Fox in the 1770s and some expected this to have political implications. Another thought him a leading member of the Bedford group, while others merely noticed his apparently smooth progress from Northite, to Foxite, to alarmist Whig and so to Grenvillite. It will appear, however, that Fox had very little influence over him politically in the 1770s; that though at first he followed his father-in-law, Lord Gower, in everything, he was never embraced by the Bedford group; and that though the various political labels which have been attached to him give an idea of his voting habits, they tell only a small part, and in some cases an inaccurate part, of the story. For example, they say nothing about his estates being in trust from 1775 to 1786, the comparatively small income to which he was reduced between those dates, and the fact that his official political career falls well within this eleven-year period. They do not reveal, though with hindsight they may suggest, that he came to politics with no creed and a very imperfect understanding of the structure of politics at the time. Nor do they reveal that he seems to have been deeply influenced

by a succession of individuals, and at the same time, or possibly because of this, he was never completely happy to act with a group or a party. We are told that he voted with the Whigs, with Pitt and then with the Grenvilles, but not that his heart was never in the whole Whig ethos, that he was more an independent than a wholehearted supporter of Pitt, and that he was divided from the Grenvillites by his own indifference to office and by his consideration for Pitt, which for him, during the early war years, preponderated over all other considerations. In short, because he was neither in office, nor in the forefront of party leadership, he has been largely ignored, when these factors were not the result of indifference to politics, but the results of deliberate choices on his part. He seems to have deliberately set himself up as a disinterested independent, a condition, especially as an aristocratic condition, which has not received much attention because independence usually meant historical insignificance.

Finally, only a very little was known of the other sides to his life. Some work had been done on the constituencies where his family had clung on to some degree of electoral influence, but the political history of these constituencies had not been traced back to his personal attitudes, to show how his policies towards them reflected both his broader attempts to seek political recognition in the 1770s and his swift disillusionment with the idea of parliamentary influence in the latter part of that decade. Virtually nothing was known of him as a country magnate, Lord Lieutenant, captain of volunteers, foxhunter, developer of Castle Howard, or picture collector. An attempt has been made to tie these occupations in, where possible, with his politics, to give substance to the platitudes which appeared in the numerous early nineteenth century accounts and obituaries of his life, and to place each of these occupations in their own context in order to give some idea of his contribution to

eighteenth century life outside politics. Nevertheless, the main body of this work will be concerned with Carlisle's gradual progress towards independence during a period usually thought of as significant for the growth of party.

A STUDY OF THE LIFE AND PUBLIC CAREER
OF
FREDERICK HOWARD, FIFTH EARL OF CARLISLE
1748-1825

BY
A.I.M. DUNCAN

[TT 1981]

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ABBREVIATIONS

In the references to works and manuscript collections quoted in the text, the following abbreviations have been used:

Addit. MSS.	British Library Additional Manuscripts
<u>Bull. Inst. Hist. Res.</u>	<u>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</u>
C.H.A.	Castle Howard Archives
(C.)R.O.	(County) Record Office
<u>Dict. Nat. Biog.</u>	<u>Dictionary of National Biography</u>
<u>E.H.R.</u>	<u>English Historical Review</u>
Hist. MSS. Comm.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
Naworth MSS.	Howard of Naworth Manuscripts
<u>Parl. Debs.</u>	<u>Parliamentary Debates</u>
<u>Parl. Hist.</u>	<u>The Parliamentary History</u>
P.R.O.	Public Record Office

THE MAKINGS OF A POLITICAL CAREER, 1770-1778

Frederick Howard, fifth Earl of Carlisle, was born in London on 28 May 1748, and known for the first ten years of his life by the courtesy title of Lord Morpeth until he succeeded to the earldom on the death of his father¹ on 3 September 1758. At an early age he was sent to Eton under the care of a private tutor, the Rev. Jeffrey Ekins,² who remained with him when he left Eton in 1764 and went up to King's College, Cambridge. He left the university the following year without matriculating. In the meantime, his mother, the Dowager Countess of Carlisle,³ had remarried within fifteen months of the death of the late Earl. Her second husband was a young Cumberland baronet, Sir William Musgrave,⁴ whose grave, austere and studious character within a few years proved intolerable to the Dowager. The result was, so Carlisle wrote later, that his home life was ruined by domestic disagreements.⁵

1 Carlisle, Henry Howard, 4th Earl (1694-1758); M.P. (Morpeth) 1715-38; Knight of the Garter, 1756.

2 Rev. Jeffrey Ekins (1731-91); Rector of Quainton, Bucks., 1761-75, of Morpeth, Northumberland, 1775, and of Sedgefield, Co. Durham, 1777; Dean of Carlisle, 1782-91.

3 Isabella Howard (1721-95), only dau. of William, 4th Lord Byron, and 2nd wife of Henry, 4th Earl of Carlisle.

4 Sir William Musgrave, 6th Bt. (ca. 1736-1800); barrister; Commissioner of Customs, 1763, and of Accounts, 1785; Vice-President of both the Royal Society and the Society of Antiquaries; Trustee of the British Museum; compiler of Musgrave's Obituary.

5 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle, [1820]; Castle Howard Archives (hereafter cited as C.H.A.), J14/65/5, p. 29.

To escape this unhappy environment he sought the society of the family of his schoolfriend, Charles James Fox,¹ at Holland House. This old mansion in Kensington, in Carlisle's own words, became more his 'real home than any other',² where he enjoyed 'almost a paternal protection',³ from Henry, Lord Holland.⁴

Through Holland House Carlisle was introduced to the pleasures of life in the capital. During the latter part of the 1760s he became a member of various clubs and societies: Brooks's, as it then was, in 1765; White's in the same year; the Society of Dilettanti in 1767; and the Jockey Club, the Coterie, and the Tuesday Night's Club at various times thereafter. At White's he met a man who, though almost thirty years his senior, quickly became his closest friend and confidant, George Augustus Selwyn,⁵ of Matson in Gloucestershire, the well known wit and bon viveur.⁶ During the remaining part of his life Selwyn spent much time with Carlisle's family, often acting in loco parentis to his children, and until Carlisle became more closely associated politically with the Whigs after 1782 he played an important part in every decision, major

1 Hon. Charles James Fox (1749-1806); M.P. (Midhurst) 1768-74, (Malmesbury) 1774-80, (Westminster) 1780-4, 1785-1806, (Tain Burghs) 1784-5; ministerial in his politics until 1774, when he began to drift gradually towards the Rockingham Whigs, thereafter becoming the leading Whig politician of the day; Foreign Secretary, Mar.-July 1782, Apr.-Dec. 1783, Feb. 1806-d.

2 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle /1820/; C.H.A. J14/65/5, p.50.

3 Carlisle to Henry, 3rd Lord Holland, 8 Oct. 1821; C.H.A. J14/1/617.

4 Holland, Henry Fox, 1st Baron (1705-74); M.P. 1735-63; Secretary at War, 1746-55; Paymaster General, 1757-65.

5 George Augustus Selwyn (1719-91); M.P. (Ludgershall) 1747-54, 1780-91, (Gloucester), 1754-80; holder at various times of four different sinecures.

6 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle, /1820/; C.H.A. J14/65/5, pp.30-2.

or trivial, that Carlisle took. It was an extraordinarily frank and intimate friendship considering the disparity between the ages of the two men. Selwyn never married, but was passionately fond of children and it may be that in Carlisle he found more a son than a friend. On the other hand it was characteristic of Carlisle to favour the society of men considerably older than himself, a trait he traced back to the influence of his step-father.¹ For example, one of his other closest friends was his old tutor, and later his private chaplain, Jeffrey Ekins, who was his senior by seventeen years. Through Carlisle, Ekins and Selwyn themselves became good friends, and Ekins would often stay with Selwyn on his infrequent trips to town from his country rectory at Quainton in Buckinghamshire. Together with Anthony Storer,² another close friend from Eton days, and a young man known familiarly as 'Prince' Boothby,³ but about whom little is known, Ekins and Selwyn formed Carlisle's own convivial and domestic circle of intimates.

Indeed, by 1766, although Carlisle had mother, step-father, guardian and trustees, none of them were so much a father to him as Selwyn. In September 1766 Selwyn took him to Paris to give him an entrée into Parisian society, and to launch him on his grand tour. But Carlisle spent a miserable few months

1 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle, /1820/; C.H.A. J14/65/5, pp.30-2.

2 Anthony Morris Storer (1746-99); M.P. (Carlisle) 1774-80, (Morpeth) 1780-4; a Lord of Trade, 1781-2; Secretary to the Master General of the Ordnance, 1783; Secretary to the Embassy, and then Minister Plenipotentiary, at Paris, Dec. 1783-Jan. 1784; fell out with Carlisle in 1783.

3 Evidently Charles Boothby Scrimshaw (d. ca. July 1800), of a family seated at Tooley Park, Leics.; assumed his mother's maiden name of Scrimshaw at an unknown date. Ex inf. Glamorgan Record Office. For a few more details, see below, p. 254.

there¹, during which he competed for the affections of Fox's coquettish married aunt, Lady Sarah Bunbury.² So taken with her was he that he cancelled his rendezvous with Fox, the Hollands and other old Etonians at Naples and returned to England with Lady Sarah, her husband, and at least one other admirer.³ A few months later, in September 1767, Selwyn again took him to Paris and this time saw him off on his journey south. During the next eighteen months he toured France and Italy extensively, much of it in the company of Fox, and another friend from Eton, Lord Fitzwilliam.⁴ A schoolfriend with whom he stayed at Turin, where he was invested with the Green Ribbon of the Order of the Knighthood of the Thistle,⁵ has left a very characteristic picture of him at this time, just after he had left for Genoa to meet Fox:

I can't say I miss Lord Carlisle, as he is certainly a great coxcomb; and what is worse is that he despises everybody, especially foreigners. He would not allow there was a sensible person here, which is a thing he could not judge of, as he never opened his lips to any of them. And they say here qu 'il portait un air d'ennui partout on il y allait. They were inclined to be very civil to him, but he never would go near any of them. If he did he never finished ten minutes in any assembly he went to. The ladies were very much inclined to be in love with him, which I do not wonder at, as he is certainly a pretty man and his green ribbon became him very much.⁶

1 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle, /1820/; C.H.A. J14/65/5, p.33.

2 Lady Sarah Bunbury (1744-1826), 4th dau. of Charles Lennox, 2nd Duke of Richmond. She m. first, 1762, Sir Charles Bunbury, 6th Bt., divorced him in 1776, and m. second, 1781, the Hon. George Napier.

3 G.D'Heylli, ed., Mémoires du Duc de Lauzun (Paris, 1880), pp. 32-50.

4 Fitzwilliam, William Wentworth-Fitzwilliam, 2nd Earl (1748-1833); Lord President of the Council, 1794, 1806; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1794-5; Fox's closest friend and lifelong Whig.

5 For the reasons behind the investiture, see below, pp.212-216.

6 Lord Kildare to Duchess of Leinster, 15 June 1768: B. Fitzgerald, ed., The Correspondence of Emily, Duchess of Leinster (Dublin, 1949-57), iii. 524.

In February 1769 Carlisle returned to England to try to prevent the impending separation between his mother and his step-father.¹ He failed, and from then on the couple lived apart though they were never divorced. Perhaps in trying to compensate to some extent for his lack of a stable family life, Carlisle married very young. In February 1770 he proposed to, and in March he married, Lady Caroline Leveson-Gower,² the sixteen and a half year old daughter of Lord Gower,³ Lord President of the Council in the recently formed North⁴ Administration, and, from 1771, leader of the Bedford group, one of the most powerful political formations within the Government. In many respects it was a most successful marriage. Emotionally it proved exceptionally enduring and stable. Politically, his wife's father was a most valuable asset, providing him, as Storer once put it, with an avenue to the Cabinet. Carlisle never became involved with the politics of the Bedford group before it dissolved around 1779, but along with Selwyn, with whom his former intimacy revived as a result of his relationship to Carlisle,⁵ Lord Gower exerted the strongest influence on Carlisle during the 1770s. For example, the personal understanding between them, which they both sought to see extended to political affairs, was largely responsible for maintaining Carlisle's loyalty to the Government during the personally difficult years he underwent in the middle of the decade. Economically too Lord Gower was a most useful connection for Carlisle. Gower himself was something of an industrial entrepreneur,⁶ though

1 Carlisle to Selwyn, 15 Feb. [1769]; C.H.A.

2 Caroline Leveson-Gower (1753-1824), youngest dau. of Granville, 2nd Earl Gower, by his 2nd wife, Louisa, sister of Francis, 3rd Duke of Bridgewater.

3 Gower, Granville Leveson-Gower, 2nd Earl (1721-1803); Lord President of the Council 1767-79, 1783-4; Lord Privy Seal, 1786-94; cr. Marquis of Stafford, 1786.

4 Frederick North, Lord North (1732-92), 1st son of Francis, 1st Earl of Guilford, M.P. (Banbury) 1754-90; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1767-1782; First Lord of the Treasury, 1770-82; Home Secretary, Apr.-Dec. 1783; succeeded father as 2nd Earl of Guilford, 1790.

5 Selwyn to Carlisle, 18 Jan. [1774]; C.H.A. J14/1/152.

6 J.R. Wordie, 'A great landed estate in the eighteenth century: aspects of management on the Leveson-Gower properties, 1691-1833' (Reading Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1966), pp. 193-6, 214-5, 222, 270.

not on the scale of his brother-in-law, the Duke of Bridgewater.¹ Both of these men became partners in Carlisle's lead mining ventures on Alston Moor in Cumberland, and brought with them the services of their own highly skilled agents and engineers.² In 1775, as will be seen later, both Gower and Bridgewater acted as trustees to Carlisle when involved in financial difficulties.

In the early 1770 s Carlisle was spending ruinously on a number of different schemes, such as improvements at Castle Howard, buying pictures, maintaining a stud of racehorses, and developing his electoral interest at the borough of Morpeth in Northumberland. At the same time the end of his minority meant that estate expenditure increased enormously as maintenance and development policies, which had been suspended during his minority in an unsuccessful attempt to pay off his father's debts, were resumed. But gambling was one of the greatest drains on his resources. In this practice most of his friends were involved to a greater or lesser degree, with Fox of course among the leaders. Carlisle had started at an early age, and continued despite frequent resolutions to drop the habit. Vast sums were lost and won. Of course, cash did not always change hands. For example, Carlisle never received more than 3,200 guineas of the 13,190 guineas which he won from Lord Stavordale³ in 1767,⁴ but more often than not he paid what he owed and received what he won, including the two large winnings of early 1772, amounting to over £30,000, one third of which was paid to tradesmen to whom he owed money.⁵

1 Bridgewater, Francis Egerton, 3rd Duke (1736-1803), the canal-builder.

2 W. Wallace, Alston Moor. Its Pastoral People : Its Mines and Miners (Newcastle, 1890), pp.124-7; H. Malet, The Canal Duke (London, 1961), pp. 152-3.

3 Henry Fox-Strangeways, Lord Stavordale (1747-1802); M.P. (Midhurst) 1768-74; succeeded his father as 2nd Earl of Ilchester, 1776.

4 'State of the Case between Ld. Stavordale and myself', n.d.; C.H.A. J14/2.

5 Carlisle to Lord Grantham, 15-19 Jan. 1772, and Selwyn to Lord Grantham, 21 Feb. 1772; Bedford County Record Office (hereafter C.R.O.), Lucas MSS. L30/14/188/4, L30/14/350/2. See also St. James's Chronicle, 26-28 Mar. 1772.

Cash also changed hands between Carlisle and Fox,¹ but one of the most interesting transactions between these two men at the time concerned not money itself, but Carlisle standing security for the repayment of loans made to Fox by certain money-lenders. This bespeaks a very intimate friendship between the two. At school and in the years immediately following, Carlisle and Fox were, it is true, close friends, but Carlisle did not as yet share that common interest in politics, which, for example, appears to have bound Fox and Fitzwilliam together; nor was he ever a member of that inner circle of bachelor gamblers of which Fox was the centre. Moreover, Carlisle had his own small group of intimate friends and it may be that his early marriage further separated him from Fox even if imperceptibly. Thus they were indeed close, yet not bosom friends.

On occasions this friendship was manifested in politics. In 1771 Fox followed Carlisle into opposition to the Government over the Nullum Tempus Bill,² and in 1774 he responded to Carlisle's efforts to win political support for a group of Leeds merchants³ who were anxious to secure the passage of a Bill to create a Leeds-Selby canal in opposition to the old-established River Aire Navigation Company.⁴ In 1772 Carlisle allowed his attitude to the Royal Marriage Bill to be dictated by Fox.⁵ On other occasions the friendship

1 Ibid., 22-24 Mar. 1770.

2 For more details of Carlisle's involvement in the progress of this Bill, see below, pp. 217-219.

3 D.T. Johnson, 'Charles James Fox : from government to opposition, 1771-1774', E.H.R. (xxxix 1974), 756, 781n.

4 Public Record Office (hereafter P.R.O.), Granville Papers, Series 30/29, vol. 1/14, f.687; Carlisle to Lord Gower, 28 Jan. 1774; Carlisle to Selwyn, 'Tuesday,' and Selwyn to Carlisle, 5 Feb. [1774]; C.H.A. J14/1/153. For the broader context, see R. Wilson, 'Aire and Calder Navigation, Part III', Bradford Antiquary, new ser., xliv (1969), 221-35.

5 A. Steuart, ed., The Last Journals of Horace Walpole from 1771-1783 (London, 1910), i.31, 37.

between the two men was revealed through patronage. For example, when Fox re-entered the North Ministry as a Junior Lord of the Treasury in January 1773 he immediately communicated three requests for places from Carlisle. These were : first, tidesmen's places for John Gray, probably the manager of his collieries and lime kilns, and for 'Geo. Milburne', probably a member of a Cumberland family connected with the Carlisle interest in that county; and second, a place in the Customs or Excise of forty or fifty pounds a year for one 'Adam Bittleston', most probably of the family of Thomas Bittlestone, a freeman of Morpeth, and therefore a post requested for political reasons. The first two were appointed, and 'Bittleston' was passed on to the Salt Office with a recommendation.¹

In return for favours like this, and because of the friendship between them, Carlisle stood security for Fox on the large sums of money he was borrow- in at this time. At the end of 1773 it was decided that Fox's debts were to be reckoned up and paid by his father. In a 'State of the Case' which Carlisle drew up for his own use, his position vis-a-vis Fox was stated to be this: 'That Lord Carlisle is bound for Mr. C. Fox in the sum of Sixteen Thousand pounds to be paid by annuities for the life of Mr. Fox at the rate of about Two Thousand pounds per annum'.² No-one seems to have been sure of the precise sum for which Carlisle stood security, but it was certainly somewhere between £14,000 and £16,000.³ As his own personal income at this time provided him

1 Book of recommendations for posts of tidesmen, and posts connected with marine services, etc., 1770-5; Bodleian Library, North MSS. c. 68, ff. 34,81 : Castle Howard Estate Accounts, Feb.-Dec. 1774; C.H.A. F4/9/13: Carlisle to Selwyn, 29 Jan. 1773; C.H.A.

2 'The State of the Case between Mr. Charles Fox and Lord Carlisle', 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/541.

3 For example, Horace Walpole, whose knowledge of this matter was strikingly accurate, thought the capital sum to be £14,000 and the annuities to be £2,500 p.a. : Earl of Ilchester, ed., 'Some Pages torn from the Last Journals of Horace Walpole', in D. Miner, ed., Studies in Art and Literature for Belle da Costa Green (Princeton, 1954), p. 455.

with around £12,000¹ p.a., it is clear that he had bound himself to pay, on behalf of Fox, at least one sixth of his income, over and above servicing his own debts. It was said that so unable was he to furnish these annual sums that he suffered an execution in his London house, 25, St. James's Place, and was forced to retire to Yorkshire.² Two other men had also stood security for Fox : John Crewe³ for £8,000 and Thomas Foley⁴ for £30,000.⁵ It has been a vexed question whether or not these three men were ever required to pay anything for Fox. The Fox family always maintained that Charles' friends were never called upon to pay a sixpence.⁶ However, it is certain in Carlisle's case, at least, that during and after the settlement of Fox's debts, he was treated with a distinct lack of consideration, that the threat of being required to advance the full sum hung over his head for many years, and that in the 1770s at least he was required to pay an annuity on Fox's behalf.⁷

For the purpose of paying his second son's debts, Lord Holland placed the sum of £100,000 in the hands of his chief man of business, John Powell, accountant and later cashier of the Pay Office. Fox's three friends were required to sign bonds to

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 2 Dec. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/199.

2 Earl of Ilchester, 'Some Pages torn from the Last Journals of Horace Walpole', p. 455.

3 John Crewe (1742-1829); M.P. (Stafford) 1765-8, (Cheshire) 1768-1802; cr. Baron Crewe, 1806.

4 Thomas Foley (1742-93); M.P. (Co. Hereford) 1767-74, (Droitwich) 1774-7; Joint Postmaster General, 1783; succeeded his father as 2nd Baron Foley, 1777.

5 Fitzwilliam to Grantham, 10 Mar. 1774; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/140/7.

6 Lord John Russell, ed., Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox (London 1853-7), i.92; Earl of Ilchester, Henry Fox, First Lord Holland (London, 1920), ii.355.

7 Much light would have been thrown on this rather confusing affair by the survival of the accounts of Carlisle's chief agent at this time, Germain Lavie. Unfortunately they have disappeared.

Lord Holland, in Carlisle's case a bond for £14,000 with an accompanying judgement, which meant that his chattels would thereby be assigned to Holland as security for the £14,000. As soon as this was done their annuity payments would cease. In return Powell would pay the arrears of the annuities and 25% of the principal sums to the annuitants immediately, and the remaining 75% in eighteen months without interest. If he paid the 75% before the expiry of the eighteen months he was to be entitled to deduct five per cent from the payment.¹ Of course, as almost three quarters of the £100,000 assigned by Holland to the discharge of his son's debts was in fact borrowed from Powell himself,² Powell was all the more anxious to see these rather partial proposals accepted by all parties. It was probably for this reason that he allowed Selwyn to think that Holland had provided only £50,000 instead of £100,000, in which case he supposed Carlisle would be more willing to accept the offer.

However, without even consulting Selwyn or Lord Gower, as he usually did on all occasions, Carlisle refused the offer peremptorily. He gave his reasons in a letter to Lady Holland³ a few days later;

it was an expedient I could not listen to or think it reasonable I should lay myself under an obligation to

1 The State of the Case between Mr. Charles Fox and Lord Carlisle', (?Dec. 1773); C.H.A. J14/1/541.

2 L. Sutherland and J. Binney, 'Henry Fox as Paymaster of the Forces', in Rosalind Mitchison, arr., Essays in Eighteenth Century History from the English Historical Review (London, 1966), p. 255 n.1.

3 Georgiana Caroline Fox (1723-74), 1st dau. of Charles Lennox, 2nd Duke of Richmond, and 2nd wife of Henry, 1st Lord Holland; cr. suo jure Baroness Holland, 1762.

pay money which I have never received to persons to whom I am not in debt; or that the heir of your Ladyship's family should have a claim upon my estate, because from an excess of friendship, I had lent my name to relieve your son.¹

Selwyn applauded Carlisle and condemned Powell's proposal, which he had heard 'as sensible a man in England... and in high office, say was an affront to your understanding, and will infallibly expose and create a very severe judgement upon those who made it. I mean Powell...'² Selwyn further suggested that Holland and Powell, by not making their offer through Carlisle's agents, were attempting to take advantage of his ignorance of complex financial matters. This did indeed seem to be so, when, after Carlisle had refused to sign the bond and judgement for £14,000, and had given as one of his reasons the fact that he had never received any of the money lent, Powell, with or without the connivance of the rest of the Holland family, attempted to persuade Germain Lavie,³ Carlisle's chief agent, that Carlisle had in fact received some of the money. Selwyn's lawyer, Elborough Woodcock, told Selwyn that it was reported among the lawyers of Lincoln's Inn that when Carlisle and Fox went 'on one of these occasions' to Westminster, a man named Munro said he saw part of the money paid into Carlisle's hands. Lavie refused to believe any of this. Fox himself denied it, and so did Carlisle, saying that he never went to Westminster on such an occasion, and that any transactions at which he may have been present were always conducted at Fox's room in St. James's Street.⁴

1 Carlisle to Lady Holland, 5 Dec. 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/540.

2 Selwyn to Carlisle, 27 Nov. [1773]; C.H.A. J14/1/141.

3 Germain Lavie (ca. 1720-81); agent to Lord Carlisle from 1770 until his dismissal in July 1775.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, [17 Dec. 1773], and Selwyn to Carlisle, 7 [Dec.], 14 Dec., [1773]; C.H.A. J14/1/144, 146.

While Carlisle was concerned about being represented in London 'as the person who has obstructed the only scheme for the settling of Mr. Foxes affairs', which was more likely after Crewe accepted Powell's offer,¹ he remained convinced of the soundness of his objections. Aside from those given in writing to Lady Holland, these were essentially two in number, and both contingent upon the early death of Lord Holland. In the first place, Holland's health was giving cause for grave concern at this time and in the event of his death, Powell, likely to be one of his executors, might have used the bond, had Carlisle agreed to sign it, to make up a fortune for Stephen Fox's² infant son, Henry,³ whose birth on 21 November 1773 had caused Charles James Fox's financial crash by reducing his expectations. Powell was considered by Carlisle to be quite capable of doing such a thing. 'From the speech about me (for which he deserves to have his bones broken),' Carlisle wrote to Selwyn, 'he I think is not likely to show us any favour, but most likely will repeat what he said before, I may thank myself for the scrape I am in.'⁴ In the second place, again if Lord Holland should die, it was possible that his public accounts as Paymaster, which had not yet been finally settled, might prove deficient, in which case the bond would then become the property of the Crown and the principal be suddenly called in. It was certainly true, as Carlisle realised, that Fox might be able to manage

1 Carlisle to Selwyn, [? 1 Dec. 1773]; C.H.A.

2 Hon. Stephen Fox (1745-74), 1st son of Henry, 1st Lord Holland; succeeded his mother as 2nd Baron Holland, 1774.

3 Henry Richard Fox, afterwards Vassall Fox (1773-1840), 1st son of Stephen, 2nd Lord Holland; at school and afterwards a close friend of Carlisle's eldest son; succeeded his father as 3rd Baron Holland, 1774.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, [? 1 Dec. 1773]; C.H.A.

things with Lord North in his favour, but it could not be guaranteed either that North would still be at the Treasury or that Fox would still be in North's good graces. Indeed, Fox was already behaving disobediently towards the Government of which he was a member. 'This is very poor security for our tranquillity,' wrote Carlisle.¹ He could hardly have been more right. Within a few weeks Fox quarrelled with North again and was dismissed from the Treasury, while Lord Holland died the following July, with his accounts with Government still unsettled.

In the meantime, Carlisle decided that he had to try an initiative of his own. He therefore appealed over Powell's head to the family honour of the Hollands, but this brought no result,² the reasons being that Lord Holland was so ill and had gone to Bath, and, more importantly, that Powell had gone ahead with the plan of buying up the annuities on behalf of Lord Holland.³ This really should have been completed before Powell had made the preliminary proposal, but had evidently been left on the supposition that the proposal would have been accepted. Now that it had been rejected, Powell needed the annuities in his hands in order to be able to exert more pressure on Carlisle. In fact, Carlisle's advisers approved in principle of what Powell was doing : on 14 December Selwyn told Fox that at least the annuities were better placed in Holland's hands than where they lay at present,⁴ that is, in the hands of a large number of the more speculative Jewish and Christian dealers on the London market.⁵ In order to facilitate this

1 Ibid.

2 Carlisle to Lady Holland, 5 Dec. 1773, and Selwyn to Carlisle, 18 Jan. 1774; C.H.A. J14/1/540, 152.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 9 Dec. 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/145.

4 Selwyn to Carlisle, 14 Dec. 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/146.

5 Sutherland and Binney, op. cit., pp. 254-5.

transaction, Lavie, inclined to let his feelings cloud his judgement sometimes, was conferring with Powell 'with much more temper than heretofore.'¹ But he and Selwyn were still angered by Powell's insistence on the five per cent deduction clause, which, though it might save Powell and the Hollands a comparatively small sum of money, was yet likely to prevent the successful outcome of the negotiations with the annuitants.

Anger turned to outrage when they discovered by what means Powell was attempting to persuade the annuitants to accept his terms. Selwyn denounced

that scandalous way which Powell has adopted of treating with the Annuitants to robb /sic/ them of 18 pence or 2 shillings in the pound out of a sum which he /Fox/ has engaged himself to pay with^t diminution. If it is infamous to be a Bankrupt, it is more so to pretend to be so when you are not, to save the money which you are able to pay and so it is they talk to your Annuitants. They tell them that you are so undone that there are constant executions in your House in Order to frighten them into Compositions which Information is false, but were it true whose fault would it be?²

Insult was added to injury when Fox, having gone down to Bath to visit his parents, lost £900 at billiards and, despite the fact that his father was as angry about it as Selwyn, drew out the money and paid the debt. 'This 900£ had it been paid to the Annuitants to make up the deficiency which Powell stickles about, These annuities would at this day be in L^d. Holland's Hands,' wrote

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 9 Dec. [1773]; C.H.A. J14/1/145.

2 Selwyn to Carlisle, 15 Jan. [1774]; C.H.A. J14/1/151.

Selwyn.¹

Two or three of the annuitants to whom Carlisle was engaged had, at a meeting of Fox's annuitants at the Devil Tavern, near Temple Bar, on 2 December, accepted the unfavourable conditions held out to them and compounded with Powell for the agreed sum.² By the end of December, so Selwyn was told by Lord Holland's attorney when they met by chance in the street, many more had agreed terms, and even more would have done 'but that Lavie has talked so much of the punctuality with which you paid, and of your punctilio that the annuitants do not listen to proposals for that reason...'³ Thus a number at least of Carlisle's annuitants refused to be influenced by Powell's attempts to undermine his financial credit, and chose to accept his security rather than face an almost certain loss of two shillings and sixpence in the pound, which they would incur if they accepted Powell's proposals. Powell was so incensed by the recalcitrance of this group of annuitants that he meditated an appeal to Chancery against them,⁴ but dropped the idea probably because he had little chance of gaining a favourable verdict.

Carlisle now decided that a solution acceptable to both parties would only be arrived at by a personal interview, in the presence of their lawyers, between himself and Fox. For this reason he came up to town in early February 1774. The ensuing meeting, however, produced not a solution, but an altercation between Powell on the one hand, and Carlisle's lawyers on the other.

1 Ibid.

2 'Names of y^e Annuitants,' 2 Dec. 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/539. The three annuitants, each receiving £100 p.a., were named as 'Dun Dallas', 'Edw. Moose for An Johnson,' and 'S.E. Du Bouchet,' against the last name being written 'supposed Lord Carlisle's'.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 28 Dec. 1773; C.H.A. J14/1/147.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, n.d.; C.H.A.

'In the heat of the dispute', Powell

produced instructions from Lord Holland to pay 100,000£ for Charles's debts and annuities. This cleared Lord Holland; but Powel /sic/ being asked why he had used Lord Carlisle so ill, confessed it was with the intention of saving 4 or 5000£ for the Fox family. This did not exculpate Ch. Fox, who winked at the transaction from carelessness...¹

This intemperate scene did, however, clear the air and considerable progress was made in the following weeks. It may be that Powell dropped his five per cent deduction clause after being exposed so embarrassingly, but certain it is that the Holland family successfully completed buying up the annuities largely with money borrowed from Powell. Powell, however, would not surrender the annuities until he had been paid. Fox promised Carlisle that he would sell an estate of his in Kent, probably Kingsgate; indeed, he said that he had already taken all the necessary steps to have it sold, which would enable him to repay Powell. Then he, Fox, would hand over the annuities to Carlisle to cancel.²

But Fox did not keep his promise. In the first place he did not sell his estate to Powell until 1777,³ and, in the second place, the Fox family retained the securities of Carlisle, Crewe and Foley, and has always openly admitted doing so, and has always asserted that it was perfectly justified in doing so too, until Lord Holland's outstanding accounts as Paymaster were finally settled with the Government.⁴ This was not in fact done until the family made its last

1 Earl of Ilchester, 'Some Pages torn from the Last Journals of Horace Walpole,' p. 456 n.11.

2 Fox to Carlisle, 25 Mar. 1774; C.H.A. J14/1/543.

3 F. Hull, Guide to the Kent County Archives Office : First Supplement 1957-68 (Maidstone, 1971), p. 139.

4 See above, p. 9.

payment to the Government on 1 December 1807, thirty-three years after Lord Holland's death, forty-two years after his retirement from the office of Paymaster,¹ and over a year after Charles James Fox's death. Fox died without the satisfaction of knowing that his friends had been discharged from their obligations during his lifetime.

But it is easy to be critical from this distance. It is important to remember that Carlisle always remained on good terms with the Holland family. He later assured the first Lord's grandson, Henry, third Lord Holland, that he saw nothing reprehensible in his grandfather's conduct towards him.² All resentment seems rather to have been directed towards Powell, whose life ended in suicide in 1782. As for Charles Fox, he behaved, and continued to do so, with his characteristic insouciance. On occasions he verbally dissociated himself from the most suspect of Powell's methods, but he never exerted himself to achieve an honourable settlement.

In the circumstances this was quite inexcusable, for there is no doubt that, in contradiction of the repeated assertions of the Fox family, Carlisle was obliged to make payments on behalf of Fox, and it is not certain that Fox, although he made some reimbursements to Carlisle several years later, ever repaid the whole amount. It is interesting to note that in 1774 Carlisle's friend Boothby offered to lend him £1500, having heard 'a good deal of the annuities which you had been paying for Charles lately,'³ but more concrete evidence exists. After the events of 1774, a sum of £1500 and an annuity of £100 remained outstanding on Fox's account with Carlisle. The annuity was purchased by a man

1 Sutherland and Binney, op. cit., p. 255 n.3.

2 Earl of Ilchester, 'Some Pages torn from the Last Journals of Horace Walpole,' p. 458.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 5 Feb. 1774; C.H.A. J14/1/153.

named Spencer and was paid to him by Carlisle, on behalf of Fox, in 1773 and in 1774.¹ Selwyn always exhorted Carlisle to press Fox for payment, but Carlisle was always strongly influenced by the delicacy of the situation in which he found himself. Things changed, however, in 1775 when Carlisle's estates were conveyed to trustees for the purpose of settling his debts. Over the summer pressure was put on Fox to redeem the annuity and to pay the capital sum. Both James Hare,² who had been at Eton with Fox and Carlisle and often acted as an intermediary between them when money was being discussed, and Selwyn tried to persuade Fox to recognise his obligations, but all they could extract from him was fifty pounds to meet Spencer's demand for half of his annuity in September 1775.³ Fox's behaviour was certainly maddening. 'The very day after I dunned him for half a year's annuity of Spencer's, amounting to 50l. only, 'Selwyn wrote, 'he won, and received 500l. He every now and then gets, by some contrivance, as much, but the devil a bit will he ever part with, but by putting it into the Ring, where he is nicked, and the money gone.'⁴ Carlisle was quite resigned to Fox's financial irresponsibility, and agreed with Hare that 'it would be useless to torment him when he has not a guinea : so there it ends for the present.'⁵ Carlisle continued to make occasional payments to Spencer.⁶

1 Same to same, 19 Sept. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/181.

2 James Hare (1749-1804); M.P. (Stockbridge) 1772-4, (Knaresborough) 1781-1804; with Carlisle's help he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Poland, 1779, but resigned before taking it up.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 9 Dec. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/201.

4 Same to same, 5 Dec. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/201. 'Nicked' was a term used in the game of hazard.

5 Carlisle to Selwyn, 2 Feb. 1776; C.H.A.

6 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Sept. 1775 - June 1777; C.H.A.

Five years later, when Carlisle was Viceroy at Dublin, Fox began to make a great deal of money with his faro bank. Selwyn was on the point of sending Carlisle's agent, Francis Gregg,¹ to him, when he suddenly lost all he had won. In June 1781, therefore, he experienced his second major financial crisis. But, having accepted large loans in return for the promise to repay his creditors by annuities,² he decided on this occasion to release Carlisle from his more direct financial obligations. He himself asked Gregg to come to see him to discuss this very subject. On this occasion he honoured the promises he made. He began by redeeming the annuity,³ and then paid a further £600 to cover half the arrears.⁴ The rest were paid on 8 September.⁵ Presumably the £1500 was also paid at this time. In November, when Gregg's annual accounts had been checked by the trustees, Selwyn wrote to Carlisle and expressed the hope that he would see 'Charles's name... in no more accounts of yours.'⁶ His wish was granted. A few months later, Fox, by his own influence, was able to bring Carlisle into the second Rockingham Ministry. The proximity in time of the two events, repayment of debts and a signal mark of political consideration, adds weight to Horace Walpole's⁷

1 Francis Gregg (1734-95); M.P. (Morpeth) 1789-94; Clerk of the Skinner's Company, 1759-d.; Lord Carlisle's attorney, 1769-75, and agent, 1775-94.

2 L.G. Mitchell, Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, 1782-1794 (Oxford, 1971), pp. 121-2.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 2 June [1781]; C.H.A. J14/1/271.

4 Same to Same, 23 June [1781]; C.H.A. J14/1/284.

5 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Dec. 1780-Nov. 1781; C.H.A.

6 Selwyn to Carlisle, 23 Nov. [1781]; CH.A. J14/1/298.

7 Horace Walpole (1717-97); wit, memoirist and letter writer; succeeded his nephew as 4th Earl of Orford, 1791.

observation that Fox was simply demonstrating his appreciation of Carlisle's financial generosity.¹

Both financially and politically the settlement of Fox's debts over the winter of 1773-4 had important repercussions for Carlisle. In the first place, it illuminated his own dangerously precarious financial position. He had begun to make small economies as early as 1771, when, for example, he ceased to devote so much of his resources to racehorses,² but no significant brake on spending was applied until 1775. The affair with Fox brought to light a great deal of Carlisle's financial obligations, which he had entered into lightheartedly and without keeping himself fully informed of their extent. By 1775 interest charges alone amounted to at least £10,000 p.a. His total debt stood at around £290,000, two thirds of which he had incurred himself, while the remainder were old unpaid debts of his father's.³ In order to reduce this massive burden, he restricted himself to an annual income of £5,000 for at least three years and attempted to formulate long term plans for the use of the surplus of his rents and profits.⁴ Some progress was made, but this informal system proved so inadequate to meet the demands made upon it, that within a few months of its inception it was being said that he meditated 'a retreat to Castle Howard from distress.'⁵ It was obvious that a stronger medicine was required. In July 1775, therefore, Carlisle's estates were conveyed to five trustees,⁶ each of whom lent £5,000 towards the settlement

1 See below, p. 134.

2 Carlisle to Grantham, 10 Nov. 1771; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/18/188/3.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 31 Oct. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/194.

4 P.R.O., Granville Papers, Series 30/29, vol. 1/15, f. 699; Selwyn to Gower, 21 Mar. 1775.

5 Lord Upper Ossory to Grantham, 25 June 1775; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/138/8.

6 The trustees were Selwyn, Gower, Bridgewater, Fitzwilliam and Hugo Meynell, who was connected politically with Gower. For more details of Meynell, see below, p. 254 n.2.

of Carlisle's debts. Payments began immediately under Selwyn's direction in London.¹

It was clearly recognised from the beginning that the trust would take a number of years to do its work. Carlisle himself expected that it would be 'an affair of full ten years,'² perhaps because no land sales were envisaged. In fact, exactly eleven years were required, the estates being re-conveyed to him on 15 July 1786. He was then released from what had been in the beginning at least, an acutely embarrassing situation. Under the terms of the trust he was allowed a clear annual income of only £3,500 p.a., though in practice he received £4,000 p.a. Everybody concerned sympathised with his difficulties in supporting his social consequence, not to mention his fondness for 'éclat' or show, on such a circumscribed income, but there was no other way. The trustees would have liked to have increased his allowance if they could, but of course they had obligations to his creditors.³ Selwyn, encouraged by Gregg, thought up many schemes to provide extra income, but they all came to nought. Carlisle therefore turned to the only obvious source of income open to a man in his position, an office of some sort in the Government.

The origins of Carlisle's political ambitions can be traced back directly to the settlement of Fox's debts. His early life had not been influenced politically in any way, except possibly by Fox, and his interest in politics was extremely slow in developing. Although he had taken his seat in the House

1 Trust deed, 7 July, 1775; C.H.A. A5/96.

2 Carlisle to Selwyn, 8 Aug. 1775; C.H.A.

3 Selwyn to Carlisle, 31 Oct. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/194.

of Lords in January 1770, in early 1774 his thoughts on office were still more concerned with the rewards in terms of remuneration and prestige than with the political benefits which might accrue from it. In particular the sort of office he favoured was of a diplomatic nature, as he explained in a letter to Selwyn, written from Castle Howard:

The going abroad for some time seems to offer the most efficacious remedy to the re-establishment of my affairs. The enormous expense of this place would be immediately struck off, and a thousand others too tedious to mention. There is no doubt but if I was to leave England I would rather do it in a public capacity than a private one, but with a Minister¹ not particularly attached [sic] to me, and my time of life and inexperience in business, I have no reason to think it could be brought about. I have every reason to wish it as it would be both honourable and convenient and nothing almost can be put in ye scale against it but the loss of some time of your Company, which I assure you is one of the greatest comforts of my life.²

Rather than approach the Government direct, he decided to try the ground with Lord Gower first, and accordingly confided his diplomatic ambitions to him.³ Gower was sympathetic, but confessed that with North's policy of retrenchment there was little chance of an ambassadorship coming up, but that there were better hopes for an envoyship. Carlisle swallowed his pride and declared that he would be satisfied with one of these.⁴ Within a few months it was reported that he was to proceed as envoy to the Court of Sardinia at Turin, where he had been invested with the Green Ribbon in 1768. After about

1 Lord North.

2 Carlisle to Selwyn, [?] 17 Dec., 1773; C.H.A.

3 Granville Papers, 30/39/1/14, ff. 681-2; Carlisle to Gower, 31 Dec. 1773.

4 P.R.O., Granville Papers, Series 30/29, vol. 1/16, f. 943; Gower to Carlisle, 6 Jan. 1774; *ibid.*, 30/39/1/14, f. 685; Carlisle to Gower, 11 Jan. 1774.

six months the speculation ceased,¹ probably because Carlisle had involved himself in such desperate financial straits. It revived again a year later, after the trust had been established. In spring 1776 it was said that Lord Grantham² had asked to be recalled from the British Embassy in Madrid and that Carlisle had applied to succeed him.³ However, Grantham remained in Spain until the outbreak of war in 1779. A short time later, in August 1776, it was said that Lord Stormont⁴ intended to return to England from the British Embassy in Paris. Carlisle asked Gower to find out who the Government intended should replace him, presumably with a view to lodging his own application.⁵ But Stormont did not leave Paris until 1778.

For one reason or another, therefore, Carlisle's diplomatic ambitions were constantly thwarted. Lord North was not always to blame, but in the Autumn of 1775 he did refuse, and in a very provoking manner apparently, some small request of Carlisle's.⁶ It was at this time that he began to consider

1-James to Grantham, 30 July 1774, 6 Feb. 1775; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/196/3.4; Walpole to Sir. H. Mann, 2 Sept. 1774; W.S. Lewis, ed., The Correspondence of Horace Walpole (London, 1937-), xxiv.36.

2 Grantham, Thomas Robinson, 2nd Baron (1738-86); M.P. (Christchurch) 1761-70; Ambassador to Madrid, 1771-9; First Lord of Trade, 1780-2; Foreign Secretary, 1782-3.

³ J. Mytton to Grantham, 21 April 1776; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/268/4.

4 Stormont, David Murray, 7th Viscount (1727-96); Ambassador to Vienna, 1763-72, and to Paris, 1772-8; Sec. of State for the North, 1779-82; Lord President of the Council, Apr. - Dec. 1783, 1794-d.; succeeded his uncle as 2nd Earl of Mansfield, 1793.

5 Carlisle to Selwyn, 20 Aug. [1776], 8 Sept. 1776; C.H.A.

6 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 732; Carlisle to Gower, 17 Nov. 1775.

political opposition to the Government as a means of expressing more forcibly his personal resentment against Lord North. To some extent it was still a tradition of eighteenth century politics, and one which held great sway over Carlisle until the early 1800 s, long after party lines had hardened from the impact of the American war, for men in Parliament, whether or not in office, to vote as their opinions dictated. Of course this led to much confusion of principle and interest. Young men like Fox and Carlisle in the 1770s, perhaps lacking experience and maturity, made little distinction between the two and consequently tended to treat politics in this highly personal way. They tended to change sides on any issue in which confidence in the Government was not at stake. Work on Fox's politics between 1771 and 1774, which both makes use of and confirms an assessment of Fox's politics and character in the 1770s and later, written by Carlisle in 1802, shows quite clearly that Fox's split with North's Government in 1774 was owing not so much to differences of principle as to circumstantial and personal factors, and that his absorption into the Rockinghamite ranks was a gradual and by no means inevitable process.¹ As with Fox, Carlisle's own search for political recognition from the Government ended in failure. Obviously he had so much less than Fox to offer, but he expected that his own loyal support of the Government, and that of the three M.P.s returned to Parliament by his influence, would be sufficient to draw from the Government the mark of consideration he wished.² This was one of the most important reasons why he concentrated on building up his local political influence during the early 1770s.³ When he was not rewarded in the way he expected, albeit naively, he began to consider withdrawing his support. One of his letters to Selwyn at this time ran as follows:

1 Johnson, op.cit., pp. 750, 781-2.

2 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 732; Carlisle to Gower, 17 Nov. 1775.

3 For Lord Carlisle and local politics, see below, ch. 7.

Administration is in a great scrape, their measures never can succeed. We who have voted with them have a right to complain, for they have deceived us, and I suppose themselves. I am sure Ld North's behaviour to me has been such that I cannot expect I should stretch a point for him... - Shall I hint to Ld G(ower) that I am not to be depended upon for voting with them tho' I shall have infinite reluctance in voting against them... I am very far from having come to a resolution of leaving them, but I give you my honour I have scruples and doubts, which I shall endeavour to combat and not to strengthen.¹

This he did, the principal reason being 'the wish and desire ever to have the same interest, the same cause at heart,' as he put it, with his father-in-law.² If Fox had any influence over Carlisle at this time, Lord Gower's was certainly more powerful.

Nevertheless, Gower received with some alarm his son-in-law's expressions of discontent. He had already been given cause for concern earlier in the year by what he suspected to be a rapprochement between Carlisle and some members of the Opposition;³ now he may have been afraid that there was a real danger of the family being divided politically. He must at the same time have been looking for ways to improve his son-in-law's financial position. From

1 Carlisle to Selwyn, 5 Nov. 1775; C.H.A.

2 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 732; Carlisle to Gower, 17 Nov. 1775.

3 The two sides to a dispute over porcelain-making patents were represented in Parliament by the Rockingham Whigs and by Gower and his friends respectively. Edmund Burke, for the Whigs, asked Carlisle to use his influence with Gower to persuade him to make certain concessions so that an amicable agreement could be arrived at. Gower thought Burke had been canvassing Carlisle for the Whigs: introduction to a letter from Burke to Eden, [21 May 1775]; T. Copeland, ed., The Correspondence of Edmund Burke (Cambridge, 1958-68), iii. 157: Carlisle to Burke, 19 May [1775]; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, BK 1/700: Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 718; Carlisle to Gower [? 22 May 1775].

Lord North, then, he obtained for Carlisle a Lordship of the Bedchamber, only to have it flung back in his face as inadequately paid and too insignificant anyway.¹ Most of those committed seem to have thought him unwise to refuse such an offer, but Selwyn persuaded Gower that he had done the right thing.² Gower, therefore, continued to urge his son-in-law's pretensions, and even began to use his own position in the Government subtly to bring a little more pressure to bear on North.³ In November 1776 Gower put Carlisle forward when North was seeking a new viceroy for Ireland,⁴ but he was far too inexperienced to be seriously considered at this stage, and in any case North had prior engagements. Gower, however, continued to represent him until North made another offer in the middle of 1777.

By then, though, Carlisle had begun to help himself, a factor which may have influenced North. Throughout his life Carlisle was known as a proud man, as indeed were most Howards. In his youth this trait was particularly dominant in his character, but was manifested not so much, in fact not at all, in contempt for social inferiors, as in a too great importance placed upon show and dignity, upon the external and ceremonial aspects of his social position. By 1775, however, through the embarrassment of having his private financial affairs discussed in society at large, and because of the frustration of his diplomatic ambitions, he began to realise 'that it is not my title, my rank, or this place (Castle Howard) that is to give me consequence, but application in Parliament.'⁵ In this year he made his first two recorded

1 Carlisle to Selwyn, 14 Nov. 1775; C.H.A.

2 Selwyn to Carlisle, 25 Nov. [1775]; C.H.A. J14/1/198.

3 Carlisle to Selwyn, 'Tuesday'; C.H.A.

4 North to Gower, 20 Nov. [1776]; A. Horwood, ed., Historical Manuscripts Commission (hereafter Hist. MSS. Comm.), 5th Report, Appendix, Part 1, Sutherland MSS, (London, 1876), p. 209.

5 Carlisle to Selwyn, 'Tuesday', C.H.A.

speeches in the House of Lords,¹ both in support of Government. But he was forced to suspend temporarily any further progress he might have made as a vocal supporter of Government by a long residence in Yorkshire, which the constraints of the trust initially made necessary. Thinking that his exile in Yorkshire would be of some duration, he wrote despondently to Selwyn:

I cannot help feeling that tho' this banishment is voluntary, it still is a banishment - If I had ever entertained an idea that by attendance upon parliament⁷, by application and attention I should have raised myself a little above those who never think or act seriously or creditably one moment of their lives, I feel it must be extinguished for the present, God knows if it will suffer itself to be kindled again, and perhaps no great loss to the public.²

In such a mood Carlisle was perhaps too susceptible to Selwyn's rather stultifying influence. Selwyn pressed him to abstain from politics until he had re-established himself financially; and only then, when he was financially independent, should he make his approaches to the Government, allowing his title and his parliamentary interest, and not his poverty, to plead for him. But when he discovered that he was able to live in London as much as before, Carlisle determined to resist the tendency of Selwyn's advice. At the end of June 1776 he hinted to Gower that he would be grateful for the opportunity to move the Address in the Lords at the opening of the next session; and he declared his firm intention of taking 'all the pains I am equal to in following the business of the year, if at the close of it I should find I am not qualified

1 W. Cobbett, The Parliamentary History of England (London, 1806-20), xvii.432, 634; 16 Mar., 12 May, 1775.

2 Carlisle to Selwyn, 8 Aug. 1775; C.H.A.

to get forward in what I have undertaken, I will with great courage submit to my retirement.'¹ He also resolved not to be fastidious should North see fit to make him another offer of office.

Presumably Gower communicated this change of heart to North, who gave Carlisle his chance on 31 October when he moved the Address in the Lords. He appealed to the Opposition to drop their differences and to join with the Government in seeking the restoration of peace with the American rebels, who had declared their independence the previous July.² The following June, in 1777, North was indeed able to make Carlisle another offer. He created a vacancy in the Royal Household and offered him the treasurership.³ As a first position this was a reasonable place and increased Carlisle's annual income by over a quarter, but North had been told by Gower that he would not accept it as it stood, probably because it was another Court office like the Bedchamber. North, therefore, knowing how close Carlisle and Ekins were, and that Carlisle had been seeking further preferment for Ekins for a number of years, added the Crown living of Sedgfield as part of the package. As far as Carlisle was concerned this obviated any difficulty he might have had in accepting the position and he kissed hands on 11 June.⁴ At the same time he was made a Privy Councillor.

Under a year later he was in Philadelphia at the head of a Commission sent to America by the British Government to treat for peace with the rebels. The history of his appointment is curious, if only because at the end of it, it seems only a little less incredible than at the beginning. There were

1 Carlisle to Selwyn, 2 July [1776]; C.H.A.

2 Parl. Hist. xvii. 1368-9; 31 Oct. 1776.

3 North to George III, 6 June 1777; Sir John Fortescue, ed., The Correspondence of King George III (London, 1927-7), iii. 453.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, [6 June 1777]; C.H.A. : St. James's Chronicle, 10-12 June 1777.

five Commissioners in all, two from the armed forces and three civilians. The two officers were Lord Howe¹ and Sir William Howe,² brothers and commanders-in-Chief of the navy and army respectively in North America. The other two civilians were William Eden,³ Under Secretary of State, and Governor Johnstone,⁴ formerly a vocal member of the Opposition, but a recent adherent to the Government due to his inveterate opposition to American independence. Aside from the Howe brothers, who were both in America during the establishment of the Peace Commission, the remaining members were generally considered to be inadequate to the enormous importance and historical significance of the task facing them. Many people thought the Government had taken little pains to find men of high standing to fill the Commission because it anticipated the utter failure of its offer of reconciliation.⁵

1 Howe, Richard Howe, 4th Viscount (1726-99); M.P. (Dartmouth) 1757-82; Commander-in-Chief of the navy in N. America, 1776-July 1778; First Lord of the Admiralty, Jan.-Apr. 1783, Dec. 1783-88; cr. Viscount Howe (GB), 1782, and Earl Howe (GB), 1788.

2 Hon. Sir William Howe (1729-1814); M.P. (Nottingham) 1758-80; Commander-in-Chief of the army in N. America, 1775-May 1778; succeeded his brother as 5th Viscount Howe, 1799.

3 William Eden (1744-1814); M.P. (New Woodstock) 1774-84, (Heytesbury) 1784-93; an expert on financial and commercial questions, he sat on the Board of Trade and Plantations, 1776-82, and later on the Council of Trade; President of the Board of Trade; negotiated the Eden Commercial Treaty with France, 1786; cr. Baron Auckland (GB), 1793.

4 George Johnstone (1730-87); M.P. (Cockermouth) 1768-74, (Appleby) 1774-80, (Lostwithiel) 1780-4, (Ilchester) 1786-7; known by the soubriquet of 'Governor' after being Governor of West Florida, 1763-7; a naval officer.

5 For example, the Morning Post of 11 Mar. 1778, and Walpole to Sir H. Mann, 4 Mar. 1778; Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, xxviii. 365.

In Eden's case this supposition was slightly unfair. Although he was only an under secretary of state, his office was in reality one 'of great Confidence',¹ which had allowed him unobtrusively to accumulate much authority. Over the winter months of 1777-8 his influence with Lord North had risen astonishingly : his supervision of the British secret agents working in Paris and his instrumental part in drafting the conciliatory propositions, on which the Commission was based, and in selecting the Commissioners, were sufficient proof of this. Those who correctly estimated Eden's real standing in the Government acknowledged that his appointment imparted 'an air of seriousness' to the Commission, which they were afraid it would have gone without.² Nevertheless, the strictures of many contemporaries are supported by these facts : first, that North encountered considerable difficulty in finding men who, having once decided to undertake what promised to be a demanding and possibly dangerous mission, satisfied the rigorous conditions originally laid down;³ and, second, that a considerable length of time elapsed and a number of more suitable men were unsuccessfully approached before Eden and Johnstone were finally appointed.

Carlisle's appointment, however, cannot be so satisfactorily and so conveniently explained. It seems almost certain that his offer to go to America was accepted by the Government before approaches were made to other parties. This is confirmed by two salient facts : first, that he was appointed on 22 February, only five days after the conciliatory propositions had been laid before Parliament, and a full ten days before the second commissioner was appointed,

1 British Library, Addit. MSS. 34416 (Auckland Papers), f. 234; Eden to North, 1 Jan. 1779.

2 Lord Mansfield to Eden, 8 Mar. 1778; Bishop of Bath and Wells, ed., Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland (London, 1861-2), i. xv.

3 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 129.

that is, Eden, on 5 March;¹ and, second, that his name appears on neither of the provisional lists of suitable candidates drawn up by Eden and by John Hatsell,² Clerk of the House of Commons.³ This suggests that Carlisle was not a man chosen wholly in desperation. The mystery deepens when his reputation at that time is taken into account. Horace Walpole probably epitomised the public idea of him when he described Carlisle around this time as 'a young man of pleasure and fashion, fond of dress and gaming, by which he had greatly hurt his fortune, was totally unacquainted with business and though not void of ambition, had but moderate parts and less application.'⁴ Commentators in newspapers⁵ and speakers in both Houses of Parliament distantly echoed Walpole in their disparagement of his youth, his lack of experience and the excesses of his way of life as totally inconsistent with the great undertaking with which he had been entrusted. Why then did North appoint Carlisle First Commissioner?

There is no clear or readily ascertainable answer to the question, and historians have tended, perhaps not surprisingly, to skirtround the problem.

1 Memorandum by Eden, n.d.; R. Kirk, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Report, Appendix, Part VI, Carlisle MSS. (London, 1897), p. 322: Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34415 (Auckland Papers), f. 76; Chronology of the Commission by Eden, 17 Feb.-6 Nov. 1778.

2 John Hatsell (1743-1820); an authority on parliamentary procedure, and incidentally Ekins' brother-in-law : Gentleman's Magazine, 1813, p. 240.

3 For the lists made by Eden and Hatsell, see Addit. MSS. 34415, ff. 158, 159 respectively.

4 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 122.

5 See the Morning Post, 18 Mar. 1778, and the humorous list of Carlisle's baggage in the St. James's Chronicle, 11-14 Apr. 1778.

They have variously attributed it to his rank and supposed wealth, to the influence of William Eden, the second Commissioner, and to North's wish to mollify Gower and the Bedford group, who were hostile to any pacific moves towards America.¹ Of these factors, Eden's influence was the more important, but there are two others also worth considering : the fact that Carlisle offered himself to go to America before the Government approached him, and North's lugubrious state of mind in early 1778.

The commencement of Carlisle's political career coincided with the declaration of independence by the American rebels. Three of his first four recorded speeches over eighteen months were concerned with various aspects of the American question. From the beginning his stand on America was ministerial; even when displeased by the lack of attention paid to him as a loyal supporter of the Government he declared himself in the Lords 'perfectly satisfied of the necessity of the measures carrying on against America.'² But as with so many others, the events of 1777 modified his attitude to America considerably. After enjoying some good fortune in the middle part of the year, British troops were forced to surrender at Saratoga in October. News of this crushing blow reached England on 2 December. Carlisle recalled later that it came to him as a greater shock than the capitulation at Yorktown in 1781, an event which eventually ended the war.³ Saratoga convinced him 'that the only method of putting an end to this disastrous war was by liberal, specific, and intelligible offers to America of reconciliation, supported at the same time by the most

1 C. Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution (New York, 1941), pp. 66-7; C. Ritcheson, British Politics and the American Revolution (Univ. of Oklahoma, 1954), p. 264; P. Mackesy, The War for America 1775-1783 (London, 1964), p. 159; A. Valentine, Lord North (Norman, 1967), i.529, 532; P. Thomas, Lord North (London, 1976), p. 110.

2 Parl. Hist. xviii. 1200; 5 Mar. 1776.

3 Carlisle to Lord Hillsborough, 1 Dec. 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/F19.

active and spirited military operations,' operations that were on no account to be suspended until America had shown herself willing to negotiate towards a treaty of peace.¹ At the same Carlisle was considering the prospects of his own career. Clearly he still enjoyed the idea of diplomatic work. He therefore offered himself to the Government as the bearer of peace terms to America, before, he later wrote, he had any idea that the Government was planning to send a deputation across the Atlantic. He readily admitted to his youth and inexperience and he stipulated that he be joined by men of stature fit for such an undertaking. Exactly in what capacity he expected the Government to employ him if his offer was accepted is not now clear, but evidently he was perfectly serious. As for going to America, a loyalist refugee in London wrote of him when all three Commissioners had been settled upon : 'he certainly discovers more fondness for the employment than the other two.'²

The surrender at Saratoga had weakened the resolve of the whole country to press the war to a victorious conclusion. Added to this there were disturbing reports from Paris of a rapprochement between the French Government and negotiators sent over by the American rebels. North was alarmed by the possibility of a Franco-American alliance, which threatened to annihilate the

1 Carlisle to Rev. J. Ekins [Oct. 1778]; Hist. MSS Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. vi, Carlisle MSS., p. 377. This is a formal, retrospective account of the Commission written by Carlisle in the form of a letter addressed to Ekins and may have been intended for publication. It is a useful source of information, but as an apologia it seeks to demonstrate the united front formed by the Commissioners in the face of ministerial betrayal and should therefore be treated with some caution.

2 Diary of Thomas Hutchinson, 29 Mar. 1778; P. Hutchinson, ed., The Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson (London, 1883-6), ii. 197.

British army already reduced and demoralised by defeat. He therefore addressed himself to a review of the machinery by which it was hoped peace might be made with the American rebels. Before the Christmas recess he promised the Commons that he would soon introduce fresh peace proposals in place of the unsuccessful commission entrusted to the Howe brothers in 1776. These new proposals were drawn up with considerable secrecy early in 1778, laid before Parliament on 17 February and swiftly enacted. England renounced the right to tax America except for the regulation of trade; and the King was empowered to appoint Commissioners to negotiate on all outstanding points of dispute short of inde^{end}pence. Although North's propositions had been emasculated in passing through Parliament, for concessions were not popular with everyone, they did constitute the first and last serious and liberal attempt at reconciliation.¹

Within a few days Carlisle's offer to go to America had been accepted and he was placed at the head of the Commission. As far as North was concerned two factors were probably important. In the first place, he was aware that Carlisle had been making an effort to apply himself and very probably had a better opinion of him than that held popularly. Perhaps it was something akin to Richard Jackson's:² he had 'always heard that Ld. Carlisle has much good sense and is a Man of amiable Manners.'³

1 W. Brown, Empire or Independence : A Study in the Failure of Reconciliation, 1774-1783 (Port Washington, 1973), p. 205.

2 Richard Jackson (ca. 1721-87); M.P. (Weymouth and Melcombe Regis) 1762-8, (New Romney) 1768-84; Counsel to the Board of Trade, 1770-82; having extensive American connections, he had been offered the third seat on the Commission, but eventually decided not to accept it, to the great relief of Carlisle and Eden.

3 Addit. MSS.34415, f. 152; Jackson to Eden, 28 Feb. 1778.

In the second place, the evidence suggests that North rushed impetuously into reconciliation, and only later, faced by the hostility of the King, of most of his Cabinet, and of many Members of Parliament, did he realise that it would not be easy to find men of character and ability to take to America such peace terms as he had obtained from Parliament. Some were against any offers of reconciliation whatsoever; some were not prepared to countenance any offers which did not include the cession of independence; while those occupying the middle ground approved of the offer, but could not believe that the Americans, in the light of their recent successes, would ever accept it. In these highly unfavourable conditions, North accepted Carlisle's offer.

The third important factor in Carlisle's appointment was William Eden. For various reasons Eden, whose influence with North was in some respects considerable at this time, wished to have Carlisle on the Commission. The two men were already friends. Eden was an able and ambitious man with considerable experience behind him already. It was his intention, if on the Commission, to be the 'efficient Commissioner'¹, the man responsible for drafting documents and undertaking the burden of the negotiations. He must have thought that he would not be challenged by Carlisle on this score. Finally, Eden was looking out for useful connections. He was a young man, who had not been long in politics, and his present patron in the Cabinet, Lord Suffolk,² was weak in health and possibly near to retirement. In

1 Quoted in Ritcheson, British Politics and the American Revolution, p. 264.

2 Suffolk, Henry Howard, 12th Earl (1739-79); Lord Privy Seal, 1771; Sec. of State for the North, 1771-d.

Carlisle Eden saw a potentially powerful friend, perhaps through Lord Gower and other members of the Bedford group. William Knox,¹ of the American Department, put it rather crudely, through his distrust of Eden, when he wrote in 1779 that Eden 'determined to get possession of the first commissioner, Lord Carlisle, and he soon carried his point. His powerful connexion was a bait too alluring not to be snatched at.'² It may be wondered why Eden, if his influence in Carlisle's appointment was so important, did not accept a place on the Commission until ten days after Carlisle.³ The reason is simply that personally Eden had no desire to go to America, but that his concern for his own career and for the success of the Commission inclined him to think that he would probably have to. From the beginning, therefore, he sought to prepare the ground for himself against his being called upon, as he eventually was.

These appear to be the principal reasons behind Carlisle's appointment. Several other factors acted in his favour to a greater or lesser degree : his rank gave the Commission the dignity of a noble name; his affable temper meant that there was more chance of the Commissioners, an eclectic group, remaining on good terms with one another, and it would be of assistance in negotiations too; he had never taken up arms against the Americans and his public statements on the American question had been both few in number and mild

1 William Knox (1732-1810); joint Under Secretary for the Colonies from 1770 until the American Dept. was abolished in 1782; had extensive connections in America and some property there too.

2 Note on Eden by Knox, 1 June 1779; S. Lomas, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm. 15th Report, Various Collections, vol. vi, Knox MSS. (Dublin, 1909), p. 266.

3. Eden offered to go to America on 24 February and accepted a seat on 5 March: Addit. MSS. 34415, f. 76; chronology of the Commission by Eden, 17 Feb.-6 Nov. 1778.

in tone; and finally his friendship with Fox was calculated to please some Americans,¹ and his relationship to Lord Gower to conciliate at least one member of the Cabinet. But having gone into Carlisle's appointment in some detail, it still seems, from this distance, an extraordinary choice for North to have made, especially as he seems to have made it before any other likely men were approached. One can only conclude that from an early stage he was extremely depressed about the chances of the Commission, yet felt that Carlisle showed greater promise than his past life had led most of his contemporaries to expect. Indeed, Carlisle's colourful early twenties have always been a stone around his neck.

¹ Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, p. 66.

II

AMERICA, 1778

Having embarked at Portsmouth on 16 April 1778, the Commissioners set sail for New York on 21 April. Five weeks out they changed course after learning from a passing ship that the two Commanders-in-Chief of the army and navy, Sir Henry Clinton¹ and Lord Howe respectively, who completed the full complement of five Commissioners appointed under the new Act, were then at Philadelphia. The ship carrying the Commissioners anchored there on 6 June. The history of the Commission has already been fully written,² and it is unnecessary to go into it in any detail again. However, some brief account of the communications between the Commissioners and the Americans, in Congress and at large, ought to be given to place in context points that will be raised.

Moving slowly up the Delaware river to Philadelphia, the Commissioners were horrified to discover that British evacuation of the capital was then

1 Sir Henry Clinton (1730-95); M.P. (Boroughbridge) 1772-4, (Newark) 1774-84, (Launceston) 1790-4; in May 1778 he succeeded Sir William Howe both as Commander-in-Chief of the army in N. America and as a Peace Commissioner.

2 Brown, Empire or Independence, pp. 204-44 passim and ch. 10, is the chief work and is particularly good on the American reaction to the Commission, but it should be read in conjunction with Ritcheson, British Politics and the American Revolution, ch. 7, and with Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, chs. 3 and 4.

in progress. It was not until they actually arrived there that they learnt that Clinton was acting in accordance with secret orders from England dated 21 March 1778, over three weeks before the Commissioners left England, and that the evacuation itself was merely a preliminary to the division of the army and the commitment of five thousand men to an attack on St. Lucia, a French colony in the West Indies. Further detachments were to be despatched elsewhere.

From the first moment the Commissioners were convinced that this re-deployment destroyed any chances of success which French intervention in the colonial revolt had left them. They contended that without the support of a military offensive, or even the menace of such an offensive, the Americans would never be induced to treat. But one course of action still lay open to them : before the expected French fleet appeared off the American coast, and while the Americans were still temporarily uncertain of the purpose of Clinton's manoeuvres in and around Philadelphia, they still had time to lay their full proposals immediately before the rebel Congress in the hope of eliciting a promising response.¹ They were well aware that they might be criticised for playing all their cards so early in the game, but they did so nevertheless. Congress wisely waited until it was absolutely certain that Clinton was actually withdrawing to New York, and then replied that no negotiations could take place without Britain's prior recognition of American independence or withdrawal of her armed forces.

¹ It is generally thought that by this time reconciliation was a dead issue, but according to Brown, Empire or Independence, pp. 268-9, the debates in the rebel Congress show that members of Congress were not unanimously opposed to considering a reunion.

So began and concluded all direct communication between the Commissioners and Congress. Three further approaches on different pretexts were made to Congress, but to no avail.¹ The proclamations issued by the Commissioners were equally unsuccessful. They failed to kindle any sparks of loyalty, but at least constituted a means of communication with the mass of the American people, which the Commissioners dutifully felt they ought to employ whilst remaining sceptical of its utility.

Although Carlisle and Eden formally applied for leave to return to England in their first dispatch after Congress had returned a refusal to treat,² the long delays in communications meant that they remained imprisoned in New York over the long, hot summer composing lengthy apologies for their methods, and hoping time would break the deadlock. Very little happened, except the exposure of Johnstone's attempt to corrupt certain members of Congress,³ which gave it the perfect pretext to refuse even to acknowledge him as a Commissioner. Eventually it was decided to issue one last proclamation on 3 October, as a final warning to the rebels should they continue to snub British peace proposals. Despite the full pardon of forty days attached to

1 'The Earl of Carlisle's Entry Book of Correspondence and Proceedings, March 1778-January 1779', pp. 45, 52-3, 62, in B.F. Stevens, ed., Facsimiles of Manuscripts relating to America in European Archives (London, 1889-99), no. 1059.

2 Carlisle and Eden to Lord George Germain, 7 July 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1116. The originals of the official papers of the Peace Commission, reproduced by Stevens, are to be found in the P.R.O., Colonial Office Papers, Series 5, vols. 180-1.

3 For a discussion of this attempt, see J. Roche, Joseph Reed : A Moderate in the American Revolution (New York, 1957), pp. 133-42.

the proclamation, its effects were negligible, and the Commissioners consequently left America on 27 November.

Three aspects of the Commission, however, are worth looking at in more detail because they were important to Carlisle's career after he had returned to England, and, in the case of the first two at least, because they have so far received little more than cursory attention. The first is the evacuation of Philadelphia and its implications for military strategy in the American theatre, for America was now, after March 1778, of secondary consideration only and France the principal enemy. The second is the new trading arrangements established by Carlisle and Eden in the port of New York towards the conclusion of their residence in America. Third, the manifesto of 3 October with which the Commissioners drew their proceedings to a close. In 1779 all were of importance to Carlisle. The ramifications of the evacuation of Philadelphia led to a quarrel with Lord North, which North assuaged partly by promising to further Carlisle's political career; the experience and contacts he gained through his involvement in the commercial regulations governing the port of New York may have been partly responsible for his appointment to the Board of Trade; and the October manifesto depressed for a time what slim chances of high office he had.

The Commissioners were both shocked and gravely disturbed by the evacuation of Philadelphia and its implications, and made sure that their friends in England were fully aware of their feelings. Their original grievances were fourfold : the evacuation itself; the contraction of military operations implicit in the withdrawal to New York; the division of the armed forces; and finally, the fact that the last of these operations, so crucial, they

thought, to the success of the Commission, had been planned and ordered long before they left England, and yet kept secret from them. Naturally there was much personal resentment in the chagrin they all felt, but as it cooled, other insuperable obstacles to the success of the Commission revealed themselves more and more clearly to the Commissioners so that they began to withdraw some of their initial hasty criticisms. Before long both Carlisle and Eden were ready to admit that the evacuation of Philadelphia might have been a measure of sound military strategy.¹ Moreover, whether sound or not, the Commissioners had no substantial grounds for blaming the Government for the humiliation they felt at witnessing the withdrawal, for their arrival at Philadelphia had been purely fortuitous. Their instructions had directed them to New York and they had only changed course to Philadelphia after a chance meeting at sea. Alexander Wedderburn,² recently appointed Attorney General and a friend of Eden's, was near the truth when he remark^ed percipiently : 'I am apt to think you would have been as impatient at the one place for the arrival of the Troops as you felt yourselves at the other on account of their removal.'³ Lord George Germain,⁴

1 Carlisle to Gower, 'Heads of a Letter,' [Sept. 1778]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., pp. 372-3 : Eden to [Wedderburn], 19 June [1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 501. Evidence concerning Johnstone's opinions is scanty. To be fair to the Commissioners, it was not so much blind resentment as the secrecy with which they had to treat the wider purposes of the evacuation that led many people in England to infer from their first letters that it was only the evacuation at which they were dismayed.

2 Alexander Wedderburn (1733-1805); M.P. for Scottish and English constituencies, 1761-80; Solicitor General, 1771-8; Attorney General, 1778-80; Lord Chancellor, 1793-1801; cr. Baron Loughborough, 1780, and Earl of Rosslyn, 1801.

3 [Wedderburn] to Eden, [Aug. 1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 514.

4 Lord George Germain (1716-85); M.P. (Dover) 1741-61, (Hythe) 1761-8, (East Grinstead) 1768-82; had survived a court martial to become First Lord of Trade, 1775-9, and Sec. of State for America, 1775-82; cr. Viscount Sackville, 1782.

the Secretary of State for America, fully intended the Commissioners to proceed to New York, which he intended to consolidate as a prestigious base for the Commission. In the secret orders of 21 March, Germain told Clinton that once the troops had been collected at New York, there would be no problem about holding that place, 'the possession of which will be so necessary to give Dignity and Effect to the Commissioners' negotiations.'¹ It is certainly true that if the Commissioners had been told about Philadelphia, they would never have changed course. Yet to have explained to them why their destination was New York and not Philadelphia would have amounted to an intimation of the new campaign orders, and in the circumstances this was not considered prudent, as will be seen later.

Closely involved with the question of Philadelphia, was that of the withdrawal of the forces to New York. In fact, both operations were consecutive stages of the same policy. The Government had been forced to realise in early 1778 that the army was inadequate to the task of reducing America without vast reinforcements, but these reinforcements were simply not available. Furthermore, the American war was now subordinate to that with France. For these two reasons future operations in North America were to be chiefly of a naval rather than a military character.² This concept was embodied in Clinton's orders of 8 March, which also provided, however, for an attack on the southern colonies in the autumn. The three civilian Commissioners were certainly familiar with this set of orders. Eden himself had proposed such a contraction of land forces, and even envisaged the evacuation of the whole of Pennsylvania, in which state Philadelphia lay, in a letter to North in December 1777.³ He had also been sent a copy of Clinton's

¹ Germain to Clinton, 21 Mar. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1068.

² Ritcheson, British Politics and the American Revolution, pp. 253-4.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 258.

orders of 8 March by Germain on 7 March after accepting the Commission two days before on a promise that the plan of the next campaign should be submitted to him.¹ Johnstone, too, had been shown Clinton's orders and was encouraged to find that they 'breathed a spirit of activity and coercion.'² It is nowhere definitely stated that Carlisle had seen the orders, but it may be assumed reasonably that had he not, Eden and Johnstone would certainly have informed him of their contents. The Commissioners had originally found nothing exceptional in these orders and, therefore, had no grounds for alleging the withdrawal to New York and the contraction of land forces as a grievance. Hardly surprisingly they did not persist with this complaint.

They could never accept, however, the division of the armed forces, and from an early stage did everything in their power to prevent it from taking place. This division was the very nub of Clinton's second set of orders, dated 21 March 1778, which were drawn up as a result of the announcement of the Franco-American treaty on 13 March, and adopted by the Cabinet on 18 March. Clinton was ordered to detach five thousand troops from his own force and embark them immediately for an attack on the French island of St. Lucia in the West Indies. A further three thousand men were to be dispatched to St. Augustine and Pensacola for their defence. In the meantime Clinton was to retire from Philadelphia to New York to await the outcome of the Peace Commission. Should New York prove impossible to hold with his depleted army, he was to evacuate it, leave enough troops with the garrison on Rhode Island to hold that place, and proceed to new headquarters at Halifax. In sum, therefore, the St. Lucia expedition and the need for Britain to strengthen her naval force in European waters now meant the abandonment of even a large scale naval war against America.³

1 Addit. MSS. 34415, f. 76; Chronology of the Commission by Eden, 17 Feb.-6 Nov. 1778.

2 Parl. Hist. xix. 1352; 26 Nov. 1778.

3 Ritcheson, British Politics and the American Revolution, pp. 255-6.

To the Commissioners' attempts to frustrate this plan, news of the imminent arrival of the French fleet under the Comte d'Estaign to assist its new American allies came, curiously, as a blessing in disguise.¹ It was one of the main reasons why Clinton chose to lead all his troops across New Jersey by land to New York instead of embarking them at Philadelphia and dispatching them at once to their various destinations, according to the letter of his instructions of 21 March. The actual appearance of the French fleet further delayed the offensives in the West Indies and southern colonies by incarcerating the British army in New York and keeping the navy engaged at the same time. Even when the British regained naval superiority by the arrival of Admiral Byron's² squadron the French fleet still remained a threat, and continued to provide the Commissioners with a very welcome breathing space, during which they attempted to persuade the naval and military commanders to postpone, if not cancel, the West Indies expedition in favour of bold attacks on such ports as Boston, in which the French fleet sought refuge when it lost its supremacy.

In the early summer, Carlisle and Eden anxiously discussed whether or not the West Indies expedition ought to be suspended for a time, and, if it ought, whether they had the right to persuade those in possession of explicit orders from the Government to ignore those orders even temporarily. For various reasons Carlisle decided that they did not have the right,³ but the situation changed when d'Estaign left his station off New York, and pursued

1 Addit. MSS.34415, f. 446; memoranda by Eden, 29 July [1778].

2 Vice-Admiral John Byron (1723-86); a celebrated circumnavigator of the globe, and Carlisle's uncle on his mother's side; succeeded Lord Howe as Commander-in-Chief of the navy in N. America, Sept. 1778.

3 Addit. MSS.34415, ff. 446-9; memoranda by Eden, 29 July [1778], and Carlisle's reply to them, n.d.

by Lord Howe, retreated to Boston in August. It is known now that this was the end of operations in the northern theatre,¹ but at the time Carlisle and Eden must have realised with concern that d'Estaing's withdrawal provided an opportunity for the execution of the 21 March orders. In September, therefore, they began to agitate actively for the recommencement of combined operations in the northern theatre and the continued procrastination of the West Indies expedition. They implored the Government to cancel the expedition,² and arranged among themselves that Carlisle should travel to Rhode Island for talks with Byron, his uncle and the new naval Commander-in-Chief, about an attack on Boston while the French fleet remained in shelter there. 'I was at liberty,' wrote Carlisle, 'if it appeared possible to carry on any naval operation within the harbour, to suggest (avoiding a formal proposition) that the West India Expedition, with the five thousand men on board, might be employed in any attack that might be thought advisable to attempt.'³ If Byron agreed with this suggestion, he was not able to put the plan into execution because of severe bad weather. In any case, d'Estaing sailed for the West Indies himself before long and so there were no attacks of the sort urged by the Commissioners. It has been rightly written that this was most fortunate, for had the Commissioners had their way and had raids been launched on rebel strongholds, d'Estaing might have been free to leave Boston and he would have caught the British army scattered in weak detachments from Philadelphia to Newport, with

1 Mackesy, War for America, p. 219.

2 Commissioners to Germain, 21 Sept. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1161.

3 Carlisle to Ekins, [Oct. 1778]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., pp. 387-8.

a depleted navy attempting to cover every part of the coast.¹ The Commissioners refused to surrender this point, however, and, in their final proclamation to the Americans, threatened them with a bloody and destructive war.

Thus until the last, and, indeed, even after they had returned to England,² Carlisle and Eden adhered to their original position : that only active measures in the New England area could invest the Commission with any authority. They asserted they would never have accepted the mission had they been aware of the full extent of the naval and military withdrawal embodied in Clinton's orders of 21 March.³ This point was the crux of their case against the Government. They were understandably touchy on the subject, for personal resentment played its part. Eden was in a great measure responsible for the Commission and enjoyed North's confidence, but his ignorance on this crucial question revealed the limitations on that confidence. Carlisle, though chastened by his financial and other difficulties and able, it appears, to keep his personal feelings under control while in America, was still extremely sensitive to any erosion of his dignity, whether as a private individual or as a Commissioner.

But what aggrieved them most was their suspicion that the Government had deliberately omitted to inform them of the new campaign orders in order to make certain that they went to America.⁴ It may be safely assumed in the first place that such information was not entrusted to any of the civilian Commissioners before they arrived at Philadelphia. Apparently John-

1 Mackesy, War for America, p. 220.

2 Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 233; Eden to North, 1 Jan. [1779].

3 Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, [ca. 20 June 1778]; C.H.A. J15/1/16.

4 Carlisle to Ekins, [Oct. 1778]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 378.

stone was convinced, and remained so, that Eden did have advance knowledge of the evacuation of Philadelphia,¹ and this was one of the reasons why they fell out, but this suspicion cannot be credited with any foundation in fact. They were all victims alike of the same conspiracy of silence.

There were four men who might have been expected to communicate the secret orders to the Commissioners : Lord Suffolk, Eden's particular friend in the Cabinet; Lord Gower, Carlisle's father-in-law; Lord George Germain, Secretary of State for America; and Lord North, the head of the Government. During the month preceding the departure of the Commissioners, these men all appear to have reduced contact with them to a minimum, and in some cases avoided it altogether. Suffolk, it is true, was in weak health and, being confined to his house from 16 March until Eden left for Portsmouth on 13 April, missed the vital Cabinet meeting on 18 March when the secret orders were officially approved. But, in writing to Eden on the subject later, he did not exclude the possibility that he was informed of the new orders before Eden left London.² Whether Gower attended the Cabinet or not on 18 March is a point disputed by historians,³ but if he did not he would no doubt have been told like Suffolk. Shortly after the Cabinet meeting he fell ill. By 26 March, five days after the date of the secret orders, he was reported to have been dangerously ill for some time at his house in Whitehall; by 6 April he had recovered a little, but had only made himself more inaccessible by going down to his villa at Putney. He did not return to his seat in the

1 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, [1802]; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 57.

2 Addit. MSS. 34415, ff. 450-1; Suffolk to Eden, 30 July 1778.

3 Mackesy, War for America, p. 189 n.1, takes the view that Gower was there; while Valentine, Lord North, i.527, says that he was not. *Gower did attend.*

Cabinet until 29 April,¹ by which time Carlisle was long gone. He was also absent from the House of Lords from 17 March, when he and Carlisle were in the House together, until 6 May.² Gower's illness made it extremely difficult for Carlisle to speak to him,³ and he himself, having kissed hands as First Commissioner on 5 April, was soon after confined to his own house with a fever, which lasted almost until the time of his departure.⁴ He was therefore forced to take written leave of Gower on 10 April.⁵ It is a curious coincidence that the two men perhaps most likely from personal motives to have told Eden and Carlisle of the new orders should have fallen ill at approximately the same time and on so important an occasion. In contrast, Johnstone's borough patron, Sir James Lowther,⁶ was in close attendance and actually accompanied him to Portsmouth,⁷ but of course there was no reason why Lowther, in opposition to the Government, should have had access to confidential information to which Johnstone was not privy, and therefore no embarrassment to prevent the two meeting at this time.

Germain and North behaved strangely too. When Carlisle went to see Germain on 12 April, the day before the Commissioners left London, to receive

1 Morning Post, 26 Mar., 6 Apr., 30 Apr., 1778.

2 Journals of the House of Lords, xxxv. pp. 373, 464.

3 Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, 24 Apr.-17 June 1778; C.H.A. J15/1/12.

4 Carlisle to Ekins, [Oct. 1778]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 378.

5 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 740; Carlisle to Gower, 10 Apr. 1778.

6 For details of Lowther, see below, p. 208 n.2.

7 Morning Post, 23 Apr. 1778.

any last minute instructions, Germain was evidently rather agitated and, so Carlisle remembered, imprudently gave away much 'When it was evident his intention was to say nothing, or ought to have been so, lest he should risk the discovery of that which was so clearly a measure to conceal,'¹ in other words, the secret orders. North appeared not only embarrassed, but positively elusive. The Commissioners dined with him on 13 March when they received the outline of their instructions, but after a long delay the Commission was not discussed again until 29 March,² although the problem of Richard Jackson, who was reluctant to go, was calling for a solution throughout the whole of that month. Between 16-31 March Eden was never able to see North alone, but did frequently between 31 March-12 April, though North, better at keeping a secret than Germain, never mentioned the new orders once.³ During this period, Carlisle wrote to Eden : 'Lord North I understand will not go to Bushy [Park, of which he was Ranger], but I believe had rather go anywhere or meet the Devil sooner than a Commissioner.'⁴ Finally, North took leave of Eden on 12 April 'very much in the stile [sic] of a common acquaintance who is stepping from your Room to the Water Closet and means to return in Five Minutes.'⁵

This evidence is admittedly circumstantial and by no means watertight.

1 Carlisle to Ekins, [Oct. 1778]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., pp. 378-9.

2 Ibid., p. 377.

3 Memorandum by Eden, n.d.; *ibid.*, p. 322 : Eden to [Wedderburn], 18 June [1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 500.

4 Addit. MSS. 34415, f. 311; Carlisle to Eden, n.d.

5 Ibid., f. 344; Eden to [Wedderburn], 12 Apr. [1778].

For example, Carlisle's own illness makes the coincidence of Gower's and Suffolk's much more reasonable, and the fact that Gower did not fully recover until the end of April suggests that his illness was wholly genuine. Furthermore, the existence of a ministerial conspiracy of silence does not need proof, for the Commissioners' ignorance betrays it. But if it is accepted that this evidence suggests awkward and embarrassed behaviour, then it may be construed from it that the Ministers' secret was in fact a guilty one, that more was meant by keeping the Commissioners in ignorance than merely the preservation of secrecy; in other words, that since the French intervention and the consequent change of orders, the Cabinet no longer had any hopes for the success of the Commission, but for various reasons could not dismantle it, and was forced to conceal the new orders in order to ensure the departure of the Commissioners, who, Ministers realised, would never have gone had they been informed of them.¹

It is perfectly true that the preservation of secrecy regarding the orders of 21 March was vital, but to withhold important information from the Commissioners, who were close at hand in London, while sending it three thousand miles across a perilous ocean, at the risk of capture by American or French ships, now seems on the face of it, absurd. It also seems unwise as far as future relations were concerned to have entrusted half the Commission, the two commanders in America, with a secret of which the other half was kept in ignorance. Furthermore, the Government, by informing the Commissioners of the orders of 8 March, accepted in principle at least, that they should be acquainted with all campaign plans.² It was not, therefore, the civilian status of Carlisle and Eden that discouraged the Government from revealing military and naval plans to them.

¹ Valentine, Lord North, i.540, also reached this conclusion, but blamed North for it instead of trying to explain it.

² Eden to Germain, 19 June [1778]; W. Hewlett, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 9th^{re} Report, Appendix, Part III, Stopford-Sackville MSS. (London, 1884), p. 93a.

The balance of the evidence seems then to rest heavily against the Government. But can Ministers really be accused of such calculating duplicity?¹ The answer can only be determined by the verdict on North, with whom ultimately rested the responsibility to inform the Commissions of any information material to their undertaking. Generally he has been criticised for concealing the new orders,² and this judgement is probably correct if the Peace Commission is examined in an exclusively American context. But North had to consider the French aspect too. There is no doubt that he faced a cruel dilemma. The Peace Commission was already established by Act of Parliament and the Conciliatory Bills long since dispatched to America by the time definite news of the Franco-American treaty broke. From a lull in preparations and decision-making in the latter part of March, after news of the treaty had been received by the Government, it does seem that North seriously considered abandoning the whole project of the peace Commission.³ But he had gone too far to withdraw : he could only have shelved it at the risk of appearing vacillating at home, and of doing irreparable damage in America to the conciliatory reputation which the British Government hoped to establish for itself there.⁴ The French war, moreover, posed an immediate threat to the very shores of England and demanded instantaneous action. North pursued the only course he saw open

1 Eden and Carlisle were prepared to exonerate Suffolk and Gower because of their bad health : memorandum by Eden, 8 June [1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no.496 : P.R.O., Granville Papers, Series 30/29, vol. 4/2, f.256; Carlisle to Lady Gower 19 June 1778.

2 Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, p.69, thought North 'intolerably lax - or disingenuous -' and Valentine, Lord George Germain (Oxford, 1962), p.318, condemned the cover-up as 'unpardonable.'

3 Diary of Thomas Hutchinson, 22/29 Mar. 1778; Hutchinson, The Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson, ii. 194, 197.

4 The Conciliatory Bills had been sent out to America over two weeks before they were enacted in order to foster this reputation and to pre-empt any news from France.

to him: he ordered immediate operations against France and at the same time sent the Commission to America on what he knew to be a hopeless task.¹ The Cabinet acquiesced in this decision in deference to the same overwhelming national interest. But although Ministers also accepted the need for secrecy,² some must have faced an agonizing personal dilemma. Though it is unlikely that Gower feigned illness to avoid meeting Carlisle, his incapacity was certainly convenient and was possibly owing to the stress of the moment.

In short, therefore, war with France assumed a natural priority over rebellion in America, and the Peace Commission, an exclusively American measure, suffered as a consequence. It is natural to sympathise with the reluctant and harassed North, but with hindsight he ought, perhaps, to have given more credence to early reports of the Franco-American alliance, and waited until the French position was made clear before embarking on his conciliatory plan with America.

Carlisle and Eden were understandably unable to rationalise their treatment as easily as it is possible to do now. They accepted that in some cases the sacrifice of an individual to the greater needs of the State might be necessary, but in their case they would not admit that the sabotage of the Commission was necessary to the national interest. Presumably Carlisle suspected that the Commission was sent out not to make peace with America, but to silence the peace lobby in England, and so he wrote:

¹ Wedderburn reported a conversation in which North said 'He did not believe the Commission would have any Effect - that nothing short of Independence would do...'; Wedderburn to Eden, [1 Apr. 1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 426.

² Addit. MSS. 34415, ff. 452-3; Germain to Eden, 31 July 1778.

If it appears that we were to be deceived because the cheat could not otherwise have been put upon the nation, by an imposition of this nature, the public is wounded thro' us, and those who continued the cheat must answer for the consequences.¹

In other words, he was eager to hear the Government explain its fraud if it could. Consequently, in February 1779, he, with much more eagerness than Eden, came very close to making the evacuation of Philadelphia and its ramifications a public issue. Eden intended Germain to come under fire too, for he held him responsible for the orders of 21 March, which he considered not only as fatal to the Commission, but strategically disastrous in a wider sense. He resolved to make these orders also a matter of public discussion on his return to England, but by early 1779 his plans for continuing his vendetta against the Colonial Secretary had changed somewhat, as shall be seen.

Turning to one of the more happy aspects of the Peace Commission, the new set of trading regulations instituted in the port of New York by Carlisle and Eden during their last few weeks in America met with some small success. Over the previous two years an immense quantity of prize property and other merchandise had accumulated there,² much of the latter comprising British goods that had been imported chiefly by the Virginia and Maryland merchants in 1776 and 1777 when hopes were running high for the recovery of these colonies. They were not reclaimed, however, and, there being no great demand for the imported commodities at New York, the goods lay idle in warehouses and spilled over into shipping when the warehouses were full.³

1 Addit. MSS. 34415, ff. 441-7; Memoranda by Eden, 29 July [1778], and Carlisle's reply to them, n.d.

2 Commissioners to Germain, 17 Nov. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1219.

3 Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 237; - to Sir Henry Clinton, 9 Jan. 1779.

The burden and inconvenience of so much undistributed merchandise had become so intolerable by August 1778, that the merchants and traders of New York petitioned the Commissioners at the end of that month for some relaxation of the commercial regulations, which would allow them to ease the load on the port.¹ Their addresses met with a kind reception, for Eden, and probably Carlisle too, had already considered the expedience of some form of open trade from the port.² Furthermore, their own objectives would be served by raising the embargo, for the more ships that were released from Government service, the longer it would take to assemble them for the expeditions to the West Indies and the southern colonies, which the Commissioners were anxious to prevent.

The only difficulty was whether Howe and Clinton were prepared to suspend the four months embargo on all ships in the port of New York imposed to secure enough vessels to convey the troops on these expeditions.³ But under the unfavourable conditions for naval operations then prevailing, the two commanders consented^{to} a lifting of the embargo so long as a limited tonnage was reserved for provisioning New York.⁴ Time was also allowed for the Admiral to 'take such precautions as he may think proper to prevent this measure's drawing the seamen from His Majesty's ships of war.'⁵ The Commissioners then issued a proclamation, dated 26 September 1778,⁶ which relaxed

1 'The Earl of Carlisle's Entry Book', p.70; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1059.

2 Addit. MSS. 34415, f. 447; memoranda by Eden, 29 July [1778].

3 Commissioners to Germain, 5 Sept. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1144.

4 Commissioners to the Superintendent of the Port of New York, 27 Aug. 1778; *ibid.*, no. 1134.

5 Commissioners to Germain, 21 Sept. 1778; *ibid.*, no. 1161.

6 *Ibid.*, no. 527.

the Prohibitory Act of 1775 and empowered the Superintendent of the Port of New York both to grant licences for the export of all goods not needed for the troops and to grant permission for prize goods to be carried to England.¹ Between 1-16 October licences were granted releasing nearly half a million pounds worth of goods.² Though the Commissioners appreciated the limited scope of their proclamation, they still hoped that it would 'at least show a Degree of System and permanent Establishment at this Place,' in order to give the loyalists confidence and encourage the waverers.³ The new arrangement served both commercial and political ends in offering Americans material inducements to rejoining the Empire.

Restrictions on trade were further relaxed by a second proclamation on 18 November.⁴ It extended its precursor of 26 September until 1 June 1779, when the Commission was due to expire, and also eased the import of stores and provisions into New York and Rhode Island. The scarcity and dearness of provisions, combined with the unreliability of the provisioning system called for new measures 'to facilitate the introduction of all necessary Articles of Cloathing, Provision & Fuel,' while at the same time retaining 'some check and means of Regulation so far as may be salutary in respect to the commercial enterprizes or speculations of Persons shipping goods to

1 Commissioners to the Superintendent of the Port of New York, 26 Sept. 1778, and to the Merchants and Traders of New York, 29 Aug. 1778; *ibid.*, nos. 1164, 1137.

2 Addit. MSS. 34416, f.63; 'Aggregate Account of Vessels & Merchandise for which Outward Permissions and Licences were granted at the Superintendent's Office, 1-16 Oct. 1778.'

3 Commissioners to Germain, 21 Sept. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1161.

4 *Ibid.*, no. 1212.

Ports surrounded by Colonies in Rebellion.'¹ Again the Commissioners acknowledged the comparatively limited scope of their work, but the system at New York was just not sufficiently stable to handle the influx that would have resulted from opening up the port to a general importation. Still, Carlisle and Eden were pleased with having been 'the Means of transmitting a Million sterling of British Property to this Country & into mercantile circulation,'² and the success of their measures imparted a happier spirit to the conclusion of the Commission : 'We shall amidst various Disappointments have at least the Satisfaction of having contributed essentially to the Interest of the Merchants and of the British Trade in General,'³ they told Germain. This was Carlisle's first, but not his last, excursion into the commercial world under the expert tutelage of Eden.

The third and final aspect of the Commission, which claims closer attention than it has hitherto received, is the manifesto of 3 October by which its proceedings in America were declared to be almost at an end.⁴ 'Tis our last dying speech,' Carlisle wrote despondently to his wife,⁵ but it was also a bold, positive though perhaps indelicate address over the head of Congress directly to the people of America. It was framed with three principal ends in view, which it was hoped together would provoke an upsurge of loyalism in Americans, predisposed to it already, perhaps, by the new

1 Commissioners to Germain, 17 Nov. 1778; *ibid.*, no. 1219 : Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 255; Carlisle and Eden to Lords of the Treasury, 31 Jan. [1779].

2 *Ibid.*, f. 233; Eden to North, 1 Jan. [1779].

3 Commissioners to Germain, 17 Nov. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1219.

4 Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1172.

5 Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, 14 Oct. 1778; C.H.A. J15/1/26.

trading privileges at New York. First, it announced the imminent departure of the Commissioners and a general pardon for most rebels until they actually left; secondly, it scotched the rumour, which had spread during August as the Commissioners unwillingly prolonged their stay in America, that they were either already empowered, or would shortly receive, the authority to grant independence to America; a rumour which, as Johnstone pointed out to North when he returned to England, hindered the progress of reconciliation.¹ Third, and most importantly, the manifesto painted in vivid colours the consequences of a continued rejection of British terms by Congress. Such a rejection, the manifesto ran, in the light of America's new position as the ally of Britain's traditional enemy, would leave her no option, but to bring the laws of self-preservation into operation. Across the Atlantic, the manifesto said, it was being conjectured 'How far Great Britain may by every means in her power destroy or render useless a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of France.'² In short, the manifesto promised that Britain's future conduct of the war would not be so lenient as hitherto.

It was this promise that created such a furore when it became known in England. Hostile motions were made against it in both Houses of Parliament.³ The Opposition accused the Commissioners of threatening the Americans with a war of heightened barbarity and savagery, which was of course vehemently denied by ministerial supporters, including Johnstone, who had already returned to England. Nevertheless the Government and the King were embarrassed. They

1 North to Lord Dartmouth, 31 Oct. 1778; B.F. Stevens, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 14th Report, Appendix, Part X, Dartmouth MSS. (London, 1895), ii. 470.

2 Manifesto of 3 Oct. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, No. 1172.

3 Parl. Hist. xix. 1388-1402, xx. 1-43; 4 Dec., 7 Dec., 1778.

could not publicly disown the manifesto, and yet thought it impolitic in that it committed Britain to a policy which it was unable to pursue effectively. Was it not obvious that the original reason for the contraction of military operations in North America was the failure of resources to meet needs? By reducing the latter the balance between the two had been somewhat improved, but the Commissioners seemed to take no heed of this development in their public pronouncement. Furthermore, official thinking ran, they had exceeded their authority in outlining future British policy, even if in principle only. It is certainly true that a few days before issuing the manifesto, the Commissioners admitted that they could only conjecture as to future Government policy and the resources available,¹ but in the manifesto this conjecture became certain fact. The manifesto, therefore, exposed an unfortunate divergence between the thinking of the Commissioners and that of the Government. The displeasure this caused the King threw doubt on whether Carlisle was fitted for the highest office and became of some importance when he was being considered for promotion in autumn 1779.

As far as he was concerned, he never publicly regretted issuing the manifesto. His attitude to America was not changed by his experience there. He went out with the genuine belief that the French treaty would be harmful to America in the long run, and that the British terms as proposed redressed every grievance of which the Americans had ever complained. While in America his eyes were opened to the cultural divergence between the British and American peoples, and he discovered a much broader and more intransigent desire for independence among Americans of all classes, but especially the common people,²

¹ Commissioners to Germain, 21 Sept. 1778; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1161.

² Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, 21 July 1778; C.H.A. J15/1/19.

than he had ever envisaged when he left England. Thus he lost faith in the idea of an amicable settlement, and was forced to consider the only alternatives he could see : independence, or military conquest.

Independence was something he could never tolerate. He argued that the recognition of the independence of the American colonies would not necessarily lead to peace, unless that peace was first made at Versailles,¹ and it would inevitably destroy the connection with America, which he considered so vital to the survival of Great Britain. To him 'independence' and 'separation' were synonymous terms.² Thus he refused ever to be a party to any transaction involving independence, even if initiated by the British Government.³ For this reason, he and the other Commissioners continued to feed the Government the specious fiction that the mass of the people were loyal in their hearts, but held in thrall by the 'artful, designing' men of Congress, who controlled the rebel army. The only alternative to independence, after the rejection of all offers of reconciliation, was military conquest : 'it is now absolutely necessary if America will run into the arms of France to send her as wretched and as miserable as we can,' Carlisle wrote in September 1778.⁴ This was the spirit of diehard imperialism, which lay behind the manifesto of 3 October 1778, and which preserved Carlisle's conviction that he and his colleagues had done the right thing in framing it as they did.⁵ Four years later his ideas had changed in a way.

1 Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, 22 Sept. 1778; C.H.A. J15/1/24.

2 Carlisle to Gower and Germain, Heads of Letters, July 1778; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 350.

3 Ibid., pp. 350-1.

4 Addit. MSS. 34416, ff. 33-4; 'Minute from Ld. Carlisle in Answer to Mine,' 29 Sept. [1778].

5 Parl. Hist. xx. 1035, xxx. 1039; 25 Nov. 1779, 17 June 1793.

Towards the end of his viceroyalty in Dublin, he exhorted the Government not to resist, but to agree to the demands of the Irish for legislative independence. To some extent he was bowing to the inevitable, and he had had much more direct contact with the patriots in Ireland than in America, but it is still true to say that by 1782 he did genuinely believe in the right of Ireland to self-government. Before Yorktown, however, he does not seem to have relaxed his particular hostility to American independence, which, of course, involved the far greater question of national sovereignty.

But whether his attitude to Ireland owed anything to his experience in America is a matter of conjecture. He himself never made any comparative references to the two countries, so far as one can tell. Nevertheless, America was in one way at least a watershed for him. Although he went to America in a slightly over-confident frame of mind, it must be assumed that he had given his decision to volunteer himself the most serious consideration, involving as it did separation from his family, and that it was not a momentary whim which had prompted him to do it. Thus in going to America, and in his conduct there, he was able to suggest a sense of responsibility and purpose which few believed him to possess before he left England. After he had arrived in Philadelphia, a correspondent there observed him and sent back a report to England saying that his dress was now sober, his demeanour grave, and his deportment stately, all worthy of the serious man of public affairs he had become.¹

In the affairs of the Commission, he did as much, if not more than was

¹ St. James's Chronicle, 1-4 Aug. 1778.

expected of him. Indeed, he and Eden were by far the most active Commissioners. Clinton, of course, had his military duties to attend to,¹ while Johnstone, who proved himself to be a poor choice as a diplomat and caused nothing but embarrassment in America, resigned from the Commission on 26 August after allegations of bribery had been made against him, and returned to England shortly afterwards. In any case, he was a maverick character, who had refused to observe the same formalities as his colleagues. So most of the work was left to Eden and Carlisle. It was, of course, by no means onerous, for the negotiations with the Americans were never begun. Official duties were necessarily limited to drafting various documents such as letters to Congress, proclamations, and dispatches to Germain. It is natural to assume, though, that Eden, from his wide experience of this sort of work, was personally responsible for all the drafting. This may well have been the case, although one important exception suggests otherwise.² But the origins of the Commissioners' documents lay not in Eden's head alone, but in minutes composed by the various individual Commissioners, usually Carlisle

1 He was away in the Jerseys, for example, on the day when his colleagues needed his signature to the original of the proclamation of 26 Sept., which original had to be posted up before the proclamation could be published : Addit. MSS. 34416, f.28; A. Ferguson to Eden, 26 Sept. 1778.

2 It seems that Adam Ferguson, Secretary to the Commission, penned some public documents, and Lord Rockingham even attributed the manifesto of 3 Oct. to his hand. But, in a minute dated 20 Dec. 1778 and read out in the Commons on 11 June 1779, Eden avowed that it was the work of the principals : 'it happened that this particular measure, involving in itself many serious and weighty matters of decision, for which the principals felt themselves responsible to God and to their country, they were led to adjust it among themselves in repeated discussions; and their Minutes delivered to their Secretary were verbatim what was afterwards printed : Parl. Hist. xx.3, 850; 7 Dec. 1778, 11 June 1779.

and Eden, and, in the early days, Johnstone too. Some textual evidence proves that Carlisle exercised some direct influence on the Commission's public pronouncements.¹ Thus although Eden may have been the 'efficient Commissioner' as he wished, he worked with and not through Carlisle.²

This was a partnership which outlived the Commission by several years. Their previous friendship, their political loyalties, and the reasons behind their appointments naturally formed a bond between them in America. As always Johnstone was exceptional. It was widely predicted before the Commission left England that he would never establish good relations with his two civilian colleagues. The predictions were half correct. As soon as they arrived in Philadelphia, he fell out with Eden, but curiously, although he and Carlisle were such different types and never agreed on 'any material subject,'³ except probably their common opposition to American independence, they became quite cordial friends. Later, in an unusually generous moment, Johnstone publicly retracted the derogatory opinion of Carlisle which he had once held, for, he said, 'a young nobleman of more

1 For example, the 'Minute from Ld. Carlisle in Answer to Mine (i.e. Eden's)', dated 29 Sept. [1778] (ref. Addit. MSS. 34416, ff. 33-4), contains a phrase, 'destroy a connection which is contrived for our ruin,' which appeared in a slightly altered form a few days later in the manifesto of 3 Oct., 'connexion contrived for her ruin.' There are other similarities of phraseology which appear in correlation.

2 A contemporary poem, An Ode addressed to the Scotch Junto. and their American Commission. on the late Quarrel between Commissioner Ed-n and Commissioner J-hst-ne (London, 1778), suggested that Eden 'By making secret Overtures in Obedience to private Instructions from the Scotch Junto, was the only effective Commissioner, and that his Colleagues were no more Than Cyphers in the Case.'

3 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, [1802]; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 57.

worth, more honour, more dignity, or greater zeal for the public service

I never knew.'¹ Eden had never ridiculed or criticised Carlisle.

Shortly after they arrived at Philadelphia, he said that he was 'highly honourable, very practicable, with a right Understanding & an earnest

Desire to do the business well...'² It is clear from this passage that Eden saw him as a beginner in public affairs, which of course he was.

Over the next few years, Eden pushed Carlisle, perhaps not further than he wished to go, but certainly rather more crudely and a little too fast for his liking. In the chain of influence by which Carlisle seems to have been governed for much of his life, Eden had replaced Lord Gower.

1 Parl. Hist. xix. 1353; 26 Nov. 1778.

2 Eden to [Wedderburn], 18 June [1778]; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 500.

III

THE BOARD OF TRADE AND PLANTATIONS, 1779-1780

At midnight on Monday, 21 December 1778, Carlisle arrived back in London after a swift crossing from America. He was evidently nervous about the reception he and Eden would meet with, but at the same time was pleased to find public attention concentrated on the naval dispute between Keppel and Palliser,¹ which the Opposition had exploited as a political issue, because this meant that the parliamentary attack on the manifesto of 3 October was, as he put it, 'universally scouted.'² There had been some fierce debates in Parliament on it, but the Opposition had found it a barren issue and dropped it over a week before Carlisle and Eden returned. The Commissioners themselves were not anxious to revive it : in Parliament Eden did not refer to it, or indeed to the Commission at all, until 29 March 1779,³ and Carlisle, although he was nearly provoked into speaking on America in a debate on an unrelated subject in April,⁴ delayed saying anything in public until 25 November 1779, when he reaffirmed his belief in the manifesto.⁵

1 Sir Hugh Palliser, 1st Bt. (1723-96), was accused of failing to obey a signal during the battle of Ushant, which had allegedly made it impossible for Admiral Augustus Keppel (1725-96), a popular naval officer and prominent member of the Whig Opposition, to re-engage the French. Both men were court martialled and acquitted.

2 Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 137; Carlisle to Eden, 22 Dec. [1778].

3 Parl. Hist. xx. 361-2.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, 29 Apr. [1779]; C.H.A.

5 Parl. Hist. xx. 1034. This speech may have been published : Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34417 (Auckland Papers), f. 37; A. Ferguson to Eden, 17 Feb. 1780.

On the other hand, the Government was anxious to receive their impressions and opinions on the progress of the war in America. Meetings were arranged at which the three Commissioners together delivered greatly exaggerated estimates of the size of the reservoir of loyalist support existing in America, and pressed the Government to tap it at once by showing more activity in its measures against the rebellious colonists. Unfortunately the Government, already elated by the recent and comparatively easy recovery of Georgia, paid great attention to these views. According to Clinton in his apologia, the promise of reinforcements he subsequently received, and his new orders directing him to bring the rebel army to a decisive engagement, or failing that, to force it to seek safety in the highlands of New York or the Jerseys, were a direct consequence of the advice of the Commissioners.¹

In fact the Commissioners only confirmed the Government in a misconception which it had held ever since the revolution began. The change from an offensive to a defensive strategy in 1778 was not a positive one, but largely the result of Saratoga, and it was conceived partly as a reculer pour mieux sauter. Into the breathing space created by the alteration in strategy was sent the Peace Commission, which, though it failed in its primary objective, discovered, so it thought, a great deal of potentially active loyalist support, which had hitherto been neglected in favour of troops sent out from England and the continent. More perceptive observers, or rather observers who were better placed to understand the real state of affairs, contradicted the sanguine reports of the Commissioners. For example, John Temple,² sent out to America at the same time as the Peace Commission to agitate secretly against

1 W.B. Willcox, ed., The American Rebellion : Sir Henry Clinton's Narrative of his Campaigns, 1775-1782 (Hamden, 1971), pp. 113, 118, 398, 409-10.

2 For some details of Temple and his mission, see Van Doren, Secret History of the American Revolution, pp. 79-80, 115-6. Temple had a partner, Dr. Berkenhout : for details of him see *ibid.*, pp. 79, 106-11.

independence, returned to England in 1779 convinced that most Americans were unswervingly determined upon independence and told Lord North so 'in the most explicit terms.' In 1783 he wrote :

Happy, happy then would it have been for Great Britain, and happy too for this country [America], had that Ministry attended more to the just representation I then made (for I went back to England on purpose to undeceive them) rather than to the delusive, and almost fatal statement of affairs, made by Lord Carlisle, Govr. Johnstone, Mr. Eden, Gallaway [Galloway, an exiled loyalist] and others; who however faithfull they intentionally may have been never had the means or opportunity of obtaining true knowledge of either men or things in this country. They could learn only from those whose interest and inclination it most certainly was, to misrepresent and to deceive them.¹

Temple's last point was a telling one. The character of the 1778 Commission was predominantly civilian, and since having witnessed the wretched and tragic scenes at Philadelphia when it was evacuated in June 1778, the three principal Commissioners had been predisposed in favour of the loyalists. From June to November, the Commissioners were incarcerated in New York, the chief city of refuge for loyalists.² Although Eden later described that 'it was my custom to give every hour during my stay in America, to gentlemen of every interest, party, persuasion or principle, who would come to my table, or would honour me with their visits,'³ it seems extremely unlikely that the Commissioners could have met any other than American loyalists or naval and military personnel from England.⁴

1 Temple to Sir Guy Carleton, 3 Mar. 1783; A. Brown, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Report, American MSS. in the Royal Institution (Hereford, 1907), iii. 382-3.

2 C. Van Tyne, The Loyalists in the American Revolution (New York, 1902), p. 243.

3 Parl. Hist. xx. 847; 1 June 1779.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, 22 July 1778; C.H.A.

The co-habitation of the Americans and the British in New York was not wholly troublefree, friction often arising over billeting.¹ Partly because of this the citizens of New York soon began to grow weary of military government and frequently petitioned the authorities for the re-establishment of civil government. The Commissioners themselves were subjected to pressure, both by petition² and by the insistence of private citizens. Conspicuous among these was William Smith,³ a recent arrival at New York, who established a close connection with the Commissioners during their residence there. He strongly urged the re-establishment of civil government in New York, presenting Carlisle with a paper to this effect while at New York and continuing to urge it in correspondence with him after his return to England.⁴ Smith was only one of many who advocated the same policy, though some advised a little more caution and restraint, especially where rights of property ownership had become confused in the vicissitudes of war.⁵

The Commissioners responded warily to this lobbying. The expedition for the recovery of Georgia planned for the end of 1778 afforded an ideal opportunity for an experiment in the re-establishment of civil government,

1 R. Calhoun, The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, 1760-1781 (New York, 1973), p. 374.

2 Van Tyne, Loyalists in the American Revolution, p. 249 and n.2.

3 William Smith (1728-93); recent adherent of the loyalist cause; on the Commissioners' recommendation appointed Chief Justice of New York, 1779; Chief Justice of Canada, 1785-93.

4 L. Upton, The Loyal Whig (Univ. of Toronto, 1969), pp. 121-2 : [Smith] to Carlisle, 2 Feb. 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 418.

5 Andrew Elliot, Superintendent of the Port of New York, to Carlisle, 4 May 1779; *ibid.*, pp. 426-7.

not least because it was a colony in which 'property had not run into any confusion.'¹ This meant that there would not be any complex problems of ownership demanding equally complex solutions. Before embarking, the leader of the expedition was entrusted by the Commissioners with the necessary powers to act as a civil governor in the event of success. The expedition indeed met with the most encouraging success and the rudiments of civil government were constructed anew without difficulty.² The Commissioners, now back in England, were so gratified by the results of their experiment in Georgia that they decided to recommend the same for New York. Though the final decision no longer rested with them, for their actions were now subject to ministerial supervision, they could rely on the support of a considerable body of loyalists in London whose opinions tended to confirm and reinforce their own,³ and, perhaps more importantly, had already prepared the ground. The Commissioners communicated their recommendations for New York in a letter to Germain written by Carlisle on 8 March.⁴ The idea was not a new one to Germain,⁵ but this letter evidently revived it and spurred him to action. The plan received Cabinet approval and Eden was asked by Germain to advise his Under Secretary, Knox, how to execute it. Eden thought it most proper if Germain write to Clinton authorising him to 'associate to himself, a Board of Advice or Assistance.'⁶

1 Ibid.

2 Calhoun, The Loyalists in Revolutionary America, p. 474.

3 M. Norton, The British Americans : The Loyalist Exiles in England, 1774-1789, (London, 1974), p. 167.

4 Carlisle and Eden to Germain, 8 Mar. 1779; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1269.

5 Eden to Knox, 11 Apr. 1779; *ibid.*, no. 1282.

6 Same to same, 30 Apr. 1779; *ibid.*, no. 1293.

On 3 August, after the expiry of the 1778 Commission, Germain did write to Clinton re-investing him with the power to grant pardon and restore to peace such states as should return to their allegiance. At New York a council was appointed to assist Clinton in the discharge of business incident to this new commission.¹ But pressure for actual civil government went unheeded and the citizens of New York lived under military rule until the end of the war.²

Another of the Commissioners' recommendations in their letter of 8 March met with more success. Pursuant to their policy of making use of loyalism in America, and having been urged to it by loyalists in London, the Commissioners proposed that another Admiralty Court, with power to grant letters of marque to condemned prizes, be opened on Rhode Island to supplement the one already established at New York. This was duly carried out.³ It was an attempt to extend to the naval sphere reforms already carried out within the military system, which provided half-pay for provincial officers who had recruited a certain complement of men. It was also an extension of the principle behind the commercial reforms made by the Commissioners at New York in September 1778; the offer of material rewards in return for active loyalism. The Government considered it so effective a policy that the final action of the Commissioners was to extend their trading arrangements by a further six months.⁴ On 31 May Germain wrote a closing letter to the Commissioners and on the following day their powers expired.⁵

1 Germain to Clinton, 3 Aug. 1779; S. Lomas, ed., *Hist. MSS. Comm.*, 15th Rep., *Stopford-Sackville MSS.* (Hereford, 1910), ii. 135.

2 Van Tyne, *Loyalists in the American Revolution*, p.250.

3 *Diary of Thomas Hutchinson*, 25 Feb., 29 May, 1779; Hutchinson, *The Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson*, ii. 244, 255.

4 Commissioners to Germain, 22 Apr. 1779; Stevens, *Facsimiles*, no. 1288.

5 Germain to Commissioners, 31 May 1779; *ibid.*, no. 1299.

It is clear then that although the Peace Commission may have failed in its primary task, it nevertheless had some influence, if not always for the best, on Government thinking and policy. It is also clear that Carlisle was not the sleeping partner or the figurehead that many people expected him to be when he was first appointed. To this extent he repaid what trust North had reposed in him. However, Carlisle and Eden showed by their conduct both in England and in America a certain want of experience of American affairs. The manifesto of 3 October angered more Americans than it attracted, and the Commissioners' position became uncomfortable even in New York's Tory society when loyalists complained that they received no better treatment than those rebels who took advantage of the forty day pardon.¹ The Commissioners underestimated both the size and complexity of existing social problems in New York, which demanded the creation of a machinery capable of solving them prior to the act of re-establishing civil government there. Their hasty and unquestioning espousal of the loyalist cause was certainly useful in producing the various measures described above and in persuading the Government to engage and employ loyalist sentiment, but their exaggerated statements of the extent of loyalism may have contributed to the protraction of the war by influencing the orders sent out to Clinton in 1779. The Commission had its compensations for Carlisle, though, for he gained good experience and useful contacts through it. Later it will be seen that his sympathy for the plight of American loyalists was to be a contributory cause of his resignation from the Shelburne Administration three years after.

In connection with the Commission, one extra-official matter remained to be settled when its members returned to England, namely, what action Carlisle

¹ Valentine, Lord North, i. 544.

and Eden proposed to take in consequence of the deception practised upon them with regard to Clinton's secret orders of 21 March 1778 and the evacuation of Philadelphia. Carlisle later related that:

A hope was entertained by the opposers of Govt. that resentment upon the secret orders upon the abandoning Philadelphia and other treatment wd. dispose the Commissioners to act hostilely towards Govt. -That they might have given the Ad. ministration great trouble and the opposition great advantage is undoubtedly true, and that much anxiety was expressed to fathom their intentions was evident by the persons employed for this purpose.¹

The Opposition most certainly might have made useful political capital out of this issue, and so it was extremely fortunate for the Government that debates exclusively concerned with the Commission petered out well before Carlisle and Eden returned, and that the attention of the public, and especially of the Rockingham Whigs, was diverted by Keppel's court martial, which assembled at Portsmouth on 7 January. Had the Commissioners arrived back earlier, or had public interest been maintained over the Christmas recess, it is very probable that they, and most of all Carlisle, would have taken a course of action in Parliament embarrassing to the Government.

Ministers were clearly aware of this possibility and took great pains to discover the intentions of the Commissioners. Their fears were set at rest, but Carlisle remembered that 'As soon as it was discovered that we were not

¹ Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/75/1. These few pages of memories, along with extracts from four letters, have been printed in E. Robson, 'Some Papers of Frederick Howard, Fifth Earl of Carlisle, 1748-1825', Bull. Inst. Hist. Res., xxiv (1951), 62-9.

willing to succour the Opposition, by giving way to our feelings and exposing that perfidy for their advantage, all anxiety seemed to subside and Lord North assumed his former indifference.¹ But Carlisle and Eden were unwilling to let the matter drop so readily, albeit for slightly different reasons. In order to appreciate these reasons, some differences between the two men ought to be borne in mind. Carlisle was entitled to, and received, a certain degree of political recognition by virtue of his title, which he used to supplement his moderate ambitious and temporary financial needs. Eden, on the other hand, the younger son of a baronet and dependent on politics for an income, assessed any political opportunity partly by its usefulness to his career. This difference, perhaps more of degree than substance, naturally produced a different approach, which was constantly reflected in their attitudes to public office and becomes especially apparent in their partnership at the Board of Trade and Plantations.

As far as the question of the secret orders was concerned, Carlisle had felt at the time that the orders of 21 March 1778 effectively drained the Commission of its strength. He still felt so and was determined to seek an explanation on this consideration alone. Eden, too, saw the Commission undermined by ministerial deception, but other considerations now operated upon him in such a way that he hoped to encompass wider objectives than personal vindication, and by methods other than those chosen by Carlisle. Motivated partly by ambition, partly by antagonism to Germain, and partly by his friendship with Carlisle, he sought, with his friend and relation, Wedderburn's help, to improve Carlisle's political position by reducing Germain's standing in the Cabinet. But he would have wished to achieve these ends by intrigue and persuasion, not by a direct approach to North or by public debate.

¹ Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/65/1.

The latter, however, was the method chosen by Carlisle.

Provoked by North's indifference, he had decided to raise the whole question of the secret orders in Parliament, his intention being to promote discussion of the orders themselves, not to debate the point of whether or not the Commissioners ought to have been informed of the orders before leaving for America.¹ This was the attack or strategy which Eden had initially considered. Eden and North were both informed of this plan. Eden was not happy with it, but could hardly refuse to act in concert with Carlisle and so agreed, reluctantly, to make a motion in the Commons similar to Carlisle's in the Lords. On receiving this ultimatum North roused himself to action. Amidst the riotings and rejoicings of the mob at Keppel's acquittal, he arranged a series of meetings with Carlisle and Eden, but they remained adamant in their intention. On the day before the motions were to be made, he approached them once more, this time taking a firmer line, and at an eleventh-hour meeting on the evening of 14 February an agreement appears to have been reached.² Carlisle had already been mollified by a letter received earlier in the day, in which North had warned him that his motion would be treated by the Government as a declaration of war.³ Even though moving for papers on a sensitive issue was a familiar tactic of opposition, Carlisle had probably never envisaged such a rupture; somehow he must have hoped to reconcile his motion with his loyalty to North. North's warning evidently convinced him that he could not do so and he agreed to withdraw his motion. Eden followed suit.

1 Addit. MSS. 34416, ff. 264, 265; Eden to North, 10 Feb. [1779], North to Eden, [?] 10-11 Feb. 1779/.

2 George III to North, 12 Feb. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 274 : Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 278; Eden to North, 14 Feb. [1779/].

3 North to Carlisle, 14 Feb. [1779/]; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 419.

Carlisle was certainly no match for North, who appears to have won an easy victory. But all the evidence points to a triumph not of reason, but of gratification. North did not clarify the point on which Carlisle sought satisfaction, but instead followed Eden's advice in explaining to him that his action would be certainly inconvenient and possibly damaging to the interest of all concerned, and then in proceeding to suggest how his own interest might be served by his taking a more complaisant attitude. Within a few days it was rumoured that Carlisle was a contender for a secretaryship of state which Suffolk wished to resign. 'It is a joke to think it is too high a step,' thought Storer,¹ and only a few days after the last meeting with North, a friend of Lady Carlisle's wrote to her : 'I do expect to wish you all joy soon of Ld. C-----le's being a Secretary of State.'² A few days later when Suffolk died the chances seemed even better, but North and the King had already decided on Lord Hillsborough³ as a successor.⁴ Carlisle was not to be neglected though. The King instructed North to ensure that:

Lord Carlisle is not offended; I fear Lord North's language to him will give rise to this unless he is somehow satisfied and disobliging Lord Gower ought certainly to be avoided; by this I do not mean that Lord Carlisle ought to be Secretary in preference to Lord Hillsborough, but that a office [sic] of business of a secondary kind ought to be found for him.⁵

1 Storer to Selwyn, 'Tuesday'; J. Jesse, ed., George Selwyn and His Contemporaries (London, 1843-4), iv. 103.

2 Lady Derby to Lady Carlisle, 18 Feb. [1779]; C.H.A. J15/1/145.

3 Hillsborough, Wills Hill, 1st Earl (1718-93); First Lord of Trade, 1763-5, 1766; Sec. of State for the Colonies, 1768-72, and for the South, 1779-82; cr. Marquis of Downshire (I), 1789.

4 North to George III, 16 Apr. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 325.

5 George III to North, 6 Apr. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 325. According to H. Butterfield, George III, Lord North and The People, 1779-1780 (London, 1949), p. 35 n.1, this letter should be dated 17 Apr. 1779.

North cast around him for such an office, but found nothing suitable. He therefore decided to create, or rather to re-establish, one, by once again separating the first lordship of trade from the American secretaryship in which it had been absorbed since 1768.¹ There were sound administrative reasons for this reorganisation, and Carlisle's standing in commercial circles may have been an additional factor,² but it still seems peculiar that North should have proposed to undermine the dignity if not the competence of one of his most effective though unpopular colleagues in this way; peculiar that is, unless Germain's Under Secretary, William Knox, was correct in his thesis that Eden and Wedderburn were scheming 'Lord George's removal from the Board of Trade, and placing Lord Carlisle there, and meant to have carried his Lordship into the Cabinet, but could not obtain it.'³ Not surprisingly, Germain refused to consent to the proposal.

Despite Germain's obstruction, it is clear at least that Carlisle had a recognised pretension to office in the spring of 1779, and it was admitted in Government circles that he had outgrown, as it were, his office in the Royal Household. The apparent grounds of this pretension were these : George III's fear of alienating Lord Gower, and, through him, other members of the Bedford group; the agitation carried on by Eden and Wedderburn on Carlisle's behalf; and North's genuine wish to recompense him for his humiliating treatment over America in 1778. But other, more obscure grounds may have had some significance too : that North recognised in Carlisle a cap-

1 C. Jenkinson to George III, 28 Apr. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 330.

2 For more details, see below, p. 90.

3 Note on Wedderburn by Knox, n.d.; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., Var. Coll., vi, Knox MSS., p. 268.

acity for loyalty that could be useful to him if cultivated; and that Carlisle had been promised in return for going to America 'one of the first vacancies (out of the responsible Line) that should happen in his Absence.'¹ The evidence afforded by the events of early 1779 does not prove this conclusively either way, but it does suggest strongly that Carlisle had become the plaything of powerful forces that tossed him about at will. From one point of view he was the unwitting pawn in a scheme concocted by Eden and Wedderburn to diminish Germain's official standing in the Cabinet, something Eden had been trying to do since Germain became Colonial Secretary in 1775;² while from another he was a token to be used in transactions concerning Lord Gower. But which picture was most accurate was not clear, and the King, too, receiving a vast mass of unclassified and speculative information, was uncertain on the point.³

As far as promotion was concerned, Carlisle's affairs remained in much the same state for something like five months. Germain's strength of character and North's lack of authority and decision had frustrated the plan to place him at the Board of Trade and Plantations, whilst Suffolk's old office, though denied him, remained vacant, its duties performed by the other 'antient' Secretary. But his situation did change in another way. For the last two years he had been Treasurer of the Household, but had always thought it beneath him, and now, as the parliamentary session drew to a close, he decided to carry out his long-formed intention of resigning.⁴ One person who knew him quite well ascribed his resignation to his frustration after being refused the vacant secretaryship.

1 St. James's Chronicle, 24-27 Oct. 1778.

2 Valentine, Lord North, i. 397.

3 George III to North, 11 Feb. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 272.

4 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, [1802]; C.H.A. J14/65/2: Lady Melbourne to Duchess of Devonshire, 25 June [1779, misdated 1780 at Chatsworth]; Chatsworth, Devonshire Collection, Correspondence of Georgiana Cavendish, 5th Duchess of Devonshire, no. 3041.

Apparently his resignation caused a little ripple of disquiet in ministerial circles, not because it was significant in itself, but 'twas feared others would [resign] in consequence.' Eden, Wedderburn, and Lord Gower, all the men with whom Carlisle was known to be variously linked at this time, were all unsteady in their support of the North Ministry in 1779, more so than in past years. Those in particular who were of the opinion that Carlisle, through his father-in-law, was embraced by the Bedford Whigs, may have construed his resignation as presaging the desertion of the Bedfords in a crisis created by the Spanish declaration of war. But 'his Majesty came to town on Monday [21 June] and sent for them all and by some means or other has reconciled all their differences. Lord Carlisle and his friends are contented with some promise that has been made him but is however to resign his White Stick.'¹

The King's visit to London on this day, 21 June, was the occasion of one of his most extraordinary personal interventions in government.² His purpose was to inject, if possible, some activity and authority into a ministry whose energy and morale had sunk to a dangerously low ebb. While it is difficult to accept that George III would have bothered himself with Carlisle's problems on such an occasion, one means of invigorating his Government was to placate men like Wedderburn, whose intimidation, in particular, of North showed in the dishevelled aspect of the Ministry. As for the promise made to Carlisle, it has not survived, but it was rumoured that he had been promoted within the Household to the post of Lord Steward.³ Nothing in fact occurred except his resignation of the treasurership on

1 Journal of Lady Mary Coke, 27 June 1779; quoted in Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, xxxiii. 104 n.14.

2 Butterfield, George III, Lord North and the People, p.43.

3 Lord Newhaven to J. Hely Hutchinson, 14 July 1779; F. Blackburne Daniell, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 12th Report, Appendix, Part IX, Donoughmore MSS. (London, 1891), p.291 : St. James's Chronicle, 6-8 July 1779.

16 July, when he was pleased to find 'the King's Professions.... very warm and flattering.'¹

Carlisle went down to Castle Howard for the summer so disillusioned with his experiences over the previous six months that he confessed he wished 'very little for efficient employment.'² As in the past, he had received little more than assurances from North,³ which he now considered worthless 'till the nature, the turn of mind, in short the whole character' of the premier were changed.⁴ Apart from distrust of North, it seems that his recent experience had also bred in him disgust for the disagreeable means by which promotion was to be obtained.

But Carlisle's future, almost against his own will it seemed, was now in the hands of other men. Ever since early 1778 Eden had undertaken, subtly and by degrees, to promote him by his own efforts. According to Knox, the King once had a conference with Eden in which he asked about Lord Carlisle : 'Eden's answer was an intire panegerick on Lord Carlisle, but he added that he wanted somebody to produce him and conduct him : "that is" said the King, 'he meant I should understand Lord Carlisle would do very well under his management."⁵ Eden's cousin, Wedderburn, was a powerful ally in this respect. But more important was the King's conviction that treatment meted out to Carlisle could influence in a material way the politics of Lord Gower. This was not necessarily so, as North realised,⁶ but George III remained persuaded that it was, and in August took up his old line once again. 'I told Lord

1 Gentleman's Magazine, 1779, p. 373 : Carlisle to Selwyn, 23 July 1779; C.H.A.

2 Carlisle to Selwyn, 18 June 1779; C.H.A.

3 To be fair North had also appointed James Hare Minister Plenipotentiary to Poland on Carlisle's solicitation.

4 Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 380; Carlisle to Eden, 8 Aug. 1779.

5 Note on Eden by Knox, 1 June 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., Var. Coll., vi, Knox MSS., p. 267.

6 North to Gower, 17 Oct. 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 5th Rep., App., Pt. 1, Sutherland MSS., p. 209.

North,' he wrote to John Robinson,¹ Secretary to the Treasury and one of his closest confidants,

that Lord Gower will certainly resign if Lord Hillsborough gets the Seals unless some provision is made for Lord Carlisle. Lord North then reverted to separating the First Lord of Trade from the Seals, but Lord George Germain will certainly never consent to that... Lord North, if he will take a decided part, is sure of my support and consequently may easily bring things into tone.²

North, however, decided to try the ground again on the Board of Trade and Plantations. He had nothing to lose by doing so, and faced by the Spanish intervention in the war, an Irish crisis brewing, and a difficult session looming ahead, he thought it prudent to remove all possible grounds of discontent. It would be worth making certain of Carlisle's support anyway, even if it had no effect on Gower. Accordingly North approached Germain for the second time seeking his consent to the re-establishment of the first

1 John Robinson (1727-1802); M.P. (Westmorland) 1764-74, (Harwich) 1774-1802; Joint Secretary to the Treasury, 1770-82; Surveyor General of Woods and Forests, 1786-d; member of close inner circle round the king, to whom he supplied information gathered from his intimacy with North.

2 George III to Robinson, 13 Aug. 1779; quoted in A. Basye, 'The Earl of Carlisle and the Board of Trade, 1779', American Historical Review, xxii (1917), 336-7. Basye argued that Carlisle's appointment was an instance of pure jobbery solely designed to gain Gower's continued support in the autumn of 1779. But he omits two important aspects: the previous application to Germain, of which he would have been ignorant as George III's correspondence was not published until ten years after his article appeared, and the relevance of Carlisle's rôles as Peace Commission and promoter of commercial interests.

lordship of trade as a separate office. Germain still thought it a degrading proposal, but reluctantly agreed under pressure, and, obviously insulted, proposed that Carlisle replace him as Colonial Secretary too. To the latter arrangement, however, he had one objection, namely, that

the expectations and demands of the rebellious colonies will be raised when they perceive one of the late Commissioners will have the settling of any future treaty with them. The proposals made by their Excellencies will be considered as approved and adopted by His Majesty, and if that was the case I should think it a most alarming and fatal blow to this kingdom.¹

The King agreed. Appointing Carlisle to the Board of Trade would place him 'in an Executive Office not one of Direction of Measures [in] which it might not have been right to place ^{the} Signer of the Proclamation of the last Year as far as regards America.'² To some degree, therefore, the Commissioner's manifesto of 3 October 1778 prejudiced Carlisle's political prospects by raising doubts in the minds of the King and his principal Ministers as to his qualities as a policy-maker. In a less troubled time he might have been given the chance, but he was not thought to be reliable at this critical juncture.

The offer made to Carlisle was limited to the principal seat at the Board of Trade. Almost at the same time, about the end of the first week in October, Gower communicated his intention to resign from the Ministry on account of its weakness, and of the wide divergence between his and North's views on the subject of Irish trade.³ The business of new appointments to be made before the impend-

1 North to Germain, 10 Sept., Germain to North, 13 Sept., 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 9th Rep., App., Pt. III, Stopford-Sackville MSS., p. 97b.

2 George III to North, 27 Sept. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 450.

3 Butterfield, George III, Lord North and the People, p. 120.

ing session was suspended while the King tested the possibility of a coalition with some elements of Opposition. When this failed North was ordered to resume his former plan and consequently wrote to Carlisle, but feared that he would decline the offer. Gower had already forewarned him that Carlisle would refuse the Board of Trade,¹ but why he should have done so remains a matter of conjecture. Most probably, he supposed Carlisle would again think it beneath him, especially as its salary was customarily less than that of the treasureship of the household. To make it more acceptable North raised the salary to £2,000 p.a.,² which seems to have removed any difficulty. When Carlisle received the offer he immediately decided to accept, probably after some conversation with his father-in-law first.³ Gower apparently raised no objections, so by 27 October Carlisle had accepted.⁴ With all hopes of his appointment anchoring Gower to the Ministry dashed, the King could only now inquire rather querulously of Robinson, as if he already knew the answer : 'Am I by the step Lord Carlisle takes to expect any change in the sentiments of Lord Gower?'⁵ The answer, of course, was no.

It is now clear that while Carlisle may have owed his place at the Board of Trade to North, it was George III who was responsible for urging North to

1 North to Gower, 17 Oct., 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 5th Rep., App., Pt. 1, Sutherland MSS., p. 209 : North to George III, 18 Oct. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 464.

2 Basye, 'The Earl of Carlisle and the Board of Trade,' p. 338.

3 Carlisle to Selwyn, 25 Oct. 1779; C.H.A.

4 North to George III, 27 [Oct.] 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 469.

5 George III to Robinson, 27 Oct. 1779; quoted in Basye, 'The Earl of Carlisle and the Board of Trade,' p. 338.

make some provision for Carlisle; that the King was so pressing because he believed that Gower would take umbrage if his son-in-law was neglected; and that this was a belief he had held since the previous spring at least and possibly for much longer,¹ even though he was aware of the close friendship between Carlisle and Eden. But by late 1779 the King's view was anachronistic. Nevertheless it has been shared in more recent times, and even adduced to support the idea that Carlisle was actually one of the leaders of the Bedford Whigs, the largest and most powerful faction within the North Administration.

It certainly seemed true that Gower, like Eden, had 'it at heart to introduce Lord Carlisle into public business,'² but probably not as a Bedford adherent. Certainly, Carlisle would never have thought of himself as such. The principal members of the Bedford group,³ which was now beginning to break up anyway, were linked by bonds formed while he was still an adolescent. Even now he was still not acquainted with them all. He did praise Weymouth⁴ as 'the person of the most easy and agreeable conversation I ever met with in society,'⁵ but he had 'little or no acquaintance'⁶ with Rigby,⁷ and even less with Thurlow,⁸ the Lord Chancellor. Only with Gower did he enjoy a

1 It would be interesting to know whether in fact it was the King's idea to appoint Carlisle as a Peace Commissioner in order to bring Gower round to a policy of concessions towards America.

2 North to Germain, 10 Sept. 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 9th Rep., App., Pt. III, Stopford-Sackville MSS., p. 97b.

3 Lords Gower, Weymouth, Thurlow and Sandwich, and their 'man of business' in the Commons, Richard Rigby.

4 Weymouth, Thomas Thynne, 3rd Viscount (1734-96); Sec. of State for the South, 1768-70, 1775-9; cr. Marquess of Bath, 1789.

5 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/75/1.

6 R. Rigby to E. Pery, 2 Dec. 1780; J. Gilbert, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 14th Report, Appendix, Part IX, Emly MSS. (London, 1895), p. 161.

7 Richard Rigby (1722-88); M.P. (Castle Rising) 1745-7, (Sudbury) 1747-54, (Tavistock) 1754-88; Paymaster General, 1768-82.

8 Thurlow, Edward Thurlow, 1st Baron (1731-1806); M.P. (Tamworth) 1765-78; Solicitor General, 1770-1; Attorney General, 1771-8; Lord Chancellor, 1778-83, Dec. 1783-92.

close personal relationship founded on family ties. But there were certainly indications in 1779 that political sympathies were drawing Carlisle even closer to Gower, and by implication, to the rest of the Bedfords. For example, the failure of the Peace Commission inclined him towards the uncompromising Bedford line on America, and, though it is dangerous to make inferences from conduct at a later period, it may be tentatively inferred from his later conduct as Viceroy of Ireland that he sympathised with Gower's personal commitment on the question of Irish trade. Thirdly, the personal hostility towards North shown by most of the Bedfords to a greater or lesser degree, which would not have been acceptable to Carlisle in 1778, was now, in the summer of 1779, much easier for him to understand. But common thinking on current political issues did not produce a political junction with Gower. As far as Carlisle can be said to have been consciously involved at this time, it was in what might be termed a political friendship with Eden, of which Gower was perfectly aware,¹ and, through Eden, with Wedderburn, whose conduct towards Carlisle, the latter wrote in mid-summer, had been 'extremely generous and greatly beyond what I had any reason to expect.'²

Yet despite the formation of this clique, this triangle of interests, with Eden and Wedderburn, and the mistaken belief held in some quarters that he was at least a lukewarm member of the Bedford group, Carlisle had contrived to preserve his political independence relatively unimpaired in the struggle for office in 1779. But it was not yet clear whether this was because he had a personal aversion to political groupings; or because he shared the

1 C. Jenkinson to George III, 29 May 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 346. In 1779 Eden published his Four Letters to the Earl of Carlisle, dealing with the economic and political issues of the day.

2 Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 380; Carlisle to Eden, 8 Aug. 1779.

widely-held courtier philosophy, held by Selwyn and most placemen, of professing direct allegiance to the King and supporting every administration, especially in a time of crisis, because it was his administration; or because he refused to allow any inconvenient sense of responsibility to his friends to impede the progress of what could be a lucrative political career. It was not easy for a man like Carlisle, with undeveloped political ideas and no experience of a change of ministry since entering politics, to decide precisely where his loyalties lay. Until this happened it was expected that 'L. Carlisle will take his part with^t troubling himself about the other Performers,' as one of Eden's correspondents put it.¹

When Carlisle took his seat at the head of the Board of Trade for the first time on 17 November,² he entered upon the happiest term of office in his short career. At a later date, probably during the revolutionary years of the 1790s, he wrote:

'I liked no office or public situation I ever held excepting that of First Lord of Trade... At the Board of Trade there was something to be done, and much to be learn'd and the greatest mistake ever made was the suffering it to be demolished /by Burke's Establishment Act in 1782/. Mr. Burke³ himself is conscious of this error and repents sorely of the wild conceit of reformation.⁴

Later still, Carlisle wrote that it was the only office he ever quitted with regret 'for much useful information was to be gained and the Lords under me excellent company.'⁵ Nobody would have denied that the Lords of Trade in 1779

1 Addit. MSS.34416, f. 436; - to Eden, [?] 27 Oct. 1779/.

2 Journal of the Commissioners for Trade and Plantations from January 1776 to May 1782 (London, 1938), p. 280.

3 Edmund Burke (1729-97); M.P. (Wendover) 1765-74, (Bristol) 1774-80, (Malton) 1780-94; Paymaster General, Mar.-July 1782, Apr.-Dec. 1783; philosopher, politician and foremost intellectual of the Whig Opposition until he broke with Fox over the French Revolution.

4 *Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle*, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/65/2.

5 *Ibid.*, [1802/]; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p.32.

were a distinguished group of men,¹ but many people, members and critics of the Board alike, would certainly have argued, and did argue, that there was very little work to be done. Indeed, since the incorporation of the first lordship of trade into the American secretaryship in 1768, the Board's business had declined. The war with America had destroyed the greater part of its plantation business, that is, the supervision of colonial government, and its activities were now centred on trade alone, especially with Africa. But because the American Secretary was now principally responsible for the conduct of the war in America, the re-establishment of the first lordship of trade was a sensible bureaucratic reform.² It must be stressed, however, that the Colonial Office was not reorganised under the stress of an increasing workload.

To its occupant a seat at the Board of Trade was little more than a comfortable sinecure. This conflicts strangely with the testimony left by Carlisle and with the more useful service which the Board came to provide in the latter half of 1780. Eden himself was one of the staunchest critics of the Board, and even during the period of its increased activity he declared to North that

The subordinate Seats at the several Boards (the Treasury by no means excepted) are certainly nothing better than a sanctified sort of Pensions during Pleasure, which help forward the idle Courtiers to a creditable retirement with their forefathers, and which serve also as Stepping Stones to industrious Men in the Course and prosecution of their endeavours to serve the King and his kingdoms at the same Time that they seek fair and honest Advantages to themselves.

1 Among the Lords of Trade at this time were Soame Jenyns the author; Eden, who had also gone into print; Gibbon the historian; Andrew Stuart, society lawyer; and the Board's secretary, Richard Cumberland, a dramatist.

2 A. Basye, The Lords Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, 1748-1782 (New Haven, 1925), pp. 202-5.

Eden described his own situation at the Board as 'idle' and himself as a 'mere Lord of Trade.'¹ Once again the difference in outlook and approach between Carlisle and Eden becomes abundantly clear. To Eden his idle seat was a low rung on the ladder of promotion. To Carlisle, somewhere between the 'idle courtier' and the 'industrious man,' the Board offered an interesting occupation. But Eden was ~~man~~ endowed with 'a restless Mind which must & will employ itself.'² 'I... love business,' he once wrote, 'and am conscious that I possess the spirit of preserverance.'³ In his own way Carlisle needed an occupation, but he never craved that degree of labour necessary to satisfy Eden.

For the first six months of Carlisle's presidency the Board of Trade seems to have done little. In March 1780 its very existence was called in question by Burke's Establishment Bill, which came before Parliament for the first time in that month. Germain's American secretaryship was saved by 208 votes to 201, but the clause abolishing the Board of Trade was retained by 207-199. However, as further clauses were taken up, they were defeated one by one and eventually the whole Bill was dropped.⁴ A few months later North wrote to Lord Grantham, Carlisle's successor at the Board of Trade :

The attack made upon that Board in the last Session of Parliament gave to the Public the idea that it was a

1 Addit. MSS. 34417, ff. 140, 154, 189; Eden to Lord Loughborough, 21 Aug., and to North, 2 Sept., 14 Sept., 1780.

2 Eden to Wedderburn, 17 Jan. 1779; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 552.

3 Eden to Wedderburn, [1772]; Bishop of Bath and Wells, Journals and Corres. of Lord Auckland, i. xiii.

4 Basye, Commissioners of Trade, pp. 205-8.

Board of no utility or business, but the vote had hardly pass'd when the Board was engaged in almost constant & material employment. Indeed, every person acquainted with the internal constitution of the executive Government of this country must see the utility of such a Board & the importance of placing there men of talents & of business.¹

North may have elaborated on the Board's importance to impress Grantham, but in the context of developments in 1780 at least the basic truth of what he wrote cannot be denied.

Nor would it be right to ignore his implication that there was more than a coincidental relationship between Burke's Bill and a phase of increased activity in the Board's history. The Bill probably had some effect on the attendance of members : although their average attendance at individual meetings slipped from 6 in 1779 to 4.7 in 1780, the number of meetings rose to sixty in 1780, the highest number since the sixty one of 1769.² Moreover, as can be seen from an almost complete list of Carlisle's attendances, the frequency of Board meetings rose from the usual four or five per month to six in May, seven in June and reached a peak of nine in July, tailing off thereafter to three or four per month.³ The actual commercial work of the Board also increased markedly. At the instance of the Treasury, it investigated the probable effects of a duty placed on English sugars by Ireland, and the Privy

1 North to Grantham, 3 Sept. 1780; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/279/5. See also George III to North, 14 Mar. 1780; 'I am sorry Men should so far Lose their reason and let the Violence of the times or fears actuate them as to forget the utility of the Board of Trade': Fortescue, Corres. of George III, v.32.

2 Basye, Commissioners of Trade, p. 209, and Appendix A, pp. 220-9.

3 Journal of Commissioners for Trade, pp. 280-343 passim.

Council directed it to draw up a plan for the grading and valuing of sugars to be sent there.¹ It reported on the effect of an Irish Act for the granting of bounties on the export of hemp and linen manufactures and for the repealing of duties on imported flax. Finally, Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the South, instructed the Board to investigate matters connected with the commercial treaties with Portugal and to compose suitable answers for the Portuguese envoys then in London. In July, the Board's most active month, Germain wrote to its secretary : 'the Board of Trade are become important. Such fine reports you never read. Who now can say that it is a useless establishment!'²

It is impossible to calculate the effects of Burke's Bill on the Board of Trade. The Board cannot have deliberately created work for itself as part of its usefulness, but it is possible that the Government fed it with business normally carried out by Treasury, or more usually, Privy Council officials. Circumstance was important too, to some extent : for example, the presence of the Portuguese envoys in London, and the question of Ireland's commercial status vis-à-vis England and her trading partners, with which much of the Board's work was concerned in 1780, and which had been a permanently contentious issue in British politics since May 1779. Yet it can also be argued that Carlisle's presence was a significant factor. Finding the work of the Board particularly congenial, he was most punctilious in his attendance, being present at at least fifty seven of the sixty meetings held during his incumbency.³ From the beginning of July he knew that he was to be the next Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.⁴

1 For the importance of the sugar duty question in Irish politics, see below, pp. 107, 120.

2 Quoted in Basye, Commissioners of Trade, pp. 210-11.

3 He was certainly absent from the meetings on 28 July, 11 Aug., 1780, while the names of those present at the meeting on 11 Mar. were omitted in the minutes : Journal of the Commissioners for Trade, pp. 280-343 passim.

4 See below, p. 102.

As much of the business of the Board at this stage was Irish and as July was the month in which the greatest number of Board meetings occurred it is very likely that Carlisle's official concern with Irish interests was partly responsible.

Direct evidence is wanting to support this hypothesis, but it may be that his experience in America, his contacts with merchants on both sides of the Atlantic involved in the American trade, and his friendship with loyalist leaders in New York, may all have contributed to the re-establishment of the first lordship of trade for Carlisle. The appointment was seen in its political context by Frederick Smyth, Chief Justice of New Jersey, whom Carlisle and Eden had recommended to be of the Commander-in-Chief's Council should civil government be restored at New York. Smyth wrote to Carlisle thanking him for his recommendation :

We are too favourably impressed with your Lordship's talents and engaging address whilst in this country, not to rejoice that your political connection with America is now so honourably and powerfully increased by your station at the Board of Trade.¹

The commercial context was brought out by the author of a memoir of Carlisle, which appeared in the Dublin Evening Post shortly after he took up his residence as Viceroy of Ireland :

The merchants of London trading to New York and other parts of America, restored to their allegiance to His Majesty, found themselves benefitted by the commercial abilities of Lord Carlisle and Mr. Eden, and we may

¹ Smyth to Carlisle, 1 July 1780; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., App., Pt. VI, Carlisle MSS., p. 435.

suppose it was in consequence of the measures they took, while in America, to facilitate the commerce between the two countries, that His Majesty was pleased to place Lord Carlisle at the head of the Board of Trade.¹

The author of this piece makes an important point in emphasising the continuity in Carlisle's career, a continuity which was to be preserved in his Irish appointment by a concern which it was politic for him to show in the problems of Irish trade to which he had been introduced at the Board of Trade. The same author also begs the questions, how exactly were Carlisle and Eden able to help the London merchants trading to certain parts of America, and how far were they enabled to do so by being on the Board of Trade?

From the very beginning of the outbreak of hostilities with America, merchants involved in the colonial trade petitioned the Government for reconciliation with the colonies, for the loss of the colonial market brought hardship to many. Their efforts were in vain, however, for Parliament passed an Act on 22 December 1775, which, among other provisions, prohibited trade and intercourse between Great Britain and America. From that moment, many merchants concentrated on seeking new outlets for trade such as Russia and Spain. But of course the British army in America continued to require supplies, and although according to the terms of the Prohibitory Act merchants were forbidden to trade with America as formerly, they could obtain licences from the Government 'for conveying stores and provisions to the forces upon the American service.' But this was a privilege which many merchants abused by carrying on illicit commerce with rebellious colonists. Merchants who were unable to obtain licences grew increasingly dissatisfied with Government measures respecting trade with America and some even risked trading without a licence. The Peace Commissioners'

¹ Dublin Evening Post, 16-18 Jan. 1781.

Proclamation of 18 November 1778 relaxing the restrictions on the import of stores and provisions into New York and Rhode Island may have been as much a sop to disgruntled English merchants as an indication of the scarcity of such articles in those ports. Ideally, merchants would have welcomed a general, open and free importation into New York, but, as the Commissioners said at the time, the system was not stable enough to handle such an influx.¹

Another and more practicable method of mitigating the effects of the war on commerce was to recover as many colonies as possible and to declare them at the King's Peace as soon as it was safe to do so. This increased the number of inlets into America for English merchants who were unwilling to relinquish the profits of colonial trade to French and Dutch competitors. The recovery of Georgia at the end of 1778 was an opportunity of which merchants and others who had formerly traded to that colony were not slow to take advantage. Through Germain, they prayed the Commissioners to extend their proclamation of 26 September 1778 to Georgia, which they accordingly did.² Admittedly this relaxed only the export trade from the colony, but it was a preliminary to the re-establishment of full trading status. A few days after news reached England that Georgia had actually been recovered, the same merchants submitted a memorial to the Commissioners praying that Georgia be returned to the King's Peace as soon as possible. This was accordingly done on 24 March 1779,³ and the following day the Commission provided a similar instrument for South Carolina in the event of its complete recovery from the rebels.⁴

1 D. Clark, British Opinion and the American Revolution (New Haven, 1930), pp. 93-104.

2 Commissioners to Germain, 21 Jan. 1779, with their proclamation of the same date; Stevens, Facsimiles, nos. 1255, 1256.

3 Memorial of the merchants and others trading to Georgia, 6 Mar. 1779, and the Commissioners' proclamation of 24 Mar. 1779; Stevens, Facsimiles, nos. 1268, 1274.

4 Commissioners' proclamation, 25 Mar. 1779, Ferguson to Knox, 26 Mar. 1779, Germain to Commissioners, 31 Mar. 1779; *ibid.*, nos. 1275-7.

Of course, the Commissioners were more than willing to concur in measures to facilitate the restoration of trading relations between Great Britain and her colonies. It was entirely consistent with, indeed a concomitant to, their aim to restore as much of the old civilian order as possible. Hence at the end of January 1779, they successfully represented to Germain and the Treasury the case of some London merchants who had encountered difficulties arising from the proclamation of 18 November 1778.¹ One of their final acts was to remind Germain that their trading arrangements would expire on 1 June : 'Many serious embarrassments will ensue if these matters should escape the early and timely notice of his Majesty's Ministers.'² Accordingly they were instructed by Germain to issue proclamations extending their arrangements by a further six months to 1 December.³ Thereafter parliamentary legislation was necessary.

It may be seen, therefore, how and to what extent the London merchants trading to America were benefited by the so-called 'commercial abilities' of Carlisle and Eden. It is questionable though, whether Carlisle's appointment at the Board of Trade enabled him to be of any great use to the London merchants, since the considerable powers vested in him and his colleagues by the Peace Commission had by then expired. Though, again, explicit evidence is wanting, Carlisle's appointment may in itself have been a conciliatory gesture to the merchant community, given, by and large, its hostility to the continuation of the war, and given also the good reputation Carlisle seems to have established with the London merchants engaged in American trade. But there is no evidence in the official records of the Board to show that it was involved in American trade. Although the Board's commercial work did

1 Commissioners to Germain, 1 Feb. 1779; Hist. MSS. Comm., 9th Rep., App., Pt. III, Stopford-Sackville MSS., p. 95a : Addit. MSS. 34416, f. 255; Commissioners to Lords of the Treasury, 31 Jan. [1779].

2 Commissioners to Germain, 19 Apr. 1779; Stevens, Facsimiles, no. 1285.

3 Germain to Commissioners, 21 Apr. 1779; *ibid.*, no. 1287.

indeed increase dramatically after spring 1780, it was concerned principally with Ireland.

In their private capacities, however, Carlisle and Eden continued to use their influence to promote the interests of the London merchants trading to America, and their membership of the Board of Trade may have been of some indirect use to them in this context. When the Peace Commissioners' proclamations concerning commercial regulations finally expired on 1 December nothing had been done or was done to perpetuate their good effects. Nor was it likely that the Government would address itself to the problem of its own accord. Encouraged, perhaps, by the commercial concessions recently granted to Ireland, a group of merchants interested in the North American trade, who had 'received Orders from their different Correspondents in New York, and other Places, for a Considerable Quantity of Clothing, Stores, and other Articles of British Manufacture and Merchandize,' therefore petitioned Parliament for permission 'to export Merchandize to New York, and all other Places which are and may be in the Possession of the King's Troops.'¹ From this petition, presented on 23 February 1780, emerged a Bill, which was double-edged in its effects; not only would it relieve the inhabitants of New York and other places, but also release and stimulate trade from Britain. In its stages through Parliament the Bill received the patronage and support of Carlisle and Eden, and their unofficial sponsorship of it must have derived some added weight from the Board of Trade. The Bill passed the Lords on 20 June and received the royal assent on the 23rd.² The merchants interested in this measure showed their gratitude to Carlisle and Eden by presenting them on 29 November 1780 with an address, in which they thanked them for 'The

¹ Clark, British Opinion and the American Revolution, p. 104; Journals of the House of Commons, xxxvii. 618b.

² Ibid., pp. 910, 919b.

Facility with which you have at all Times admitted their Communications and the unwearied Application which you have given to the Progress and Dispatch of their mercantile Concerns,' and, the address went on,

By the Patronage which you gave to the late Act of Parliament, for reviving the Trade of this Country with certain Parts of America, you have contributed to the Relief of the Inhabitants of those Places,¹ and to a great Advancement of the British Commerce.

The address concluded with congratulations and good wishes on their appointments in Ireland.

Two days after the presentation of the address Carlisle presided at the Board of Trade for the last time, and in the circumstances a successful term of office drew to a close. Widely regarded as a useless place, Carlisle had in fact found it personally rewarding and of some use to the public. Admittedly much of his activity was not specifically concerned with the Board, but his various interests dovetailed together very neatly. Indeed, there was no reason why they should jar : the duties of his office were by no means onerous, and the area of his competence as First Lord was circumscribed only by the amount of interest he was personally prepared to take in the job. The axiom that the significance of many offices in the executive at this time was closely related to the character of the occupant was to some extent relevant to the case of Carlisle and the Board of Trade. Had he treated his office as a sinecure it would have remained so, but instead he increased its capacity by exploiting its faculties. However, he did not greatly increase his own personal importance in the Government at the same time. This was due

¹ St. James's Chronicle, 2-5 Dec. 1780.

to a variety of reasons : the loss of prestige by the Board as a whole as an organ of executive government; the want of ambition or strength of character in Carlisle and his failure to establish himself as an effective parliamentary speaker.¹

It is unfortunate that the work of the Board of Trade and Carlisle's rôle as its chief have been eclipsed by the movement for economical reform. It was heralded by the publication of two letters in the Public Advertiser of 2 November 1779, one of which called for county meetings to protest against the waste of public money.² This letter represented an extremely widespread, but as yet unarticulated grievance. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that Carlisle's appointment, which was made public only a few days before, and which was probably regarded by many as a notorious instance of jobbery, did not find its way into newspapers and correspondence as a classic example of the waste of public money. He and his friends were certainly more concerned with the wisdom of taking office in an administration that was very possibly doomed than with the morality of accepting what appeared to be a useless, but highly-paid office in an establishment that could ill-afford expensive passengers.³ Again one wonders whether he only began to exploit the business possibilities of his office when the economical reform movement really gained impetus and when Burke began to select his victims.

1 During 1779-80 he is recorded as having spoken in Parliament on only five occasions : Parl. Hist. xx.593, 891, 1034-5, xxi. 728-9; 30 Mar., 17 June, 25 Nov., 1779, 21 June 1780 : St. James's Chronicle, 8-10 Feb. 1780.

2 Butterfield, George III, Lord North and the People, p. 193.

3 Storer to Selwyn, [?] 23 Oct. 1779; Jesse, George Selwyn and his Contemporaries, iv.277. Carlisle himself had been heard to say 'that this Administration could not last' : Lord Sandwich to George III, 9 Oct. 1779; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, iv. 453.

Carlisle's relationship to the movement was not only potentially interesting because of the coincidence of its inception with his appointment to the Board of Trade, but also because he was a large landowner in the North Riding of Yorkshire, in which county the movement originated. A committee of reforming Yorkshire gentry sent out in late November and early December some hundreds of circular letters to 'the gentlemen of weight and character' in Yorkshire, soliciting their support in a requisition for a county meeting to be held on 30 December.¹ Peers of the county, both resident and absentee, received circulars and Carlisle probably did too, but his reply has not been found.² Consequently evidence for his attitude to the whole movement is extremely slim, resting on a newspaper report of his speech on 8 February 1780 in a debate in the Lords on Lord Shelburne's³ motion for national economy. Judging by this and by some knowledge of his character and developing liberal views, he approved of the movement in principle, even though he may have suspected that his own career might suffer by it. At the same time, like many other Yorkshire gentlemen who approved of the principle of reform, he felt that in the critical circumstances in which the country was placed, it was not the most opportune time in which to institute a reform programme; nor, he may have

1 I.R. Christie, Wilkes, Wyvill and Reform (London, 1962), p. 74.

2 The collections of replies preserved in the York City Library (M.25) and in the North Yorks. R.O. (Wyvill MSS.) have been searched without success.

3 Shelburne, William Petty, 2nd Earl (1737-1805); Leader of the old Chatham group in the Opposition; Sec. of State, Mar.-July 1782; First Lord of the Treasury, 1782-3, when Carlisle served under him as Lord Steward; cr. Marquis of Lansdowne, 1784.

thought in common with others, was a county meeting the most proper method of doing so.¹

Other Yorkshiremen close to the Government, including his friends Lords Fauconberg² and Grantham, also refused to involve themselves with the movement. At a meeting at Lord North's on 24 December, at which Carlisle and ten others were present, it was decided that they should not even attend the county meeting to oppose the resolutions to be debated there, but instead, 'privately to discourage....,' as Robinson put it.³ Government supporters amongst the gentry in Yorkshire later lamented this decision,⁴ but it was obviously thought to respond to the challenge would only inflame it, and play into the hands of the Rockingham Whigs by stirring up public opinion. Wedderburn, also taking the Government line that the county meeting was an expression of factiousness, nevertheless thought Carlisle should attend it to lead the conservative elements of the county against the so-called 'reformers.' 'Nothing would be more easy than to turn the meeting at Y [ork] on the 30th to the disadvantage of those who assemble it,' he wrote. 'Ld Carlisle would do well to support the County agt. a Party Lead & I think he would find himself well joined if proper precautions were taken.'⁵ But North preferred a policy of wary indifference,

1 For an example of one of these gentlemen, see the reply of Thomas Grimston (1753-1821), of Kilnwick to the circular, 10 Dec. 1779; C. Wyvill, Political Papers and Tracts (York 1794-1808), iii. 139.

2 Fauconberg, Henry Belasyse, 2nd Earl (1743-1802); M.P. (Peterborough) 1768-74; Lord of the Bedchamber, 1777-1802.

3 The Political Memoranda of Francis, Fifth Duke of Leeds, ed. O. Browning (Camden Soc., Newser., xxxv, 1884), pp. 18-19 : Addit. MSS. 34416, f.489; Robinson to Eden, 23 Dec. 1779.

4 Butterfield, George III. Lord North and the People, p. 201.

5 Addit. MSS. 34416, ff. 510-11; Wedderburn to Eden, [?] Dec. 1779.

in which preference everybody present at the meeting on 24 December acquiesced except the Marquis of Carmarthen.¹

Carmarthen, Lord Chamberlain and Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding, had been intending to resign for some time owing to the apparent want of ability in the Government, but his decision was interrupted by a circular seeking his support for the county meeting to be held at York. Although he was not able to attend in person, he communicated his full approval of the measure, and accordingly dissented from the general agreement entered into at Lord North's. About a month later he resigned as Lord Chamberlain. On Tuesday, 8 February 1780, just as he was going to dress in order to attend the debate on Shelburne's motion, he received official notification of his summary dismissal from his lieutenancy of the East Riding. Several other peers were similarly treated.²

Though by no means so popular in the East Riding as Carmarthen, who had recently raised a thousand volunteers there, Carlisle succeeded to the lieutenancy. Later Carmarthen wrote :

The next day after my dismissal Lord Carlisle Kiss'd
Hands for the Lieutenancy, xc. of the East Riding,
and that evening at Lady Milbourne^s was extremely polite
on the occasion, and assured me the first he knew of
my Dismission was from my speech in the House of Lords.³

1 Francis Osborne, Marquis of Carmarthen (1751-99), third son of Thomas, 4th Duke of Leeds; M.P. (Eye) 1774, (Helston) 1774-5; Lord Chamberlain to the Queen, 1777-80; Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding of Yorks., 1778-80, 1782-d.; Foreign Secretary, 1783-91; succeeded his father as 5th Duke of Leeds, 1789.

2 Valentine, Lord North, ii. 188-9.

3 Browning, Political Memoranda of Francis, Fifth Duke of Leeds, pp. 17-24.

Carlisle was not then a party to any preconceived Government measure, but in profiting by it he can only have damaged his standing as one of the less slavish lackeys of the court system. The various dismissals of the Lord Lieutenants on what was alleged to be a matter of conscience aroused great resentment generally.¹ By accepting one of the various vacancies Carlisle erased all the good effects of his discreet and equivocal speech on Shelburne's motion of 8 February. In it he agreed

With the noble Lord, as to the Spirit and Principle of his Motion, but whether the Mode of Reformation suggested by his Lordship was the best, was more than on a hasty Consideration of the Subject he would determine.

Nor could he agree with Shelburne's idea that the Committee of both Houses of Parliament, which he wished to inquire into offices, sinecures and the like, should be composed of men who enjoyed neither place nor pension.

This was a restriction in which he would never acquiesce. He himself possessed a Place - was it just that he was therefore to be precluded from rendering his best Services to his Country at a Moment when every Man's Service was so much required? What did it mean, but this, that because a Man had a Place, he would forget his own Honour and his Country's Interest.²

This last point was explicit and defiant, but the tendency of his whole speech was clearly ambiguous. Indeed, the St. James's Chronicle, which reported it, reported also that he had divided against Administration on Shelburne's motion

1 Valentine, Lord North, ii.189.

2 St. James's Chronicle, 8-10 Feb. 1780.

and that he had had a private audience of the King the following day at which he had resigned his seat at the Board of Trade.¹ Ironically, he was actually kissing hands for the Lord Lieutenancy. By doing so at such a time, Carlisle firmly identified himself with an administration that was widely regarded as corrupt and inefficient, and possibly as a threat to the liberties of all Britons too.

Carlisle was never a man who subscribed to the idea of collective loyalty in thought and action, as he had hinted in his speech on 8 February, but North was beginning to trust him more and more. In 1779 he had not joined in the general bullying of North for promotion, and he had remained independent of any group within the Government. Yet he had not made his own personal mark on the inner circles of Government. In a way North emphasised this by sending him to Ireland.

¹ Ibid.

IV

IRELAND, 1780-1782

Carlisle unofficially accepted the offer of the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland in early July 1780, after negotiations for a coalition between the Government and the Rockingham Whigs had broken down. It was a most suitable position for him, being a post of solemn dignity and pomp, which at the same time imposed considerable political responsibilities. But for North there was in all probability an ulterior motive behind the appointment : he hoped it would induce Eden to accept the post of Chief Secretary in Ireland, which he had already been offered once, at the present Lord Lieutenant's¹ express request, but had refused. When, however, Carlisle pressed him to join him in July, the offer presented a completely different complexion to Eden, because, as he wrote, 'I know Ld. Car. well & am convinced that the whole turn of his character makes him peculiarly fit for that very difficult & important Situation.'²

Eden therefore agreed to accompany Carlisle provided the Government first gave him guarantees that in doing so he was advancing and not merely suspending his political career. Neither North nor the King were willing to oblige³

1 Buckinghamshire, John Hobart, 2nd Earl (1723-1793); M.P. (Norwich) 1747-56, when he succeeded his father; various offices at Court 1755-67; Envoy to St. Petersburg 1762-5; appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1776; known as Lord Buckingham until the creation of the marquise of Buckingham in the Grenville family in 1784.

2 Addit. MSS. 34417, ff. 98, 134; 'Explanatory Minutes' by Eden, Feb. - Aug. 1780, Eden to North, 19 Aug. 1780.

3 For the correspondence on this matter, see Addit. MSS. 34417, ff. 98-208 passim.

even though Eden, in order to secure the guarantees he required, twice refused the chief secretaryship and once actually signified his intention to retire from public life altogether.¹ Carlisle sided with Eden throughout these protracted and rather squalid negotiations, declaring that he would be Viceroy with no other Chief Secretary.² Both in fact refused to go to Ireland without the other. Eventually North gave in, though not, it seems, to Eden's but to Carlisle's pleadings,³ and after a delay which had caused him much anxiety and aggravation, Carlisle was officially appointed to succeed Buckingham in October. Apart from suggesting the difficulties which the King's inflexible approach to coalitions created for North, the incident underlines the solidarity that now existed between Eden and Carlisle, and indicates the extent to which Wedderburn, now Lord Loughborough, had become an important confidant and adviser to Carlisle, even though at this time he was actually away on circuit in the North. On more than one occasion Carlisle lamented his absence;⁴ and later, when he himself was absent in Ireland, Loughborough exercised his proxy in the House of Lords,⁵ and Loughborough's nephew, Sir James Erskine,⁶ became one of Carlisle's aide-de-camps.⁷

1 Ibid., ff. 135, 154, 189-90, 193-4; Eden to North, 19 Aug., 2 Sept., 14 Sept., 1780, North to Eden, 16 Sept. 1780.

2 Ibid., f. 137; Carlisle to Eden, 19 Aug. [1780].

3 Carlisle to North, 23 Sept. 1780; W. Beresford, The Correspondence of the Right Hon. John Beresford (London, 1854), i. 142-4.

4 Addit. MSS. 34417, ff. 173, 178; Carlisle to Eden, 4 Sept., 6 Sept., 1780.

5 Loughborough to Carlisle, 12 May 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/672.

6 Sir James Erskine, 6th Bt. (1762-1837); M.P. (Castle Rising) 1782-4, (Morpeth) 1784-96, (Dysart Burghs) 1796-1805; assumed the name St. Clair before Erskine upon inheriting his cousin's estates in 1789; succ. Loughborough as 2nd Earl of Rosslyn, 1805. As M.P. for Carlisle's borough of Morpeth, see below p. 231.

7 Gentleman's Magazine, 1780, p. 48.

In the autumn of 1781 Loughborough came over to Dublin to stay for a few weeks.

Carlisle himself arrived in Dublin just before Christmas 1780. High expectations were formed in advance of his fine breeding, easy temper and fondness for what he and his friends called 'éclat'.¹ In the last respect the Irish were not disappointed. The Public Advertiser reported to its English readers that 'The Outset of the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has verified all the Expectations that were formed of his Pomp and Shew.'² Buckingham's court had been rather dull, but Carlisle's was by comparison lavish and colourful. He brought over a French cook, Bertrand by name;³ a large retinue of servants all in fine new liveries;⁴ and he himself dressed most exquisitely, if reports are to be trusted. As for his levées, they were the most splendid and brilliant that had been seen at the Castle, the viceregal residence in Dublin, for many years.⁵ But this magnificence represented not only Carlisle's personal wishes, but also deliberate political policy. The Irish were thought to love a colourful court and it was thought such a spectacle would perhaps soften political differences.⁶

Unfortunately this laudable plan was undermined by deficiencies in Carlisle's personality. The press, having dubbed him 'Lord Red-Heels' in allusion to his sartorial elegance, later began to apply to him the more ominous soubriquet of 'Governor Tacitus,' in allusion to his courteous but

1 Dublin Evening Post, 18 Jan. 1781.

2 Public Advertiser, 31 Jan. 1781.

3 Lord Derby to Carlisle, 'Sunday'; C.H.A. J14/44/D/8.

4 St. James's Chronicle, 14-17 Oct. 1780.

5 Dublin Evening Post, 23 Jan. 1781.

6 Eden to Robinson, 1 Jan. 1781; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i. 149.

taciturn demeanour. In fact both Carlisle and his wife were equally reserved in strange company,¹ a tendency which must have been accentuated by the importance of their position in Ireland. Lady Carlisle was still thought 'insipid' and her court 'triste' after a year of residence in Dublin,² and Thomas Conolly of Castletown,³ while finding Lord Carlisle 'very well bred and easy in his manner,' also thought him 'very slack of conversation, not only at his levée, but every where,'⁴ which showed that he had lost none of that laconic and rather superior air that he had assumed when confronting foreigners on his grand tour. Others found him positively 'stiff and distant,'⁵ and the native press drew attention to his 'formal and distant civility'; his 'freezing reserve';⁶ 'the continual frown on his Lordship's brow... the stern forbidding cast which pervades him... even in scenes of relaxing pleasure and sociability'.⁷ He was thought nervous and awkward when receiving strangers and nobody approached him with ease.⁸

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 11 Sept. [1780]; C.H.A. J14/1/217: Lady Derby to Lady Gower, 12 Nov. 1781; Duke of Argyll, ed., Intimate Society Letters of the Eighteenth Century (London, 1910), i.275.

2 Lady Moira to Lord Huntingdon, 17 Mar. 1782; F. Bickley, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 20th Report, Hastings MSS. (London, 1934), iii.197.

3 Thomas Conolly (1738-1803); Irish politician; M.P. (Malmesbury) 1759-68, (Chichester) 1768-80, (Co. Londonderry) 1761-1800; took up permanent residence in Ireland from 1780; owner of large estates and controller of important parliamentary connection.

4 Thomas Conolly to Buckingham, 13 Jan. 1781; D.B. Collyer, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 16th Report, Lothian MSS. (London, 1905), p. 381.

5 Beresford to Allan, 26 Jan. 1781; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i.156.

6 Dublin Evening Post, 23 Jan. 1781.

7 Ibid., 27 Mar. 1781; letter from 'A Kettle-Mender.'

8 Ibid., and 15 Sept. 1781.

Before long, of course, suspicions were raised in the minds of more imaginative commentators that he harboured some dark purpose towards Ireland. But as time proved these fears groundless, comments on Carlisle's personality gradually ceased to be publicly aired. The Irish became accustomed to his severe formality. He himself manfully made a virtue of necessity by transforming his shyness into a tactical political weapon. In admitting to his father-in-law that he was reserved to a fault and wishing he was less so, he wrote: 'I would not be deprived of it while I remain in this country, as I look upon [it] as my great defence against strategems and invasions peculiar to my situation...' ¹ In another place he gave a similar account of managing an unpleasant audience: 'All my resource was patience, silence & taking snuff, which I immediately left off upon my return to England.' ²

Carlisle's rather disconcerting aloofness could have had real political consequences in a less troubled time when personalities mattered much more. But he was anxious to conciliate the Irish in any other way that he could, and also he had arrived in Ireland at a time when, for various reasons, the Irish aristocracy was anxious to show its support for the Castle in resisting a popular movement which had become unmanageable and dangerous. During the previous decade, a powerful patriot movement, tracing its origins back to the 1720s and stimulated enormously by the recent colonial revolt in America, had grown up in Ireland. Largely protestant, it nevertheless had the moral support of the Irish Roman Catholics. It also had military backing from the highly organised and potentially revolutionary Volunteer movement, which owed its inception in 1778 to the inadequate state of the Irish army following its

¹ Carlisle to Gower, 30 June, 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/85.

² Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle, [1802]; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 71.

depletion to serve in the American war. From the beginning, the Volunteer Movement, which was led by some of the most important noblemen in the country, had shared the commercial and political objectives of the patriot movement, of which indeed the Volunteers were a part. These objectives were two-fold : first, free trade, that is, the removal of restrictions imposed on Irish commerce by Great Britain; and, second, the freedom of the Irish Parliament to regulate Irish commerce in future. The latter, in fact, came to mean to all Irishmen full legislative independence, and the means by which this independence was to be achieved were, firstly, the repeal of the 'Act of 6 George I,' or the Declaratory Act of 1720, by which the British Parliament at Westminster asserted its right to legislate for Ireland, and, secondly, the repeal or modification of Poyning's Law of 1494, by which the Irish Parliament was completely subordinated to both the Lord Lieutenant and the Irish Privy Council in Dublin, and to the King and the English Privy Council in London. In practice the only Bills that ever came before the Irish Parliament for debate, which even then it could only enact or reject, had previously been approved by the King and Council in England.

Over the winter of 1779-80, Lord North, bowing to pressure in both England and Ireland, had granted a satisfactory degree of free trade, and now the constitutional issue of legislative independence to protect these concessions became paramount. The sugar duty question in the summer of 1780, when the British Parliament reduced the duty on the import of refined sugar into Ireland in the exclusive interest of English refiners, demonstrated only too clearly that the English might revoke Irish trading concessions at will. Henry Grattan,¹ with

¹ Henry Grattan (1746-1820), the leading Irish orator and patriot of his day, and the architect of legislative independence; M.P. for various Irish constituencies, 1775-1805, for Lord Fitzwilliam's borough of Malton, 1805-6, and for Dublin, 1806-20.

a united country behind him, made a declaration of independence in the Irish House of Commons on 19 April 1780. It was, however, indefinitely adjourned, but on the question of timing rather than basic principle. Many leading members of the Irish aristocracy now began to grow anxious for their political power, which they feared was being undermined by the patriot movement with its strong commercial middle-class element. The best way for the aristocracy to preserve its political position was to maintain the constitutional status quo between England and Ireland. As a result many important members of the Irish upper classes, who had been leaders of or conspicuous among the patriots, notably the Duke of Leinster,¹ formerly Lord Kildare and a friend of Carlisle's at Eton and on the grand tour, and Leinster's uncle, Thomas Conolly, now began to gravitate towards Administration in Ireland. The effect of this transference of influence was shown by the peaceful termination of the 1780 session of the Irish Parliament.² From this moment Irish public opinion and the sentiments of the Irish Parliament began to diverge.

This was the situation in which Carlisle found himself on his arrival in Ireland. He immediately began to placate the Irish by any means at his disposal. He followed the usual practices of writing to prominent Irish politicians before coming to Ireland, and of wearing clothes of Irish manufacture, especially on public occasions.³ The Volunteers, in their ambivalent status, were especially sensitive to the behaviour and opinions of the Viceroy, but appear to have been satisfied with ^{his} admittedly equivocal

1 Leinster, William Fitzgerald, 2nd Duke (1749-1804), the premier nobleman of Ireland.

2 M. O'Connell, Irish Politics and Social Conflict in the Age of the American Revolution (Philadelphia, 1965), ch. 10.

3 Dublin Evening Post, 24 Feb. 1781.

declaration amidst a large circle on 15 February, 'that he entertained the highest respect for the military associations in this kingdom, and should upon every occasion shew them every countenance consistent with his station.'¹ Until the autumn of 1781 the Volunteers were effectively dormant as far as Carlisle was concerned. In September rumours of an invasion by French and Spanish troops caused the alarm to be raised at Cork. Because of the paucity of regular troops in the vicinity, the Volunteers tendered their services to the Lord Lieutenant. Carlisle graciously but non-committally accepted. Naturally he expected some vote of thanks to be accorded the Volunteers when Parliament opened soon after in October and thought his administration should make some public acknowledgement of their loyalty and good conduct.² But the English Government forbade it, as it had forbidden every official acknowledgement of the Volunteers ever since their establishment.³ It was not until 1782, however, that the Volunteers began to present very serious problems once again, but by then Carlisle was recalled anyway. The relatively peaceful behaviour of the Volunteers during 1781, however, may have been partly due to the Lord Lieutenant's sympathetic attitude.

Basically Carlisle hoped to pacify the turbulence of the Irish spirit, so recently manifested, by suppressing discussion of constitutional questions and by consolidating Government support in Parliament. But his was neither to be an idle administration nor one of reaction and retrenchment; rather

¹ Dublin Evening Post, 18 Jan. 1781.

² P.R.O., State Papers Ireland, Series 63, vol. 476, ff. 135-6; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 15 Sept. 1781.

³ Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34418 (Auckland Papers), ff. 127-8; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 29 Sept. 1781.

one of carefully guided reform. As Eden put it, he wished his administration to be distinguished by 'a spirit of Improvement in every circumstance, however minute, which comes under his inspection & order...'¹ The city of Dublin itself provided one of the most obvious fields for reform. With Ireland as a country and with its rich but undeveloped natural resources Carlisle was very favourably impressed, but given his almost constant and, as it transpired, comparatively brief residence in Dublin and lack of familiar acquaintance with the rest of the country, it was natural that only the capital should fall within his immediate purview, especially as he had been heard to remark that it could be made one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.²

He certainly had great plans for the improvement of Dublin and Dublin life, but sadly they were not all executed. He was able to order the enforcement of strict rules of discipline in the military garrison; exhort the Barrack Board and the Circular Road trustees to settle the course of the new circular road;³ condemn the dilatory proceedings of the Commissioners for widening the avenues;⁴ privately encourage the building of a new Custom House nearer the centre of fashionable Dublin;⁵ and personally recommend to the English Secretary of State⁶ Bills concerned with the beautification of Dublin.⁷ Phoenix Park, too, came under his scrutiny after he reviewed the

1 Addit. MSS. 34417, f. 382; Eden to - , 11 July 1781.

2 Dublin Evening Post, 2 Aug. 1781.

3 The new bridge (built 1790) which carried the new road over the Liffey was named after Carlisle. It is now known as O'Connell Bridge.

4 Dublin Evening Post, 3 May, 16 June, 5 July, 1781.

5 Beresford to Allan, 26 Jan. 1781; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i. 156.

6 The Earl of Hillsborough.

7 P.R.O., Home Office Papers, Series 100, vol. 1, f.13; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 27 Mar. 1782.

garrison there on 2 July 1781.¹ Eden, who lived in the Park, received orders to attend to its drains, ditches and plantations and to extend the levelling of the riding and reviewing ground which had evidently proved too small for its purpose.² Behind these improvements lay a genuine desire to initiate the development of Dublin, but the impartiality which Carlisle tried to preserve on the controversial question of the siting of the Custom House suggests that political considerations were involved too.³ Carlisle's task was to exhibit as far as was prudent the good intentions of the Administration towards Ireland while at the same time distracting public attention away from the serious issues of the day.

The various branches of the executive government also came under close examination. Carlisle opened his administration 'by a Strict Inquiry into every Department,'⁴ and it was found that in particular 'the mode of collecting the revenue of this Country... required immediate reform.'⁵ This discovery was confirmed at the beginning of 1781 by the defalcation of the Collector of the Dublin City Excise.⁶ Carlisle ordered that the Revenue Commissioners be reprimanded for their idleness and inattention by their secretary,⁷ and Eden was, as always, 'very alert in examining and

1 Dublin Evening Post, 3 July 1781.

2 Addit. MSS. 34417, f. 382; Eden to - , 11 July 1781. See also Addit. MSS. 34418, f. 309; Eden to Loughborough, 29 Jan. 1782.

3 Ibid., ff. 6, 35; Eden to - , 3 Aug., 18 Aug., 1781.

4 P.R.O., State Papers Ireland, Series 63, vol. 480, f. 397; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

5 Carlisle to Hillsborough, 24 June 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/E/37.

6 Beresford to Robinson, 27 Jan., 4 Feb., 1781; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i. 157, 158.

7 Dublin Evening Post, 10 Mar. 1781.

stating the different accounts of the different Boards,'¹ and 'in rummaging all the offices, and enforcing residence and attendance.'² By the middle of the year the Revenue Commissioners had been roused to self-reformation. Carlisle reported that

the industry of the Board in correcting abuses, & destroying evil practices has been extremely exemplary; & the good effects of their vigilance & activity is universally felt & acknowledged. I believe we shall find a bottom to that sink the Barrack Board, that has frequently been considered as fathomless.³

Carlisle also reported that he might at some point propose a reduction in the numbers of the General Officers on the Military staff, whose appointments amounted to an expense of £29,000 p.a.⁴ It is not known how far-reaching were the financial reforms implemented during his administration,⁵ but they do at least show that, with Eden's active assistance, he was anxious to improve the collection of revenue and to restrict unnecessary expenditure.

Progress in administrative reform, however, pales into relative insignificance beside one of the chief monuments of Carlisle's administration, the introduction of measures to establish a National Bank of Ireland. National

1 Conolly to Buckingham, 19 Mar. 1781; Hist. MSS. Comm., 16th Rep., Lothian MSS., p. 386.

2 Edward Tighe to Buckingham, 17 July 1781; *ibid.*, p. 390.

3 Carlisle to Hillsborough, 24 June 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/E/37.

4 Carlisle to Hillsborough, draft, 18 Aug. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/401.

5 They find no mention in the standard work on the subject, T.J. Kiernan, History of the Financial Administration of Ireland to 1817 (London, 1930).

banks had been established in England and Scotland in 1694 and 1695 respectively and thereafter there were several attempts to do the same in Ireland, but they all proved uniformly unsuccessful, and the Irish banking structure remained hopelessly weak, inadequate and prone to frequent crises.¹

The grant of free trade to Ireland in 1779 and 1780 naturally re-opened the issue of a national bank, for the lack of capital was, along with the war, one of the two principal reasons why Irish trade failed to expand as it should have done in succeeding years. As the Dublin Evening Post pointed out in 1781, such a facility was never more necessary; it was absurd that in the second city in the Empire and in the second year of free trade, the Dublin merchants should only have one house to resort to for discount.² Both Carlisle and Eden were fully in favour of a national bank, not only because it would benefit commerce, but also because it would be of great service to the Government in providing loans.³ The Government in England agreed that the time was ripe,⁴ and on 27 February 1782 Eden introduced into the Irish Parliament heads of a Bill to establish a national bank. It received the royal assent on 4 May and the bank opened on 25 June 1783.⁵ The introduction of this measure was an indication of the strength of Carlisle's administration, but it was also designed to add to that strength at the same time. As a popular measure it would serve to divert attention

1 F.G. Hall, The Bank of Ireland 1783-1946 (Dublin, 1949), ch. 1.

2 Dublin Evening Post, 22 Nov. 1781.

3 P.R.O., State Papers Ireland, Series 63, vol. 477, f. 107; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 22 Nov. 1781; Eden to Knox, 28 Nov. 1781; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., Var. Coll., vi, Knox MSS., p. 240.

4 S.P. 63/477, ff. 133-5; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 3 Dec. 1781.

5 Hall, The Bank of Ireland, pp. 30-44.

away from constitutional issues, which was partly what it was designed to do.¹ It was thus both a commercial necessity and a political expedient.

Irish merchants were assisted not only by the introduction of measures to set up a national bank, but also by Carlisle's personal solicitude for their commercial interests. The Irish expected this from his good relations with, and activity on behalf of, English merchants engaged in American trade.² From the beginning of his administration, he himself said later, Irish merchants were encouraged 'to have recourse to my Government in frequent instances for Advice, Information and Assistance.'³ Probably as a result of this, he received a petition from Dublin merchants before his first month in Ireland was completed.⁴ The petition concerned the detainment of Irish woollens and printed linens at Lisbon by the Portuguese authorities.⁵ The free trade granted to Ireland so recently enabled her to export, among other commodities, woollen goods, but the Portuguese refused to include Ireland in the Methuen treaty of 1703 which supplemented the settlement of trading relations between Britain and Portugal of 1654. The Portuguese contended that the Methuen treaty, in referring to Great Britain, did not embrace Ireland; and their case was further strengthened by the prohibition

1 S.P. 63/480, f. 398; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

2 Dublin Evening Post, 18 Jan. 1781.

3 S.P. 63/480, f. 398; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

4 Dublin Evening Post, 20 Jan. 1781.

5 An authoritative account of the commercial negotiations between England and Portugal, which followed the closure of the Portuguese market to certain Irish goods, is given in J. Ehrman, The British Government and Commercial Negotiations with Europe 1783-1793, (Cambridge, 1962), pp. 5-16, 70-5, 173-4.

of Irish woollen exports then in force. Carlisle was requested by Irish merchants to seek redress of their grievances, and wrote to Hillsborough several times on the subject.¹ But no satisfactory conclusion was reached before the meeting of Parliament in October 1781. Carlisle was not held responsible for this. On the contrary, he received much praise for his active part in the affair, while the British Government was criticised for its indifference.² Evidently Hillsborough's approach to the problem was characteristically lackadaisical, and he failed to appreciate its complexity and seriousness quickly enough.³ When at last he did, Britain's international position assumed a superior importance for Portugal was almost her only friend in Europe and could not be antagonised for the sake of Irish wool merchants.⁴ The issue was fiercely aired on more than one occasion in the Irish Parliament, seeming to confirm Carlisle's prediction that it would prove a large stumbling block to his administration. But it appears to have lost much of its popular support by early 1782,⁵ and in May the Portuguese at last permitted the temporary importation of Irish manufactures.⁶

1 P.R.O., State Papers Ireland, Series 63, vol. 474, ff. 72-3; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 30 Jan. 1781 : S.P. 63/476, ff. 40-3; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 10 Sept. 1781.

2 Dublin Evening Post, 24 Apr., 31 July, 9 Aug., 1781. Apparently an extraordinary rumour prevailed that Portugal only acted in response to English pressure to prevent the expansion of Irish trade; Lord Nugent to Carlisle, 15 May 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/E/41.

3 S.P. 63/476, ff. 40-3; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 10 Sept. 1781.

4 Ibid., ff. 276-7; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 21 Oct. 1781.

5 Carlisle to Loughborough, 14 Feb. 1782; C.H.A. J14/44/H/1.

6 A.E. Murray, A History of the Commercial and Financial Relations between England and Ireland from the Period of the Restoration (London, 1903), p. 227. Ehrman, op.cit., p.13, disagrees on this point.

Naturally it would have been politically insensitive for Carlisle to have treated the 'Portugal business,' as it was commonly called, with the same complacency as Hillsborough. But Carlisle was commendably vigilant and invariably asserted the rights of Ireland when he saw them threatened by English legislation, especially Ireland's commercial rights.¹ He and Eden obtained the extension of an English Bill for the importation of flax and flax seed to Ireland, which had been inadvertently omitted in England even though linen was the staple manufacture of northern Ireland.² And Carlisle recommended that when peace should be made with Spain, the linen question should be settled because the Spanish duties on Irish linen exceeded those on French by ten per cent 'to the utter Exclusion of the former.'³ Finally Carlisle went so far as to propose that Ireland should herself maintain a number of frigates for the protection of her trade for as long as the war continued, but once again the Government disapproved.⁴ On this, as on other occasions, Carlisle showed himself prepared to advance further than the Government in England thought prudent.

One of the reasons why he was able to propose Government initiatives on selected popular questions so confidently was because of the large measure of parliamentary support his administration enjoyed. In this respect the benefits accruing to Carlisle both directly and indirectly from Lord Buckingham's

1 S.P. 63/480, f. 117; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 24 Jan. 1782.

2 Hillsborough to Carlisle, 3 Apr. 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/E/9. Of course, the probable reason why Ireland was omitted from the Bill was because the Government was observing Carlisle's warnings not to attempt to bind Ireland in English legislation.

3 S.P. 63/474, f. 193; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 15 Mar. 1781. Peace was signed with Spain on 3 Sept. 1783.

4 S.P. 63/477, ff. 108, 133-5; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 22 Nov. 1781, Hillsborough to Carlisle, 3 Dec. 1781.

administration were incalculable. The indirect benefit, which has already been described, was the determination of the landed aristocracy to re-establish its political supremacy in Ireland when the patriotic movement began to threaten it. This determination was also in part a response to deliberate policy on the part of Lord Buckingham. A significant feature of his administration had been his attempt to broaden its base further than the career politicians of Dublin Castle by using his family connections to attract Conolly, and, through him, Leinster. The success of this measure was never felt by Buckingham, but it was of great help to his successor. Indeed, rather unfairly perhaps, the promises of rewards made by Buckingham were deliberately left unfulfilled until Carlisle was appointed,¹ so that he harvested the crop sown by his predecessor, and Buckingham was unfortunately blamed for the intervening delay.² As soon as Carlisle and Eden arrived in Ireland they immediately sensed the drift of aristocratic ambitions away from the patriots to the Government.³ Robinson was right when he reported to a colleague in November 1780 that Leinster's agent, Lees, had brought over 'for Lord Carlisle and Mr. Eden a bed of down with the pillows before prepared for them, if they know how to rest upon it.'⁴

1 George III to North, 18 Sept. 1780; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, v.123.

2 Andrew Corbet (1753-1824), aide-de-camp and confidential adviser to Carlisle during his viceroyalty, to Carlisle, 6 Dec. 1780; C.H.A. J14/44/D/10.

3 S.P. 63/474, ff. 20-1; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 7 Jan. 1781: Addit. MSS. 34417, ff 306-7; Eden to C. Jenkinson, 29 Jan. 1781.

4 Robinson to C. Jenkinson, 5 Nov. 1780; quoted in I. Christie, The End of North's Ministry, 1780-1782 (London, 1958), p. 241.

They did indeed. To begin with Carlisle wisely resisted making rash promises. It would have been as unwise to grant as to resist all the supplications of the Irish aristocracy. To have inflated its strength, influence and expectations would have been to invite trouble in the future. A few dependents and relations of important Irishmen were provided for, but there was actually no need to do more. As Carlisle, wrote, 'the cordiality we meet with from all parties, former opposers, & former supporters gives us time at least to breath, and does not force us into the arms of any set of men whatever.'¹ In the following months Carlisle and Eden proceeded to the construction of a parliamentary majority against the coming session of Parliament, the most important task facing any Lord Lieutenant and his staff. Perhaps to compensate for the shortage of patronage resources² Carlisle 'opened an extensive personal Intercourse with Individuals of Weight in the Kingdom and with the leading Men in Parliament.'³ By June, so he wrote,

The great people declare themselves satisfied with what England has done for this country... The Speaker,⁴ the Duke of Leinster, and Conolly are lavish in their expressions of attachment and gratitude for the favours they have received from Government since my appointment.

1 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 741; Carlisle to Gower, 25 Jan. 1781.

2 Carlisle to Hillsborough, 23 July 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/F/7.

3 S.P. 63/480, f. 398; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

4 Edmond Sexton Pery (1719-1806); M.P. (Wicklow) 1751-60, (Limerick) 1761-85; very able Speaker, 1771-85; active legislator; took the patriot line on free trade and the Volunteers; cr. Viscount Pery (I), 1785.

He then went on to discuss the prospects of support from other 'great people' and erstwhile patriots, and reached the tentative conclusion that only Flood¹ and Barry Yelverton,² who 'will not risk his popularity by any connection with us,' would side with opposition in the forthcoming session.³ This prognostication proved entirely accurate; Flood moved over to opposition with a resounding speech on 2 November and was promptly dismissed from his vice-treasureship by Carlisle. Yelverton remained in opposition, though, as will be seen, as a constructive moderate.

Carlisle had been well prepared for disappointment on the question of parliamentary support,⁴ and even when he was assured of it, once the session had started, requested his official and private correspondents in England to repeat that his success was not a natural phenomenon but the result of much hard work and management.⁵ Understandably he boasted about it; first, he said, because he had achieved something never achieved before, the uniting of all the great interests and factions in support of the Government; and secondly because this support had been bought relatively cheaply. There

1 Henry Flood (1732-91); M.P. for 3 Irish constituencies 1759-83 and for 2 English boroughs 1783-4, 1786-90; prominent politician; chiefly responsible for creation of the Irish Opposition, but deserted it for a Government sinecure in 1775, from which he was later sacked by Carlisle.

2 Barry Yelverton (1736-1805); M.P. (Donegal) 1774-6, (Carrickfergus) 1776-83; prominent patriot until his last years when he voted with Administration; cr. Baron Avonmore (I), 1795, Baron (GB) and Viscount (I), 1800.

3 Carlisle to Gower, 30 June 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/85.

4 Carlisle to Gower, 11 Oct. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/87.

5 Carlisle to Gower, 23 Nov. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/88 : Carlisle to Hillsborough, copy, 22 Nov. 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/F/18.

was no 'construction of new employments' and no absolute promises were made.¹ On paper the expense totalled about £8,000 p.a.² Finally it must be acknowledged in any discussion of parliamentary management that Eden's rôle was absolutely vital. Indeed it was the Chief Secretary's principal task to manage the Commons and this was the reason why Eden had been called in to replace the previous inadequate Secretary.

As a result of what Carlisle called his 'system of Attentions and Exertions' the Irish House of Commons which assembled in October 1781 was extremely complaisant, and continued so even in early 1782 when the extra-parliamentary demand for legislative independence increased alarmingly in intensity. Carlisle was therefore able to promote 'many Laws calculated not only to strengthen extremely the Hands of my Successors here, but to advance the general Prosperity of both Kingdoms.' In particular he mentioned provisions 'for the Security of the Public Debts, the better Collection and great Increase of His Majesty's Revenue, the Prevention of Frauds in the System of Bounties and lastly for the very great and extensive Improvements of this Metropolis.'³ The speed with which the money bills were guided through Parliament and sent off to England,⁴ the postponement of Yelverton's declaration on Poyning's Law in favour of a loyal address after the arrival of the news of Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown, the settlement of the sugar duties question, and the vote of a country residence in Phoenix Park for the Lord Lieutenant were all further indications of the strength of Carlisle's administration and of the personal regard of many Irish politicians for Carlisle himself.⁵

1 Carlisle's audience book (C.H.A. J14/53/8), in which he made notes of his response to requests, confirms this.

2 Carlisle to Gower, 23 Nov. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/88.

3 S.P. 63/480, f. 398; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

4 Carlisle and Eden prided themselves on this, but were soon provoked to anger and frustration by the tardiness with which the Bills were returned from England.

5 See above, note 1, and Addit. MSS. 34418, f. 219; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 18 Dec. 1781.

In some instances Carlisle faced more delicate problems, when he and Eden had to play more retiring parts. One such measure was the Catholic Relief Bill sponsored by Luke Gardiner¹ in early 1782. In the context of the Gordon riots not so long before, such a measure required the most careful handling. London advised discouragement of relief measures; Carlisle was also nervous, fearing presbyterian objections.² Privately, however, he favoured Catholic relief 'but does not Chuse to avow it as a measure of Government.'³ Eden held the same opinion and the measure was allowed to pass. Usually the Government was strong enough to adopt popular measures itself : the Habeas Corpus act, which was the only reforming measure actually to be enacted during Carlisle's administration; the National Bank; and the reform of the Bench.⁴

Inherent in the very strength of Administration, however, was one extremely dangerous consequence. The political nation became divorced from a vociferous public opinion. As M.P.s continued to support the Administration with large majorities within Parliament so they began to lose their popular support outside it. The growth of the movement for legislative independence in early 1782 was principally responsible for revealing this weakness in his system to Carlisle. The question of whether or not the British Parliament

1 Luke Gardiner (1745-1798); M.P. (Co. Dublin) 1773-89; cr. Baron Mountjoy, 1789, Viscount, 1795. He was killed in 1798 while leading his regiment against the insurgents.

2 O'Connell, Irish Politics and Social Conflict, p. 353.

3 Viscount Kenmare to Burke, 4 Feb. 1782; Copeland, Corres. of Edmund Burke, iv. 401.

4 Carlisle seems to have been particularly interested in this measure, wishing to see more judges and with higher salaries : S.P.63/480, ff. 135-6; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 31 Jan. 1782; Eden to Thurlow, 9 Jan. 1782; C.H.A. J14/48, p. 117.

was competent to legislate for Ireland was central to all aspects of Irish life at this time. It was also, incidentally, becoming of increasing significance in English politics. Before leaving for Ireland Carlisle had been advised to 'avoid the Lieutenancy' if he could not obtain guarantees from his Government that the Westminster Parliament would not attempt to legislate for Ireland.¹ He even delayed his journey to Ireland by some days in a fruitless attempt to discover whether or not Britain intended to include Ireland in its Mutiny Bill.² When he arrived in Ireland, the long parliamentary recess and the readiness of former Irish patriots to support the Government, as well, no doubt, as the influence of men like Beresford³ and Scott,⁴ tended to push the fundamental issues of Irish politics into apparent obscurity, and led Carlisle and Eden to concentrate on political management as the solution to all political problems. As they quickly discovered, the traditional method of governing Ireland was now obsolete, unless, of course, the whole country could be managed.

1 John Scott to John Lees, 6 Dec. 1780, enclosed in Lees to Eden, 6 Dec. 1780; C.H.A. J14/44/D/12.

2 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38215 (Liverpool Papers), f. 29; Carlisle to C. Jenkinson, 13 Dec. 1780 : Carlisle to Hillsborough, 14 Nov. 1780, Hillsborough to Carlisle, 21 Dec. 1780; C.H.A. J14/44/D/16, J14/44/C/9.

3 John Beresford (1738-1805); M.P. (Waterford) 1761-1805; served on the Revenue Board (from 1780 as First Commissioner) 1770-1802; the most influential political figure in Ireland in the '80s and '90s; personally responsible for many improvements in revenue collection and in the appearance of Dublin.

4 John Scott (1739-98); M.P. (Mullingar) 1769-83, (Portarlington) 1783-4; loyal supporter of Administration and eminent lawyer; dismissed by the Whigs in 1782, but became Prime Serjeant, 1783, and Chief Justice of the King's Bench, 1784; cr. Baron Earlsfort, 1784, Viscount Clonmell, 1789, and Earl, 1793.

Before Parliament opened on 9 October Carlisle was instructed by his Government to suppress discussion of all constitutional issues.¹ This he was able to do with apparent ease and, in an exclusively parliamentary context, might have continued to do so, had not the agitation for legislative independence outside Parliament first increased in intensity and then communicated itself to M.P.s within the House of Commons. Although Carlisle began his own personal campaign to maintain the exclusion of Ireland from English Acts of Parliament at the beginning of 1782,² it was not until another six weeks had passed that he began to realise that the size of his parliamentary majority was rapidly becoming

1 Addit. MSS. 34418, ff. 124-5; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 29 Sept. 1781. Carlisle had previously written to Hillsborough seeking instructions for the coming session. Hillsborough passed the letter on to Thurlow, who made some rather caustic remarks on it, e.g., 'The first head offers to embrace the whole class of what are called Constitutional Questions. This seems a cant word for certain points to which custom has assigned that name': Brit. Lib., Egerton MSS. 2232 (Thurlow Papers), ff. 44; memoranda by Thurlow, [Sept. 1781]. It may be noticed here that Thurlow's attitude towards Carlisle's administration in Ireland was always of a piece with the above, and he was a formidable enemy. Edward Cooke, who worked under Eden, told him that he had been informed by Hillsborough 'that the Chancellor had not ever shewn a cordial Disposition towards my Lord Lieutenant in the Business which had come before His Lordship from Ireland during His Excellency's Administration'; Addit. MSS. 34418, ff. 381-2; Cooke to Eden, 26 March 1782.

2 S.P. 63/480, ff. 10-11; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 29 Dec. 1781.

meaningless as an accurate measure of his real political strength.

Even in the middle of February he could write complacently to Loughborough :

The remaining part of the Session will probably be employed in battling corn premiums, exposing distilling rogueries, forcing and repelling internal and domestic jobs, in short, in such things upon which the existence of Administration does not absolutely depend.¹

But on the following day, 15 February, the celebrated Volunteer meeting at Dungannon took place and the whole country was fired with the cause of legislative independence. On 22 February Henry Grattan again moved an address to the King containing a declaration of the independence of the Irish legislature. On the very next day, alarmed by these events, Carlisle wrote the first of several dispatches in which he reiterated with increasing emphasis these crucial points : that his administration was strong enough to defeat all popular constitutional measures in Parliament; that despite this the movement for legislative independence would not abate; and that if his friends continued to support Administration loyally, while, at the same time strenuously maintaining the principle of Irish legislative independence, which, with the exception of Attorney General Scott, they all did,² they would soon lose support in their constituencies and become powerless.³ Indeed by the end of March Volunteers were already beginning to withdraw themselves from the command of men who continued to support the Government.⁴

1 Carlisle to Loughborough, 14 Feb. 1782; C.H.A. J14/44/H/1.

2 S.P. 63/480, f. 248; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 23 Feb. 1782. Scott eventually declared in favour of legislative independence on 4 May 1782.

3 Ibid., ff. 249-50, 296-300, 136; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 23 Feb., 3 Mar., 16 Mar., 1782.

4 H.O. 100/1, f. 19; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 28 Mar. 1782.

All attention on both sides of the Irish channel was fixed at this time on the Volunteers. Their central role in the patriotic movement presented an armed threat to the preservation of law and order. Using an analogy frequently resorted to, Carlisle told his father-in-law that

The Junction of the Thames & the Liffy would be as easy an attempt as to enforce a B^h statute. No juries will find under it, and there are thirty thousand men with the arms of Government in their hands, who would take the field tomorrow rather than submit to it.¹

The immediacy of the crisis thus left Carlisle little time to think and no time at all to seek instructions from London when Yelverton produced his conciliatory proposition giving force in Ireland to certain useful British Acts. He thought it best to act on his own initiative and approve it without first seeking official directions. In sending it off to London both he and Eden pleaded that it be returned unaltered, for, they said, it offered an effective and dignified solution, as far as England was concerned.² Given the chance, Hillsborough would again have counselled a more cautious approach, but the return of the Bill was going to be delayed anyway because the Privy Council did not feel it could consent to it without parliamentary approval.³ In Ireland the crisis continued to grow more alarming every minute. It was known that Grattan intended to move another declaration of legislative independence on 16 April after the Easter recess. Therefore in one of his

1 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 745; Carlisle to Gower, 23 Mar. 1782.

2 S.P. 63/480, f. 350; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 12 Mar. 1782.

3 Ibid., f. 335; Hillsborough to Carlisle, 12 Mar. 1782.

last dispatches Carlisle actually ventured 'to submit that it may deserve the serious Consideration of the ministers... whether the Repeal of the 6th of George the 1st¹ might not be a Measure equally becoming and wise!² From America Carlisle returned more hardened if anything, in his determination to resist American demands; from Ireland he returned genuinely in favour of the concessions demanded by the Irish patriots.

The Rockingham Whigs, having inherited the Irish problem from North's Ministry, were embarrassed to find themselves faced with a crisis much more serious than they had imagined. Their initial reaction was to attribute it to the weakness and narrow political outlook of Carlisle's administration. They accused him of having taken no account of public opinion, and, in not closing the breach between politicians and public opinion, of losing control of the Volunteers. They thought strong government could only be re-established by concessions.³ They obviously thought that Carlisle had firmly resisted all concessions until his departure from Ireland, and had no idea that he had been advocating them, belatedly it is true, but had been baulked at every turn by the Cabinet.

But it seems to have become the custom for every new Administration in Ireland to attribute the problems it encountered in its early stages to the failure of the preceding Government. It was a natural corollary to

1 The Declaratory Act of 1720 by which the British Parliament asserted its right to legislate for Ireland.

2 S.P. 63/480, f. 426; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 27 Mar. 1782.

3 These views are nicely encapsulated in an early letter from the new Chief Secretary, Richard Fitzpatrick, to Shelburne, 24 Apr. 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159 (entitled Ireland 1782-3, Parliamentary and Trade).

the development of party politics. Carlisle's friends were as guilty of this as the Whigs. One wrote to him saying that the Irish all agreed that Carlisle 'had reclaim'd the Government that Lord Buckingham had lost.'¹ This contained as little truth as did Fitzpatrick's² strictures on Carlisle's administration : 'the fact is that the Government here is at the present moment Dissolved.'³ Both points of view exaggerated beyond credibility different aspects of the same situation. The real fact was that the Protestant ascendancy as a whole was beginning to dissolve; it was no longer accurately represented by magnates sitting in both Houses of Parliament. Volunteer resolutions were now more expressive of the real state of public opinion than loyal addresses voted by large majorities. Fitzpatrick certainly perceived this and Carlisle and Eden may be severely censured for not having done so earlier. But English politicians were notoriously ignorant of the real state of Irish politics and society, witness only the embarrassment of the Whigs, who prided themselves on their connections with the Opposition in Ireland. Every Lord Lieutenant fought a losing battle against obfuscation and obscurantism. Moreover the Irish movement which resulted in the constitutional revolution of 1782-3 had been rekindled astonishingly quickly.⁴ Buckingham had tried to break out of the constraints

1 [Corbet?] to Carlisle, 26 Aug. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/828.

2 Richard Fitzpatrick (1747-1813), the new Chief Secretary in Ireland during the lieutenancy of the Duke of Portland; M.P. (Okehampton) 1770-4, (Tavistock) 1774-1807, 1812, (Bedfordshire) 1807-12; a close friend of Fox and a son-in-law of Lord Gower; Secretary at War in the Fox-North Coalition and Ministry of all the Talents.

3 Fitzpatrick to Shelburne, 24 Apr. 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159. C.f. same to same, 18 May 1782; *ibid.*

4 Carlisle attributed this to the discovery in the Irish Parliament of five recently passed English acts which happened to include Ireland : S.P. 63/480, f. 398; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

of the traditional system of Irish Government, but his attempts were sabotaged from within. Carlisle naturally tried to reconstruct the structure and processes which Buckingham had sought to dismantle. It was not a terribly difficult task, for reasons which have already been suggested, but the result was dangerously fragile. This Carlisle began to realise in February 1782, and his subsequent dispatches stated with increasing clarity and emphasis that only real concessions would pacify the Irish.

Was, however, Carlisle's powerful advocacy of concessions, especially of the acceptance of Yelverton's measure, merely a response to the irresistible pressure of the times, an attempt to defuse a potentially explosive crisis, or did it amount to a recognition of Ireland's inalienable rights? His own comments in this context are revealing :

I know that I am liable to be represented as having caught the Infection of Local Prejudices, whenever I seem to lean towards Measures which may be pleasing to the People; I know also that Individuals will talk stoutly in their Letters to England of British Supremacy, though they are afraid here to whimper the Word within their own Closets - But I must not be biassed by such slight Considerations - The Character and Weight of His Majesty's Government are safe, and the Public Peace is likely to be secured if the present Opening can be successfully used for the Removal of all Jealousies & apprehensions - It is beyond a Doubt that the Practicability of governing Ireland by English Laws is become utterly visionary; It is with me equally beyond a Doubt that Ireland may be well and happily governed by its own Laws.¹

In fact the enforcement of British statutes in Ireland had become impracticable even before Carlisle arrived. By 1782 though, he had come to recognise, under

¹ S.P. 63/480, f. 339; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

pressure it is true, the moral validity of Ireland's right to legislative independence. He had begun his term of office with reforming ambitions and his attempts were not merely politic and expedient measures to placate Irish nationalism, but genuine attempts to improve the quality of Irish life, whilst at the same time maintaining the authority of central government. He was disadvantaged by his own lack of vision. Furthermore the detached and cautious instructions he received from London checked his ambitions to some extent; and the termination of his administration in the middle of what proved to be a singularly important parliamentary session, coupled with the large constitutional reforms implemented by his Whiggish successors,¹ have tended to obscure the liberal character of his administration, just as much to posterity as to his immediate successor. But the Irish constitution of 1782 cannot be attributed wholly to the advent of the Whigs in England, even though it was enacted under their aegis. It was the result of many years of agitation, which reached a peak in April 1782, just when Carlisle was recalled to England.

The termination of his viceroyalty was surrounded by much bad blood and ill-feeling provoked entirely unnecessarily. The bare facts are these : Carlisle was peremptorily dismissed from the lieutenancy of the East Riding, in which Lord Carmarthen was reinstated, and he was suddenly recalled from Ireland, receiving notice of the appointment of his successor through the pages of the official Gazette. But there were extenuating circumstances which help to explain the actions of all parties involved. In the first place Carlisle was kept informed by his friends of political developments in England

1 On the other hand, the Whigs curtailed several of Carlisle's reform programmes, especially that for the improvement of Dublin : Eden to Beresford, 27 Oct. 1782; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i.233.

throughout March and he expected to be recalled by the new Whig Administration even though such practice was not customary. He also accepted that Carmarthen would naturally expect to be restored to his old position at the head of the East Riding Lieutenancy; and he was not blind to the prudence of leaving Ireland while his reputation remained untarnished. He therefore decided to pre-empt recall by resignation, and, having followed Selwyn's advice to wait until he knew who the new Ministers were,¹ wrote to Shelburne accordingly on 31 March.²

In the meantime, in England the new Ministry had relieved him of both his offices without any previous warning. Their reasons, as communicated to Eden, who had brought Carlisle's letter of resignation to England, were that the justice of Carmarthen's claims could not be ignored, and that they had been informed that in any case Carlisle was returning to England voluntarily so that the order of recall was a pure formality.³ This seems plausible; but one wonders whether the new Government would really have allowed Carlisle to remain in Ireland had he chosen to do so. According to Walpole, Fox had arranged that Carlisle be permitted to remain in Ireland, but that Carlisle himself asked to be recalled.⁴ However, this does not square with the evidence of Selwyn's conversations with Fox, as will be seen, nor does it allow for the fact that the Duke of Portland⁵ was earmarked for

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 22 Mar. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/346.

2 Carlisle to Shelburne, 31 Mar. 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159.

3 Eden to Carlisle, April 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/409.

4 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 434-5.

5 Portland, William Henry Cavendish-Bentinck, 3rd Duke (1738-1809); Lord Chamberlain, 1765-6; Carlisle's successor in Ireland, Apr.-Aug. 1782; First Lord of the Treasury, Apr.-Dec. 1783, 1807-9; Home Secretary, 1794-1801; Lord President of the Council, 1801-5; with Fox and Fitzwilliam, leader of the Whig party after Rockingham's death, until he joined Pitt in 1794; ineffectual speaker in the Lords.

Ireland and had been since at least 1780.¹ The truth probably is that the Whigs had always intended to recall Carlisle from Ireland, but to include him in the Administration in some other office if possible. He accepted the arrangement, but resented its spirit, which he felt was not as amiable or as gentlemanly as his friendship with Fox led him to expect. He also felt that it cast a public slur on his character and his dignity. For a short time a distinct tone of pique pervaded his letters.²

Eden, being closer to the scene of events, expressed his feelings rather more violently. When he discovered how his chief had been treated he lost his temper and refused to consult with Shelburne on the present crisis in Ireland.³ In an ignominiously futile attempt, he tried to embarrass the Government by moving the repeal of 6 Geo. I, c. 5, the Irish Declaratory Act, on 8 April. He was widely condemned for his excessive and stubborn resentment and presented a ridiculous figure to most observers. Moreover he placed Carlisle in a difficult position for he badly misjudged the Lord Lieutenant's reaction to the rude treatment he had received from the Rockingham Ministry. Most unreasonably Eden accused the Government of trying to ruin Carlisle. 'Whatever may be the inclination of any of the new Ministers towards Him,' Eden wrote to Gower, 'this very precipitate Recall amounts to an attempt to ruin Him both publicly and personally.' He continued, that

1 In June 1780 Carlisle agreed to withdraw from office in Ireland should a coalition be formed between Rockingham and North in which case Portland was to go to Ireland; North to George III, /Dec. 1780, but misdated; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, v. 167.

2 Carlisle to Fox, draft, /Apr. 1782; CH.A. J14/1/415.

3 Eden to Carlisle, copy, 5 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/411.

'as to any arrangement for his Carlisle ever taking office here, I fear it will be quite out of the question; His recall would from that hour be construed into a Callusion [sic] by which He had taken care of Himself tho His numerous friends in Ireland are to be utterly neglected & deserted..¹ He also told several other people that if offered the Lord Stewardship Carlisle would indignantly refuse it,² and he wrote bellicosely to Carlisle : 'We have no alternative but open war.'³ He obviously expected Carlisle to fight the Government, either for his just deserts, or from the Opposition benches. It may be mentioned here that some people thought Eden's exhibition of outrage a deliberate plan concocted by him and Loughborough to make Carlisle's 'Interest a sacrifice to their Resentment.'⁴ Certainly Eden's conduct on this occasion presented a marked contrast to his behaviour when he returned to England from America. Then it was Carlisle who had given vent to his feelings and Eden who had played a cautious, reserved and subtle part. Now the rôles were reversed.

Resident, still, in Ireland, Carlisle was forced to take steps after his recall to convince the leading figures in Irish politics that his sympathy with the 'patriot' cause was sincere and that he 'was not a party to those measures by which all their fair hopes and honourable pretensions are frustrated in an instant.'⁵ In contrast to the sullen silence of Eden, perhaps because Fitzpatrick, the new Chief Secretary, also acted as an emissary from Fox and tried to persuade Carlisle that no personal hostility was intended towards him,⁶ he showed his replacement, Portland, when he arrived, much

1 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 751; Eden to Gower, 6 Apr. 1782.

2 Eden to Carlisle, 5 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/409.

3 Same to same, 6 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/412.

4 Selwyn to Carlisle, 9 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/51/6.

5 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 753; Carlisle to Gower, 17 Apr. 1782.

6 Fitzpatrick to Shelburne, 13 Apr. 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159.

personal respect and communicated with him freely 'upon every subject that I conceived necessary for the quiet and ease of the King's Government; a conduct which I conceive does not impeach the propriety of Mr. Eden's reserve, which I am prepared to explain and to defend.'¹ It is true that he did not tell Portland anything he did not know already, but Portland felt he ought to do justice to Carlisle's 'civility & professions of Assistance' and to acquit him of any collusion in Eden's attempt to move the repeal of 6 Geo. I, c.5, even though he had defended Eden to Shelburne and others from 'a mistaken but nice sense of honor.'² Carlisle was equally assiduous in cultivating good opinions when he returned to England. On 29 April he had an interview with Lord Rockingham,³ in which he was very forthcoming, and, so Rockingham said, showed himself to be favourably disposed towards the new Ministry.⁴ On Friday, 17 May, he supported the repeal of the Irish Declaratory Act in a strong speech which sought to explain Irish grievances.⁵

Why was Carlisle so nicely in step with the new Ministry when it filled his 'court' friends with gloom and foreboding? In the first place, its principles were not unacceptable to him, and he had been careful to appease the new Government. It is true that he composed rather bitter letters to Fox and Hare when he first discovered how he had been treated, but it is very unlikely that they were ever sent. Clearly neither he nor Ministers considered that his recall from Ireland necessarily prevented him from joining the Administration in some other capacity. Equally clearly the new Ministry's apparent eagerness to win Carlisle over stemmed directly from one source, namely, Fox. In March he had a conversation with Selwyn about Carlisle in which he

1 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 753; Carlisle to Gower, 17 Apr. 1782.

2 Portland to Shelburne, 27 Apr. 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159.

3 Rockingham, Charles Watson-Wentworth, 2nd Marquis (1730-82); First Lord of the Treasury, 1765-6, Mar.-July 1782; patron of Burke and leader of the largest Whig group in the Opposition.

4 Rockingham to George III, 29 Apr. 1782; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, v. 505.

5 St. James's Chronicle, 16-18 May, 1782.

expressed 'more than once,' in Selwyn's words, 'an anxiety lest you should be in Opposition and asked me if the Master of the Horse would please.'¹ A few days later Selwyn told Carlisle that 'Charles would give anything in his power to make you attached to him.'² Indeed Fox personally wrote to Carlisle with professions of friendship.³ On another occasion he explained why he wanted to have Carlisle's support : 'I can have no other motive for wishing you to take a part with us than the desire of our living all together as we once used to do in better times.'⁴ If Fox could introduce sentiment into politics in this way, perhaps Walpole was partly right in thinking that Fox helped Carlisle as a reward for his standing security for his debts.⁵

Facing an acute shortage of places with which to reward a host of loyal friends and supporters, the best Fox could do for Carlisle was the reversion of the Lord Stewardship, presently held by Lord Talbot,⁶ who was dying.⁷ It

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 23 Mar. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/348.

2 Same to same, 2 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/51/3.

3 Fox to Carlisle, 2 Apr. 1782; most of Carlisle's Irish correspondence at Castle Howard was arranged in bundles after his return, but Fox's letter, which is known to have existed from an index book (C.H.A. J14/45), was in bundle K (no. 13), which, together with bundle J, is now missing.

4 Fox to Carlisle, 30 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/679.

5 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 434-5.

6 Talbot, William Talbot, 1st Earl (1710-1782); M.P. (Co. Glamorgan) 1734-7; Lord Steward, 1761-d.; cr. Earl Talbot, 1761, and Baron Dinevor, 1780; he died on 27 April, the day after Carlisle returned from Ireland.

7 Selwyn to Carlisle, 1 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/356.

took him some time to decide whether or not he could accept it with any propriety. On principle he seemed secure. The three main planks on which the second Rockingham Administration rested were the implementation of Burke's economical reform programme, peace with America, and the settlement of the Irish problem. It has been seen that Carlisle was in favour of economical reform, but at the appropriate time.¹ There is no evidence to fix his position on America at this time. As for Ireland, he was in favour of the repeal of the Declaratory Act and probably of legislative independence altogether. However, his surviving correspondence suggests that none of these great questions of principle troubled him. Indeed he was in good humour and high spirits throughout this period.² The only difficulty was Eden. It was not intended to include him in the Ministry, so to some extent Carlisle was, as Walpole said, leaving him in the lurch,³ and possibly implying also that he disapproved of his behaviour. 'The Apprehension that accepting would convey an idea of disavowal of any part of your conduct was very alarming to me,' Carlisle told Eden.⁴ However, Fox persuaded him that there was 'no intention of persecuting' Eden and that Carlisle could not serve Eden's interests 'by being out of humour with us.'⁵ So, after one last difficulty had been overcome, he decided to accept.

1 See above, p. 97.

2 Fox to Fitzpatrick, 1 May 1782; Russell, Mems. and Corres. of C.J. Fox, i. 317; George III to Rockingham, 30 Apr. 1782; Fortescue, Corres. of George III, v. 506.

3 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 479.

4 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34460 (Auckland Papers), f. 509; Carlisle to Eden, 8 May 1782.

5 Fox to Carlisle, 30 Apr. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/679.

This difficulty was a clear illustration of one of the most serious problems facing the second Rockingham Administration, but it also contained an aspect personally discomfiting to Carlisle. The offer of the stewardship had come directly and exclusively from Fox. But Shelburne, seeking to establish a personal channel of patronage, wished to give the office to Lord Charles Spencer¹ in order to oblige the Duke of Marlborough.² Unfortunately, Marlborough was also Eden's parliamentary patron; the person, wrote Eden, 'with whom my Parliamentary situation is most immediately connected.'³ Eden's relationship with Marlborough probably caused Carlisle some anxiety, but did not prove an obstacle; the issue became a simple trial of strength between Rockingham and Shelburne. 'Pray my dear Lord,' Fox beseeched Rockingham, 'fight hard with Shelburne about this Stewardship, or you and all of us shall be laughed at by the whole town.'⁴ Shelburne evidently gave way, and as Talbot had obligingly died a few days before, Carlisle was able to receive his White Stick on 4 May. Its salary of £1460 p.a. increased his personal disposable income by almost three quarters, so obviously the financial aspect of office-holding should not yet be discounted in an assess-

1 Lord Charles Spencer (1740-1820), 2nd son of 3rd Duke of Marlborough; M.P. (Oxfordshire) 1761-1801; occupant of various minor offices including treasurership of the chamber, 1779-1782; joint Postmaster General, 1801-6.

2 Marlborough, George Spencer, 4th Duke (1739-1817); active politically in his youth, being Lord Privy Seal, 1763-5, and K.G., 1768; thereafter lived quietly at Blenheim; presided at head of many varied institutions.

3 Eden to Beresford, 10 July 1782; Beresford, Corres. of John Beresford, i.214.

4 Fox to Rockingham, 'Sunday night'; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, R1/2069.

ment of Carlisle's political career.¹ He was certainly not prepared to relinquish it after Rockingham died in order to follow Fox into opposition. Despite Fox's efforts on his behalf he acknowledged no personal loyalty to him, but instead declared his intention of informing Shelburne 'how perfectly free I stand respecting all political obligation.'² In early July the Foxites departed, but Carlisle remained in office.

It is difficult to fix Carlisle's position on the political spectrum in 1782 with any accuracy. Indeed it is vain to attempt to attach party labels to a man who quite obviously rejected them. His ties with individuals seem to have been equally insubstantial. The absence of contemporary references to his connection with Lord Gower shows not only that the connection was politically insignificant, but that, although speculation resurfaced on a few occasions, it was actually acknowledged to be so. On Fox's initiative a new intimacy between him and Carlisle, interrupted in past years by political differences, was formed, but the Rockingham Ministry was too brief and troubled to allow personal obligations to take root; in this

1 And he had lost money in Ireland too, despite the annual viceregal salary of £16,000, plus equipage money of £3,000 and the chance to sell off such ceremonial trappings as coach horses etc. to his successor. By the end of 1781 expenditure exceeded income by £2,000 p.a. and Carlisle's agent wrote to him : 'I'm too much convinced that the plan which your Excellency fixed of making the income answer will from apparent circumstances by frusterated [sic]'. According to Eden, Carlisle was £10,000 out of pocket by March 1782, and of course he was never able to reap the financial benefits of the tranquil period between the bi-ennial Irish parliamentary sessions : T. Ramshay to Carlisle, 15 Jan. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/818 : Addit. MSS. 34418, f. 389; Eden to Loughborough, 27 Mar. [1782].

2 Carlisle to Gower, 'Friday even'; C.H.A. J14/1/90.

respect the Coalition was to be more successful. North was still an important political figure by virtue of his parliamentary following, but he was personally eclipsed for the time being. The partnership with Eden even seemed to be in danger of imminent dissolution. Carlisle's friendship with leading Whigs, especially Fox, had engendered some bitterness in this quarter. Eden bore it in silence though, thinking, perhaps, that he had no right to expect loyalty and self-sacrifice, especially if reports of his scheme with Loughborough were accurate.¹ But Carlisle's adherence to Shelburne stretched his tolerance and sympathy too far. 'Ld. Carlisle has sold a good name which he can never recover for a Place which He will be unable to Keep,' Eden wrote; 'in the upshot He will have barter'd Importance & Respect in exchange for Magnificence and Dishonour.'² But Eden was perhaps a little jealous owing to his temporary loss of influence. To be fair to Carlisle, he was simply asserting his political independence, and, whether consciously or not, proving those people wrong who tended to think of Carlisle and Eden, having concurred on all questions of policy in Ireland, as politically inseparable. They supposed that when Carlisle was accepted into the Whig Government Eden would soon follow. But they erred; Eden made an error of judgement too and lost ground, while Carlisle's old attachment to Fox and the needs of his own career combined to efface any guilt he once felt for his erstwhile colleague.

¹ See above, p. 132.

² Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34419 (Auckland Papers), f.2; Eden to - ,
1 Aug. [1782].

V

INTO OPPOSITION WITH THE WHIGS, 1782-1792

Shelburne was so desperate for parliamentary support that Carlisle was suffered to remain as Lord Steward after the schism of early July 1782, perhaps partly in the hope that he would help draw Lord Gower into the ministerial ranks. But relations between the Prime Minister and his Lord Steward were not of the most cordial. During a conference with Eden, Shelburne 'hinted that if Ld. Carl. s^d be dissatisfied & wish to resign the White Stick, it was a good Thing & other Lords w^d be glad to have it.'¹ But he was not confident enough to dismiss Carlisle outright. For his part, Carlisle later reflected that 'The situation of Lord Steward was render'd soon disagreeable by its connection in the business of [the] office with the first Minister Ld. Shelburne, whose manners no patience could endure...'² Carlisle formed no exception to the general rule, that few men could tolerate Shelburne's unpleasant company with any ease.

Various issues soon arose to aggravate the personal hostility already existing between the two men. In the early stages of the brief administration, perhaps the reform of the Royal Household was one of the most acrimonious.³ It was obvious that Carlisle's new department, the Board of Green Cloth, was due to be pruned as part of the implementation of the economical reform

1 Addit. MSS. 34418, f. 523; Eden to - , 31 July [1782].

2 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/2, pp. 2-3.

3 For an account of this, see J. Norris, Shelburne and Reform (London, 1963), pp. 179 seq.

programme. The man appointed by Shelburne to investigate the Household departments and to prepare reforms was Thomas Gilbert,¹ Lord Gower's former land agent, and one of Carlisle's partners in his lead mining interests. It was Gilbert who was responsible for provoking much of the resentment that gradually percolated through the ranks of the Lord Steward's department until it even infected Carlisle himself. In the beginning Gilbert's investigation proceeded smoothly enough and Shelburne and his colleagues were careful to conciliate Carlisle whenever they could, even though he was absent in Yorkshire over the summer when the investigation took place.² But gradually Gilbert began to rankle the Household officials. He delayed his investigation into the Board of Green Cloth despite clear requests to begin there first;³ he treated the Talbot family, several members of which were dependent on the Board in various ways, with scant respect;⁴ and he ignored administrative precepts derived from precedent and long experience which led him to commit several elementary mistakes,⁵ and earned him the scorn of the Master, Sir Francis Drake, and of the Clerk Comptroller, John Secker. Secker wrote to Carlisle on 17 October: 'I really my Lord have no patience with this Gilbert, I think he is as Insolent as he is ignorant.'⁶

1 Thomas Gilbert (1720-98); M.P. (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 1763-8, (Lichfield) 1768-95; well-known as a poor law reformer. His brother John (1724-1795) was agent and engineer to Gower's brother-in-law, the Duke of Bridgewater.

2 John Secker to Carlisle, 21 Aug./1782; C.H.A. J14/1/691.

3 Same to same, 22 Aug., 31 Aug., 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/697, 700.

4 Same to same, 17 Oct. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/704.

5 Secker to Carlisle, 26 Oct. 1782, and Drake to Carlisle, 31 Oct. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/706-7.

6 Secker to Carlisle, 17 Oct. 1782; C.H.A. J14/1/704.

of the traditional system of Irish Government, but his attempts were sabotaged from within. Carlisle naturally tried to reconstruct the structure and processes which Buckingham had sought to dismantle. It was not a terribly difficult task, for reasons which have already been suggested, but the result was dangerously fragile. This Carlisle began to realise in February 1782, and his subsequent dispatches stated with increasing clarity and emphasis that only real concessions would pacify the Irish.

Was, however, Carlisle's powerful advocacy of concessions, especially of the acceptance of Yelverton's measure, merely a response to the irresistible pressure of the times, an attempt to defuse a potentially explosive crisis, or did it amount to a recognition of Ireland's inalienable rights? His own comments in this context are revealing :

I know that I am liable to be represented as having caught the Infection of Local Prejudices, whenever I seem to lean towards Measures which may be pleasing to the People; I know also that Individuals will talk stoutly in their Letters to England of British Supremacy, though they are afraid here to whimper the Word within their own Closets - But I must not be biassed by such slight Considerations - The Character and Weight of His Majesty's Government are safe, and the Public Peace is likely to be secured if the present Opening can be successfully used for the Removal of all Jealousies & apprehensions - It is beyond a Doubt that the Practicability of governing Ireland by English Laws is become utterly visionary; It is with me equally beyond a Doubt that Ireland may be well and happily governed by its own Laws.¹

In fact the enforcement of British statutes in Ireland had become impracticable even before Carlisle arrived. By 1782 though, he had come to recognise, under

¹ S.P. 63/480, f. 339; Carlisle to Hillsborough, 19 Mar. 1782.

In fact, Gilbert's plan went even further than this. He proposed the abolition of the pay clerkships of each individual Household department and the concentration of all the paying and accounting functions of the Household in a new office, whose incumbent would be known as superindendent of the Household and paymaster of the Civil List.¹ Naturally the great officers, in particular the Lord Chamberlain² and Carlisle, were indignant at this assumption of superintending authority by an outsider.³ Carlisle later described Gilbert as 'a perfect Clown' and condemned his pettifogging ways;⁴ while to Secker and Drake he sent a humorous description of Gilbert which much amused them.⁵

Striking a more serious note, Carlisle composed a stinging letter to Shelburne complaining of Gilbert's plan. He denied that he had ever 'betray'd a wish of retaining the former patronage of the employment in question, or that I have cast the smallest impediment in the way of a system which of necessity has affected all employments of the same description with that I enjoy.' But he did see himself as the 'Guardian of the office' and would

not suffer without remonstrance and complaint any diminution of the fair privileges of the situation, or any transfer of offices properly appertaining to my department to be executed in another, by which a mixture & confusion of duties... will be created, & all hope of regularity and good order utterly destroyed.⁶

1 Norris, Shelburne and Reform, p. 181.

2 George Montagu, 4th Duke of Manchester (1737-1788); M.P. (Huntingdonshire) 1761-2; Lord of the Bedchamber, 1762-70; Lord Chamberlain, 1782-3; Ambassador to Paris (for which post Carlisle's name was put forward; see below, p. 148 n.1.) April-Dec. 1783.

3 Gilbert to Shelburne, 30 Dec. 1782; Bowood MSS.

4 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/2, pp. 2-3.

5 Secker to Carlisle, 3 Oct. [1782]; C.H.A. J14/1/702.

6 Carlisle to [? Shelburne], 29 Oct. 1782; C.H.A. (There is no reference number because the letter has been mislaid in the recent cataloguing at Castle Howard).

But this letter, drafted in the fury of smouldering resentment, wisely was never sent. Instead Carlisle wrote postponing entering into the subject of the paymaster's place until he met Shelburne in person at the opening of Parliament. But he did conclude this letter with a few admonitory remarks :

Trusting to your Lordship's equity and justice I shall remain satisfied that no attempt to deprive my office of that patronage (which not only the act of parliament affixed to it, but also the good policy of keeping each department separate in its respective powers & duties renders a necessary appendage to the office) will find favour with your Lordship; or that any alteration derogatory to the situation of the Lord Steward by any future appeal to parliament will have your sanction or countenance.¹

Carlisle's remonstrance fell on deaf ears. Shelburne not only approved the creation of the new office, but accepted Gilbert's request that he be its first incumbent. But Carlisle and most of the other great officers must have been pleased when the appointment was later cancelled by the Coalition Ministry in 1783.²

The persecution of Carlisle's Irish friends by the Whig administration of the Duke of Portland in Ireland also contributed to a deterioration in relations between Carlisle and Shelburne. Generally the change of administrations in Ireland did not correspond to similar changes in England; and mass persecutions along party lines had never taken place. In 1782, however, the Whigs assumed power simultaneously in England and in Ireland, and in both countries old servants of the Crown were proscribed. In Ireland Portland actually tried

¹ Carlisle to Shelburne, 8 Nov. 1782; University of Michigan, W.L. Clements Library, Shelburne-Lacaita Papers.

² Norris, Shelburne and Reform, p. 185. Norris, op.cit., p. 182, is incorrect in saying that Carlisle resigned over this issue; see below, p. 147.

to create a Whig party rather than a personal faction.¹ Naturally there were casualties, the most important of whom were John Scott, the Irish Attorney General, with whom Carlisle had lived 'in the habits of more than political friendship,'² and John Lees, whose sinecures had been reduced by Carlisle and Eden, presumably as part of their reforming programme, but who had been compensated by his appointment as Under Secretary in the Military Department, an appointment which he had been given to understand was permanent.³

Carlisle was obviously embarrassed by the fate of his friends, being a member of the English counterpart to the Irish Ministry which had dismissed them. While the Rockingham administration was in power he was unable to do anything to help them, but Shelburne's accession to the premiership presented him with an opportunity to obtain reparation for his Irish friends in return for a pledge of his support. Loughborough 'pressed Him strongly to avail himself of the Crisis at least so far as to cover his friends in Ireland,' but 'did not find him very prompt.'⁴ In fact Carlisle, as he said, wanted very little inducement on this point :

I must immediately press upon him /Shelburne/ the necessity of turning the stream of Irish persecution from those who were the Supporters of my Administration, for I know it will be expected from me to raise my voice upon this subject with a new Ministry; though

1 J.C. Beckett, 'Anglo-Irish constitutional relations in the later eighteenth century,' Irish Historical Studies, xiv (1964), 31-2.

2 Carlisle to Gower, 30 June 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/85.

3 Addit.MSS. 34418, f. 459; Eden to Carlisle, 14 May [1782]. According to Portland, Lees was dismissed for having instigated Post Office officials to open one of Portland's dispatches, on the strength of which he deliberately spread false rumours that Portland had transmitted an address from the House of Lords to the King accompanied by some disparaging remarks of his own reflecting on this address : Portland to Shelburne, 6 May 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159.

4 Addit. MSS. 34418, ff. 477-8; Loughborough to Eden, [?] 4 July 1782.

my difficulties with the last were well understood by my friends on the other side of the water.¹

Carlisle did indeed approach Shelburne and many others, but failed to make an impression. Somewhat unfairly his zeal and sincerity came under question in Ireland, but, he wrote,

After having repeatedly conversed with L^d Shelburne upon Lees' situation, urged Fox to write to the D^e of Portland,² consulted with Hamilton³ what were the best measures to adopt, represented Lees' situation to the King in the strongest colours, it is very difficult for me to guess what other channel I could have pursued by which that compensation or reparation could possibly have been obtained.⁴

Here the matter rested.

Carlisle met with equally little success for his own patronage recommendations made as outgoing Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Before leaving he had followed custom by sending over to England 'a list of recommendations for small pensions, requitals for services & & & which in the whole amounted to a small

1 Carlisle to Gower, 'Friday even.'; C.H.A. J14/1/90.

2 For this letter, see Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 47561 (Fox Papers), ff. 44-5; Fox to Portland, 9 Aug. 1782.

3 Probably William Gerard Hamilton (1729-96), better known as 'Single-Speech' Hamilton; sat in both Irish and English Parliaments for over forty years, and was well known as a sinecurist; Chief Secretary in Ireland, 1761-4; Chancellor of Irish Exchequer, 1763-84.

4 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS 29475 (Auckland Papers), f.21; Carlisle to Eden, 10 Sept. 1782.

& contemptible sum.'¹ He persuaded Rockingham to show the list to the King and, before Rockingham died, understood 'a favorable [sic] termination was fairly and immediately intended.'² Carlisle then applied, with less success, to Shelburne 'from whose difficult mode of conversing I think I may collect a resolute intention of refusing...'³ There did indeed appear to be a general moratorium on the patronage of Lord Lieutenants although Carlisle was not apparently made aware of it. Shelburne wrote to Portland on 5 September telling him that his recommendations would be 'reserved for further consideration in consequence of a general rule laid down and strictly adhered to in so much that none of Ld Carlisle's have been yet agreed to.'⁴ How understandable then was Carlisle's angry reaction when he learnt that not only had Eden approached Shelburne on this very issue, which he considered as an unwarranted intrusion into his own exclusive preserve, but that Shelburne had seemed to assent to the recommendations as made by Eden.⁵ As Eden rightly said, this would 'be felt very unpleasantly at Castle Howard.'⁶

1 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, ff. 755-6; Carlisle to Gower, 15 Sept. 1782. For the list, see enclosure in Carlisle to Shelburne, 13 July 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159. The main recommendations were an additional salary of £300 p.a. for Edward Cooke, Eden's immediate subordinate, and a pension of £100 p.a. for W. Ferguson, Eden's confidential clerk.

2 Carlisle to Shelburne, 18 July 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159.

3 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, ff. 755-6; Carlisle to Gower, 15 Sept. 1782.

4 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 24138 (Lansdowne Papers, Abstracts), f. 91; Shelburne to Portland, 5 Sept. 1782.

5 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, ff. 755-6; Carlisle to Gower, 15 Sept. 1782. For Eden's part, see Eden to Shelburne, 2 Aug., 21 Oct., 24 Oct., 1782; Bowood MSS. vol. 159. Eden assured Cooke and Ferguson of success, but it seems that their suits failed.

6 Addit. MSS. 34419, f. 38; Eden to Loughborough, 25 Sept. 1782.

It was indeed. Carlisle had already been 'expressing strong resentment against the premier of the day for his neglect,'¹ still a sore point with him. But after clashing with Shelburne over Household reform, he became very unhappy about the tenour of his Ministry, largely, according to Eden, for personal reasons :

Lord Carlisle's dislike to the present state of public affairs would not be quite so lively, if he had not experienced much more personal disregard from the present Minister than he ought in honour to bear.²

By the end of 1782, therefore, Carlisle was probably contemplating resignation, but waiting for the right opportunity to arise. It did so in early 1783 amidst the controversy generated by the provisions for the loyalists in the peace preliminaries negotiated by Shelburne's Government with America. Carlisle condemned the lack of adequate provision for the loyalists in particular and inveighed against all the preliminary articles in general as derogatory to British dignity.³ On 4 February he wrote a letter of resignation to Shelburne. Walpole, bewildered by his changes of side during the past year, has implicitly accused Carlisle of tergiversation and, in this instance, of using the loyalist issue as a pretext to desert Shelburne's sinking ministry. According to Walpole, another reason for Carlisle's resignation was pique at not being appointed Ambassador to France.⁴ He had certainly been mentioned to Shelburne in this

1 Eden to Loughborough, 3 Sept. [1782]; Bishop of Bath and Wells, Journals and Corres. of Lord Auckland, i.33.

2 Eden to Loughborough, n.d.; *ibid.*, i.39.

3 Parl. Hist. xxiii. 375-87; 17 Feb. 1783.

4 Steuart, Last Journals of Horace Walpole, ii. 440, 479.

context,¹ but there is no evidence to test the validity of Walpole's supposition either way. As for the loyalist question, Carlisle certainly used it as a pretext to the extent that, possibly under persuasion from Fox and Eden,² he was already seriously considering resignation, but it would be unjust to question his sincerity on the issue. In 1778 he had gained rare firsthand experience of their plight and thenceforward had been conspicuous amongst those who pressed the British Government to give them more recognition and support. His letter of resignation ran as follows :

It has been my lot to have been a near observer of the merits of these miserable persons thus openly exempted & abandoned, and an eye-witness to the generous and spirited exertions which they made in that cause which, at the risk of their lives and fortunes they so zealously espoused.

Your Lordship will therefore not be surprised that I should entertain a quicker sense than another man of the injuries now offered to these meritorious individuals, and that I should esteem it to the last degree contemptible to suppress that abhorrence of their treatment.³

This he did publicly in the Lords on 17 February, when he moved an amendment condemning the preliminary articles.⁴

1 On 5 December 1782 Carmarthen had put Carlisle's name forward for this post, but Shelburne 'did not seem to approve that nomination' : Browning, Political Memoranda of Francis, Fifth Duke of Leeds, p. 77.

2 Reports among Eden's friends in Ireland spoke of a coldness between Eden and Carlisle at this time : Addit. MSS. 34419, f. 116; Eden to - , 20 Feb. 1783.

3 Carlisle to Shelburne, 4 Feb. 1783; Bowood MSS.

4 Parl. Hist. xxiii. 375-87; 17 Feb. 1783. Lord John Cavendish, a leading Whig, moved a similar amendment in the Commons on the same day. As it was drawn up by Lord North, Carlisle's probably was too. As for the loyalists, it is a sad truth that those who predicted hardship for them were ultimately proved correct : Lord E. Fitzmaurice, Life of William, Earl of Shelburne, (London, 1912), ii. 235, 237 n.1.

Carlisle was not the first to desert Shelburne, but his withdrawal was extremely opportune. Within a short time the old Ministry had fallen leaving George III in the invidious position of eventually having to accept what to him was a coalition of insolence and ingratitude in the shape of Fox and North. Once again Carlisle was extremely well placed. He seemed to have a claim on every prospective ministry except one formed by Pitt,¹ Shelburne's Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Gower was sounded in both 1782 and 1783, and had he accepted his son-in-law could have had great expectations. Fox was apparently anxious to provide for Carlisle again, and with North he seemed to have an even more watertight arrangement, the terms of which were quoted by Carlisle in a letter to Lord Gower :

That L^d C^d be considered as having fair pretensions to become a candidate for any efficient place of business equal to his rank which might become vacant, & that he should be considered for any place of that description preferably to any present friend, & in short s^d only be postponed to some pressing arrangement previously to be communicated.²

Carlisle would therefore appear to have entered the Coalition under the auspices of North,³ but also with the positive backing of Fox and the Whigs. Indeed, the Rockinghams supported Carlisle against the claims of another, more experienced Northite, Lord Stormont. Carlisle was originally allocated one of the secretaryships of state,⁴ alongside Fox, and Stormont put down as Lord President.

1 Hon. William Pitt (1759-1806); 2nd son of the 1st Earl of Chatham; M.P. (Appleby) 1781-4, (Cambridge University) 1784-1806; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1782-3; Prime Minister, 1783-1801, 1804-d.

2 Granville Papers, 30/29/1/15, f. 763; Carlisle to Gower, 20 Mar. [1783].

3 Fox to Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/1/688.

4 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 47568 (Fox Papers), f. 114; list of the proposed administration, [?] Apr. 1783 : [R. Atkinson] to John Robinson, n.d.; H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 10th Report, Appendix, Part VI, Abergavenny MSS. (London, 1887), p. 59.

When Stormont refused this unless it carried Cabinet rank, the Rockinghams refused to hear of his replacing Carlisle, perhaps the obvious choice.¹ In the end, Carlisle became Lord Privy Seal with one of the three seats in the Cabinet held by North and his friends.

At the age of thirty-four then, he at last attained Cabinet rank. No doubt he had benefited from the extraordinary circumstances of the times, when party spirit was inflamed, but, paradoxically, when party loyalties were thrown into the melting-pot. In the formation of ministries men perhaps looked more now to those personal friends whom they knew and trusted. The Coalition of 1783 was the first Ministry to which Carlisle seems to have given his wholehearted support. As Privy Seal his duties were not onerous, but the King's hostility made life rather difficult : Carlisle said he was vexed with 'not having the Closet,'² as he put it. But Portland, as First Lord of the Treasury, was sympathetic on questions of patronage.³ His parliamentary utterances became a little more frequent and a great deal more authoritative, reaching a peak with a long and weighty defence of Fox's East India Bill on 17 December 1783,⁴ when he acted as Coalition spokesman in the Lords.⁵ His confidence and his personal standing seem to have been greatly enhanced by his success in Ireland. His last act on behalf of the now defunct Coalition was another long speech delivered in extremely difficult circumstances at the great

1 J. Cannon, The Fox-North Coalition (Cambridge, 1969), p. 73.

2 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/2, p.3.

3 Carlisle to Portland, 15 Aug. 1783, and Portland to Carlisle, 2 Oct. 1783; C.H.A. J14/1/831, 645.

4 Parl. Hist. xxiii. 756-7, 969-70, xxiv. 133, 161-175; 14 Apr., 3 June, 9 Dec., 17 Dec., 1783.

5 Cannon, The Fox-North Coalition, p. 139.

county meeting in the Castle Yard at York on 25 March 1784. Other members and supporters of the Coalition were also present and with them he defended the late Ministry and attacked the undue exercise of royal authority which had been used to defeat it.¹ In the meantime, his wife, who had remained in London, accompanied the Duchess of Devonshire² and other Whig ladies in the celebrated canvass for Fox in Westminster.³

In associating himself with the Whig cause Carlisle effectively proscribed himself politically for some years to come. But the time served in fruitless opposition provided an invaluable education not only in the everyday tactics of parliamentary debate, but, in a wider sphere, in enabling him to see through Opposition and Government cant and to form his political beliefs accordingly. Later in life his views were to change again, but by the 1790s it is clear that he had come to believe firmly that politicians should be men who provided reliable and cautious government, not those who sought to carve out lucrative professional careers for themselves. In this system party had no place, although temporary alliances were justifiable in order to redress the political balance disturbed by any grasping or ambitious man, or by the unconstitutional use of the royal prerogative.

In the 1780s these views were not formulated. But they were the result of Carlisle's experiences in the Coalition and in the first years of Pitt's Administration. Administrations tend to fragment on quitting office, but the Coalition, especially its Foxite wing, remained remarkably stable in the barren years of the later 1780s. It has been said that to have voted on Fox's India

1 Wyvill, Political Tracts and Papers, ii. 346-8. Carlisle subscribed £500 to the fund to support the Whig candidates in the county election for Yorkshire in 1784 : E.A. Smith, Whig principles and party politics (Manchester University Press, 1975), p. 84 n.49.

2 Devonshire, Georgiana Cavendish, 5th Duchess (1757-1806); daughter of John, 1st Earl Spencer; she was celebrated as a beauty, a leader of fashion, a 'politician' and a hostess for many years.

3 H. Stokes, The Devonshire House Circle (London, 1917), p. 199.

bill in 1783 determined one's political attitudes for the rest of the decade.¹ In other words, the idea of party solidarity was developed and employed to a remarkable extent. Curiously, considering the hostility he had shown until now to political formations, Carlisle seems to have been a willing participant in this process, though as a pupil to Fox's teaching. Evidence for the political life of Lord Carlisle in the 1780s is very slender and one is forced to rely heavily on reports of debates printed in the Parliamentary History and in the St. James's Chronicle. But a picture, albeit inadequate, of his activities can be built up and some points drawn from it. In the House of Lords he formed part of an important flight in the Opposition squadron. This flight was actually an ex-Northite triumvirate composed of Loughborough, Carlisle and Stormont, probably ranked in that order of importance as far as the developing Whig party was concerned. After the Regency crisis the composition of this small group was altered by the replacement of Lord Loughborough with Lord Porchester,² another former supporter of North and later, as the Earl of Caernarvon, a colleague of Carlisle in the Grenvillite opposition of the early 1800s.

Carlisle spoke regularly and authoritatively on all major issues in the 1780s, with special emphasis on Indian affairs. It has been noticed already that he acted as Coalition spokesman in the Lords on India in 1783 and he continued in this rôle in the succeeding years. Those of 1784 to 1786 were his most active as a parliamentary speaker during this stage of his life.

1 Mitchell, Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, p. 92.

2 Porchester, Henry Herbert, 1st Baron (1741-1811); 5th son of Thomas, 8th Earl of Pembroke; M.P. (Wilton) 1768-80; Master of the Horse, 1806-7; cr. Baron Porchester, 1780, and Earl of Caernarvon, 1793.

After the trial of Warren Hastings¹ began in February 1788 Carlisle appears to have relinquished his leadership on Indian affairs to Lord Loughborough, who, as a lawyer, would naturally have been more conversant with the legal and constitutional questions involved, and more able to handle them in the parliamentary forum. It comes as no surprise to find that Carlisle's interest in the case declined along with almost everybody else's, until by the conclusion of the case he scarcely attended on it at all.²

Carlisle's rise in importance as a speaker in the House of Lords was not a response to the challenge of opposition to Pitt's administration, but the result of his Irish experience and of new confidence gained as a member of the Coalition Cabinet of 1783. So in August 1784 he was able and willing, as far as one can tell, to run a passage of arms with Thurlow, Pitt's Lord Chancellor, and a particularly formidable opponent in debate too.³ But all Carlisle's parliamentary experience so far had fitted him to present, explain, support and defend measures, but had not instructed him how to attack them. For the uninitiated it was obviously difficult to adapt to opposition tactics, and, again as far as one can tell from rather dry reports of debates, his first steps were faltering and clumsy.⁴ Over the next two

1 Warren Hastings (1732-1818); in East India Co. service from 1750; Governor-General of Bengal from 1773; unpopular with the new Council; impeachment on the ground of his corruption and cruelty in the administration of Indian affairs voted, 1787; trial lasted 1788-95, when he was acquitted.

2 The following figures record Carlisle's attendance on the Hastings case :
1788, 28; 1789, 9; 1790, 4; 1791, 1; 1792, 1; 1793, 0; 1794, 1 :
35 20 15 3 22 27

Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 29223 (Hastings Papers), ff. 94, 101, 110, 121, 131, 147, 156; Lists of peers who attended the Hastings trial, 1788-94.

3 Parl. Hist. xxiv. 1306-8; 2 Aug. 1784.

4 Ibid., xxiv. 1241; 23 July 1784.

or three years he tried to master the trick of turning every issue to opposition advantage; and though he never succeeded with the same facility as more accomplished speakers, his touch did become surer, so that by 1788 he was able to introduce an element of sarcasm into his speeches with great effect. When the Duke of Richmond,¹ as Master of the Ordnance, proposed to place the newly-raised corps of military artificers under martial law in order to make a saving of £2,000 p.a., Carlisle replied that as this involved the surrender of the rights of 600 men, their Lordship's would see that the noble Lord valued the rights of every individual at exactly £3.10s. each.²

Carlisle's speeches show that he had been well tutored in Whig doctrines and they were expounded in an orthodox and consistent manner. The best example may be extracted from a speech delivered by him on 14 June 1786 during a debate on the East India Judicature bill :

he thought that he saw a settled system in the present ministry, to destroy the rights of the public one by one, a system which had manifested itself in respect to trial by jury in particular; and he was confident, that whatsoever the people might be deprived of, would be thrown with unconstitutional profusion, into the scale of the Crown.³

In justification of this point of view, Carlisle cited the Bill under discussion, the Wine Excise Bill and the Bill for subjecting brevet officers to martial law, inter alia. On those mentioned, he spoke himself⁴ and the sum of his utterances

1 Richmond, Charles Lennox, 3rd Duke (1735-1806); politician and distinguished military officer; had been a leading Whig, but now supported Pitt; Secretary of State for the Southern Department, 1766; Master-General of the Ordnance, Mar. 1782-Apr. 1783, Dec. 1783-1795.

2 Annual Register, xxx. 123: [? 12] Mar. 1788.

3 Parl. Hist. xxvi. 134; 14 June 1786.

4 Annual Register, xxviii. 1107; 20 Mar. 1786 : Parl. Hist. xxvi. 169-71; 26 June 1786.

amounted to an attempt to expose what he saw as the growth of the power of the executive at the expense of both the legislature and rights of the people as private individuals. On specific issues he generally followed Fox's line : he took a prominent part in opposition to Pitt's commercial proposition relating to Ireland, for which, incidentally, he received a great deal of credit in Ireland,¹ in particular representing the cases of various trading interests opposed to the new measures;² he condemned the commercial treaty with France, which Eden negotiated, ridiculing the idea 'that those ancient Rivals and Nations were henceforth to be seen both smelling one nosegay',³ and advocated instead the preservation of our trade with Portugal, an 'unrivalled market';⁴ finally in 1788 he declared himself a 'hearty friend' to Sir William Dolben's⁵ bill to improve the conditions of negroes being transported to the West Indies and 'were it practicable, he was prepared to vote for the abolition of the Slave Trade altogether.'⁶

It was well-known, he said, that this Great Business would be taken up by Parliament early in the next Session, and that many Persons were now employed in collecting Evidence that would enable Parliament to decide properly on such a Subject.⁷

1 Leinster to Carlisle, 13 June 1785; C.H.A. J14/1/838.

2 Parl. Hist. xxv. 834; 8 July 1785. St. James's Chronicle, 2-4 June, 7-9 June, 1785; c.f., ibid., 30 June-2 July, 12-14 July, 16-19 July, 1785.

3 Ibid., 19-21 Apr. 1787.

4 Parl. Hist. xxvi. 524; 23 Feb. 1787.

5 Sir William Dolben, 3rd Bt. (1727-1814); M.P.(Oxford University) Feb.-Mar. 1768, 1780-1806, (Northamptonshire) 1768-74; a supporter of Pitt and managed to push his Bill through the Commons.

6 Parl. Hist. xxvii. 644; 25 June 1788.

7 St. James's Chronicle, 3-5 July 1788.

Quite obviously Carlisle personally believed in the abolition of the slave trade, but his exposition of some of the more hackneyed tenets of Whiggery do not read quite so sincerely. This was no doubt partly due to the difficulties encountered in mastering the opposition vein in his speaking, but this awkwardness may also have been partly due to a lack of real conviction in the matter of his speeches. His own instinctive reaction was to criticise or support measures as he evaluated them individually, and not to attack them indiscriminately using the doctrinaire approach with which he and doubtless other, less committed party men were provided by Fox's establishment of the intellectual foundations of Whiggery. That being so, it speaks eloquently of Fox's efforts to hold the Whig party together, for Carlisle's conversion to Whiggery, in its most traditional sense, owed more to Fox than to any other man.

It has already been noticed that from the first moment that the Whigs came to power in the spring of 1782, Fox sought to revive a friendship with Carlisle which had been weakened by the political acrimony generated by debates on the American question and by the endless stream of personal invective poured on Lord North. Whether or not the personal warmth of their former intimacy was ever revived is impossible to say, but that the relationship between the two became, in a political sense, much closer than before, and remained so during the 1780s, there can be no doubt. Fox and the Whigs were responsible for pushing Carlisle's claims in the formation of the Coalition in 1783, and in early 1789, during the Regency crisis, when the Whigs were forming a putative cabinet against the assumption of the Regency, Fox personally pressed, with some ardour, Carlisle's prospects, possibly even against his wishes.¹ In the intervening years Carlisle's political behaviour shows clearly

¹ J.W. Derry, The Regency Crisis and the Whigs, 1788-1789 (Cambridge, 1963), p. 178.

the hand of Fox. Having re-established friendship with him, Fox proceeded to inculcate into him the principles of Whiggery. In other words, having established a personal bridge he used it to convey his intellectual and political message. Fox may have tried this with others. With Carlisle it was made slightly easier through their collaboration on Indian affairs, in particular, for example, on the issue of the debts of the Nawab of Arcot, brought to light by public interest in the case of Warren Hastings.¹ Certain sums of money were owed by the Nawab to employees of the East India Company. Pitt's India Act of 1784 provided for the investigation of these debts, but the newly-established Board of Control superseded this provision with a measure of its own. It established the debts, assigned a fund for their discharge out of the revenues of the Carnatic, a region of India, and settled a priority of payment among the several classes of creditors. Both Fox and Carlisle made motions in their respective Houses seeking to re-establish the principle of the Act, that the debts be investigated prior to settlement.² In his main speech on the issue on 1 March 1785, Carlisle investigated the financial affairs of the East India Company 'which he went through with great accuracy, following the sentiments of Mr. Fox, as delivered on Monday in the House of Commons, and making similar conclusions from similar premises.'³ Though this proves nothing, it does argue collaboration between Fox and Carlisle, which could plausibly have taken place on many other occasions at this time. The point is that Carlisle was heavily influenced by Fox in the 1780s, probably against

1 On the subject of the Arcot debts, see C.H. Philips, The East India Company 1784-1834 (Manchester, 1961), pp. 36-41.

2 Carlisle made his motion for the relevant papers on this subject on 18 February. Fox followed with an identical one on 28 February, which suggests he may have taken up the matter on Carlisle's initiative. On the night of 28 Feb.-1 Mar. Debrett published the papers in question. Carlisle used them in his speech of 1 March : Parl. Hist. xxv. 260-1; 18 Feb. 1785; Philips, East India Company 1784-1834, p. 40 n.1.

3 Parl. Hist. xxv. 262-3; 1 Mar. 1785.

his own natural instincts. The degree of Fox's dominance was a tribute to his personal charm, to his ability to act as an intellectual mentor, and to his efforts to unite a Whig party.

While Fox was re-asserting a high degree of influence over Carlisle, Carlisle's old associates were dropping away, and in some cases tried to draw Carlisle with them. Not all the victims of the débâcle of 1783-4 adhered to Fox's interpretation of the events of 1782-4 in the years that followed. Some men were drawn into opposition in spite of their real inclinations because the configuration of politics, as it then existed, permitted no other course of action. After Christmas 1783 one either sided with Fox or Pitt and as the debates of the following weeks dragged on into March, one's position became rooted ever more deeply, and the possibility of switching allegiance became ever more remote. Eden was one who suffered from this polarisation of politics, but by the end of 1785 he felt able to bear the recriminations of his erstwhile friends and responded to overtures from Pitt. Despite his instrumental part in the formation of the Coalition, and his leading rôle in instigating opposition to Pitt's Irish Propositions, he accepted on 5 December 1785 Pitt's offer of an extraordinary envoyship to Paris for the purpose of negotiating a commercial treaty with France.¹ Shortly afterwards he published a pamphlet in which were collected a series of letters addressed to eminent friends and associates explaining the reasons behind his change of side. The first letter, to Carlisle, throws interesting light on their seven-year relationship, which had begun to break up on their return from Ireland, and to which the present political re-alignment dealt the coup de grâce. The only reason, wrote Eden, why he should have refused Pitt's offer was his concern

¹ Eden to Carlisle, 5 Dec. 1785; C.H.A. J14/1/424.

for Carlisle's opinion. He went on

... it was to you, and you alone that all my solicitude was directed - your partiality had twice advanced me to most respectable stations - we had in a manner publicly embarked in one common bottom - you had presented me to your friends, and our junction was established on principles declared and unequivocal; that notwithstanding this, I have at once acceded to a separate arrangement, is a circumstance no other-ways to be explained, than by declaring, as with truth I do, that neither interest nor vanity have had the smallest share in detaching me from your Lordship - No, upon my honour, I declare my real motive was to save the State.¹

Domestic reasons were important too : Eden found it difficult to support his growing family on £1800 a year.

Eden's defection naturally led to speculation that the three ex-Northite peers would follow his lead, especially Carlisle.² But they remained in opposition. A year later the same rumour was current, but, as Thomas Orde³ who reported it cautioned : 'it is to be remembered that this is the usual season of pretended changes, and new arrangements in administration.'⁴ No changes

1 Eden to Carlisle, 6 Dec. 1785; Letters from The Right Honourable W - E - on the late Political Arrangement (London, 1786), p.3. The remaining letters were addressed to Lord North, C.J. Fox, J. Lee, W. Woodfall, the Duke of Portland, Lord Loughborough, R.B. Sheridan, J. Wedgewood, W. Adam.

2 St. James's Chronicle, 8-10 Dec. 1785.

3 Thomas Orde (1746-1807); M.P. (Anglesey) 1780-4, (Harwich) 1784-96; Secretary to the Treasury, July 1782-April 1783; Chief Secretary in Ireland, 1784-7; cr. Baron Bolton, 1797.

4 Thomas Orde to the Duke of Rutland, 18 Dec. 1786; H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 14th Report, Appendix, Part 1, Rutland MSS. (London, 1894), iii. 363.

occurred. In this year, 1786, Lord Gower, who had hitherto been Lord President under Pitt, was now raised to the Marquisate of Stafford and made Lord Privy Seal. It was natural that he should wish to see Carlisle join him in support of Pitt and in July 1788 when Lord Howe resigned from the Admiralty, the press reported that Stafford had offered to resign to facilitate any ministerial re-arrangements to include Carlisle, and he had even approached his son-in-law with this proposition.¹ This was a plausible story, but it came to nothing. Although he was to write in 1794 that the Admiralty was indeed a tempting plum to him,² he was by now proof against offers of office. The termination of his trust in 1786 released him from the onerous financial restrictions which it had effectively imposed for ten years, so that he had now no urgent financial reasons for taking office. Moreover his executive ambitions were by now dead, and all offers of political office were henceforward resolutely refused whenever made.

Fox's influence would probably have conquered over any ambitions that Carlisle might have had, had it been put to the test. But it should be remarked in fairness to Carlisle that although he may have been deeply under Fox's influence at this time, he was by no means a devoted Foxite nor a committed member of the Whig party. He was unwilling to subscribe fully either to the party structure or to the complete ethos of the Whig party as envisaged by Fox. The Regency crisis revealed these limitations on Carlisle's support. The illness of the King presented him with a difficult dilemma : whether to support the King's Ministers in a time of crisis, or to exploit the situation for party advantage. The signs are that he chose the latter

¹ St. James's Chronicle, 15-17 July 1788.

² Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 42058 (Grenville Papers), f. 184; Carlisle to Thomas Grenville, 18 Dec. 1794.

course, but mitigated his personal conduct out of respect for the King. Indeed his refusal to accept an office in the projected Whig Ministry may have owed something to his scruples regarding the royal person. Judging by an account of the early stages of the Regency crisis which he drew up later, he was appalled by the intemperate and intolerant attitudes adopted not only by the Whigs, but also by the Pittites.¹ In a letter to Lord Loughborough he also shows himself to have been gravely disturbed by the open-handed freedom with which delicate questions bearing on important matters of state were aired at Brooks's, within the hearing of the waiters.² His own pronouncements during the crisis backed the claims of the Prince of Wales,³ but after his speech in favour of the Regency, on 26 December 1788, of the speeches of how many Whigs could it have been said by a member of a family close to the royal family : 'The conclusion of Lord Carlisle's speech was decent, respectful, and expressive of feeling for the King'?⁴ The crisis of 1788-9 first exposed to Carlisle what he considered to be the needless and unthinking virulence of party war.

Carlisle's account of the latter part of 1788, mentioned above, is useful in revealing his own feelings on the crisis, but adds little to what is already known about the conduct of the various groups and individuals contending for power over the winter of 1788-9. It does suggest, however, that Carlisle was at least partly responsible for putting an end to that dishonourable bargain by which Loughborough was to be deserted by his Whig friends in favour of Lord Thurlow. 'The moment I detected what was going on,' Carlisle wrote later,

1 'Observations upon the occurrences of the latter end of the year 1788-', by Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/75/2.

2 Carlisle to Loughborough, n.d.; Lord Campbell, The Lives of the Lord Chancellors and Keepers of the Great Seal of England, from the earliest times till the reign of King George IV (London, 1847), v. 204n.

3 Parl. Hist. xxvii. 874, 1061; 26 Dec. 1788, 22 Jan. 1789.

4 Lord Harcourt to Lady Harcourt, 26 Dec. 1788; E.W. Harcourt, ed., The Harcourt Papers (Oxford, 1876-1905), iv. 91. Lord Harcourt's brother, General Harcourt, was, with Mrs. Harcourt, very much at home at Court at this time.

I sounded the alarm, & represented both the ingratitude & impolicy of the measure to the D of Portland & Mr. Fox, & had the satisfaction of finding both their opinions agree with mine; & what was more to the purpose very soon after was informed all negotiation with the Chan^r was at an end & so no more was said about it, tho I confess it made a deep impression upon me.¹

At the time Carlisle was so affected as to write to Loughborough expressing his concern at the intended arrangement.² Given this, and the impression the incident made upon him, it is reasonable to conclude that it, in particular, contributed to his disillusionment with party values, and perhaps weakened his ties with Fox. Of course, political parties have always been reduced to unpalatable methods to win their objectives, and in justification have invoked the greater good. But this argument never seems to have held sway over Carlisle. It was all very well to enlist allies, as he showed in his attitude to the formation of the Talent's Ministry in 1806,³ but not by sacrificing friends.

If the origins of Carlisle's withdrawal from the ranks of the Opposition in 1792 may be traced to his reactions to the Regency crisis, it must not therefore be antedated. There is nothing to suggest in the following three years any dissatisfaction with the conduct of the Whigs, even of Fox and his friends in their encomium of the revolution in France. In the late summer of 1789, the Prince of Wales spent a weekend at Castle Howard as part of a Yorkshire tour to restore Whig morale and rally loyalty round his person.⁴ An enormous

1 'Observations upon the occurrences of the latter end of the year 1788-', by Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/75/2. See Mitchell, Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, pp. 129-30, and Derry, The Regency Crisis and the Whigs, p. 44.

2 Loughborough to Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/1/719.

3 See below, p. 199.

4 Smith, Whig principles and party politics, pp. 107-8. See also The Tour to York: A Circumstantial Account of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' visit to that City (York, 1789).

feast and ball followed at Wentworth Woodhouse, Fitzwilliam's Yorkshire home, at which Carlisle was represented by his wife. In July 1790, he and Lord William Gordon,¹ a most curious combination, were reported to have been preparing to go to Paris to celebrate the first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, but were advised that it might be too dangerous.² Bearing in mind that Carlisle was one of the most nervous and prominent of the 'alarmist' Whigs this story of Walpole's seems almost incredible, but it constitutes the only hint to be found of Carlisle's early reaction to the French revolution. In the early 1790s he spoke on the important issues relating to foreign policy and attacked the Government on every occasion. Otherwise the sources on Carlisle fall strangely silent in these crucial years between the outbreak of the French Revolution and the disintegration of the Whig party between 1792 and 1794. It is possible that Carlisle, ashamed of his early welcome of such a diabolical event, later destroyed his relevant papers.

By 1792, though he still voiced his hostility to Government in public, he had begun to feel certain discomfiting reservations in private. These reservations seemed to be justified by events of that year : the formation of the Association of the Friends of the People on 11 April 1792; Charles Grey's³ motion for parliamentary reform on 30 April; and Fox's vote in favour of the measure, even though he was at pains to publish the facts that he did not think the present moment suitable for advocating parliamentary reform and that this

1 Lord William Gordon (1744-1823); 2nd son of Cosmo, 3rd Duke of Gordon, and brother of Lord George Gordon, instigator of the 'No Popery' riots of June 1780.

2 Walpole to Mary Berry, 10 July 1790; Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, xi. 85-6.

3 Charles Grey (1764-1845); M.P. (Northumberland) 1786-1807, (Appleby) May-July 1807, (Tavistock) July-Nov. 1807; leading Whig, attached to Fox; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Sep. 1806-Mar. 1807; Prime Minister, 1830-4; succ. his father as 2nd Earl Grey, 1807.

connection with the Association, though it was led by his young, aristocratic, Whig disciples, amounted to no more than an independent vote given in the Commons on the reform question.¹

For Carlisle, Fox embodied the Whig party. He measured his conduct, therefore, by Fox's. In spite of the scarcity of materials for this stage of Carlisle's life, it is possible to be sure of one thing, that his hostility to the idea of parliamentary reform predisposed him against toleration of Fox's aberration even on this one issue.² At the same time, the revolution in France and the growth of discontent and radicalism at home planted in Carlisle's mind the seed of coalition. Pitt's first overture to the Whigs was made through Eden, now Lord Auckland, on 1 May. Though Pitt and many Whigs suspected the motives of each other at the time, and subsequently proved to have treated the idea of coalition or ministerial reconstruction disingenuously, Carlisle accepted Pitt's opening as genuine from the beginning. He called on Portland

to say how much He wished an arrangement would be formed upon an extended Basis, to protest against the possibility of such a wish being suggested by any view of personal consideration & to pledge his disinterested support of any Administration formed upon that principle.³

Until late July Carlisle remained faithful to Fox, and even though he thought it everybody's public duty to strengthen the Government against domestic and foreign enemies, he would never have given his support to Pitt without the admission of Fox to the Cabinet. But for Carlisle there was one major stumbling-

¹ Mitchell, Charles James Fox and the Disintegration of the Whig Party, pp. 177, 179, 184.

² Addit. MSS. 47561, f. 126; Portland to Fox, 1 Aug. 1792.

³ Addit. MSS. 47561, f. 126; Portland to Fox, 1 Aug. 1792.

block : he was not prepared to tolerate a ministry in which the Whigs, including Associators, preponderated. If Fox was, then Carlisle could no longer remain loyal to him. Unfortunately, as Pitt made no definite proposal to the Whigs in the early summer of 1792, party and personal loyalties were not put to the test, and the relationship between Fox and the Associators remained undefined.¹ Motivated by his hostility to Grey and other agitators for parliamentary reform, Carlisle therefore wrote to Fox and put the question to him bluntly, whether or not the Association and the Whig party were still united.² To his credit Fox did not equivocate, but answered fairly that he considered that they were.³ This satisfied Carlisle, and from the moment he received Fox's reply, in his eyes all idea of coalition between Pitt and the Whigs evaporated. He was now prepared to follow Loughborough into support of the Pitt ministry without demanding as the price of support any ministerial re-arrangement.⁴ The Whig party 'As an opposing Party, driving at the old object, the overthrow of the present administration in order to replace it with our own forces,' existed no longer in Carlisle's estimation,⁵ while all grounds for residual loyalty based on personal consideration for Fox were utterly destroyed. 'The man who goes up in a balloon might as well reproach

1 Carlisle to Loughborough, 'Autumn of 1792' [misdated]; it must have been written before Carlisle wrote to Fox on 23 July; Lord Campbell, Lives of the Lord Chancellors, vi. 359-60.

2 Addit. MSS. 47568, f. 277; Carlisle to Fox, 23 July 1792. This letter is printed in Russell, Mems. and Corres. of C.J. Fox, iii. 22.

3 Fox to Carlisle, [25 July 1792]; C.H.A. J14/1/720.

4 Browning, Political Memoranda of Francis, Fifth Duke of Leeds, p. 182.

5 Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 15 Oct. 1792; Northampton C.R.O., Milton MSS. 44/6.

the earth for leaving and deserting him as Fox can any individual of the old Opposition for any conduct they may think fit to adopt.'¹ Carlisle laid the blame for the disintegration of the Whig party firmly at Fox's feet.²

The occasion fixed by the conservative Whigs, looking to Portland rather than Fox for leadership, for the transference of their parliamentary support to Pitt was a debate on the Alien Bill on 26 December 1792.³ Carlisle used it to advise the House of Lords that although he was not accustomed to agree with the present Government, he would support their measures in this instance.⁴ The real purport of such a declaration was unmistakable. Indeed, so explicit was it that Portland, who had intended to rise after Carlisle, was dissuaded from doing so, and thus from pledging his support to Pitt, because he felt unable to express the consistency of supporting Pitt while not renouncing allegiance to Fox. The precise terms of Carlisle's declaration made this impossible, he said.⁵ Had he been more equivocal, the major split in the Whig party might have occurred in late 1792 rather than in 1794, when the Portland Whigs deserted Fox.

In January 1793 Loughborough attained the ultimate object of his ambitions by accepting the seals as Lord Chancellor, while in June the 'utmost extent'

1 Carlisle to Loughborough, 13 Jan. [1792]; Lord Campbell, Lives of the Lord Chancellors, vi. 364.

2 'Refutation of the accusation of deserting the party of Opposition,' by Lord Carlisle, [? 1793]; C.H.A. J14/74/7.

3 Diary of Lord Malmesbury, 27 Dec. 1792; Earl of Malmesbury, ed., Diaries and Correspondence of James Harris, First Earl of Malmesbury (London, 1844), ii. 490.

4 Parl. Hist. xxx. 164; 26 Dec. 1792. Cf., The Times, 27 Dec. 1792.

5 Portland to Loughborough, 27 Dec. 1792; Lord Campbell, Lives of the Lord Chancellors, vi. 363.

of Carlisle's wishes were met by a Garter.¹ Sections of the press reported incorrectly that Carlisle was also to succeed Dundas² at the Home Office,³ where Portland settled in 1794, but as we have seen, office had lost its attractions for him. In 1799 he told Pitt that for some time he had been convinced that 'every exertion I could make to serve the King's Government would be render'd most efficacious by perservering in a private condition of Life.'⁴ Office, then, was certainly^a not the bait by which Carlisle was caught. Nor was Loughborough^{of} more than incidental importance to Carlisle's conversion. It is true that they had acted closely in the Opposition since the dismissal of the Fox-North Coalition; that Loughborough handled the details of the negotiations between Pitt and the 'alarmist' Whigs in 1792; and that Loughborough was responsible for obtaining Carlisle's Garter. But personal relations between the two men were not so close as they had been in the early 1780s, when Carlisle had returned Loughborough's nephew for the family borough,⁵ and after 1793 they drew apart even further. By 1801 they had lived on distant terms for some time,⁶ and Carlisle was rather

1 P.R.O., Pitt Papers, Series 30/8, vol. 121, f.17; Carlisle to Pitt, 5 June 1793/.

2 Henry Dundas (1742-1811); M.P. (Midlothian) 1774-82, 1783-90, (Newtown, Isle of Wight), 1782, (Edinburgh) 1790-1802; all-powerful election manager for the Govt. in Scotland and friend of Pitt; Home Secretary, 1791-4; Secretary for War, 1794-1801; President of Board of Control, 1793-1801; cr. Viscount Melville, 1802.

3 The Diary, 8 June 1793; quoted in F. O'Gorman, The Whig Party and the French Revolution (London, 1967), p. 141 n.2.

4 Pitt Papers, 30/8/121, f. 27; Carlisle to Pitt, 13 Feb. 1799.

5 See below, p. 231.

6 Carlisle to Loughborough, Mar. 1801; Lord Campbell, Lives of the Lord Chancellors, vi. 315-16 : Loughborough to Carlisle, 15 Mar. 1801; C.H.A. J14/1/764.

embittered by Loughborough's failure to provide preferment for the Rev. Thomas Coombe,¹ one of his former domestic chaplains in Ireland and a personal friend.² In 1792 Loughborough was merely a channel of communication for Carlisle, not a means of persuasion.

It is difficult to resist the conclusion that his adherence to Pitt was a completely natural action; that he was, in a sense, returning like the prodigal son to his real home, and that his activities in the later 1780s and early 1790s amounted to no more than a mere excursion into Whiggery. Certainly it is grossly anachronistic to refer to him at this time, as some historians tend to, as a Northite, or even an ex-Northite.³ He later remarked to William Huskisson,⁴ who became M.P. for Morpeth in 1796, that he had derived great satisfaction in acting, most agreeably to his inclinations, in support of Pitt's administration.⁵ Furthermore his personal relations with Pitt were good, by and large. He felt able to approach him with advice and information, and Pitt seems to have reciprocated with some degree of

1 Rev. Thomas Coombe (1747-1822); Anglican clergyman and American loyalist; born and educated in Philadelphia; ordained in England, former Chaplain to Lord Rockingham; came to England permanently with the help of Carlisle and the Peace Commissioners in 1778. See A. Johnson and D. Malone, ed., Dictionary of American Biography (New York, 1930), iv. 395-6, and Hutchinson, Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson, ii. 223.

2 Loughborough to Carlisle, 18 Apr. 1795, 4 Jan. 1800, and Carlisle to Loughborough, 2 Jan. 1800; C.H.A. J14/1/727, 757-8.

3 O'Gorman, The Whig Party and the French Revolution, pp. 44, 87.

4 For more information on William Huskisson (1770-1830), see below, p. 235 n.1.

5 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38737 (Huskisson Papers), f. 73; Carlisle to Huskisson, 26 Dec. 1804.

confidence, which must have flattered Carlisle.¹ It was only Pitt's failure to establish a broad-bottom administration in 1804 and his junction with Lord Sidmouth² and his friends in January 1805 that poisoned personal relations between Pitt and Carlisle. But the latter's admiration for Pitt never dimmed. 'In truth he was a phenomenon,' Carlisle wrote when Pitt died in 1806, 'gifted with rare abilities beyond almost any character that ever the world witnessed.'³ The world of Pittite politics was altogether a more sober place than the 'Grand Whiggery', and Carlisle was, as far as his politics were concerned, more comfortable there. His moderately liberal sympathies could find adequate expression within the Pittite scheme of things, while his anxieties for social stability and his outrage at the revolution in France were fully catered to by Pitt's domestic and foreign policies. And in 1792 Carlisle wanted 'an Administration not a mere Party';⁴ there was more chance of finding it under a leader such as Pitt rather than Fox.

Fox, by his immoderate and indiscreet politics, had forfeited all claims to leadership and had, indeed, even cast doubt on the acceptability of a party as a political institution. Henceforward Carlisle's great object was the establishment of a broad-bottom administration, the usual eighteenth century antidote to a glut of party politics. The difficulty in understanding Carlisle's

1 E.g., P.R.O., Pitt Papers, Series 30/8, vol. 102, ff. 62-3; Pitt to Carlisle, copy, 4 June 1797, on the forthcoming peace negotiations with France.

2 Sidmouth, Henry Addington, 1st Viscount (1757-1844); M.P. (Devizes) 1784-1805; Speaker, 1789-1801; Prime Minister 1801-4; Secretary of State for the Home Department, 1812-22; nick-named 'the Doctor'; cr Viscount Sidmouth, 1805.

3 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, pp. 78-9.

4 Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 15 Oct. 1792; Northampton C.R.O., Milton MSS. 44/6.

advocacy of it lies in discovering whether his was a naturally hostile reaction to the growth of party, whether he considered it the ideal form of executive government in a parliamentary constitution, or whether he regarded it merely as the best and most solid form of government for so long as the twin menaces of foreign invasion and domestic discontent remained potent. As the country faced these dangers for the rest of his active political life, the answer is not immediately apparent. But an examination of his politics over the following fifteen years or so will throw some light on it.

VI

INDEPENDENCE AND PARTY POLITICS, 1792-1807

In the 1790s Carlisle lost much of the political influence which he had built up with Fox's help in the 1780s. There were two principal reasons for this decline. In the first place, private affairs kept him away from London for longer periods than before. Released from his trust in 1786, he now had more money to hand and from the mid 1790s began to spend large sums on picture-buying, house-improving, hunting, and the like.¹ His eldest son, Lord Morpeth,² came of age in September 1794, and much of Carlisle's time was subsequently filled with arranging new settlements of land and money, disposing of unwanted estates and improving those which remained. More time was also taken up by the rest of his children, in arranging their education, their careers, or their marriages, though he had liberal views on the last. In October 1796 Morpeth moved the address in the Commons, and the following summer Carlisle successfully obtained permission for him to accompany Lord Malmesbury³ on the peace negotiations with France as some initiation into public

1 For an account of these extra-political activities, see below, ch. 8.

2 George Howard, Viscount Morpeth (1773-1848); M.P. (Morpeth) 1795-6, (Cumberland) 1806-20; Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests, 1827; Lord Privy Seal, 1827-8, 1834; Cabinet Minister without portfolio, 1830-4; succeeded his father as 6th Earl of Carlisle, 1825.

3 Malmesbury, James Harris, 1st Baron (1746-1820); distinguished diplomat who negotiated the Triple Alliance, for which he was cr. a baron, 1788; led negotiations with the French, 1796-7; cr. Earl of Malmesbury, 1800.

business.¹

Like Fitzwilliam's, Carlisle's own interests centred more and more on county affairs. These became more demanding with volunteer duties from 1798, and with official duties from 1799, when Pitt made him Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding. He held this office, demanding at times, from 1799 to 1807;² during these same years he was also active in the revival of political activity after Pitt's resignation in 1801. It is not surprising, then, that his health, already weakened, broke down. He attributed the initial damage to sixteen months in Ireland,³ but gout took its toll too.⁴ By 1798 he was also suffering from a painful disorder in his cheek. In July he underwent an operation which produced some improvement,⁵ but the long-term, debilitating effects of the pain it continued to give him affected his nerves, and, so it was said, caused neuralgia, from which he suffered for the rest of his life.

For various reasons, then, in the 1790s Carlisle was unable to be as active in politics as before. On some occasions, as in 1795, it gave rise to suspicions that he was dissatisfied with Government measures, and he was forced to allay the suspicions,⁶ but more often than not it simply meant that he had less

1 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 58992 (Dropmore Papers), f.5; Carlisle to Lord Grenville, 14 June 1797.

2 For Carlisle and his lieutenancy, see below, ch. 8.

3 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/2, p.2.

4 From Sept. 1809, Carlisle was able to obtain some relief from a new medicine : E. Jones, An Account of the Remarkable Effects of the Eau Médicinale D'Husson in the Gout (London, 1810), pp. 24-5.

5 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38735 (Huskisson Papers), ff. 104, 158, 162; Lady Sutherland to Huskisson, 31 July, 11 Oct., 18 Oct., 1798.

6 Pitt Papers, 30/8/121, f. 21; Carlisle to Pitt, 27 Dec. 1795.

influence to reinforce the independent attitudes he took in the 1790s.

Though Carlisle generally supported Pitt's foreign and domestic policies, his intention had never been to give unqualified support to the Government, but to adopt an independent position, criticising or approving measures according to their individual merits, and calling for the creation of a broad-based administration composed of men from all parties. But this independence was one of the main reasons why Carlisle lost so much political standing in the 1790s. Many men professed independence, but few, aside from country gentlemen, practised it. Country gentlemen, as a group, were of course an exception, but, except on very rare occasions when they acted collectively, they made little impact on politics. Their sort of independence was certainly not then, and is not now, regarded as having been an aristocratic phenomenon, but Carlisle did try to be a real independent in the 1790s. He made it clear on several occasions that he was not interested in office, so that the principles on which he acted could be said to be disinterested. At the same time, partly from vanity and partly from duty, he wanted to be influential in politics. He wanted to have the luxury of criticising the Government when he thought it deserved it, but he also wished to remain on good terms with Pitt and other leaders. But this attempt, though it may have been honourable, turned out to be so impracticable as to be, in the circumstances, almost naive. On three occasions he was humiliated.

In 1794 when Fitzwilliam, the new Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, began to proscribe old friends of Administration and to support Grattan's Bill for the relief of Irish Roman Catholics, Carlisle tried to set himself up as an arbiter

between Fitzwilliam and the Government, which was not pleased with the Lord Lieutenant's handling of Irish affairs. Though the King, Pitt and Loughborough all said that they approved of what Carlisle had done, Fitzwilliam told him, though not in so many words, to mind his own business,¹ which he had no option but to do.² In 1797 Carlisle burnt his fingers again. He tried to force an enquiry into the failure of the Admiralty to intercept a French invasion fleet, which had only been prevented from landing troops in Bantry Bay in Ireland by bad weather and bad seamanship. The Foxite Opposition was also interested in exploiting the incident, for political reasons of course, which presented Carlisle with a dilemma. If he did nothing it would be construed that he was acting in conjunction with what he described to Huskisson as 'our common enemy, the opposition.'³ Therefore he must make his own motion to show that he was acting quite independently,⁴ and yet the Government, facing a naval mutiny and a stop at the Bank of England, would not take criticism kindly. Carlisle's first decision was to accept the advice of Huskisson and Dundas and do nothing,⁵ but, as feared, it was then reported that he was moving over to the Opposition.⁶ In order to dissociate himself publicly from the Foxites, he had to do something himself, but he dared go no further than calling for information on the Bantry Bay incident, and passing strictures on

1 Fitzwilliam to Carlisle, 19 Apr. 1795; C.H.A. J14/1/748.

2 Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 20 Apr. 1795; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, F31/92.

3 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38734 (Huskisson Papers), f. 248; Carlisle to Huskisson, 17 Feb. 1797.

4 Ibid., f. 256; Carlisle to Huskisson, 21 Feb. 1797.

5 Ibid., f. 258-60; Huskisson to Carlisle, copy, 22 Feb. 1797.

6 Addit. MSS. 38735, f. 189; Carlisle to Huskisson, ? 8 Mar. 1797 : The Times, 13, 21 Mar., 1797; quoted in A. Aspinall, ed., The Later Correspondence of George III (Cambridge, 1962-70), ii. xxiii. n.2.

the pusillanimity of the Admiralty.¹ Significantly, in a debate on 27 March on a motion for the dismissal of Pitt and Lord Spencer,² the First Lord of the Admiralty, Carlisle addressed himself exclusively to the conduct of the Admiralty, whereas the Opposition blamed Pitt alone.³ Furthermore, though he may have called privately for the replacement of Spencer with Lord Howe after another naval mutiny in May, through Huskisson he had to abase himself before Pitt, and assure him of his continued support of the Government.⁴

In 1800 Carlisle clashed with the Government again, and on this occasion it nearly had more serious consequences than the disagreement in 1797. In 1800, Lord Auckland introduced into Parliament his Adultery Bill, framed by the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Lord Kenyon.⁵ Carlisle thought the Bill ill-framed and questioned Kenyon's fitness, as a lawyer, for the task of legislation of this sort.⁶ Kenyon, who had as Chief Justice set himself up as a judicial censor of public morals,⁷ took offence and delivered several

1 Parl. Hist. xxxiii. 112-13; 16 Mar. 1797.

2 Spencer, George Spencer, 2nd Earl (1758-1834); M.P. (Northampton) 1780-2, (Surrey) 1782-3; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1794-1801; Sec. of State for the Home Dept., 1806-7; incidentally, a successful First Lord.

3 Parl. Hist. xxxiii. 191; 27 Mar. 1797 : J. Holland Rose, William Pitt and the Great War (London, 1914), p. 320.

4 Addit. MSS. 38734, ff. 267, 269; Carlisle to Huskisson, 4 May 1797, and n.d.

5 Kenyon, Lloyd Kenyon, 1st Baron (1732-1802); M.P. (Hindon) 1780-4, (Tregony) 1780-4; Master of the Rolls, 1784-88; Chief Justice of the King's Bench, 1788-d.; cr. Baron Kenyon, 1788.

6 Parl. Hist. xxxiv. 279-80; 23 May, 1800.

7 Sir L. Stephen and Sir S. Lee, eds., Dictionary of National Biography (London, 1908-9), xi. 32.

bitter strictures on Carlisle's speech in a charge to a jury sitting on an adultery case then before him.¹ Carlisle read the report of Kenyon's speech in The Times and immediately intimated to Ministers his intention to bring one of the printers of The Times to the bar of the House of Lords to answer for the breach of privilege.² As Pitt pointed out, Carlisle's real grievance was obviously against Kenyon, for he thought his charge to the jury contained reflections, as it most certainly did, on himself for his language in Parliament, and on others who voted against the Adultery Bill. The Government became involved because it intended to support this controversial Bill, and because three of the King's sons had supported Carlisle in his quarrel with Kenyon.³ Accordingly pressure was brought to bear on him, and, at Lord Grenville's⁴ behest, he agreed to withdraw his motion. He 'very properly expressed his wish that no proceeding should be adopted which might leave a painful impression on the mind of Lord Kenyon.'⁵ Once again, in this 'shuffling sort of compromise,'⁶ he was forced to yield to superior strength.

But on this occasion, as it was more personal than in 1797, the shame was almost too much to bear. Genuinely offended at 'having been so cast off'

1 The Times, 2 June 1800.

2 Addit. MSS. 58992, f. 11; Carlisle to Lord Grenville, [?] 5 June 1800.

3 Pitt to George III, 7 June 1800; Aspinall, Later Corres. of George III, iii. 358.

4 Grenville, William Wyndham Grenville, 1st Baron (1759-1834); M.P. (Buckingham) 1782-4, (Buckinghamshire) 1784-90; Chief Secretary in Ireland, 1782-3; Home Secretary, 1788-91; Pres. of the Board of Control, 1790-3; Foreign Secretary, 1791-1801; leader of the Talents Ministry, 1806-7.

5 Lord Moira to Prince of Wales, 11 June [1800]; A. Aspinall, ed., The Correspondence of George, Prince of Wales, 1770-1812 (London, 1963-71), iv. 143-4.

6 Journal of Lady Holland, 11 June 1800; Earl of Ilchester, ed., The Journal of Elizabeth, Lady Holland (London, 1908), ii. 93.

by Ministers '& abandoned to the frantic treatment of L^d Kenyon without the least consideration for me, tho' I had much for them,¹ he seems for a short time to have contemplated retirement, but he was too much involved in politics to give it up on so slight a pretext : even in the last years of his career, when his health was terribly bad, he clung to the last remaining vestiges of political influence with dogged tenacity. Moreover, retirement in these circumstances would inevitably have been interpreted as an act of hostility. Yet the last thing he now wished to do was to translate his personal chagrin into hostility towards Pitt. So, as resentment cooled, he seized on the deterioration of the international situation as a reasonable pretext for rallying behind the Government once again in early 1801. 'I cannot endure the idea of seeming to desert the ship when foul weather seems to threaten it,' he wrote.² Personal loyalty to Pitt will also have been important in his decision.

Ironically had Carlisle actually retired at this time it would probably have passed unnoticed as an act of hostility towards the Government for in February Pitt himself resigned from the position he had held for seventeen years, though he agreed to continue to dispense government until a new Administration was finally formed in mid-March. The political world was thrown into a frenzy; activity and speculation revived with astonishing vigour, the latter gorging itself on the secrecy and confusion with which Pitt's resignation was cloaked. The reasons for it baffled contemporaries and have bewildered posterity ever since. It is traditionally supposed that he resigned because of his failure to carry the emancipation of the Irish Roman Catholics, a

1 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 34455 (Auckland Papers), f. 343; Carlisle to Auckland, 19 Dec. 1800.

2 Carlisle to Huskisson, draft, Feb. 1801; C.H.A. J14/1/761.

measure to which he considered himself personally pledged. Others have advanced less plausible or more eccentric theories as solutions to the mystery. Like everybody at the time, Carlisle had his own views on it, but it is a measure of its depth that he did not begin to expound them until the middle of 1802.¹ Nor would they be worth rehearsing here did they not serve to endorse a new explanation of Pitt's resignation quite recently given in the publication of a 'Memorandum on Pitt's Retirement,' written by Lord Camden² at some point between August 1803 and May 1804. The significance of Camden's memorandum lies in its correction of the perspective in which historians have traditionally viewed Pitt's resignation. The traditional point of view places undue emphasis on the principles and issues involved in Roman Catholic emancipation and ignores the decline in personal relations between Pitt and George III, which can be traced in the last years of the eighteenth century. According to Camden, therefore, the Catholic issue provided no more than the ostensible cause for Pitt's resignation.³

1 It was at this time that Carlisle began both to keep a political journal, which he updated at irregular intervals until the assumption of the Regency by the Prince of Wales in 1811, and to record systematically his reminiscences and various anecdotes about important figures. These two documents are to be found at Castle Howard (refs. J14/64/1, 3-4, and, for the main series of reminiscences, J14/65/3, respectively). They both testify to his resumption of political activity after the slack period of the 1790s.

2 Camden, John Jeffreys Pratt, 2nd Earl (1759-1840); Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1795-8; Secretary of State for War and Colonies, 1804-5; Lord President, 1805-6, 1807-12; cr. Marquess Camden, 1812.

3 R.E. Willis, 'William Pitt's Resignation in 1801 : Re-examination and Document,' Bull. Inst. Hist. Res., xliv (1971), 241-2.

Like Camden, Carlisle too was convinced that Pitt's inability to carry the emancipation of the Irish Roman Catholics was certainly not the real cause of his resignation.¹ He attributed it instead to an estrangement between George III and Pitt. At first he thought that estrangement to have proceeded from Pitt's awareness of the King's illness in the summer of 1800,² but a few months later he altered his opinion in favour of a simple breakdown in personal relations.

The K was so alienated from him, as to make it impossible to conduct the Govt & intrigues were actually on foot with members of Parlt to weaken him, particularly in the H^e of Lords,

Carlisle wrote of Pitt in early 1803.³ As an instance of the difficulty of conducting the government, Carlisle cited the King's tendency to dispose of great offices, either without taking advice from his Ministers, or directly contrary to it and gave as an example the appointment of Dr. Stuart⁴ to the primacy of Ireland.⁵ Interestingly, Camden mentions this incident too.⁶

1 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 76.

2 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 3-4 : Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 41854 (Grenville Papers), f. 105; Carlisle to Thomas Grenville, 3 Aug. 1802.

3 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 83.

4 Hon. William Stuart (1755-1822), 5th son of John, 3rd Earl of Bute; Bishop of St. Davids, 1794-1800; Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of all Ireland, 1800-22.

5 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 3-4.

6 Willis, 'William Pitt's Resignation in 1801,' pp. 254-5.

There is no great merit in having committed to paper this view of Pitt's resignation a year or so before Camden, and anyway Camden's exposition of his views was far more cogent, coherent and comprehensive than anything Carlisle ever attempted. But it is important in endorsing Camden and shows that either Carlisle's sources were authoritative, and possibly Huskisson's confidence was important here, or that his observations on contemporary politics could be remarkably acute.

Despite his resignation from office in 1801 Pitt remained the central figure in British politics until his death five years later. He was the planet whose motions determined the revolutions and oscillations of a host of subordinate moons. Certainly Carlisle's politics were not self-interested, as had once been the case, but hinged instead on the course Pitt chose to follow. Until 1805 all his efforts were concentrated on helping to replace Pitt in his rightful position as Prime Minister, in maintaining him there, and in assisting in the formation of an all-party administration with Pitt as both leader and lynchpin. His unreserved subscription to Canning's¹ idea of Pitt as the pilot who weathered the storm, his determination to see Pitt restored to the Treasury, forced him to rediscover, albeit reluctantly, the expediency of systematic party opposition in order to attain greater ends. And it will be seen that he later proceeded, cautiously but visibly, beyond the belief that while such formations might be necessary in some cases, they were to be related strictly to a particular object, which once obtained was to signal their dissolution. In short he became reconciled to the largely Foxite notion of organised party, but not to its party ethos.

¹ George Canning (1770-1827); M.P. for seven different constituencies, 1793-1827; Treasurer of the Navy, 1804-6; Foreign Secretary, 1807-9, 1822-7; Chancellor of the Exchequer and Prime Minister, Apr.-Aug. 1827; close friend and confidant of Pitt; also the mentor of Lord Morpeth, but they became estranged after Pitt's resignation in 1801; they were reunited when Morpeth entered Canning's Cabinet in July 1827 as Lord Privy Seal.

He had, however, finally begun to realise that the two were inseparable when ill-health and old age rendered him inadequate to the problem of finding a solution.

At the time of Pitt's resignation Carlisle was acting entirely alone. Nevertheless his efforts to facilitate Pitt's return to power were strenuous to the point of indiscretion. At this stage, ignorant of the real facts behind the events of February, he could personally find no substantial reason for them. So uninformed was he that he predicted the failure of Irish Catholic emancipation as a consequence of Pitt's resignation instead of adducing it as a reason for that resignation.¹ And as he was an ardent friend to the measure, which, unlike Fitzwilliam for example, he thought was an essential consequence to the Union between Britain and Ireland in 1800,² its success obviously depended on Pitt's return to office. The prosecution of the war, and the negotiation of a peace, if need be, too, demanded a strong hand as well. For these reasons, having been contemplating retirement at the turn of the year, Carlisle suddenly plunged into great activity towards the end of February.

He beseeched Pitt personally to remain in office.³ He advised the Prince

¹ Parl. Hist. xxxv. 945; 10 Feb. 1801. Two days later Huskisson wrote to Carlisle giving it as his opinion that Pitt's line of holding out pledges to the Catholics, but of deprecating immediate discussion of the question, should be supported: Huskisson to Carlisle, 12 Feb. 1801; A. Aspinall and E.A. Smith, eds., English Historical Documents 1783-1832 (London, 1959), pp. 163-4. This letter was printed from the Castle Howard Archives, but the original now seems to have been lost.

² The Times, 11 Feb. 1801.

³ Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 2-3.

of Wales, who approached him amongst others for advice when it became obvious that the King was about to suffer another attack similar to that of 1788-9, to abstain from political intrigue and to profit from the mistakes of 1788-9 by accepting the imposition of parliamentary limitations on the Regency.¹ Presumably the prospect of a government under the Prince and Pitt must have been attractive in principle to Carlisle, especially as far as Irish Catholic emancipation was concerned, although such an arrangement would have been fatally flawed by the personal dislike that divided Pitt and the Prince. As to Pitt's successor, Henry Addington, Carlisle was scathing in his objections. Doubtless any successor to Pitt would have been obnoxious at this moment to Carlisle, and his opposition was perhaps also coloured by Addington's social inferiority, which received much notice at the time.² But the principal ground for opposition to Addington was his negligible political stature and lack of ability. His government could only be weak and therefore needed peace to survive; but because it was so weak any peace it made was sure to be unfavourable to Britain.³ So ran the main criticism of the new Government and Carlisle was its first and most vigorous exponent.⁴ Moreover he actively

1 Carlisle to the Prince of Wales, 26 Feb. 1801; C.H.A. J14/1/844. For Carlisle's strictures on the conduct and tactics of the Whigs in 1788-9, see his 'Observations upon the occurrences of the latter end of the year 1788-;' C.H.A. J14/75/2.

2 Carlisle evinced a contempt for physicians throughout his life. On 16 Aug 1776 he wrote to Selwyn: 'I hate the tribe. They are ignorant and important, and I am too well convinced that they bear about more distempers in their clothes than they can cure'; Jesse, George Selwyn and his Contemporaries, iii.144.

3 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, p.9.

4 Parl. Hist. xxxv. 945; 10 Feb. 1801.

attempted to undermine Addington by seeking to divide his ministry.

Huskisson, presumably voicing Pitt's sentiments, had written to Carlisle advising against agitating publicly for Pitt's return to office,¹ but in the week following this letter agitation of this sort reached its peak. Carlisle himself, with others unnamed, tried 'to make a junction of part old and part new Administration,'² with Pitt's position as leader understood, but the King recovered simultaneously and Pitt surrendered his seals of office on 14 March. Despite Pitt's injunctions to his friends and supporters to rally behind Addington, Carlisle remained in opposition to the new Government for the remainder of the session, and indeed was in at its death three years later in 1804.

In 1802 he wrote with some self-conceit that during the first few months of the life of Addington's ministry, he was 'obliged to submit to the odium of sustaining singly the unfair attack upon the Ministers.'³ Although he deliberately ignored the Old Opposition here and referred only to erstwhile adherents of Pitt, he was still exaggerating his isolation vis-à-vis supporters of the late Ministry. Yet the New Opposition at this early stage was by no means numerous. Lord Buckingham,⁴ Pitt's cousin and one of the Grenville brothers, had formed a strange alliance with Fitzwilliam and other Whigs in opposition,⁵ but most others remained hesitant and cautious at first. By

1 Huskisson to Carlisle, 5 Mar. 1801; C.H.A. J14/1/763.

2 Diary of Charles Abbot, 11 Mar. 1801; Lord Colchester, ed., The Diary and Correspondence of Charles Abbot, Lord Colchester (London, 1861), i.255.

3 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 7, 10.

4 Buckingham, George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, 1st Marquess (1753-1813); M.P. (Buckinghamshire) 1774-9; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1782-3, 1787-9; had supported Pitt until his resignation.

5 J. Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29. Party Politics and Factionalism in the Age of Pitt and Liverpool (University of Illinois, 1979), pp. 51-3.

October 1801, however, when the preliminary articles of the peace with France, which Addington's government had negotiated, were signed and brought before Parliament for debate, some elements of Opposition had coalesced. For example, the three Grenville brothers, Lord Buckingham, Lord Grenville and Thomas Grenville¹ had united against the preliminaries. Henceforward Lord Grenville and Thomas Grenville formed the nucleus of the Grenvillite group, which gradually absorbed into its undisciplined ranks Carlisle, his two sons, Lord Morpeth and William Howard,² and relations, Lord Stafford³ and Lord Cawdor.⁴ At its peak the Grenville group, excluding the 'Stowe

1 Thomas Grenville (1755-1846); M.P. (Buckinghamshire) 1779-84, 1813-18, (Aldeburgh) 1790-6, (Buckingham) 1796-1809; Fox's envoy to Paris for the peace negotiations in May-July 1782; Pres. of Board of Control, July-Oct. 1806; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1806-7; bibliophile, and left his library of over 20,000 vols. to the British Museum.

2 Hon. William Howard (1781-1843), 2nd son of Frederick, 5th Earl of Carlisle; M.P. (Morpeth) 1806-26, 1830-2, (Sutherland) 1837-40.

3 Stafford, George Granville Leveson-Gower, 2nd Marquis (1758-1833), 1st son of Granville, 1st Marquis of Stafford and brother to Lady Carlisle; M.P. (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 1779-84, (Staffordshire) 1787-99; Ambassador at Paris, 1790-2; m., 1785, Elizabeth, suojure Countess of Sutherland (1765-1839); succ. his father, 1803, and cr. Duke of Sutherland, 1833.

4 Cawdor, John Campbell, 1st Baron (? 1753-1821); M.P. (Co. Nairn) 1777-80, (Cardigan) 1780-96; supporter of North before and after the Coalition; came over to Pitt with the Portland Whigs, and cr. Baron Cawdor, 1796; captured the French force which landed at Fishguard Bay in Feb. 1797; m., 28 July 1789, Caroline Howard (1771-1848), 1st dau. of Lord Carlisle and accounted a great beauty. For an interesting account of their meeting, see 'Passages from the diary of Lord Robert Seymour,' Murray's Magazine, i(1887), 489.

Grenville's' under Lord Buckingham, consisted of about twenty-six peers and twenty-two M.Ps.¹ Carlisle did not join the Grenvilles until early 1802, but the only reason for the short delay between October 1801 and then was that he did not come up to London until after Christmas. A social connection already existed through Thomas Grenville, a Portland Whig and former Foxite, with whom he had been friends since 1778² and who was a great favourite at Castle Howard.³ Perhaps more importantly the most prominent members of the group were all either former senior Pittites or Portland Whigs such as Lord Grenville, Lord Spencer and William Windham.⁴ Thus to Carlisle the group appeared both as a sort of Pittite rump and as a harbour for alarmist Whigs seeking shelter. The impulse actually to associate with it lay quite simply in the gravity and immediacy of the problem presented by Addington.

According to the historian of the Grenvillites, the principal contribution made to the group by Carlisle concerned his family connections.⁵ This was perfectly true. By some criteria, however, he should have played a much more

1 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, pp. 132-3.

2 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 153; T. Grenville to Carlisle, copy, 24 Jan. 1811. Correspondence between Carlisle and T. Grenville spans the years 1794-1820.

3 Lady Harriet Cavendish to Lady Spencer, Sept. 1804; Sir G. Leveson-Gower, ed., Hary-o. The Letters of Lady Harriet Cavendish, 1796-1809 (London, 1940), p. 100.

4 William Windham (1750-1810); M.P. (Norwich) 1784-1802, (St. Mawes) 1802-6, (New Romney) 1806-7, (Higham Ferrers) 1807-10; Chief Secretary in Ireland, Apr.-Aug. 1783; Secretary at War, 1794-1801, and for War and Colonies, 1806-7; broke with Fox over the French revolution; effective leader of the Grenvillites until 1806.

5 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 61.

significant rôle in the formation and activities of the Grenvillites. He possessed a varied stock of political experience and was a solid and useful speaker. Furthermore he was avowedly uninterested in office and could therefore afford to be more outspoken in his denunciation of Addington and advocacy of a stronger Government.¹ But in this very fact lay one of the difficulties he encountered in his association with the Grenvillites, and one of the reasons why his participation with them was not so influential as it might have been in different circumstances. Though the traditional view of the Grenvillites as comprising a faction of unscrupulous place-hunters has been very properly revised recently,² their interest in office, Thomas Grenville, Lord Grenville and perhaps Lord Spencer apart, was nevertheless more than vestigial. Moreover Pitt did not enjoy an assured and prominent position in their scheme of things.³ On these two points at least Carlisle was at variance with most other Grenvillites.

In 1802 and 1803 the general policy of the Grenvillites was one of moderate opposition to Addington, perhaps because it was thought that in this conduct lay a better chance of enticing Pitt, who was a well-known opponent to the idea of systematic opposition, into the ranks of opposition.⁴ Though Carlisle was more in harmony with the less restrained Grenvillites in the Commons, men like French Laurence,⁵ Windham and Tom Grenville,⁶ such was his

1 Thomas Grenville to Lord Grenville, 15 Nov. 1802; W. Fitzpatrick, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Report, Dropmore MSS. (Hereford, 1910), vii. 127-8.

2 See Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, *passim*.

3 Ibid., pp. 64-6.

4 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, pp. 60-1.

5 Dr. French Laurence (1757-1809); M.P. (Peterborough) 1796-1809, through Fitzwilliam's patronage; eminent civil lawyer, becoming Regius Professor of Civil Law at Oxford, 1796; broke with Fox, but a friend and literary executor of Burke.

6 Sack, The Grenvillites. 1801-29, p. 61.

acquiescence in party policy that in March 1802 the Prince of Wales was moved to ask the Duchess of Devonshire whether Carlisle 'was not a perfect Grenvillite.'¹ Although he continued to criticise the Government and especially the preliminary articles,² he deliberately tempered his attacks 'to repel the insinuation of factious opposition.'³ Thus on 19 January he disclaimed all intention of embarrassing the Government,⁴ and on 15 March he praised Ministers for their vigour in the negotiations with France.⁵ Consideration for Pitt not to the untried Prime Minister was the sole motivation behind this delicacy, though Carlisle pointed out to Huskisson that he felt no personal hostility towards any member of the present Government.⁶

After the Peace of Amiens had been signed and the session closed, Carlisle considered the policy of restraint adopted by what he called the 'middle party'⁷ redundant. 'We have used Pitt handsomely;' Carlisle wrote, 'in return he must be explicit with us : we must be told what he really means.'⁸ In other words he called for the more direct application of party strength to the attainment of a more clearly defined object in order to clarify their position vis-à-vis Pitt. Consistent with this view he came up to town in the autumn of 1802 with

1 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 100; Carlisle to T. Grenville, [16 Mar. 1802].

2 Parl. Hist. xxxvi. 312-13, 659-60; 19 Jan., 5 May, 1802 : The Times, 9 Feb., 16 Mar., 1802.

3 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 100; Carlisle to Grenville, [16 Mar. 1802].

4 The Times, 20 Jan. 1802.

5 Ibid., 16 Mar. 1802.

6 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38736 (Huskisson Papers), ff. 349-50; Carlisle to Huskisson, 3 Dec. 1801.

7 Addit. MSS. 38737, f. 77; Carlisle to Huskisson, 27 Oct. 1804.

8 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 105; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 3 Aug. 1802.

' the notion of his taking the necessary steps for speaking his mind upon the present state of things and upon the absolute necessity of supplying to the Government more vigour and abilities than it now possesses.'¹

Though Thomas Grenville seemed to approve of Carlisle's ideas,² other counsels, more conservative and less pro-Pitt, prevailed. In late 1802 Lord Grenville's chief aim certainly seemed to be to restore Pitt to office, but most Grenvillites opposed forming too close a relationship with him.³ To them Pitt had acquiesced in a shameful peace,⁴ but this in itself never troubled Carlisle. He explained Pitt's strange support of Addington by his fear of the Foxites. Not surprisingly then, the 'Stowe Congress' of November 1802, that is, a meeting of leading Grenvillites at Lord Buckingham's country home, concluded against the aggressive policies that Carlisle was foremost in advocating and the old Foxite opposition was left in possession of the field.⁵

From this moment Carlisle's frustration at the cautious approach adopted by both Pitt and the Grenvillites began to influence his actions. It was aggravated by his realisation in January 1803 that Pitt's initial opinion of Addington had been more genuinely favourable than otherwise, but that he now recognised his incompetence and weakness.⁶ Although he sympathised

1 T. Grenville to Lord Grenville, 15 Nov. 1802; Hist. MSS. Comm., 15th Rep., Dropmore MSS., vii. 127-8.

2 Ibid., and T. Grenville to Lord Grenville, 21 Aug. 1802; *ibid.*, p. 109.

3 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, pp. 64-6. There were in fact very cordial negotiations between Lord Grenville and Pitt, but on 8 November Grenville wrote to Pitt more or less terminating all projected arrangements; *ibid.*, pp. 65-6.

4 Ibid., p. 73.

5 Smith, Whig principles and party politics, p. 270.

6 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 83.

with Pitt's wish to bar the Old Opposition from forcing the Closet, Carlisle could see no alternative for Pitt, but a concordat with the New Opposition.¹ When by the middle of March the political situation had still not markedly changed, but when the international situation was noticeably deteriorating, Carlisle's frustration exploded in a week of frantic outbursts in the House of Lords. His lone voice ranted against Addington's government and he allowed himself to be steadily goaded into actually nominating a successor :

That man was Mr. Pitt; whom he would not hesitate to call the saviour of the country. It was he who had saved us from destruction in times of danger, and he alone could now defend us against the threats of an implacable enemy.²

He would never, he said, shirk his public duty as a member of Parliament.

He was attached to no party : he stood there as an independent man, without place, pension or emolument; and he would never sell his birthright for a mess of potage.³

On further occasions he denounced the Government with almost incoherent invective until finally on Monday 21 March he moved that the Government lay before the House a monthly return of the artificers employed in the dockyards, beginning at 1 May 1802, confessing that 'the ultimate object of his Motion

1 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 17-18.

2 The Times, 16 Mar. 1803.

3 Ibid., 19 Mar. 1803.

would be to ground an enquiry into their conduct at a further period.'¹ Lord Grenville, aware that consultations between Pitt and Addington, of which Pitt had agreed to keep Grenville fully informed, were imminent,² was so worried lest these talks be jeopardised by Carlisle's behaviour that he rose and advised him to withdraw his motion, a request with which Carlisle complied.³ But in the following weeks he continued to threaten the Government with inquiries, to censure Ministers on the current negotiations with France, which were to end in war in May, and to plead for a Cabinet composed of 'the truly great talents of the Country.'⁴ This extraordinary outburst demonstrates clearly the gulf that separated Carlisle from most of the Grenvillites on the question of a new government. Carlisle was using the resources of the Grenvillites to restore Pitt to office; while they naturally entertained more self-interested notions of their political utility.

Pitt could so easily have engineered his own return to office had he been prepared to participate in full opposition to the Government. As his scruples forbade this throughout 1803 and into 1804, the Grenvillites turned to the old Foxite opposition for help in ousting Addington. The idea of a Grenville-Fox coalition, though as extraordinary as the Fox-North coalition of 1783, had been mooted since early 1803 at least. The two groups were brought closer together by the Prince of Wales, who consulted representatives from both over the summer of 1803, after his claim for military service, placed when the war broke out again, had been rejected by the King.⁵ But Fox was the

1 Ibid., 22 Mar. 1803.

2 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 67.

3 The Times, 22 Mar. 1803.

4 The Times, 8 Apr., 21 May, 3 June, 1803; c.f. Addit. MSS. 58992, f. 14; Carlisle to Lord Grenville, 7 Apr. 1803.

5 Aspinall, The Corres. of George, Prince of Wales, iv. 349.

chief protagonist of the coalition.¹ Though there seems to be some difference of opinion over whether or not the arrangement was an alternative to a Grenville-Pitt coalition,² a Grenville-Fox coalition was formed at the end of January 1804. Its only object was the replacement of Addington with a non-exclusive ministry of talents. On the understanding that such a ministry would include Pitt, Carlisle was fully in favour of the coalition although, as he told Morpeth, he had 'grown rationally indifferent to party & politics.'³ Carlisle still shared Pitt's scruples about party politics, but was prepared to relax them if that meant using 'party' to create a non-party administration.

The subsequent course of events, how Pitt eventually joined the Grenvillites and Foxites in their onslaught on Addington, how Addington was brought down and replaced by Pitt, how George III refused to admit Fox to the Cabinet, and how the Grenvillites therefore refused to enter the Ministry, is well known. Interestingly, the attack on Addington which began on 12 March was probably partly concerted, or perhaps inaugurated, the day before at what The Times called a 'Coalition Dinner' at Carlisle's house, 12 Grosvenor Place. Present were the Duke of Devonshire,⁴ Lord Stafford, Lord Spencer, Lord Caernarvon, Lord Robert Spencer,⁵ Morpeth, Fox, Fitzpatrick,⁶ Tom Grenville,

1 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p.73.

2 P. Ziegler, Addington (London, 1965), p. 108, suggests that it was an alternative, while Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, pp. 73-5, implies that it was not.

3 Carlisle to Morpeth, 27 Jan. 1804; C.H.A.

4 Devonshire, William Cavendish, 5th Duke (1748-1811); succ. 1764; attached to Fox in politics; lived in a ménage à trois with his Duchess and Lady Elizabeth Foster, dau. of 4th Earl of Bristol, whom he married in 1809.

5 Lord Robert Spencer (1747-1831), 3rd son of Charles, 3rd Duke of Marlborough; M.P. for four constituencies 1768-99, 1802-7, 1817-20; attached to Fox from 1781.

6 Richard Fitzpatrick (1747-1813), M.P. at this time for Tavistock, 1774-1807; army officer, wit and intimate friend of Fox.

Mr. [?] William Howard and Elliot. The Duke of Bedford,¹ Fitzwilliam and Lord Grenville were also invited but were unable to attend for some unknown reason.² Carlisle took his part in the ensuing campaign against Addington,³ but was bitterly disappointed, as many were, by the failure to establish what he had been vigorously campaigning for since the latter part of 1792.

In an unusual mark of consideration Pitt invited Carlisle to his house in Baker Street to talk over the political situation, possibly hoping to detach him from the Grenvilles.⁴ If so he was sadly mistaken. They met on 16 May. Carlisle expatiated on the glorious prospects of a broad-bottom headed by Pitt. He laid the blame for the failure to establish it firmly at Pitt's feet. He should have combatted the King's scruples, he said, and forced him to admit Fox into the Cabinet. Pitt retorted that he had already deviated far enough from his own principles by taking part in the destruction of Addington's Ministry : 'no one had ever more violently forced the closet than he had done by appearing in array in Parlt with the declared design of obliging the K to abandon Mr. Addington,' Pitt said.⁵ Carlisle, who had once declared that his 'warmest desire' was 'to prevent the closet of the King being flung open to persons not acceptable to him,'⁶ was now sickened by Pitt's 'plea of delicacy towards the Crown,' because, he said, 'the violence of the Rape' was committed not by forcing Fox on the King, but 'by the act of tearing Addington from the King's side.'⁷ Thus it may be seen

1 Bedford, John Russell, 6th Duke (1766-1839); M.P. (Tavistock) 1788-90, 1790-1802; Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, 1806-7; staunch Whig attached to Fox; succ. his brother, 1802.

2 The Times, 12 Mar. 1804.

3 Parliamentary Debates /afterwards Hansard's parliamentary debates/ 1803- (London, 1812-), ii. 145, 338-9; 19 Apr., 30 Apr., 1804.

4 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, p. 51.

5 Ibid.

6 Addit. MSS. 38734, f. 267; Carlisle to Huskisson, 4 May [1797].

7 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, pp. 49-51 : Addit. MSS. 38737, f. 75; Carlisle to Huskisson, 27 Oct. 1804.

that Carlisle, generally a moderate and anti-party man, was driven to condone, even to approve, what at the time was regarded as the grossest outrage of party violence purely in the interests of non-party government.

It is perhaps unworthy of iteration, but his belligerent attitude towards the Closet was not the result of particular sympathy for Fox's interests. Rather, Fox and his friends formed an essential element of any broad-bottom, and the Grenvillites were honourably allied to the Foxites to the extent that, in Carlisle's view, they could never contemplate taking office without them.¹ In these two factors lay the importance of Fox in Carlisle's thinking. But some of Carlisle's relations, notably the still Pittite Lord Stafford, and Edward Vernon, Bishop of Carlisle,² suspected that Devonshire House, a citadel of Whiggery, was actually gaining ascendancy at Castle Howard, certainly over Morpeth and possibly over Carlisle too.³ Canning shared this view, at least as far as Morpeth was concerned,⁴ and it is interesting to find that some political prints in the summer of 1804 depicted Carlisle as a Foxite.⁵ There were, indeed, slight grounds for suspecting that Castle Howard had been invaded by Whiggery. In 1801 Morpeth had married Georgiana,⁶ the Devonshire's eldest daughter and this naturally led to frequent visits of members of the Cavendish family to Castle Howard. The Carlisle's even took

1 Ibid., f. 76; same to same, 27 Oct. 1804.

2 Edward Vernon (1757-1847), youngest son of George, 1st Lord Vernon; Bishop of Carlisle, 1791-1807; Archbishop of York, 1807-d.; inherited name and estates of Harcourt family in 1831; m., 1784, Lady Anne Leveson-Gower (1760-1832), Lady Carlisle's sister.

3 Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, 11 Nov. [1804]; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D Lons. L/CL22/61

4 P. Dixon, Canning: Politician and Statesman (London, 1976), p. 67.

5 M. D. George, Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires, (London, 1935-54), viii. nos. 10240, 10264.

6 Georgiana Cavendish (1783-1858), 1st dau. of William, 5th Duke of Devonshire; became Viscountess Morpeth, 1801, and 6th Countess of Carlisle, 1825.

a share in the Devonshire's box at the Drury Lane Theatre for the 1802-3 season,¹ but, significantly, the subscription was not kept up. The two families were too widely separated from one another by moral and social attitudes² ever to merge socially and politically, and since his youthful friendship with Fox, Carlisle had changed too much for him to feel completely at home in the Whiggish milieux of Devonshire House or Holland House.

Personally he was still much attached to Fox,³ but was now much more aware of his weaknesses and less susceptible to his charms than he had been in earlier days.⁴ His opinion of the extravagance of Foxite politics remained unchanged since 1792 despite the formation of the Grenville-Fox coalition. He commonly referred to the Whig Club as Fox's 'wretched senate'⁵ or 'the mob of the Whig Club.'⁶ He warmly hoped that mutual support of the

1 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Nov. 1802-Feb. 1803; C.H.A.

2 For a vivid illustration of this, see Diary of Joseph Farington, 27 May, 1804; J. Greig, ed., The Farington Diary (London, 1922-8), ii. 242.

3 In July 1803 Carlisle paid Nollekens, the sculptor, 100 guineas for a marble bust of Fox: Receipt from J. Nollekens, 3 July 1803; C.H.A. J14/28/16.

4 This becomes clear in a 'Character of Fox' written by Carlisle and printed without date by Aspinall and Smith in English Historical Documents, 1783-1832, pp. 127-9. In fact the 'Character' was written towards the end of 1802: in November of that year Carlisle sent a 'rough draft', now at Castle Howard, to Thomas Grenville (see Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 107; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 26 Nov. 1802), and also in that month copied it into the journal, which he had begun to keep in July 1802. See Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, pp. 20-6.

5 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/1, p. 12.

6 Carlisle to Morpeth, Sept. 1806; C.H.A.

Talents Ministry would remove those political differences which until then divided them,¹ but sadly Fox died in September and with him any last hopes of a complete reconciliation. Previously in 1804, though, there was no chance of Carlisle responding to any blandishments issuing from either Devonshire House or Fox, effectively the same source. Indeed at that time Carlisle was so much of an anti-Foxite that he declared he would never like to see any Government solicit Fox's assistance except when 'the acid of outrageous Whiggism, to use the gentlest term, could be neutralized by all the alcali it would have met with in the united potash of both Mr. Pitt's friends and of those who may be called the middle party i.e. the Grenvillites'.² Alone, the Grenvillites were not strong enough to dominate the Foxites, were they ever to collaborate together in a ministry. Fox would inevitably assume prominence as far as the public at large were concerned and 'universal terror & dismay would prevail over the Whole Country.'³ These were Carlisle's thoughts in 1804. In 1806 the Ministry of all the Talents, although it contained a numerical superiority of Foxites, proved his earlier fears to have been groundless.

But in 1804, and indeed in 1805 too, Fox's influence was difficult to counteract. He himself was anxious to paper over any divisions in the coalition,⁴ though they appeared nevertheless in 1805 on the prosecution of Dundas, now Lord Melville, and on Pitt's foreign policy, and surprisingly few Grenvillites seem to have questioned the continued existence of the Grenville-Fox coalition. Presumably their view was that although Addington, it was true, had been removed, the broad-bottom administration intended to

1 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 127; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 3 Aug. 1806.

2 Addit. MSS. 38737, ff. 76-7; Carlisle to Huskisson, 27 Oct. 1804.

3 Carlisle to T. Grenville, copy, 28 Nov. 1804; C.H.A. J14/1/773.

4 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 84.

replace him had yet to be put into effect. If this was coupled, as it generally was, with lack of consideration for Pitt, then continued and organised opposition to his Government seemed perfectly justified.

Carlisle, on the other hand, differed widely from his associates, even with Thomas Grenville, with whom he was generally in agreement, over the policy to be adopted for the future. After Pitt's failure to create a broad-bottom in 1804 he saw little chance of a similar opportunity recurring.¹ At the same time he felt that in honour the Grenvillites were unable either to continue in organised opposition against Pitt or to desert Fox to whom they were still engaged. As he told Lord Stafford, Pitt had been restored to office and as he was the keystone of any broad-bottom there was little point in endeavouring to bring him down.² At the same time he was of the opinion that, in the present circumstances, co-operation with Pitt but without Fox was too inconsistent with their pledges ever to be contemplated.³ Thus he recommended that the Grenvillites take an independent stand on principle, meeting the Foxites only coincidentally, that is, in parliamentary divisions, and deliberately avoiding all dinners, political meetings and cabals.⁴ His conclusion, therefore, though nowhere so explicitly stated, was that the Grenville-Fox coalition be formally dissolved, but that both groups continue in a regular course of hostility to Pitt, not with the intention of bringing him down, but with debilitating his already notoriously weak ministry in order that he be brought to such a pass that he admit them both into the Government and force the King to accept Fox.

¹ Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 111; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 6 Dec. 1804.

² Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, 17 Nov. 1804; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/60.

³ Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, pp. 62-3.

⁴ Carlisle to T. Grenville, copy, 28 Nov. 1804; C.H.A. J14/1/773 : Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 111; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 6 Dec. 1804.

Carlisle's ideas, however, contained such difficulties as would soon have rendered them impracticable. Whether or not the King could be prevailed upon to accept Fox, or indeed Pitt persuaded to force Fox on the King, were admittedly imponderables. But real obstacles could be clearly predicted with some assurance. Although Carlisle had found it impossible in the 1790s to preserve the distinction between a temporary difference of opinion with the Government and formed opposition, some individuals possessing acute debating talents or great parliamentary strength were able to do so. For example, Pitt managed it in early 1804, though he was hardly representative of the norm. But now, as Thomas Grenville pointed out, it would, if possible at all, have required great nicety of words and behaviour to preserve the distinction in Parliament between 'the opposition of old friends' and 'the opposition of old enemies,'¹ that is, between former supporters of Pitt and ancient adherents of Fox. As was appreciated at the time, Lord Grenville was no party leader and would have been hard put to impose such a subtle construction on the utterances of his eclectic band of followers.

As it transpired, however, Pitt made the first move, and such a move as obviated the necessity for any further arguments over policy. Utterly unexpectedly, at least as far as Carlisle was concerned, he reconciled himself with Addington, raised him to the peerage as Viscount Sidmouth, and brought him into the Cabinet as Lord President in January 1805. Other Addingtonians were accommodated elsewhere.² Members of the Opposition and some of Pitt's own friends and supporters were equally disgusted by what he had done.

1 T. Grenville to Carlisle, 1 Dec. 1804; C.H.A. J14/1/774.

2 Ziegler, Addington, pp. 230-3.

Carlisle was deeply disillusioned; and in this ministerial re-arrangement, though welcomed by the public at large, lay the root of that mistrust of Pitt, which, for example, Fitzwilliam and most Foxites had always felt, and which now soured personal and political relations between Pitt and Carlisle. Their estrangement was increased by Pitt's unhandsome treatment of Lord Stafford, who had expected a Garter, which was then given instead to an Addingtonian. This insult provoked great resentment at Castle Howard.¹ Instead of restricting his opposition to Pitt to his defence measures only, as the Bishop of Carlisle once hoped Carlisle might have done,² he followed a course of more regular and sometimes very caustic criticism.³ And when the King's obduracy thwarted Pitt's last attempt to form a truly national administration in the late summer of 1805,⁴ an attempt incidentally, which Carlisle for some time had hoped Pitt would be forced to make, his opinion of the Prime Minister was so jaundiced that he found it

difficult to believe Mr. Pitt could earnestly wish to bring about a union of parties, tho' he professed to wish it, when he left it to Lds Mulgrave⁵ & Harrowby⁶ to sound the King upon it, who would not hear, at least from them, anything on the subject - Sept. 1805 at Kew when the K returned from Weymouth.⁷

1 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 88 : Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, p. 75.

2 Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, 11 Nov. 1804; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/61.

3 E.g., The Times, 9 Mar. 1805.

4 J.H. Rose, William Pitt and the Great War, p. 530.

5 Mulgrave, Henry Phipps, 3rd Baron (1755-1831); M.P. (Totnes) 1784-90, (Scarborough) 1790-4; distinguished military career, becoming a general in 1809; Sec. of State for Foreign Affairs, 1805-6; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1807-10; cr. Earl of Mulgrave, 1812.

6 Harrowby, Dudley Ryder, 2nd Baron (1762-1847); M.P. (Tiverton) 1784-1803, when he succ. his father; Paymaster General, 1791-1800; Sec. of State for Foreign Affairs, 1804-Jan. 1805, but remained in the Cabinet; also in the Cabinet, 1809-12 without office, 1812-27 as Lord President; cr. Earl of Harrowby, 1809.

7 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 113.

Sadly, in the last months of Pitt's life, Carlisle's opinion of him deteriorated even further, until he became a true convert to the distorted Foxite image of Pitt as a proud and overbearing authoritarian. After Pitt died, he wrote à propos his failure to establish a broad-bottomed administration :

He split upon that rock, which he often had weather'd with extreme difficulty, the too proud conceit of his own abilities, carried to so high a pitch, as not only to make the want of talents in his Colleagues indifferent to him, but to render that want an object of preference.¹

Such an attitude, prevalent at the time of Pitt's death in January 1806, perhaps helps to explain why the principle of a non-exclusive ministry was forgotten as far as Pitt's friends, except Canning, were concerned, but invoked for the sake of Lord Sidmouth and his friends in the formation of the Ministry of all the Talents in January and February 1806. Certainly Carlisle, when the question was put to him by Lord Grenville, answered that Sidmouth should be included in the Ministry consistent with the principle on which it was based, although in a position commensurate with his inferior talents, but he never mentioned the fate of the late Prime Minister's supporters.² The Talents Ministry was certainly not that which Carlisle sought, though apparently for Fitzwilliam it was the crowning moment of his political life.³ But disappointment on this score was probably dispelled by gloom at the loss of Pitt, and the elation of coming to power, with Fox at least sharing the fruits. Carlisle himself was offered a seat in the Cabinet, but conclusively refused it now lest he do irreparable damage to his already delicate state of health.⁴

1 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, p. 80.

2 Ibid., pp. 81-2. In practice Carlisle thought the two Cabinet seats, one without office, which the Addington element received, more than it deserved.

3 Smith, Whig principles and party politics, p. 284.

4 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, pp. 63, 81.

This proved to have been a wise decision for later in the year he seems to have suffered his first really serious and prolonged bout of illness, which left him so weakened that he was forced to resign from the lieutenancy of the East Riding in July 1807.¹ From this time, although hampered by physical disabilities and a nervous disorder, he strove, with great fortitude a relation said,² to maintain his position within the Grenville party, even though it was gradually disintegrating around him. But as Auckland said in 1808, in a particular context, but applicable generally : 'He is very earnest, but perhaps in the actual state of his constitution, the enterprise is somewhat more than his strength can cope with.'³ Inevitably, therefore, he lost stature, until any respect he retained as a politician was paid him for his age and his experience rather than for his contribution to the party. In January 1811, when composing a ministry in anticipation of a summons from the Prince Regent, Lord Grenville did not think it worth while to repeat any offer of a seat in the Cabinet to Carlisle, an act of indifference which angered him especially as he thought that lately he had done much more than usual on behalf of the party, by attendance in Parliament for example.⁴

Similarly, his rôle as head of the family declined in real terms so long as illness incapacitated him from handling estate business. Until recently he had kept his family in great awe of him so that his sons, even though Morpeth, for example, was now nearly forty, were 'in their behaviour to each other more

1 Carlisle to the Prince of Wales, 2 Feb. 1807; C.H.A. J14/1/846 : Lady Harriet Cavendish to Lady Spencer, 1 Aug. 1807; Leveson-Gower, Hary-O, p. 201. For more details of his resignation as Lord Lieutenant, see below, pp. 247-248.

2 H. Howard, Indications of Memorials, monuments, paintings and engravings of persons of the Howard family (Corby Castle, 1834-6), i. 77-8.

3 Auckland to Lord Grenville, 22 Feb. 1808; W. Fitzpatrick, ed., Hist. MSS. Comm. 15th Report, Dropmore MSS. (London, 1915), ix. 180.

4 Addit. MSS. 41854, ff. 150-1; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 24 Jan. 1811.

like a Prince with his followers, or a General with his Aide de Camps, than a Father with his sons.'¹ But they were gradually able to liberate themselves from stifling paternal authority. By 1809 William Howard, a conservative in later life, was occasionally dividing with radical M.P.s and was forced to deny to his mother that he was acting with 'the violent & intemperate people in this country.'² And Morpeth, by 1815, was a member of the Fox Club and actively voting with the Foxite Whigs.³

Thus in the few years immediately after the formation of the Talents Ministry Carlisle's political career effectively closed, while Morpeth's and Williams were really just beginning.⁴ Of course, major issues like

1 Lady Harriet Cavendish to Duchess of Devonshire, Sept. 1804, and to Countess Spencer, 20 Aug. 1807; Leveson-Gower, Hary-O, pp. 106, 207.

2 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 135 : William Howard to Lady Carlisle, n.d.; C.H.A. J15/1/35.

3 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 126; for a flattering appraisal of Morpeth as a parliamentarian at this time, see T. Barnes, Parliamentary Portraits (London 1815), pp. 134-6.

4 Morpeth entered the Board of Control under the Talents and handled Indian business in the Commons, until in October 1806 he was sent on an important diplomatic mission to the continent which was abruptly curtailed in rather embarrassing circumstances. Some details are to be found in Lord Ronald Gower, ed., Stafford House Letters (London, 1891), pp. 4n, 11; and in Lady Jackson, ed., Diaries and Correspondence of Sir George Jackson (London, 1872), pp. 6, 10, 22, 27-29, 41.

William Howard, to his father diffident, but to Lady Harriet Cavendish sullen and boorish, became M.P. for Morpeth in 1806, but never held any sort of office. His father tried to obtain him some position under the Talents, but received such a frosty answer from Lord Grenville that he never asked for anything again : Addit. MSS. 41854, ff. 150-1; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 24 Jan. 1811. For the relevant correspondence between Carlisle and Lord Grenville in 1806, see Addit. MSS. 58992, ff. 23-45 passim.

the Corn Laws,¹ Peterloo² and the Royal Divorce³ roused him to a semblance of action, but he spent much of his time in a stupor of senility and infirmity. After Frederick Howard,⁴ his third, and some said favourite son, was killed at Waterloo in 1815, Carlisle's health deteriorated to such an extent that his death was actually reported in the press at the beginning of 1816.⁵ Curiously, during this long period of decline and inactivity, his political beliefs seem to have undergone quite a radical change. Though he never lost his loathing of the selfishness of inward-looking party unity and especially of party violence, he came to believe in the idea of party politics, of political formations based, albeit loosely, on ideological principles. This seems all the more extraordinary when it is remembered that he was reduced by illness to a mere shadow of himself, that the party alignments of the heyday of Fox and Pitt had largely collapsed and that the Grenville group had degenerated into an inchoate collection of individuals who as often disagreed as agreed among themselves.⁶ But that it was indeed

1 Although the Carlisle family was no longer united with the Grenvilles by this time, Carlisle followed Lord Grenville against the agricultural interest on the Corn Bills : Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 158 : Parl. Debs. xxx. 94-5, 186, 261; 10, 15, 20 Mar. 1815.

2 He refused to subscribe to the requisition for a county meeting in Yorkshire to demand a parliamentary enquiry into the conduct of the Magistrates at Peterloo, and tried to persuade Fitzwilliam against it too : Fitzwilliam to Carlisle, 18 Sept. 1819; C.H.A. J14/1/795 : Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 22 Sept. 1819; Northampton C.R.O., Milton MSS. 97/75 : Addit. MSS. 58992, f. 52; Carlisle to Lord Grenville, 13 Jan. 1820.

3 A mass of confused notes by Carlisle on the proceedings relating to the Divorce exists at Castle Howard, but Carlisle missed much of them by taking advantage of the indulgence granted to peers over seventy to absent themselves : Carlisle to Lord Eldon, copy, 10 Aug. 1820; C.H.A. J14/1/801.

4 Hon. Frederick Howard (1785-1815); major in the 10th Hussars; fell at Waterloo.

5 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 51577 (Holland House Papers), f. 166; Morpeth to Lord Holland, 22 July 1815 : Morning Chronicle and Courier, 1 Feb. 1816.

6 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, pp. 132, 135, 142, 167.

the case may be seen by his reaction to the failure of the Talents. In his opinion, the question of Catholic emancipation should have been settled before the new ministers took office,¹ but that as it was left undetermined it should never have been raised at a later date : 'This Reign will never do for the radical cure,' he wrote,² voicing the widespread feeling that George III would always present an insurmountable obstacle to the measure.

In Parliament in the years following the sad demise of the Talents he thought, as far as the Grenvillites were concerned, that 'the rule of our conduct sh^d be that of Moderation,'³ but in fact the party collapsed altogether contrary to all his wishes. And although the Grenville party had served its purpose of leading back Portland Whigs to the true Whig corps long before 1820,⁴ Carlisle still favoured the creation of a new middle party, to oppose but to oppose moderately.⁵ So far as one can tell, for Carlisle the idea of the sort of national government which he had supported since 1792 was dealt a fatal blow by Pitt in 1805 and became extinct when the Talents Ministry was formed in 1806. The idea of a national government he jettisoned therefore in favour of moderate party alignments which were not to preclude, however, the giving of support to a government whose measures 'tended to the general preservation.'⁶ At the same time he recognised the damaging implications this had for the very existence of a party. Young men, as he saw, needed to be blooded in the parliamentary chase, and old hands kept close to their work.⁷ But he arrived at these contradictory notions too late in life to attempt to reconcile them.

1 Journal of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/64/3, p. 93.

2 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 133; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 16 Mar. 1807.

3 Ibid., ff. 136-7; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 17 Dec. 1807.

4 Sack, The Grenvillites 1801-29, p. 123.

5 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 158; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 20 Apr. 1820.

6 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 154; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 29 Mar. 1817.

7 Ibid., f. 136; same to same, 17 Dec. 1807.

VII

LORD CARLISLE AND PROVINCIAL POLITICS, 1767-1807

In this and the following chapter it is proposed to survey the interests and activities of Frederick, Earl of Carlisle, outside London and away from national politics at Westminster. This will complete the present account of his life and help to restore the balance between politics and his other pleasures and responsibilities. This particular chapter will examine the political influence of the Carlisle family in parliamentary elections during a period when Lord Carlisle was principally responsible for its deployment, that is, between 1767 and 1807. Before 1767 he was too young to be concerned; and after 1807 infirmity and old age necessitated increasing delegation of authority to his eldest son, Lord Morpeth, whose own career by then was more directly concerned in the electoral fortunes of the family.

As the family was seated in Yorkshire it might be supposed that it was of considerable significance in the politics of the locality. This was not the case. Its immediate influence extended only in so far as Castle Howard supplied much business to the tradesmen and artisans of Malton, the local market town six miles distant from the house. The town itself was firmly in the grip, politically speaking, of the Rockingham and then Fitzwilliam families: and it would have been unthinkable for Carlisle to have attempted to establish an interest there as he was a close friend of Fitzwilliam throughout his life,

and a political associate for most of it. The most Carlisle could do at Malton was to ensure that those tradesmen over whom he had any influence at all voted according to his directions, and that if they did not, to make them pay for their disobedience. To take a conspicuous example, when Carlisle's 'rascal of an Apothecary'¹, George Parker, who had attended at Castle Howard since at least 1794,² took a prominent part in the 1807 general election against the Whig candidates fielded by Fitzwilliam, Carlisle promptly called in his account.³ Judging by surviving evidence, the elections of 1807 for Malton and for the county of York were the only ones in which Carlisle can be said to have played much of a part, except perhaps for that of 1784 when he subscribed £500 to the Whig election fund.⁴ In 1807 though he sent his agent to Malton to exert a little gentle pressure on suspect tradesmen,⁵ and gave 10/6 apiece as expenses to 47 county voters. In cases of real extremity then, as in 1784 and 1807, Carlisle was prepared to assist in a small way in Yorkshire, but naturally his efforts were chiefly directed towards his own concerns in Northumberland and Cumberland. The preservation of family influence was still more important than party victory at Westminster

1 Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 9 Aug. 1807; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, F72/24.

2 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1794-5; C.H.A. F4/9/34.

3 Rev. J. Forth to G. Parker, 8 Aug. 1807; quoted in E.A. Smith, 'Earl Fitzwilliam and Malton : a Proprietary Borough in the Early Nineteenth Century,' E.H.R., lxxx (1965), 62. Forth's letter is printed in Aspinall and Smith, English Historical Documents, pp. 308-9.

4 See above, p. 151 n. 1.

5 W. Hastings to Fitzwilliam, 8 May 1807; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, F72/14.

to those landowners who were involved in parliamentary elections. Indeed, the elections in which Carlisle was involved were decided without reference to national events.

The political interest of the Carlisle branch of the Howards lay at their older territorial centres : at Morpeth, where the Earl of Carlisle was Lord of the Manor, and at Carlisle, only a few miles west of their ancient caput baroniae, Naworth Castle.¹ Morpeth was described by the second Earl of Oxford, who visited it in 1725, as a borough town, which had 'the reputation of being the most corrupt, mercenary place in the whole North...'² During the second and third quarters of the eighteenth century the Carlisles took advantage of its susceptibility to temptation by restricting the creation of new freemen, in whom the right of election of M.P.s lay, and by making concessions, often financial, to existing freemen. This policy was so successful in its early stages that by 1755 Morpeth had become a virtual pocket borough in which elections could be managed with very little expense. In 1754 the number of voters amounted only to about sixty.³

1 The electoral histories of Carlisle, 1767-75, and of Morpeth, 1767-1802, have already been investigated in B. Bonsall, Sir James Lowther and Cumberland and Westmorland Elections, 1754-1775 (Manchester University Press, 1960), and in J.M. Fewster, 'The Politics and Administration of the Borough of Morpeth in the Later Eighteenth Century' (Durham Univ. Ph.D. thesis 1960), respectively. Fewster later published some of his main conclusions in an article : 'The Webbs and the Borough of Morpeth,' E.H.R., lxxxi (1966).

2 Quoted in Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, x (1902), 250.

3 Sir L. Namier and J. Brooke, The History of Parliament : The House of Commons, 1754-1790 (London, 1964), i. 349.

Carlisle was considerably more independent than Morpeth. The city lay between the two baronies of Gilsland to the east and Burgh to the west. Gilsland had passed to the Howards of Naworth by marriage in the sixteenth century, while Burgh had been bought by the Lowthers of Lowther Castle. Consequently the two families were always keen rivals in the city's politics. They were influential in county politics too, but shared their dominance with the Seymour family. Later the situation changed slightly with the succession of the Wyndhams, Earls of Egremont, to the Seymour property, and by the arousal of the dormant interest of the Dukes of Portland. By the early eighteenth century, however, Cumberland and Westmorland politics had stabilised to such an extent that it was agreed that a Lowther should sit for the county of Cumberland, a representative of the Howards for the city of Carlisle and some nominee of the Seymours for the borough of Cockermouth.¹

Carlisle's minority, from 1758 to 1769, almost spelt disaster for his interest at both Morpeth and Carlisle. His mother, the Dowager Countess, who was left to dispose of it,² took little pains to preserve it. Her second husband, Sir William Musgrave, loathed such matters; while Carlisle's guardians,³ appointed under his father's will, both resided at too great a distance from the north of England to watch over their ward's interests, as they were in duty bound to do,⁴ and even though one of them, Robert Ord, had been M.P. for Morpeth from 1741 to 1755. All parties involved, however, were alike disabled by lack of money, for Henry, the fourth Earl of Carlisle, had died leaving consid-

¹ Bonsall, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-4.

² Duke of Grafton to Sir James Lowther, 12 Sept. 1767; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/Addl. Stray Letters.

³ John, 5th Baron Berkeley of Stratton (ca. 1697-1773), and Robert Ord (1700-78), Chief Baron of the Scottish Exchequer, 1755-75.

⁴ P.R.O., Chancery Proceedings, C12/6/10; Countess of Carlisle v. Earl of Carlisle, Bill of Complaint, 26 Feb. 1759.

erable debts, which had to be paid off to avoid legal actions. It was not surprising therefore that encroachments were made by determined opponents, who met little resistance from an organisation, that is, the Carlisle family and its traditional power, immobilised by its lack of a single controlling force. In 1761, at the first general election since the fourth Earl of Carlisle's death, Viscount Garlies¹ bought himself into Morpeth, helped by the growth of opposition to aristocratic control, which had begun in the borough in 1760. Similarly the weakness of the Howards encouraged Sir James Lowther,² who had already begun his astonishing career of aggrandisement in Cumberland and Westmorland, to make his first open assault on the city of Carlisle. Sir Charles Howard,³ a sitting member there since 1727, who had never taken much trouble to cultivate his interest, retreated at the first sign of a contest.⁴ At this one disastrous general election the Howards lost two of the three seats which formerly they had been able to secure without difficulty.

Once the opposition had broken the ground it was vital to prevent it entrenching itself. Nobody therefore was in any doubt, except perhaps Carlisle himself, about the importance of the next general election in 1768.

1 John Stewart, Viscount Garlies (1736-1806), 1st son of Alexander, 6th Earl of Galloway; M.P. (Morpeth) 1761-8, (Ludgershall) 1768-73; attached himself to the Bedford party and held several minor offices; cr. Baron Stewart GB, 1796.

2 Sir James Lowther, 5th Bt. (1736-1802); M.P. for various constituencies in Cumberland and Westmorland, 1757-84; Lord-Lieutenant of both counties; eventually returned, there and elsewhere, 9 M.P.s to the Commons; cr. Earl of Lonsdale, 1784.

3 Hon. Sir Charles Howard (d. 1765), 2nd son of Charles, 3rd Earl of Carlisle; M.P. (Carlisle) 1727-61; K.B., 1749; General, 1765.

4 Bonsall, op. cit., pp. 50-2.

During the preparations Musgrave wrote to Carlisle respecting Morpeth,

It is agreed on all hands that this election will be decisive either for the establishing or utter ruin of your interest.¹

It was at Morpeth that the Carlisle family encountered the most intractable difficulties. For the time being the city of Carlisle was left to its own devices. The humiliation of exclusion from the parliamentary representation of that city was not quite so bitter to the family as the total defeat which faced it at Morpeth. The opposition there, financed and led by Francis Eyre,² had made steady gains during the 1760s : by favourable verdicts gained in actions brought in 1766 they had secured the admittance of at least thirty three new freemen in 1767, in plenty of time for the forthcoming general election.³ The Carlisle family therefore faced a serious crisis which could only be averted, if at all, by firm and timely action.

Lord Carlisle, however, was not prepared to exert himself to deal with the problems in Morpeth and elsewhere. He reacted to them sluggishly. To be fair though these problems were exceedingly inconvenient to him. He was about to leave England with Selwyn and Lord March⁴ on a second attempt to complete his Grand Tour. The previous year he had travelled as far as Paris, but had returned to England in the wake of Lady Sarah Bunbury, with whom he fancied himself to be in love. Now he was impatient to be on his way again,

1 Musgrave to Carlisle, 1 Dec. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/7.

2 Francis Eyre (1722-97); M.P. (Morpeth) 1774-5, (Great Grimsby) 1780-4; an attorney who had acquired a large fortune through his privateering interests, and now wanted to sit in Parliament; he died comparatively poor.

3 Fewster, 'The Politics and Administration of the Borough of Morpeth in the Later Eighteenth Century,' pp. 130-3, 152, 155, 171-9, 181-4.

4 William Douglas, Earl of March (1725-1810), cousin of 3rd Duke of Queensberry, whom he succeeded as 4th Duke in 1778; shared with Selwyn the disputed paternity of Maria Fagnani, later Marchioness of Hertford; cr. Baron Douglas of Amesbury GB, 1786.

this time to fulfil a long-postponed engagement to meet Fox at Nice.¹ He and his friends had actually arranged to leave London on Friday, 4 September, but on 29 August Selwyn received 'fresh intelligence' concerning the dissolution of Parliament.² Selwyn was far too experienced in election matters to allow Carlisle to leave England without making arrangements for Morpeth. From 1751 to 1791 he controlled the borough of Ludgershall in Wiltshire, and used his power as a source of revenue by selling both seats to Administration.³ So he persuaded Carlisle to stay, writing to Lord Holland,

Carlisle is much embarrassed what to do abt Morpeth. He should not certainly leave this Country, till he has endeavoured to putt it upon some foot, by w^{ch} he may secure an interest in it, at least in future times. I have persuaded him to consult the D. of G⁴ abt it, and he may be assisted by him in the arrangement. It will at least be a compliment to consult him upon it. So he intends to go to him on Wednesday 2 September for that purpose.⁵

But Carlisle was far too hasty to do more than delegate the necessary decisions to others. He prevailed on his father-in-law, Musgrave, 'to assist in the Management of his Affairs particularly at Morpeth during his Absence,'⁶ even

1 Memorandum Book of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/5, p. 50.

2 Parliament was actually dissolved on 11 March 1768.

3 Namier and Brooke, The House of Commons, 1754-1790, i. 416-7.

4 Grafton, Augustus Henry Fitzroy, 3rd Duke (1735-1811); First Lord of the Treasury, 1766-70; Lord Privy Seal, 1771-5, March 1782-April 1783. By both his marriages, Grafton later became a distant relation of Carlisle.

5 Selwyn to Holland, 29 Aug. 1767; Earl of Ilchester, ed., Letters to Henry Fox, Lord Holland (London 1915), p. 280.

6 Musgrave to Duke of Portland, 10 Nov. 1767; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 7086.

though Musgrave was as he told Carlisle rather peevishly, 'entirely unacquainted with the people, and hating the sort of business'¹ : and to the Duke of Grafton Carlisle delivered the right of nominating candidates to stand at Morpeth, directing Musgrave to accept Grafton's choice without exception.'² Accompanied by Selwyn and March he then set off for Paris, and arrived on 20 September.³

Avoiding his responsibilities and passing them on to Musgrave and Grafton did not relieve Carlisle's family interest from the electoral difficulties facing it. Musgrave soon became so vexed by the problems he met at Morpeth that he wrote sarcastically to Carlisle : 'you seem to have left your Borough in an excellent situation without candidates and without managers. You may however depend I will endeavour [to] put it on the best footing I can...'⁴ In Cumberland, the problems, though of a different nature, were equally serious. As we have seen, the city of Carlisle was to be ignored at this general election, but the family interest would inevitably play an important part in the county, for which a fierce contest was expected. But Carlisle's agents and supporters had not received any directions at all and were in doubt whether to support the Lowther family or the two independent candidates put up in opposition to it, Henry Fletcher⁵ and Henry Curwen.⁶ The opposition to Sir James Lowther had

1 Musgrave to Carlisle, 22 Sept. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/1.

2 Same to same, 1 Oct. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/2.

3 Paris Journals of Horace Walpole, 20 Sept. 1767; Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, viii. 321.

4 Musgrave to Carlisle, 22 Sept. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/1.

5 Henry Fletcher (1727-1807); M.P. (Cumberland) 1768-1806; prominent in East Indian affairs and Chairman of the East India Company, 1782-3; a lifelong Whig, he was cr. a baronet in 1782.

6 Henry Curwen (1728-78); M.P. (Carlisle) 1761-8, (Cumberland) 1768-74; one of the earliest opponents of Lowther, he naturally became connected with the Duke of Portland.

grown up in Cumberland since 1761, under the leadership, since 1763, of the Duke of Portland,¹ and with the support of many others including another branch of the Howards, seated at Corby Castle in the county. According to Musgrave, writing in September 1767, Carlisle was supposed to have entered into certain engagements with Portland several months before, and was now called upon by Portland, Philip Howard² of Corby, and Musgrave too, to fulfil those engagements by declaring his support for Curwen and Fletcher. In the most explicit terms Carlisle was informed by Musgrave that

Sir James has made no manner of application to you since this meeting, and that the other side have been very attentive, and seem to rely on your promise; that it is in your interest to weaken Sir James' as much as you can, and that all the gentlemen who profess themselves friends to your family are at present in opposition to him, and zealous supporters of Messrs. Curwen and Fletcher; for all which reasons I think (if not both) at least one of your votes should be given as proposed by Mr. Howard.³

But once more Carlisle was irresolute.

On this occasion, however, there were more valid reasons than indifference and impatience for his hesitation and uncertainty. As we have seen, he had relinquished to Administration the right to choose the candidates to stand on the Carlisle interest at Morpeth. But this favour was really Carlisle's part of a bargain, which had been made a short time before and on an entirely different occasion. It concerned Sir James Lowther's attempt to secure certain

¹ Bonsall, op. cit., pp. 62-5, 69.

² Philip Howard (1730-1810); author of Scriptural History of the Earth and of Mankind (1797).

³ Musgrave to Carlisle, 22 Sept. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/1.

crown leases in Cumberland and the award to Carlisle of a Green Ribbon, or Order of the Knighthood of the Thistle. In July 1767 three Knights of the Thistle died,¹ leaving the Government with three Green Ribbons to dispose of and a general election due the following year. One of these Ribbons was bestowed on Carlisle. There is some evidence that he received it as a result of deliberate solicitation on his part. Selwyn was involved in negotiations with Grafton for a place for himself and for the vice-admiralty of Scotland for Lord March, and may indeed have persuaded Carlisle to try to obtain one of the Ribbons for himself. Carlisle has left his own account of what happened.

I consulted the old Lord Holland² (being then only nineteen years of age) in what manner I should apply for the Green Ribband; by all means said L^d H thro' the Minister, for were you first to solicit the King, I, were I a Minister, I would do everything to prevent your having it. I took his advice, saw the D^e of Grafton, afterwards the King and obtained it. A week afterwards he asked the King for the title of Ormond, without acquainting the D^e of Grafton, & did not carry his point.³

It seems strange that Grafton should have been so ready to honour Carlisle in this way. These Ribbons were generally given to Scots, and indeed, on this occasion the remaining two Ribbons were disposed of north of the border.⁴ Furthermore Carlisle was still only nineteen years old and was conscious himself that it was an 'unprecedented distinction' for the Ribbon to be given to one under age. Selwyn did his best to answer this last objection by rummaging for precedents in the College of Arms.⁵ Whether he succeeded or not,

1 J. Haydn and H. Ockerby, The Book of Dignities (London, 1890), p. 747.

2 Henry Fox, 1st Baron Holland.

3 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 38.

4 To the 3rd Duke of Buccleugh, Carlisle's friend from Eton, and to the 3rd Duke of Atholl.

5 Walpole to Lord Holland, 7 Aug. 1767; Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, . xxx. 246.

Carlisle nevertheless received the Order, being invested at Turin by the King of Sardinia on 27 February 1768.

It cannot now be ascertained whether Carlisle or Grafton first raised the subject of the Green Ribbon, but Grafton's wish to oblige Carlisle may plausibly be explained by the following events. The chronology is to some extent manufactured owing to a lack of dated evidence, but it does seem to bear criticism. On 9 July 1767, almost two months before the Cumberland county meeting of 31 August, when Curwen and Fletcher were nominated, Sir James Lowther applied to the Treasury for grants of the Forest of Inglewood and the Socage of the Manor of Carlisle. Many years before, in 1696, William III had granted to the Bentinck family the reversion of the Honour of Penrith and its appurtenances, and the specific properties were enumerated in the grant. Although the Forest of Inglewood and the Socage of Carlisle could be said to be geographically embraced by the Honour of Penrith and its appurtenances, they were not actually specified by name, and the Bentinck family, now Cavendish-Bentinck and Dukes of Portland, had simply assumed ownership at different times when the old leases fell in, some as late as 1750. Lowther now contested this and sought a lease of the lands for himself. His intention plainly was to build up his electoral influence for the lands in question were much more valuable in terms of control of freeholders' votes than rents.¹

Most probably Lowther was aware that there was a connection between the Carlisle family and the Socage of Carlisle. The Portland family had assumed ownership of

¹ Bonsall, op. cit., pp. 83-4.

in
this property when its lease fell in/1729, but prior to that date had bought up the tenants' interest and thus shut out the Carlisles, who had a claim to the reversion of the Socage as passing to them by a grant from Queen Elizabeth.¹ According to Selwyn, writing to Lord Holland, the Carlisles had actually leased the property in the not too distant past.

S^r J. Lowther, I am told, has asked for the Mannor of the town of Carlisle, but as that used allways to be in Ld. Carlisle's family and his grandfather had a lease of it, w^{ch} his father by neglect only did not get renewed, so I hope it will not be given to Ld. Carlisle's prejudice.²

Indeed, from a letter from the Duke of Grafton to Sir James Lowther, it appears that Carlisle now intended to lodge his own claim to the Socage; that Lowther was afraid of this; and that he asked Grafton to discover from Carlisle what his views on Cumberland politics were. Presumably, if they were hostile to Lowther, Grafton was to oblige him by appeasing Carlisle in some way. Grafton's letter ran thus:

I neglected no Opportunity of speaking to Lord Carlisle on the subject of Cumberland. His interest he had allowed his mother to make use of, during his Minority. Since that, he has been much offended at your Memorial before the Treasury, where both his Lordship & The Duke of Portland have desired Leave to lay in their Claims. You will judge from this that my pressing his Lordship would have been attended with more harm than good.³

1 R.S. Ferguson, Cumberland and Westmorland M.P.'s from the Restoration to the Reform Bill of 1867 (London, 1871), p. 134.

2 Selwyn to Lord Holland, [29 Aug. 1767]; Earl of Ilchester, Letters to Henry Fox, Lord Holland, p. 280.

3 Grafton to Lowther, 12 Sept. 1767; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/Addl. Stray Letters.

According to the historian of Sir James Lowther's electioneering, Portland heard nothing of Lowther's claim until quite by chance on 2 September.¹ It seems strange, therefore, that Selwyn should have been fully aware of it three days before.² Be that as it may, Portland may have persuaded Carlisle to lay in a counter claim to Lowther, and this perhaps was the engagement, which, it has been seen, Musgrave was led to believe that Carlisle had made to Portland. Portland acted expeditiously. Hearing that the Surveyor-General had recommended the Treasury to grant a lease for three lives to Lowther, Portland immediately requested a deferment of the Treasury's final decision until he could present a full defence of his title to the disputed property. Carlisle, on the other hand, did nothing, the reason being, most probably, that Grafton had satisfied him, on Lowther's behalf, with a Green Ribbon.

Lowther laboured under the misapprehension that Carlisle would not only withdraw his claim to the Socage of the Manor of Carlisle, but would also support him in the forthcoming election. Carlisle, without perhaps having fully considered the consequences of his obligations to the Government, which he had evidently entered into without taking family advice, may also have expected to side with Lowther in the elections. But he could not resist the pressure exerted on him by friends and relations, who were more interested in the progress of events in Cumberland than he obviously was : he was forced to yield to the tide rising against Lowther and wrote to his chief agent, John Cleaver, telling him to mobilise support in favour of Curwen and Fletcher. Grafton's apparent insouciance at Carlisle's change of side will have made this

1 Bonsall, op. cit., p. 83.

2 See above, p. 215 and n.2.

3 W. Milbourn to Portland, 18 Oct. 1767; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF6763.

easier.¹ Lowther was inevitably much vexed at this volte-face, and complained bitterly to Charles Jenkinson in November : 'Lord Carlisle has given his interest strongly to the D. of Portland notwithstanding his promised friendship to Government for his Ribbon...'² Yet in the following month Lowther obtained the grant for which he had been seeking.

This did not settle the dispute however. During the next few years it became something of a cause célèbre, attracting much attention both in Parliament and in society. The Treasury defended its action in Lowther's case by claiming that it had acted in accordance with the old maxim Nullum Tempus occurrit regi, that is to say, right by prescriptive possession is no bar to the claims of the Crown. The Opposition eventually managed to push through the Commons in early 1769 an act, known as the Nullum Tempus Act, which sought to do away with this maxim, but as it applied to all grants except those made before 1 January 1769 it did not apply to Portland's case. Portland naturally tried to obtain the removal of this excepting clause, but a Bill of Amendment introduced into Parliament for this purpose was defeated on its third reading on 26 February 1771 by the narrow margin of 164-155 votes.³

Many people at the time thought that Carlisle played a very shabby part in this affair. He had been zealous in support of the Nullum Tempus Amendment Bill and had enlisted the aid of his macaroni friends, including Charles Fox.⁴ But then he suddenly changed horses in mid-stream. The Court was against the Bill, but North did not treat it as an issue of confidence in the Government, and so this cannot have been a reason for Carlisle's change of heart. Rather, the reason, according to him, was that as Lowther had unexpectedly withdrawn

¹ Musgrave to Carlisle, 16 Oct. 1767; C.H.A. J14/1/3.

² Quoted without date in Bonsall, op. cit., p. 80.

³ Ibid., p. 123; and A.S. Turberville, A History of Welbeck Abbey and its Owners (London, 1938-9), ii. 115-6, 124 and n.3.

⁴ Duke of Richmond to Marquis of Rockingham, 12 Feb. 1771; A. Olson, The Radical Duke (Oxford, 1961), p. 138.

notices of ejectment, which he had issued against hundreds of the sitting tenants of the disputed lands in Cumberland until his title to them was settled by a court of law, he had no further part to play with the Opposition :

I never had nor could have any other motive for taking so warm a part but for their [i.e. the tenants'] relief, & having succeeded, it cannot be expected that I should take any further steps in an affair, that now seems to be entirely between your Grace & Sr J. Lowther, of which I am very unable to form any opinion.¹

This was an argument advanced by many members of the majority which defeated the amendment, and was perfectly sufficient for those M.Ps and others, who had responded to the Opposition cry of violated property, but were satisfied by the new Act as it stood, and who had no direct connection with Cumberland affairs, but were only interested in the fate of a few humble tenants too weak to defend themselves against Lowther's tyranny.

But these reasons should have been inadequate to Carlisle whose involvement in the case was by circumstance far greater than that of most men. Not only had he promised to support Portland unconditionally, but in concluding the letter in which he withdrew that support he wrote :

if I was to consult my private interest, it would be much more agreeable to me to see your Grace possessed of the Lands & in question than Sr J. Lowther, whose interests have been I believe & always will be very contrary to mine.²

¹ Carlisle to Portland, 20 Feb. 1771, and see also same to same, 22 Feb. 1771; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 5511-12.

² Carlisle to Portland, 20 Feb. 1771; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 5511.

This proves that Carlisle was aware of the issues involved, and also begs the question, why did he not consult his private interest? In many respects it would have been more honourable for him to do so. Did Fox and others work on him, or did he simply believe that Lowther had a sound title? Or rather, did he feel that having supported Portland in the 1768 election, he still owed a debt to the Government, though led now by Lord North, for his Green Ribbon? The answer must remain in obscurity, but payment of a political debt holds good as a plausible explanation.¹

Notwithstanding the failure of the Amendment Bill, Portland eventually won confirmation of his title in 1776. But Carlisle emerged with little more than a rather tarnished reputation. It was the first occasion on which he had played anything like a conspicuous part in a major public issue, and had unfortunately made one or two unhappy errors of judgement. In some quarters, a less charitable view of his conduct in 1771 was taken. It was marked down as an act of apostasy and it was not to be forgotten. 'An English Elector' wrote to the London Evening Post in November 1772, addressing himself to Carlisle :

The Duke of Portland may chuse to forget his injuries, but the world shall know of your deceit. They shall hear that in defiance of every engagement which is dear and sacred to a man of honour, at the very moment of a firm reliance on your plighted faith, you did not scruple to forsake the cause of justice, and of violated property, in the affair of the Nullum Tempus Bill.²

Considering the savagery of this attack, it would be only fair to Carlisle to set it in its proper context. Writing from Northumberland, the author was

¹ For a possible contributory factor, see below, p. 223.

² London Evening Post, 24-26 Nov. 1772.

evidently well acquainted with events then taking place at Morpeth, notably the suborning of freemen by Carlisle's agents by means of seemingly inexhaustible supplies of money. This was a central part of the attempt to revive the Carlisle interest in the borough. A similar object was also envisaged in the city of Carlisle. In fact, Lord Carlisle's attitude to the value of electoral interest had altered dramatically since he returned from his Grand Tour and settled down. Having acquired a wife he now had a surer grasp of the extent and nature of his family responsibilities; and he clearly recognised the need to build up his family interest once again in Morpeth and in Carlisle, if he was to be of any political consequence himself. This seems to have been an idea inculcated into him largely by Selwyn. It was seen in the first chapter how invalid Carlisle soon discovered this notion to be and how this affected his political behaviour. It will be seen here how this affected his activities at Morpeth and at Carlisle.

At Morpeth in 1768, Musgrave had worked hard to arrange a compromise by which he had secured the return of one member. He was possibly involved also in a successful conspiracy to oust Francis Eyre, the leader of the opposition, in order to replace him by a third candidate put up at the last moment. But though Eyre failed to win election in 1768 he still controlled a considerable body of support, which was steadily enlarged by the admission of new freemen. But as the number of freemen steadily increased, they became less defiant of aristocratic tyranny and less tractable to Eyre and his friends. Carlisle, through his agents, took advantage of this fluid situation by methods which were at best dishonourable and generally corrupt. The full story has been told in great detail elsewhere,¹ but essentially the facts are that Carlisle's agents, led by Cleaver's successor, Germain Lavie, who revelled in his work, made

¹ Fewster, op. cit., pp. 230-82 passim, 319-62 passim.

a political contest out of every possible opportunity; spent freely; dismissed large tenant farmers, sub-divided their farms, and parcelled them out among the freemen; exploited all sorts of public entertainments, races and assemblies; and even resorted to victimisation.

It is impossible to be certain how far Carlisle was directly responsible for the implementation of these unpalatable policies. Francis Eyre charitably remarked at the time, 'I find Lord Carlisle is exceedingly negligent so that his Agents do what they please,'² and Lavie's dismissal in 1775 tends to confirm the supposition that he was exceeding his authority. But it would be obsequious to acquit Carlisle of all complicity, though it is quite possible he knew little of what was going on. For example, he does not seem to have visited Morpeth until September 1773,³ when he was twenty five years of age. While there he and Lavie made plans for the forthcoming election. This time the candidates were not to be enormously wealthy Government nominees as in 1768, but members of his family : Peter Delmé,⁴ his brother-in-law, and William Byron,⁵ his first cousin, both of them his contemporaries.

1 Fewster, op. cit., pp. 230-82 passim, 319-62 passim.

2 F. Eyre to R. Trotter, 7 Apr. 1772; quoted in *ibid.*, p. 481.

3 See the panegyric, 'Nearly a Translation of what was said to the present Ld Carlisle upon Entering Morpeth Sept. 1773 by R. Fenwick;' Durham University, Dept. of Palaeography and Diplomatic, Howard of Naworth MSS. (hereinafter cited as Naworth MSS.) N87/2.

4 Peter Delmé (1748-89); M.P. (Morpeth) 1774-89; m., 16 Feb. 1769, Lady Elizabeth Howard, Carlisle's sister; Delmé was not attentive in Parliament, very extravagant and always in financial difficulties.

5 Hon. William Byron (1749-76), eldest son of William, 5th Baron Byron; M.P. (Morpeth) 1775-6.

From Morpeth Lavie went directly to Naworth. There he met Joseph Nicolson, successor to William Milbourne as steward of Carlisle's baronial courts, and a correspondent of the Duke of Portland's. Lavie told Nicolson that Carlisle desired a meeting with Portland, where and when Portland pleased, 'to Settle the Cumberland Politicks.'¹ The city of Carlisle was most probably included in these general terms of reference. Carlisle had inaugurated the restoration of his interest there with a well documented two week visit to Naworth in August 1770. He arrived 'in great pomp,' 'with a vast Number of Servants,' and announced

that his Intention was to endeavour to revive the Family Interest both in Town & County upon his own bottom only, that he never wou'd have Connexion with Sir Jas. Lowther.²

He distributed largesse and provided entertainments yet made no 'alarming stride to popularity,' and the general consensus of opinion among Portland's supporters was that should Carlisle attempt to establish his own interest independent of both Lowther and Portland, as did indeed appear to be his intention, then he would assuredly fail.³ What measures Carlisle took to entrench himself in the city in the following years are not known, but things were apparently much quieter there than at Morpeth, despite the city's stormy political reputation. And of course Carlisle's interest in the city was essentially more akin to his influence at Malton than at Morpeth; that is, it derived from the business the estate could provide rather than from the ownership of property. Intermixed with this, it was true, was a certain degree of traditional family loyalty, the Howards of Naworth having been local residents for nearly two hundred years, but

1 Nicolson to Portland, 24 Oct. 1773; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 7191.

2 Nicolson to Portland, 31 Aug. 1770; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 7191.

3 The full details of Carlisle's visit are to be found in various letters to the Duke of Portland from : T. Benson, 6 Aug. and 23 Sept., Mrs. E. Lind, 9 Aug., B. Hotham, 26 Aug., and J. Nicolson, 31 Aug., all of 1770; *ibid.* PWF 419-20, 6418, 5317, 7184.

even this was being undermined according to Thomas Benson, Portland's agent. While 'several of the old freemen have been accustomed to think favourably of the Carlisle family,' he wrote, 'I doubt they would rather consider the virtues of his Lordship's Ancestors than the degeneracy of the Son.'¹

By 1773, therefore, Carlisle had come to appreciate that he would make little impression in the city unless he was allied to another prominent power, and this, he decided, was to be Portland. Nicolson and Francis Gregg had favoured a proper union with Portland since 1770 at least,² but Carlisle, standing on his dignity as usual, seems to have been reluctant to admit the necessity of it, and this reluctance may in turn have been a contributory factor to his desertion of Portland over the Nullum Tempus affair in February 1771. Now he proposed that he and Portland put up one candidate between them at Carlisle.³ But instead Portland arranged a compromise with Lowther. This displeased Carlisle, so Portland, who had often declared that he had intervened in the city's affairs with the single aim of bridling Lowther, now generously offered to resign his interest to the Howards.⁴ Carlisle accepted and put up his close friend, Anthony Storer, for the city. Preparations for the general election of 1774 were therefore complete.

Selwyn was naturally delighted with the arrangements Carlisle had made.

It is a very pleaseing prospect to me, that which you have in respect both to Carlisle and Morpeth. For God's sake don't neglect the reasonable means of securing them this time. They will give you a weight which your family and those whom you wish to assist in the world, must feel the good effects of. I am not so much afraid of your refusing your money as your

1 Benson to Portland, 23 Sept. 1770; Nottingham Univ. Lib., Portland MSS. PWF 420.

2 Nicolson to Portland, 31 Aug. 1770; *ibid.* PWF 7184.

3 Same to same, 24 Oct. 1773; *ibid.* PWF 7191.

4 Bonsall, *op. cit.*, pp. 135-40.

trouble, but I hope it will not be requisite to afford a good deal of either.¹

This letter clearly reveals Selwyn's conception of the value of borough management. For a man like him, of limited liabilities and limited ambitions, the weight he derived from his own electoral interests was quite adequate. Carlisle soon found that in his case the influence he derived from returning three M.P.s was quite insufficient to his needs. Of course, his views extended so much further than Selwyn's and in the later 1770s, as his personal political ambitions began to develop, he found that the influence accruant to him from his provincial political authority was of little use in furthering those ambitions.

But at least at the general election of 1774 all the time, money, effort and damaged reputation paid off. As expected there was a fierce contest at Morpeth where Delmé was elected and Byron seated on petition in January 1775. Later in the year Carlisle gained a favourable verdict in renewed legal proceedings against Eyre. Effectively this meant that the number of freemen could be reduced and the Carlisle interest consequently strengthened.² Indeed Eyre never made another challenge and neither seat was contested again until 1802. As for Carlisle, Storer was elected quite comfortably and it was fairly clear that Portland had virtually given Lord Carlisle a seat. During the following years Carlisle's interest in the city showed so few signs of independent growth that by 1780 he had as little chance of carrying a candidate using his own influence exclusively as he had in 1774. At the general election of 1780 Portland and Lowther were still prepared to uphold the 1774 compromise, but the Howards of Greystoke, now the senior line, wanted to develop their interest

¹ Selwyn to Carlisle, 14 Aug. 1774; C.H.A. J14/1/161.

² Fewster, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-60 passim.

in the person of the Earl of Surrey.¹ One authority describes Carlisle as quietly abandoning the city in the face of this challenge,² but other evidence suggests that he had made his decision to withdraw some time before.³ Whatever the precipitant was, if indeed there was one at all, Carlisle had quite definitely relinquished any idea of increasing his influence at Carlisle. In September 1780, the month of the elections, he wrote to Selwyn :

I consider Carlisle as you consider G~~loucester~~^r, gone, at least till my purse is large enough to recover it, and when it is I hope I shall have too much sense to open it for so silly a purpose... in regard to C~~arlisle~~^e I have nothing to reproach myself with, great attention, and a constant Expenditure might have afforded a fair chance of success tho' I am convinced would not have secured it.⁴

Though not in the most calm and objective frame of mind when he wrote these words, they do reflect his realisation of the folly of diminishing further his already precarious income by vain seeking after the illusory influence provided by the return of three members of Parliament. The year 1780 marked a watershed in his attitude to involvement in parliamentary elections. In that year he began to reap the more substantial benefits of application to business.

1 Charles Howard, Earl of Surrey (1746-1815), only s. of Charles, 10th Duke of Norfolk; M.P. (Carlisle) 1780-6; succ. as 11th Duke, 1786; attached to Foxite Whigs.

2 Namier and Brooke, The House of Commons, 1754-1790, i. 246.

3 Bishop of Durham to Carlisle, 2 Feb. 1780; C.H.A. J14/1/639.

4 Carlisle to Selwyn, 4 Sept. 1780; C.H.A.

Although he had no plans for the future at Carlisle, plans were already being formed in other quarters. Certain people urged to Gregg the advisability of a conjunction with Lord Surrey on a future occasion,¹ but this was totally impracticable as a long and extremely interesting letter to Gregg from Thomas Ramshay, junior, son of the agent at Naworth, showed. The second half ran as follows:

There appears to me not the least Chance for Lord Carlisle to bring in a Stranger on a Conjunction with Lord Surrey even at any expence - probably by a Conjunction with Sir James Lowther in a Case of a Contest his Lordship might effect it but in that case my Lord would lose all the natural Interest he has amongst the Country Gentlemen, and in future would be dependent on Sir James - And as to any Idea of a Separate Interest from both Ld. Surry [sic] & Sir James that cannot answer any end for it appears plain to me that if the opposition is divided against him Sir James must succeed - So upon the whole I cannot see any Chance Lord Carlisle has of Commanding or getting anything of consequence either in the County or City of Carlisle - consequently I think it would be much more elligible [sic] not to Sacrafice [sic] any of His Prosperity on that Account - for without any particular attention Lord Carlisle's property will at all times give him such an Interest as will be Counted by all parties - and depend upon it nothing further can be done with the greatest exertion, without spending a great deal of Money - ²

This prudent advice was taken to heart. Carlisle quietly concentrated on improving his estate until ready to try to win a county seat in 1806.

In the meantime he confined his attention to Morpeth where the situation gradually became more stable as election succeeded election without a contest.

¹ Gregg to Carlisle, 26 Sept. 1780; C.H.A. J14/18/14.

² Ramshay to [Gregg], 29 Aug. 1782; Naworth MSS. C173/125.

The immediate problem in the later 1770s was how to preserve the ground that had been won after the legal and parliamentary defeat of Francis Eyre in 1775. Added to this problem were the usual difficulties caused by the lack of money. Lavish spending at Morpeth in the early 1770s may have won the election in 1774, but it had also contributed to Carlisle's impoverishment. In 1775, as was seen in the first chapter, Carlisle's estates were conveyed to trustees and his own income was fixed at a standard annual rate. So, naturally, the sort of methods Lavie had used to keep the freemen in good humour were inconceivable now. Not only that, but Carlisle felt that he was morally obliged to his trustees not to overspend¹. This feeling effectively inhibited him where Morpeth was concerned and other methods of retaining control had to be found.

Essentially these fell under two heads : an end to financial concessions; and the deliberate avoidance of frequent elections. An important element in Lavie's strategy had been the letting of farms to pliable freemen at concessionary rates. Presumably after Lavie was dismissed a stop was put to this and to other over-generous practices. There is not much evidence for this except two revealing passages, the first in a letter from Francis Gregg to Carlisle, describing his annual visit to the borough in 1781. He visited the houses of every individual freemen 'as it has always been my constant custom,' and he entertained the bailiffs and aldermen as usual.

As I had taken the precaution a few weeks before I went there to have it understood among them that nothing was to be expected for the present, I found everything very peaceable and quiet & not the least appearance of disappointment. Indeed I never remember to have visited

¹ National Library of Scotland, MS. 13337 (Minto MSS.); Carlisle to Sir Gilbert Elliot, 3 Feb. 1777.

the Borough with fewer clamours against me, and upon the whole I am rather surprized, at the great confidence that is placed in your Lordship's Agents, as we have been so long in paying them the usual compliment.¹

The second passage, from a much later period, is to be found in a letter from Carlisle of 1807, in which he gives advice to Lord Fitzwilliam about repairing his interest at Malton :

I am convinced you must act with firmness, & all will be recovered. I have done so at Morpeth, & taking my full rents have precisely the same influence I had when I was such a dupe as to make every injurious sacrifice.²

It is important to remember, however, that such a policy was not blindly pursued without consideration of its political consequences. Though a few years outside the period under discussion, it is interesting to note that the agent at Morpeth wrote in 1818,

I have as has been done last year made a general deduction of 10 per Cent [in rents] supposing you might think proper to keep the Freemen in good humour at present being on the eve of a general election.³

When this was written, times were certainly hard, but the agent stressed that the tenants had no other claim to an abatement of rent than as freemen. In the early days such a policy cannot have been without its risks, but it was then absolutely essential if Carlisle was to pay off his debts. Solvency was a higher

1 Gregg to Carlisle, 2 Nov. 1781; C.H.A. J14/18/17.

2 Carlisle to Fitzwilliam, 9 Aug. 1807; Sheffield Central Library, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, F72/24.

3 Report on Morpeth estate by [? Edward Lawson], 17 Feb. 1818; Naworth MSS. N52/3.

priority than electoral influence.¹ In order to preserve as much of this influence as cheaply as possible it was also vital to avoid frequent elections, which provided the determined invader with the opportunity to force a contest, and contests were never cheap. Without frequent elections, in Gregg's opinion, 'the Borough is almost as secure as if it were a Burgage Tenure.'² Indeed, a well-informed contemporary observer informed Carlisle that from the list of 150 freemen who resided in the borough, 130 had promised to vote for Carlisle's candidate at the election in 1777, and the votes of the freemen living outside the borough would be five to one in his favour.³

It was fortunate that such a large majority of the Morpeth freemen were so well-disposed, for on two occasions within six months of each other Carlisle was faced with election crises at Morpeth. The first occasion was potentially the most alarming. On 22 June 1776 William Byron died quite suddenly and his seat remained vacant for ten anxious days before a suitable candidate could be found, sent down to Morpeth and fortunately elected without opposition. The new M.P. was Gilbert Elliot.⁴ The second crisis was created by the death of Elliot's father at Marseilles six months later on 11 January 1777. Elliot,

1 What evidence for expenditure there is tends to support this, for it does seem to have been kept low. Aside from the standing annual charges, such as £50 annual salary to the election agent, subscriptions to the Races and to local charities, which in all amounted to over £100 p.a., the upkeep of the borough ran at about £170 p.a., and the cost of an uncontested election for one seat declined from £303-17-18½ in 1777 to about £250-270 for the remainder of the century. It is impossible to make any calculations for the 1774 election at Morpeth, or for any elections for Carlisle or for Cumberland.

2 Gregg to Carlisle, 1 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/18/9.

3 R. Fenwick to Carlisle, 12 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/1/638.

4 Gilbert Elliot (1751-1814); M.P. (Morpeth) 1776-7, and for other constituencies, 1777-84, 1786-95; Governor-General of India, 1806-13; cr. Baron Minto, 1797, Earl of Minto, 1813.

now fourth baronet, wished to succeed his father as M.P. for Roxburghshire on the family interest, but offered to remain at Morpeth if Carlisle thought a vacancy there would weaken his control of the borough.¹ Carlisle wished to be able to release him if he could, but was not able to find a suitable replacement and was forced to tell Elliot 'that your vacating your seat at this time may and probably will materially affect my interests at Morpeth...'² But Elliot replied to this with a compromise, which was accepted. It was to this effect : that another candidate should be sent down to Morpeth, but, if it looked as though he was going to meet with an opposition, Elliot would not vacate his seat.³ The new man was Captain John Egerton,⁴ who was safely elected on 20 February.

The above are the briefest details of the elections of 1776 and 1777, but they suggest very strongly the difficulties Carlisle encountered in selecting suitable candidates. This was principally due to the strict conditions of acceptance, which had to be met by any prospective member, laid down by Carlisle and his friends. At this time, if an M.P. accepted an office of profit under the Crown, his election was automatically rendered null and void and he had to undergo re-election, which could be dangerous. As a sine qua non for an aspirant member, Carlisle therefore insisted on an absolute undertaking not to vacate the seat for any reason whatsoever. Neither James Mansfield,⁵ curiously, leading counsel for Eyre in his petition against William

1 Elliot to Carlisle, 29 Jan. 1777; C.H.A. J14/1/633.

2 Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. 13337; Carlisle to Elliot, 7 Feb. 1777.

3 The document is dated 10 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/1/635. There is a copy in the Minto MSS.

4 John William Egerton (1753-1823); M.P. (Morpeth) 1777-80, (Brackley) 1780-1803; succeeded his cousin as 7th Earl of Bridgewater, 1803.

5 James Mansfield (1734-1821); M.P. (Cambridge University) 1779-84; Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, 1804-14.

Byron in 1775,¹ nor Sir Ralph Payne,² who were both offered the seat before Elliot, were able to give such an undertaking. Elliot was, and was duly elected. Storer particularly remembered Elliot's father telling him 'that his son had no views of any place & that a vacancy was not at all to be apprehended.'³

Later on this rigorous stipulation was relaxed.⁴ In 1784, for example, Sir James Erskine⁵ was elected for Morpeth even though he made his own condition that he be free to contest the county of Fife at the first vacancy there. By then, of course, Carlisle was less encumbered financially, and his control of the borough was more secure than it had been. Nevertheless his basic criteria for choosing men to represent Morpeth did not change. In 1777, when the search was being made to find a replacement for Elliot, Storer wrote to Carlisle,

... whom would you chuse for Morpeth? Macaroni, Lawyer or Esquire - one ought to send you a Bill of fare that you may chuse y^r Man - I told Gregg the best thing he could do, would be to make a list of various persons, that you might take y^r choice.⁶

But Gregg was able to recommend only one man, a man of business whom he thought Carlisle might remember from Eton.⁷ Indeed, Gregg, Storer, and some

1 Newcastle Journal, 4 Feb. 1775.

2 Sir Ralph Payne (1739-1807); M.P. at various times between 1768 and 1799; Clerk of Board of Green Cloth, 1777-82; Governor of Leeward Islands, 1771-5, 1799-1807; cr. Baron Lavington, 1795.

3 Storer to Carlisle, 13 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/1/372.

4 Fewster, op. cit., pp. 557-8.

5 For details, see above, p. 103 n.6.

6 Storer to Carlisle, 2 6 Feb. 1777; Naworth MSS. N51/4.

7 Gregg to Carlisle, 6 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/18/11.

others of Carlisle's friends, all shared the same opinion, that Carlisle should bring in a man of business for Morpeth.¹ But Carlisle never agreed. During his lifetime no man of business ever sat for Morpeth in that capacity. His chief agent, Francis Gregg, sat for the borough from 1789 to 1795, but only as a replacement for Delmé, who died in August 1789, and as caretaker member until Lord Morpeth came of age in 1794. It is clear, judging by the crop of candidates raised by the crises of 1776 and 1777, and by those subsequently considered or elected for Morpeth, that Carlisle always favoured a relation or a close friend, or, failing that, someone with whom he had some personal connection.² His preferences remained the same even when the dangers of re-election had receded into the distance.

In 1776 and 1777 Carlisle and his friends considered in all fourteen men in connection with Morpeth, of whom two were actually elected. Of these fourteen, at least five were suggested by Carlisle himself, and all of these were close friends or relations, except one, a lawyer, who was approached in desperation. In toto, of these fourteen, only three,³ two lawyers and one man of business, were completely unknown to Carlisle and recommended by their professional reputations alone. The remainder, eleven in all,⁴ were more or less connected with him in some way, five of them being relations. From the representation of Morpeth at a slightly later stage the same picture appears. Of the seven M.P.s who represented Morpeth from 1780 to 1807, three were members of Carlisle's family,⁵ while the other four were all closely connected to him in other obvious

1 Ibid. 4 Feb. 1777; C.H.A. J14/18/10.

2 Fewster, op. cit., p. 557.

3 J. Mansfield, A. Macdonald, J. Sargent.

4 J. Hare, T. Duncombe, Sir R. Payne, G. Elliot, J. Egerton, Boothby, W. Waldegrave, P- MS. illegible, J. Walker Heneage, Sir C. Cope, C. Crowle (relations underlined).

5 P. Delmé, Lord Morpeth, W. Howard.

ways.¹ Three further men during this period were considered as candidates. Two of these were friends² and the third a relation.³

That Carlisle should make such obviously personal choices in the 1770s, and perhaps early 1780s, was a perfectly natural result of the condition of the borough at the time. Career men were dangerous. Unambitious friends and relations were much safer, and the choice of a candidate from among these served two ends : it contributed to the security of the family interest; and it retained the family character of that interest, which was extremely important at a time when voters often resented the introduction of unknown outsiders. But even when Morpeth was restored to its early eighteenth century character of a virtual pocket borough, it is noticeable that Carlisle continued to choose the same sort of men, and it was only a matter of chance that one member subsequently achieved eminence.

With one exception there is no evidence that Carlisle generally ever expected anything more from the members he returned than loyalty in the House

1 A. Storer, Sir J. Erskine, F. Gregg, W. Huskisson.

2 A. Stuart, T. Grenville.

3 P. Delmé.

of Commons. Storer¹ was the exception. It would seem that Carlisle, and Selwyn too, expected him to make an impression on public life by acquiring a reputation as a speaker and by attending closely on parliamentary business,² especially after Lord North had inconvenienced himself to oblige Carlisle by appointing Storer a Lord of Trade.³ But although Storer put in a fairly regular appearance at the Board of Trade,⁴ probably in order to

1 Incidentally the author of the entry for Storer in Namier and Brooke, The House of Commons, 1754 - 1790, knew that he was employed by the Fox-North coalition in 1783, but not in what capacity. In fact he was appointed secretary to the Master-General of the Ordnance. Though his tenure of the office was too brief to be noticed in contemporary published registers, Ordnance records show that he received two quarters salary for April to September 1783, amounting to £110:P.R.O. , War Office Papers, series 48, vol. 127, ff.150,590; Accounts of the Treasurer and Paymaster of the Ordnance.

2 Selwyn to Carlisle, [25 Nov. 1775]; C.H.A. J14/1/198.

3 Carlisle to Selwyn, 5 Nov. 1781, and North to Carlisle, 13 Aug. 1781; C.H.A. J14/44/F/8.

4 Namier and Brooke, The House of Commons 1754-1790, iii. 487.

please Carlisle, he was incurably idle and by no means suited to the regular habits of business or regular parliamentary activity; and incidentally, it may be for this reason that he recommended in 1777 a man of business to sit for Morpeth. Such a man would relieve him of the tedious business of presenting Carlisle's enclosure petitions and the like. It may also be that it was the increasing demands which Carlisle made on Storer which contributed to their separation in 1783.

In the main Carlisle's other members were asked only for attendance on important occasions and for political loyalty. Considering their personal relationships with their patron these were not unreasonable demands and in all cases except one they were satisfactorily met. It was very probably political differences, for example, that caused the separation between Carlisle and William Huskisson,¹ who sat for Morpeth from 1796 to 1802. In early 1796 Lord Gower informed Carlisle that Huskisson, his ex-private secretary, was looking out for a seat in Parliament. The offer of Morpeth was duly made.² When thinking over Carlisle's offer, Huskisson turned to Henry Dundas, his chief in the War Office, for advice. Dundas replied in these words:

Considering... the connexion you are in with me and consequently with Mr. Pitt, I think it would be right for you to explain to Lord Carlisle that if any quibble of general politicks should ever put you into a situation to differ with him, you would not feel yourself at liberty to retain the Seat. The event is I think a very unlikely one but it is always best to stand perfectly clear on points of that kind.³

1 William Huskisson (1770-1830); M.P. (Morpeth) 1796-1802, and thereafter for other boroughs; acted as something very near to a man of business while sitting for Morpeth; very useful to Carlisle as a junior member of the Government (Under Secretary at War, 1795-1801) and as a contact with Pitt.

2 Addit. MSS. 38734, f. 229; Carlisle to Huskisson, n.d.

3 Ibid., ff. 171-2; Dundas to Huskisson, 2 Apr. 1796.

Huskisson, however, did differ with Carlisle over their political views after Pitt's resignation in 1801. Carlisle, as we know, took up a position of implacable hostility to Addington, which was too extreme for Huskisson to accept. Carlisle was forced to make an unequivocal and deliberate statement of his position in December 1801.

Lest I should not have explained myself clearly, I repeat that I deprecated the formation of an Administration of untried Men when we were in difficulties, because I thought such an administration must at least at its outset be weak & we were in want of a strong one.¹

This letter marks the close of the first stage of the surviving correspondence between Carlisle and Huskisson and precipitated their separation in 1802, when Huskisson did not stand again for Morpeth. Before parting with Huskisson, however, it is worth pointing out that he was the only M.P. selected by Carlisle to achieve real fame, as a luminary on financial and commercial questions, not to mention the unfortunate accident which resulted in his death. This being so, it is difficult to accept even the cautious claim of the historian of Morpeth's politics and administration in the later eighteenth century that, judged by the calibre of its members, the borough was at this time one of Sir Lewis Namier's 'waiting-rooms for rising men.'² On the contrary, it was a source of prestige exclusively preserved for relations and friends, of whom nothing much was expected, and who did indeed, by and large, achieve very little.

Having completed this survey of the members it now only remains to carry the history of the borough of Morpeth up to 1807 and to investigate the circum-

1 Addit. MSS. 38736, ff. 349-50; Carlisle to Huskisson, 3 Dec. 1801.

2 Fewster, op. cit., p. 558.

stances of the entrance of the Howards of Naworth into the representation of the county of Cumberland.

Morpeth remained quiet until 1802 when William Ord,¹ member of a prominent local family and great-great-nephew of Robert Ord, one of Carlisle's guardians, who had himself sat for Morpeth from 1741 to 1755 on the Carlisle interest, contested a seat. Ord took advantage of his local family interest, and perhaps capitalised also on opposition to aristocratic, and particularly Howard, control existing below the surface in Morpeth. He may also have benefited from a decline in the traditional Howard family influence in the borough after the election of 1796. Two things suggest that this had been taking place : first, a series of land sales, beginning in 1794, which may have reduced the number of freemen-tenants over whom the family had influence; and secondly, an increase in the number of financial gifts or 'compliments' to freemen, beginning in May 1797 and continuing for the next three or four years,² which suggests that the family was having to buttress an interest in which had appeared disturbing cracks. Lastly Ord may have had the advantage of surprise.

He certainly did not spare himself on the canvass : 'I hear nothing ever equalled Mr. Ord's diligence & efforts,' Lady Morpeth wrote to her husband,³ and indeed he managed to come second in the poll, ousting the Carlisles' second candidate.⁴ Carlisle had learnt his lesson since the 1770s and was not inclined

1 William Ord (1781-1855); M.P. (Morpeth) 1802-32, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne) 1835-52.

2 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Feb.-July 1797 and June-Dec. 1800; C.H.A.

3 Lady Morpeth to Lord Morpeth, [?] July 1802; C.H.A.

4 At the close of the poll the votes stood thus : Lord Morpeth, 129; Ord, 115; Delmé, 97; J. Hodgson, A History of Northumberland (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1827-35), II, ii. 534.

now to waste time and money on recovering the lost seat. Instead, with the assistance of Charles Grey, later second Earl Grey, another local man, an agreement was made between Morpeth and Ord to assist each other to the exclusion of any third candidate, or, as Ord himself put it,

The agreement between Lord Morpeth & myself is one rather of mutual forbearance than of mutual assistance it being utterly impossible that the persons who supported me at the last Election should ever become supporters of Lord Carlisle's interest if I were ever so much inclined to make them so.¹

At the 1806 general election, William Howard, Carlisle's second son, was put up on the Carlisle interest. Gregg wrote to Ord to have the agreement, which had been reached with Lord Morpeth, put into effect on Howard's behalf.

I have taken the liberty of writing to you by the desire of Lord Howick² (whom I have had the honour of seeing) in order that the agreement between Lord Morpeth and yourself respecting your future interest in the Borough of Morpeth may be carried into effect - Every assistance should be mutually rendered for insuring the return of both Candidates & as a joint canvass might be very prejudicial, a separate one shall immediately be made for Mr. Wm. Howard with instructions to give every assistance secretly to you, and I trust you will give the same instructions to your agents - An apparent junction would be very prejudicial.³

1 Ord to Gregg, copy, 22 Oct. 1806; C.H.A. For a tentative dating of this agreement to somewhere between autumn 1803 and autumn 1804, see below, p.240.

2 Charles Grey was styled Viscount Howick from 1806 to 1807.

3 Gregg to Ord, copy, 22 Oct. 1806; C.H.A.

Ord could not afford a contest and so agreed to the compromise, but would not give secret instructions to his supporters lest it provoke them to raise an opposition.¹ Gregg suspected Ord's motives, but in fact his caution was most prudent. The arrangement worked satisfactorily in 1806, and thereafter the borough was shared between Howard and Ord for many years to come, indeed, beyond Frederick, Earl of Carlisle's time. There was some opposition at the general election of 1807 when one Colonel Michael Symes,² lately returned from India, attempted a canvass, but he declined a poll because of lack of support. Ord estimated it at thirty votes and no more.³

In Cumberland, far from losing ground, the Howards of Naworth began to make it up. In the 1780s and 1790s, it is true, they took little interest in either the city of Carlisle or the county. Indeed, as far as the city was concerned, Carlisle's decision to withdraw in 1780 became permanent policy. In 1781 Gregg had thought 'it still worthwhile to continue the appearance of an Attention to the Freemen where it can be done without expence,'⁴ but by 1806 Carlisle was still determined to 'have nothing to do with Carlisle.'⁵ A county seat was much more of an attraction to him. The Carlisles remained, of course, one of the leading families in the county, receiving, in 1804, a landed rental of £12,000 p.a. from the county. Since 1796 at least Carlisle had been planning to utilise this wasted interest by putting up Morpeth for

1 Ord to Gregg, copy, 22 Oct. 1806; C.H.A.

2 Michael Symes (1753?-1809); M.P. (Carlow Borough) 1806, (Heytesbury) 1807; soldier and diplomatist.

3 Lady Morpeth to Lord Morpeth, [7 May 1807], and 'Tuesday'; C.H.A.

4 Gregg to Carlisle, 2 Nov. 1781; C.H.A. J14/18/17.

5 Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, [1 Nov. 1806]; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/53.

one of the Knights of the Shire of Cumberland. Sitting for the county would be more prestigious for him and it would release another seat at Morpeth. But because Carlisle was not yet prepared to contemplate disturbing the old compromise of 1774, which divided the representation of the county between the Lowthers and the independent country gentlemen, or the Yellows and the Blues as they were known, Lord Morpeth was not able to stand for the county until one or other of the sitting members vacated his seat. To this situation the declining health of the popular independent champion Sir Henry Fletcher, who had sat for the county since 1768, was obviously very pertinent. The state of his health was therefore closely observed at Castle Howard.

In the autumn of 1803 the Bishop of Carlisle heard that Fletcher was dying. Having also heard that Sir James Graham¹ of Netherby had decided not to offer himself in the event of a vacancy and that the only probable candidate would be John Christian Curwen,² the Bishop wrote to Carlisle with the news. His response was that Morpeth would not be able to take advantage of any vacancy in the representation of Cumberland at this time because of unspecified difficulties concerning the borough of Morpeth. It may be that the existence of these difficulties indicated that the agreement with William Ord had not yet been made. But by the autumn of 1804 when Carlisle and the Bishop again talked of Cumberland affairs, Morpeth appears to have overcome the difficulties which impeded him the previous year; and, although the situation

1 Sir James Graham, 1st Bt. (1761-1824); he had become a relation of the Gowers', and therefore of Carlisle's, by marrying into the Stewarts, Earls of Galloway.

2 John Christian Curwen (1756-1828); M.P. (Carlisle) 1786-90, 1791-1812, 1816-20, (Cumberland) 1820-8; assumed additional name of Curwen in 1790 through marriage; an enduring opponent of the Lowthers.

in Cumberland had not changed since then, Carlisle did at least urge the Bishop to approach Lord Lowther¹ in order to discover his probable reaction to Morpeth's candidature.²

The old Lord of Lowther had died in 1802 since when tension in Cumberland had relaxed somewhat. There was certainly now no real bar to an alliance between the Howards and the Lowthers, an alliance which Carlisle was anxious to obtain as Morpeth's success or failure depended on Lowther's attitude. In 1804, however, Lowther had doubts about Carlisle's opposition to Pitt, and about possible ties between Carlisle and Morpeth on the one hand, and Devonshire House, Fox and the Prince of Wales on the other.³ But by September 1806 when Morpeth decided to stand for the county, even though Fletcher had neither died nor retired, Lowther's doubts, thanks chiefly to the Bishop of Carlisle's soothing assurances, had been largely overcome. The Bishop told Carlisle that Lowther felt 'it would be a desirable thing for him to have a parliamentary (without relation to politics) connection with yourself & Ld. Stafford.'⁴ But Lowther's support was at first so diffident that it amounted to little more than neutrality. He was worried first by the unexpected number of declarations in Fletcher's favour, and then by the projected visit of the Prince of Wales to Castle Howard. Lowther was so disturbed by the Prince's sympathy with Roman Catholics that the Bishop was forced to assure him that of

1 Lowther, William Lowther, 2nd Viscount (1757-1844); M.P. (Carlisle) 1780-4, (Cumberland) 1784-90, (Rutland) 1796-1802; succeeded to the Viscountcy on the death of his cousin James, 1st Earl of Lonsdale, in 1802.

2 Bishop of Carlisle to Lowther, 5 Oct. [1804]; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/45.

3 Same to same, 10 Oct., 17 Nov., [1804]; Lowther to Bishop of Carlisle, copy, 11 Sept. 1804; *ibid.* D. Lons. L/CL22/46, 60, 41.

4 Bishop of Carlisle to Carlisle, 21 Sept. [1806]; C.H.A. J14/1/516.

the inhabitants of Castle Howard only Frederick, Carlisle's third son and a captain in the Prince's regiment, the 10th Hussars, was really attached to him.

Ld. C- lives in no habits of intimacy with the Prince - so little indeed is he at home in his society, that it was for the sole purpose of relieving himself from it that he wished Frederic [k] to return to him at this time, & as for Ld. M [orpeth] he most certainly is not in H.R.Hs train.¹

Lowther was not reassured : he continued to oscillate, being 'quite steady' one moment and wavering again the next. But Morpeth had a large amount of popular support; the interest of the Duke of Devonshire had been mobilised on his behalf thanks to the intercession of Lady Morpeth;² and the Carlisles could muster nearly 700 votes from amongst their own tenantry.³ Other interests, such as those of Sir James Graham, whose baronetcy had been solicited of Lord Shelburne by Carlisle in 1783,⁴ and of the Bishop of Carlisle, would, along with single votes, make up the numbers so long as Lowther remained true. On election day Fletcher was proposed from the hustings and a poll demanded, but he withdrew seeing that his cause was hopeless.⁵ Morpeth and the Yellow candidate, yet another Lowther, were returned, Morpeth continuing to sit for the county until 1820.

1 Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, [? 29 Oct. 1806]; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/51.

2 Lady Morpeth to Lord Morpeth, 24 Oct., 30 Oct., [1806]; C.H.A.

3 Bishop of Carlisle to Lord Lowther, [26 Oct. 1806]; Carlisle R.O., Lowther MSS. D. Lons. L/CL22/49.

4 Carlisle to Shelburne, 8 Nov. 1782; W.L. Clements Library, Shelburne-Lacaita Papers.

5 Ferguson, Cumberland and Westmorland M.P.'s, p. 219.

VIII

THE PURSUITS OF AN ENGLISH NOBLEMAN

'The pursuits of an English nobleman,' Sydney Smith¹ decided in 1819, 'should be Politics, Elegant Literature and Agriculture.'² Carlisle's political life has already been examined in some detail, but literature and agriculture, Smith would have been pleased to find, also occupied his time. Between 1773 and 1820 he wrote, printed and on some occasions published poems, plays and pamphlets, though never with much more success than being praised as a nobleman who made better use of his time than did many others of his rank.³ An interest in agriculture came with middle-age, probably prompted both by the need to produce more food more cheaply during the years of scarcity in the mid-1790s, and, following on from this, by a desire to encourage improved farming among the estate tenants. To these ends was established on the estate in 1796 a new institution known as 'Lord Carlisle's Farm', on which was erected in subsequent years a threshing machine and grinding mill, a bone mill, a malt kiln and malt rollers.⁴ At Michaelmas 1798 was begun the practice of awarding prizes

1 Rev. Sydney Smith (1771-1845); Rector of Roston, near Castle Howard, 1806-29, and Canon of St. Pauls; outspoken Whig and wit.

2 Smith to Carlisle, 29 Aug. 1819; C.H.A. J14/1/475.

3 For a complete list of his literary productions, see the British Library Catalogue under Howard, Frederick, Fifth Earl of Carlisle.

4 'Particulars of Lord Carlisle's farm,' 1795-6; C.H.A. F4/9/45 : Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1806-7, 1808-9; C.H.A. F4/9/46, 48.

for the best sheep and cattle produced on the estate.¹ In the following years agricultural societies and journals were subscribed to, but it is impossible to calculate the overall effects of this encouragement of farming improvements. In any case, though agriculture and certainly literature were of personal interest to Carlisle, his leadership in the county, his improvements at Castle Howard, and his connections with the Byron family are more worthy of attention.

It is a striking fact that although his politics of his mature years suggested the character and outlook of a country gentleman, Carlisle fitted ill into country society. This may have been because his locality was sparsely populated with peers, as it was. It may also have been owing to his natural pride, and to the fact that he made little effort to cultivate close social contacts among his fellow landed proprietors because of his awkwardness at first meetings. Certainly he is on record in his twenties as saying that there was little good company in the county.² Indeed, throughout all the available records of his life, there appear only two instances of his making social visits to his neighbours in Yorkshire. An exception may be made in the case of Sydney Smith, Rector of Foston near Castle Howard. Carlisle called on him at his newly-built rectory in the late summer of 1814,³ and a warm, though not intimate friendship was struck up. They even seem to have shared a copy of the Edinburgh Review. But apart from Smith, Carlisle

1 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1798-9; C.H.A. F4/9/38. See The Times, 4 Oct. 1803.

2 Carlisle to Selwyn, 10 Sept. 1775; C.H.A.

3 Carlisle to Morpeth, 15/16 Aug. [1814]; C.H.A. The visit was not made in 1815 as is commonly thought.

made few, if any, good friends in the locality. This isolation was, as we have seen, reflected in his negligible political standing in the county. But through involvement in county activities from the 1780s onwards he became better known and his local credit, as it were, rose accordingly.

In February 1780 Lord North dismissed the Marquis of Carmarthen from the Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire and appointed Carlisle in his place.¹ Though Castle Howard stood in the North Riding, the estate almost abutted on to the boundary with the East Riding, and Carlisle owned a relatively small amount of land there too. So he was not an unnatural choice as a replacement. But Carmarthen had been a popular Lord Lieutenant and many of the leading gentry of the Riding shared his support of the recently inaugurated economical reform movement, which support was the reason for his dismissal. In some quarters, his removal was received with outrage. One Deputy-Lieutenant said he would resign, while Sir Robert Hildyard,² one of the original members of the Committee of the Yorkshire Association, wrote to a sympathetic neighbour :

I am sure you wou'd be sorry to see that Ld Carmarthen was so ill treated by Ministry by taking away his Lieutenancy, & depriving us of a Man we all liked, merely because he show'd a good Conscience, approv'd our Petition & Found this Country must be undone by the present Ministers. I fancy you do not much approve of his Successor, he is a Sensible Young Man, but I fear has too much Pride for the Independent Gentlemen of the East Riding.³

¹ See above, p. 99.

² Sir Robert Hildyard, 3rd Bt. (1716-81), of Winestead, E. Yorks.; M.P. (Great Bedwyn), 1754-61.

³ J. Courtney to J. Grimston, 19 Feb. 1780, and Hildyard to the same, 25 Feb. 1780; Humberside C.R.O., Grimston MSS. DDGR/42/30.

Fortunately, on this appointment, Carlisle cannot have found much need for contact with these independent gentlemen. The invasion scares and mobilisation of militia and volunteers in the summer of 1779 were not repeated in 1780, and for all but ten of his twenty-six month tenure he was away in Ireland. On his second appointment, however, the situation was very different.

In February 1799, Carlisle was again appointed Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding, in place of the Duke of Leeds, formerly Lord Carmarthen, who had been restored to his old post when the Whigs came to power in 1782. To some extent Pitt was expressing his thanks for Carlisle's political support since the end of 1792, but he was also Leeds' natural successor after the events of 1780-82. Now, however, the position was not one of honour only, but involved considerable responsibilities concerning the organisation of the internal defence of the county against the threat of an invasion from France. The East Riding was not expected to receive the first onslaught of the French invasion forces, but it was a maritime county and as such required special attention. As Lord Morpeth discovered in September 1803, when he was forced to act as secretary and amanuensis to his father when he fell ill, the position of Lord Lieutenant was 'not quite a sinecure, especially with regard to the Volunteers.'¹ The extent of the Lord Lieutenant's official correspondence at this time shows that the burden of work must at certain times have been onerous, and as he was also prominent in the New Opposition, it is hardly surprising that his health gave way in the early part of the new century.

Apart from interpreting the plethora of new volunteer regulations, Carlisle's main problem in 1803 was to procure sufficient arms to meet the flood of offers from those willing to raise companies of volunteers.² By the levée en masse

¹ Morpeth to G. Canning, 12 Sept. 1803; Leeds Archives Department, Harwood Archives, Canning MSS. Bundle 64.

² For some account of the volunteer movement in the East Riding during Carlisle's lieutenancy, see R. Norfolk, Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteer Forces of the East Riding, 1689-1808 (E. Yorks. Local History Series, no. 19 : E. Yorks. Local History Soc., 1965).

Act of July 1803, Addington's Government had issued an appeal to the British people to rise up in defence of their country. Carlisle fully approved of this appeal, but thought it so tardy and so rushed that, owing to lack of time to make adequate preparations, the Government would not be able to take full advantage of the response.¹ To some extent he was right. In the early stages of this renewed volunteer activity of 1803 he did find it extremely difficult to meet the demand for arms. The problem in his eyes appeared to be a lack of communication between the Board of Ordnance, which provided the arms, and the War Office, which ordered them. This confusion he attributed privately to the overall inefficiency and weakness of Addington's Government, but at the same time he showed himself anxious to assure the Government that he would not seek to make political capital out of the administrative tangles he encountered in his official position as an apolitical servant of the Government. 'In truth,' he told a senior official in the War Office in 1803, 'it has been my industry to smooth a variety of difficulties, owing to the cause I have alluded to.'²

In early July 1807 Carlisle resigned as Lord Lieutenant because of 'inconvenient local situation & frequent interruptions of necessary duties from precarious health.'³ His landed stake in the East Riding had been disposed of some years before. Beverley, the county town where general meetings were held, was a long, hard ride of more than thirty miles over the Wolds, a journey which became increasingly difficult for him to undertake as his health declined. On at least two occasions, early September to mid December 1803, and August to

1 Addit. MSS. 41854, f. 109; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 4 Aug. 1803.

2 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 38239 (Liverpool Papers), f. 263; Carlisle to -, 12 Dec. 1803.

3 Carlisle to [?] Lord Hawkesbury, draft, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/78/7.

September 1804, Morpeth had been forced to act as his father's secretary owing to illness, and in 1806-7 his health deteriorated badly. In short, the job had become too taxing.

Nearly four years before his resignation as Lord Lieutenant he had been forced to suspend his own active military rôle in the Volunteer Movement. This formative stage in the history of this movement had begun in 1794 in response to the threat of invasion posed by the French war. From the beginning, Morpeth played a prominent part in it, being captain of one of the only two troops of yeomanry cavalry in the North Riding.¹ But until 1798 Carlisle's contribution to the internal defence of the country had been made in financial and administrative terms only. He had thought about raising a troop of light artillery or disciplining a corps of riflemen, but never found the time.² Instead he subscribed £100 annually to the North Riding volunteer organisation;³ he gave £4,000 to the patriotic subscription of early 1798;⁴ and, presumably because his town house was in Grosvenor Place, he sat on the committee of the Loyal Pimlico Volunteers,⁵ a particularly fashionable and élite corps, largely because Buckingham Palace lay within its district. Huskisson served in it,⁶ and Lady Carlisle had presented it with its colours.⁷

1 M. Ashcroft, To Escape the Monster's Clutches (N. Yorks. R.O. Publications, no. 15 : N. Yorks. County Council, 1977), pp. 21, 41.

2 Addit. MSS. 38735, f. 191; Carlisle to Huskisson, n.d.

3 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1795-6; C.H.A. F4/9/35.

4 York Chronicle, 15 Feb., 1 Mar., 1798. The servants at Castle Howard subscribed £40.

5 R. Berry, A History of the Formation and Development of the Volunteer Infantry (London, 1903), p. 69.

6 P.R.O., Home Office Papers, Series 50, vol. 42, unfoliated; a letter of 5 May 1798.

7 Rev. W. Butler, A Discourse addressed to the Loyal Pimlico Volunteers previous to Receiving Their Colours from... The Countess of Carlisle, in the Rotunda at Ranelagh House, May 20, 1799 (Pimlico, 1799), pp. x-xi.

But Carlisle felt that he was not doing enough to assist the national cause. He wished to make some serious offer to the Government, but did not know what form it should take, until, in April 1798, the Government began to urge the formation of further volunteer corps in order to strengthen the country's internal defence.¹ This was exactly the sort of spur which Carlisle and many others needed. To Henry Dundas at the War Office he immediately made the following offer :

To raise at my expense a company of rifle men consisting of sixty, to serve anywhere within the northern district in which the men so raised shall reside. The clothing to be furnished by me, also carriages & horses for quick conveyance in cases that require immediate exertion. Government to supply arms viz a rifle & Bayonet for each man.

To be allowed from Government a Sergt. to instruct the men.

I conceive it not unusual to request to have the nomination of two officers under me subject to the approbation of the Lord Lieutenant.²

The King, to whom Dundas communicated Carlisle's offer, accepted it immediately,³ and Carlisle thus had the honour for the North Riding of making the first offer of a company of infantrymen under the new establishment.⁴ He now had to find officers, men and equipment for his corps, known as the Castle Howard Riflemen.

1 Ashcroft, op. cit., p. 42.

2 P.R.O., Home Office Papers, Series 50, vol. 346, unfoliated; Carlisle to Lord Fauconberg, 27 Apr. 1798, enclosed in Fauconberg to Dundas, 28 Apr. 1798.

3 P.R.O., War Office Papers, Series 6, vol. 197, ff. 214-16; Dundas to Carlisle, 28 Apr. 1798.

4 Ashcroft, op. cit., p. 49.

The composition of the officer corps presented one or two problems, but was eventually monopolised totally by members of the Carlisle family or its relations. Carlisle immediately appointed himself captain,¹ and Major Frederick Delmé, of his brother-in-law's family, first lieutenant.² Their commissions were both dated 10 May 1798. Delmé, who may already have been an officer in the regular army, probably only took his commission in Carlisle's corps to assist with its preliminary organisation and establishment, for he had resigned by 5 August,³ making way for another Delmé, Cornelius, or possible Emilius Henry, who was commissioned as first lieutenant on 29 August 1798.⁴ In September 1801 this Delmé also resigned and was succeeded by Lord Morpeth,⁵ who was released for infantry service by the demise of his cavalry troop, which appears to have been defunct by July 1801.⁶ Arguably the most important officer in the Castle Howard Riflemen was, paradoxically, the most junior, namely, the ensign, because he was supposed to be somebody permanently resident in the area, and at times the only officer left with the men. As expected it was not easy to find a suitable ensign, or second lieutenant, as he was invariably known.⁷ It was hoped that John Kendall of Barton-le-Street, who later, in the 1803 establishment, became lieutenant in the Barton-le-Street

1 List of the Officers of the... Corps and Companies of Volunteer Infantry (London, 1799), p. 453.

2 H.O. 50/346; Fauconberg to Portland, 2 May 1798.

3 Ibid., Fauconberg to Dundas, 5 Aug. 1798.

4 List of the Officers, 1799, p. 453.

5 P.R.O., Home Office Papers, Series 51, vol. 61, ff. 187-8; Lord Pelham to Fauconberg, 8 Oct. 1801.

6 Ashcroft, op. cit., p. 62.

7 York City Library, Acc. 54 (Munby MSS.): 110; Carlisle to Rev. John Forth, 12 May 1798.

Yeomanry Cavalry,¹ would offer himself,² but he remained silent at this stage. Instead, then, Carlisle had to commission as ensign his second son, William, later M.P. for Morpeth, but at this time only seventeen and a half years of age.³ There were no more changes in the officers of the Riflemen as constituted in 1798.

Picking responsible and conscientious officers was probably the aspect of volunteering in which Carlisle took most interest. Other tasks were entrusted to his agents, Francis Gregg⁴ in London and the Rev. John Forth⁵ at Castle Howard. Gregg paid for officers' commissions, bought such accoutrements as cartridge pouches, and purchased material from which the green⁶ uniforms of the Riflemen were made up.⁷ Forth was instructed to find a safe place in the house for the arms and the powder, and to see the drill sergeant quartered at the New Inn nearby.⁸ He also bought regimental hats, black silk handkerchiefs and cockades, paid one Mary Cowley for making ball cartridges, and made sure that repairs and alterations to the uniforms were carried out.⁹

1 List of the Officers, 1805, p. 3.

2 York City Lib., Acc. 54 : 111; Carlisle to Forth, 26 May 1798.

3 H.O. 50/346; Fauconberg to Dundas, 5 Aug. 1798 : List of the Officers, 1799, p. 453.

4 Francis Gregg, junior, succeeded his father as agent in 1794 until superseded by James Lock in 1823.

5 Rev. John Forth (1764-1816); agent at Castle Howard, 1788-1816.

6 York City Lib., Acc. 54 : 119; Projects at Castle Howard undertaken and completed by Rev. J. Forth, n.d.

7 Francis Gregg's Accounts, June-Nov. 1798; C.H.A.

8 York City Lib., Acc. 54 : 111; Carlisle to Forth, 26 May 1798.

9 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1798-9, 1800-2; C.H.A. F4/9/38, 40-1.

As far as the size of the corps was concerned, by July 1801 it consisted of one captain, two lieutenants, four sergeants, two drummers or trumpeters and fifty-six rank and file.¹

With the conclusion of the Peace of Amiens in 1802 most of the volunteer corps were disbanded, including that of Castle Howard. But owing to some mistake, Carlisle retained custody of the arms with which he had been issued in 1798,² and this enabled him to make a second offer to raise a new corps of riflemen in 1803 as soon as the Government appealed to the people again on the renewal of war with France. Being already in possession of sixty stand of rifles, he offered to raise sixty men at one, rising to one hundred should he receive an extra forty weapons from the Government.³ This eventually he was able to do, though the evidence suggests that he was forced to make do with muskets rather than rifles. By the end of 1803 the new corps of Riflemen numbered ninety-four men, and by 1806 its strength had risen to 103.⁴ As before, it was the senior corps by date of acceptance, 5 August 1803, in the North Riding.⁵ Except for rifles or muskets, Carlisle provided everything else. The estate accounts show that apart from the uniforms, and repairs and alterations to them such as lining them with flannel, money was spent on haversacks, one hundred blankets from Leeds, black Barcelona handkerchiefs, canteens, breast plates, cartridge boxes, powder horns, hats, pistols and ammunition.⁶

1 Ashcroft, op. cit., p.62.

2 Addit. MSS. 41854, f.109; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 4 Aug. 1803.

3 H.O. 50/346; Carlisle to [? Lord Pelham], 30 July 1803.

4 Ashcroft, op. cit., pp. 77, 80.

5 Ibid., p. 84.

6 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1804-8; C.H.A. F4/9/43-8.

The officers of this second corps were again drawn from family and relations, but this time with one exception, owing to Carlisle's unexpected withdrawal. Regarding his own commission, Carlisle had requested that, in consideration of his services in the last war, it be made out as captain commandant, 'Which I conceive will exempt me from some inconveniences provided we sd be called upon to act with other military bodies.'¹ This was duly done. In September 1803 he fell ill of his old nervous complaint and was forced not only to delegate some of his official duties as Lord Lieutenant to Morpeth, but to resign from the command of the Riflemen as well. Morpeth succeeded him as captain commandant; Frederick Delmé returned to become captain; William Howard succeeded Delmé as first lieutenant; and Edmund Garforth, probably of Wiganthorpe, an estate contiguous to Castle Howard, was recruited as second lieutenant.² These four men comprised the officers of the Castle Howard Riflemen until its dissolution, along with the entire volunteer movement in 1808.

Considered in financial terms, the raising of a corps of riflemen was not a very large commitment for a man of Carlisle's resources to make to the defence of the country. In total he spent £991-18- 9½ on his corps over a period of nearly ten years; or a sum roughly equivalent to maintaining a pack of hounds for a year. But it is important to remember that given the appropriate official policy and increased availability of arms, he could and would have easily raised thrice the number of men that he did from the area around Castle Howard.³

1 H.O. 50/346; Carlisle to [? Lord Pelham], 30 July 1803.

2 List of the Officers, 1805, p. 3.

3 Addit. MSS. 41854, ff. 109-110; Carlisle to T. Grenville, 4 Aug. 1803.

Expense would not have barred him from raising more volunteers because in 1800 he gave up keeping foxhounds. From the early '70s he had subscribed to a pack of hounds kept at Driffield in the East Riding by Humphrey Osbaldeston¹ of Hunmanby Hall. It is quite probable that Carlisle was at this time influenced by at least one leading figure in the development of foxhunting, in the 1770s and 1780s, Hugo Meynell,² known as the 'father of foxhunting,' who was one of his trustees from 1775 to 1786. Moreover, Boothby, one of Carlisle's closest friends in the 1770s, lived with Meynell, married one of his sisters and subscribed to his hounds.³

But Carlisle did not obtain his own pack until 1787, when he purchased Osbaldeston's hounds and hunting establishment. With it came also Isaac Grainger,⁴ Osbaldeston's famous huntsman. However, Carlisle kept the pack for only two years, and as it cost over £800 a year to maintain⁵ Selwyn was obviously partly right when he supposed he had found it too expensive.⁶ But

1 Humphrey Osbaldeston (1745-1835); originally H. Brooke of Gateforth, North-umberland, he had inherited Hunmanby Hall and a new name on the death of his great-uncle, Fountayne Osbaldeston; well-known sportsman and land-improver.

2 Hugo Meynell (1735-1808); M.P. (Lichfield) 1762-8, (Lymington) 1769-74, (Stafford) 1774-80; Master of the Staghounds, 1770-6; m. Anne, dau. of Thomas Boothby Skrymsher of Tooley Park, Leics., in 1758; founder of the Quorn.

3 J. Randall, A History of the Meynell Hounds and Country, 1780-1901 (London, 1901), i.35.

4 Isaac Grainger (1731-1811), 'long known in the Castle Howard country as the first huntsman of his day'; see his obituary in the Gentleman's Magazine, 1811, p. 679.

5 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1787-9; C.H.A. F4/9/27-8.

6 Selwyn to Lady Carlisle [?] 6 Sept. 1789; C.H.A. J15/1/111.

it is also likely that his initial enthusiasm spent itself amidst the constant squabbles with neighbouring hunts over territorial rights, and the difficulties of conciliating and giving satisfaction to landowners who were not interested in foxhunting.

Along with Osbaldeston's hounds, Carlisle had inherited Osbaldeston's country : a block of some twenty by thirty miles, bounded by the river Foss and Ouse to the west and the towns of Drifffield and Market Weighton to the east, and the whole bisected by the river Derwent. Carlisle's right to the country east of the Derwent was undisputed, but certain West Riding fox-hunters, particularly Colonel Thomas Thornton¹ of Thornville Royal, now Stourton, lodged claims to part of the Castle Howard country west of the Derwent, and particularly to the south of York. Thornton had already been at odds with Osbaldeston for at least fifteen years, and was openly imperialistic in his claims. He was obviously jealous of the country hunted by what were now Lord Carlisle's Hounds, alleging that one pack could not hunt satisfactorily such a large tract, but he confided privately in Carlisle that he asserted his claims so strenuously because he needed 'strong covers' to break in his hounds.² Carlisle was a considerate Master of Fox Hounds and treated Thornton's claims seriously, realising the need for increasingly clear definition of territories as packs of hounds proliferated. In attempting to put an end to what Thornton called the 'ridiculous animosities' which had spoilt the foxhunting in this part of Yorkshire for many years, Carlisle invoked 'custom and the established law of foxhunting.' For nearly a year he was

¹ Thomas Thornton (1757-1823); a famous sportsman who revived the art of falconry in England.

² Thornton to Carlisle, 28 Nov. 1787; C.H.A. J14/20.

involved in vexatious negotiations with Thornton. Supported by the testimony of all those who had formerly hunted the country he now controlled, Carlisle stuck to his rights as inherited from Osbaldeston, but, in a spirit of accommodation, made concessions to Thornton along lines suggested by Isaac Grainger.¹ Thornton refused these concessions and in turn put forward his own terms.² Some sort of compromise seems to have been reached at a meeting in London on 12 February 1788,³ but it is by no means certain that it proved satisfactory in practice. This may have been one of the reasons why Carlisle gave up the hounds after the following season.

This is only conjecture, however, and it may be that Carlisle did succeed in solving a problem which had bedevilled foxhunting in his district for many years. In a related aspect he was most certainly successful. Judging by surviving correspondence with the Sykes family of Sledmere in the East Riding,⁴ he managed to give satisfaction to those landowners who were not interested in foxhunting. He did this by applying to landowners individually for permission to hunt their covers, by abiding by any stipulations they made, and by hunting well and regularly and so pleasing everybody by keeping the number of foxes low. Isaac Grainger must doubtless take much credit for this, but it was all in stark contrast to the sad story of bitterness, complaints and

1 Carlisle to Thornton, copy, 28 Oct. 1787; C.H.A. J14/20.

2 Thornton to Carlisle, 9 Nov., 30 Nov., 1787; *ibid.*

3 'At a meeting between Lord Carlisle & Lt.-Coll. Thornton - Mr. Plumer present', 12 Feb. 1788; *ibid.*

4 This correspondence is to be found in the typescripts of Sir Christopher Sykes, 2nd Bt.'s, correspondence at Sledmere (Letter books, 1775-90, and 1790-95; and Letters and Papers, 1783-93). There is also a letter from Carlisle to Sykes, 14 Oct. 1788, in the Sykes MSS. (DDSY/101/68) in the Brynmor Jones Library, University of Hull.

renewed animosity which characterised the mastership of Carlisle's successor, Henry Willoughby¹ of Birdsall. He refused to observe any of the delicate agreements which Carlisle had painstakingly established, and a great sigh of relief was breathed in the county when he departed for Warwickshire in December 1792. Two non-local packs hunted the country alternately in the following season, but in 1794 Carlisle took it in hand once more when the Castle Howard Hunt proper was established.

For six seasons a new pack of hounds hunted from kennels at Castle Howard. The expense ran to nearly £1,000 p.a.,² and was merely one symptom of the spending fever, which seems to have gripped Carlisle in 1794 following the barring of the entail when Lord Morpeth came of age. Indeed, the new pack was very possibly intended as a coming-of-age present to Morpeth, who was, in his twenties at least, a keen foxhunter. Once again Carlisle sought permission from neighbouring landlords to hunt their covers, and the country was of approximately the same extent as in the 1780s. However, Willoughby, not surprisingly, refused permission to hunt on the Birdsall estate,³ but this loss was balanced by the acquisition of Buttercrambe moor after the death of Henry Darley of Aldby Park in 1797.⁴ Unfortunately, no accounts of the history or quality of the Castle Howard Hunt have survived, so no more than this simple framework of facts can be constructed. In 1800, at the end of the season, the hounds were given up. In consequence, William Marshall, second huntsman, left Castle Howard in July,⁵ and in August 1802, Thomas Brady, ex-second Whipper-in, took the hunters to York where they were sold during race week.⁶

1 Hon. Henry Willoughby (1761-1835), 1st son of Henry, 5th Baron Middleton, whom he succeeded as 6th Baron, 1800.

2 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1794-1800; C.H.A. F4/9/34-9.

3 Digby Legard to Sir Mark Masterman Sykes, 27 June 1806; Sledmere House, Letters and Papers of Sir M.M. Sykes, 1794-1823 (Transcripts), p. 183.

4 Carlisle to Morpeth, [July 1797], 3 Aug. 1797; C.H.A.

5 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1800-1; C.H.A. F4/9/40.

6 Ibid., 1802-3; C.H.A. F4/9/42.

The disestablishment of the hunt must have been part of Carlisle's determination 'to contract the Stable expences into the smallest compass possible, for these are not times to spend much money or time upon mere amusements.'¹ The raising of the Rifle corps in this year, 1798, and his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding the following year, left him little time or justification for diverting himself on the chase.

However, considerable expenditure continued upon other, less conspicuous undertakings, such as the purchase of works of art and the completion and decoration of the new west wing at Castle Howard. Carlisle's contribution to the development and embellishment of the house and grounds will be considered here, but a little more attention will be paid to his collecting and patronage of art, for he is remembered more as a connoisseur than as a builder. Broadly speaking, it may be said of the Carlisles in the eighteenth century that Charles, third Earl,² built the house and outworks, and laid out the grounds, that Henry, fourth Earl, supplied the house and park with its landed base,³ and that Frederick, fifth Earl, completed and beautified the interior of the house. Yet it should be remembered that he also left behind him some of the most conspicuous features of the grounds, some of which remain, while others are now lost or forgotten.

1 York City Lib., Acc. 54 : 110; Carlisle to Forth, 12 May 1798.

2 Carlisle, Charles, 3rd Earl (1669-1738); M.P. (Morpeth) 1689-92; First Lord of the Treasury, 1701-2, 1715; he commissioned the first designs of the present house from Vanburgh in 1700.

3 Although piecemeal purchases of land around Castle Howard were made throughout the eighteenth century, the main acquisitions of Slingsby, Wath, Hovingham, Fryton, North Ings, Terrington, Mowthorpe, Hardy Flats and Bulmer were all made between 1751-7; C.H.A. A2/5/13-15, 18, 21.

It is obvious now that after his marriage in March 1770 Carlisle intended to develop Castle Howard according to a grandiose set of plans which he was soon after forced to lay aside for twenty years for want of money. One of the earliest of these plans was for the construction of a new approach to Castle Howard, which is now unused, but whose effect in its day was very striking. In 1770 work began on a new road across Woodcock Bank, a piece of rising ground about a mile and a half south of the house. A new gateway, designed by Sir William Chambers¹ and carved by Matthew Freer, junior,² was placed at a twist in the road, thus framing the traveller's first view of the house. The success of this new feature was well attested by Horace Walpole and Sydney Smith. When Walpole visited the house in August 1772 he wrote : 'I was infinitely struck & surprised with the first view of Castle Howard from the new road, which is like a Terrass opposite to it,'³ while many years later Smith christened Chambers' gateway 'Exclamation Gate' for obvious reasons.

Another project undertaken by Carlisle in the early 1770s was the new stable block.⁴ Because the old stables were falling down, this was the only project at Castle Howard on which work continued after the establishment of the trust in 1775. The remains of the old stables were demolished and a new block, designed by Carr of York,⁵ was erected between October 1774 and October 1781, when only the courtyard remained to be paved.⁶ The courtyard

1 Sir William Chambers (1723-96); H. Colvin, A Biographical Dictionary of British Architects, 1600-1840 (London, 1978), p. 208.

2 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1770-2; C.H.A. F4/9/5-7.

3 Horace Walpole's Journals of Visits to Country Seats, ed. Paget Toynbee (Walpole Soc., xvi, 1928), p. 72.

4 For some well-known details not included here, see R. Wragg, 'Stables worthy of Stately Homes,' Country Life, cxxxii (1962), 1073.

5 John Carr (1723-1807), for more than fifty years the principal architect practising in the north of England.

6 Gregg to Carlisle, 22 Oct. 1781; C.H.A. J14/18/16.

suffered from a recurring problem of damp and had to be repaved in 1812-13,¹ but the rest of the structure has remained sound. The Great Lake, in the north front of the house, was exactly the sort of feature which Carlisle may have thought of in the 1770s, but had to delay until he was better able to finance its construction. It was an idea that had been mooted since the early part of the century, and Walpole remarked after his visit in 1772 that 'behind the North front may be made a considerable lake.'² He may even have suggested it to Carlisle, though he was not at home when Walpole called. In 1795 work began on the huge embankment,³ which now forms the eastern bank of the Great Lake, or 'the new Sheet of Water,' as it was then called. By the summer of 1797 work had so far progressed that the embankment was completed and only a few acres remained to be flooded, the water having risen to a foot and a half of its intended height. 'The embellishment to the view is very striking,' wrote Carlisle with satisfaction.⁴ The last feature of the grounds for which Carlisle was responsible was an 'elegant monument' raised to the memory of Lord Nelson⁵ and commemorating his victories: 'Aboukir,' 'Copenhagen' and 'Trafalgar' were inscribed on three of its sides in golden characters.⁶ It was erected between the east and west wings of the house, but has since disappeared.

Turning to the house, its interior structure and decoration, Carlisle was responsible for completing the west wing and for creating a collection of pictures

1 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1812-13; C.H.A. F4/9/52.

2 Walpole's Visits to Country Seats, ed. Toynbee, pp. 72-3.

3 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1795-9; C.H.A. F4/9/35-8.

4 Carlisle to Morpeth, 3 Aug. 1797; C.H.A.

5 Nelson, Horatio Nelson, 1st Viscount (1758-1805).

6 The Illustrated Handbook to Castle Howard (Malton, 1857), p. 5.

with a national reputation. Although Vanburgh's¹ original design for the house envisaged two wings of equal proportions, the west wing, built to the designs of Sir Thomas Robinson,² the fourth Earl of Carlisle's brother-in-law, was in fact, though regular in itself, of much greater proportions than its counterpart on the east. Why the fourth Earl ever permitted Robinson's designs to be used, neither the fifth Earl nor his family could ever understand.³ Once built, however, it was widely expected that alterations would be made to harmonise the wings with each other, though opinion was divided as to whether the remodelling would affect the east or the west wing.⁴ In fact Carlisle made no attempt to bring the wings into conformity.

The walls were already a few feet high when Henry, fourth Earl, died, in 1758, and the wing was one of the few projects on the whole of the Carlisle estate on which work continued during Frederick's minority, the reason being that Henry had bequeathed a £1,000 a year for it alone. It has been conjectured that the shell of the wing was probably completed by the time Frederick came of age,⁵ but he did not lay down the floors or put up the windows until 1771. Then, for some unknown reason, he put a stop to further work and the Long Gallery, running almost the whole length of the west side of the new wing, was used as a lumber room, in which were stored sarcophagi and other objects of antiquity collected by Carlisle during his grand tour, and in which were hung numerous family portraits.⁶ Apart from this, the wing was left largely unfurn-

1 Sir John Vanburgh (1664-1726), dramatist and architect.

2 Sir Thomas Robinson, 1st Bt. (? 1700-1777); m. Elizabeth, eldest dau. of Charles, 3rd Earl of Carlisle, in 1728; an amateur architect.

3 Reminiscences of Lord Carlisle; C.H.A. J14/65/3, p. 55.

4 Walpole to Selwyn, 12 Aug. 1772; Lewis, Corres. of Horace Walpole, xxx. 256-9; Anon., Observations made during a Tour through parts of England, Scotland and Wales in a series of Letters (London, 1780), p. 180 : H. Avray Tipping, 'Castle Howard, III', Country Life, lxi (1927), 1029-30.

5 Ibid., p. 1029.

6 Carlisle to Grantham, 28 July 1771; Bedford C.R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/188/2 : Carlisle to Selwyn, 10 July [1771]; C.H.A.

ished and undecorated¹ until the mid 1790s when more money was available and when the family needed more room. The large room lying transversely at the north end of the wing was intended by Robinson as an enormous dining room : if it was not used as such by Frederick, Earl of Carlisle, it was certainly known as a dining room, and described as such to visitors to the house.² It was, however, converted into a chapel in 1795-6.³ The lack of an adequate dining room, noticed by Walpole in 1772, was still felt though, especially after Morpeth married in 1801. Therefore, in that year, Carlisle decided to take one of the two divisions of the Long Gallery, which were separated from each other by an octagon, and to fit it up as a dining room. It is clear that it was the southern division which was altered.⁴ When it is so used,' wrote Carlisle, 'it will have a temporary separation from the circular part in the middle; at other times the comfort of the long walk will not be destroyed.'⁵ Charles Heathcote Tatham,⁶ who did a great deal of work for Carlisle at Castle Howard, at his town house, 12 Grosvenor Place, and also

1 Some work was done in the wing in 1783-5 and 1792-4, perhaps fitting up new bedrooms and dressing rooms, of which Carlisle had felt some need as early as 1781 : Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1783-5, 1792-4; C.H.A. F4/9/23-4, 32-3 : Gregg to Carlisle, 22 Oct. 1781; C.H.A. J14/18/16.

2 See, for example, Journal of William Hervey, 15 Oct. 1776; Journals of the Hon. William Hervey in North America and Europe, from 1755 to 1814 (no ed., Bury St. Edmunds, 1906), pp. 263-4.

3 Castle Howard Estate Accounts, 1795-6; C.H.A. F4/9/35 : York City Lib., Acc. 54 : 119; Projects at Castle Howard undertaken and completed by Rev. J. Forth.

4 C.H. Tatham, The Gallery at Castle Howard in Yorkshire (London, 1811) unpaginated.

5 Carlisle to E. Jerningham, 9 Aug. 1801; L. Bettany, ed., Edward Jerningham and his Friends (London, 1919), pp. 63-4.

6 Charles Heathcote Tatham (1772-1842), a well-known architect who apparently owed much of his early success to Carlisle's patronage.

at Naworth Castle, until they fell out in 1820,¹ was employed to plan and oversee the alterations. Work on the south gallery began in November 1801 and finished in July 1802.² The octagon and north gallery were completed according to Tatham's overall design in 1811-12.³ This marked the end of the alterations to Castle Howard made by Carlisle, and perhaps John Jackson's⁴ painting of Carlisle and his son, Henry,⁵ in which the whole length of the Long Gallery appears, was intended to mark the successful conclusion of this work.⁶

By the end of his life Carlisle was well known as a collector and patron of the fine arts. He it was who made the collection of pictures at Castle Howard worthy of note. His father, described in 1744 as 'very curious in Matters of Antiquity,'⁷ had, as well as buying a great deal of land, amassed a fine collection of notable antique gems, which were kept in London,⁸ and a

1 Gregg to Carlisle, 17 Feb. 1820; C.H.A. J14/18/50 : Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 60487A (Grenville Papers), unfoliated; George, 6th Earl of Carlisle, to Grenville, 20 May 1827. The extent of Tatham's work is shown by the fact that between 1801-18 Carlisle paid him a total of £8,604-5-4 $\frac{1}{4}$.

2 Note by Tatham, 30 May 1811; C.H.A. G5/2/4.

3 'Abstract of Artificers' Accounts for Works done & materials used in the finishing of the North Gallery & Octagon at Castle Howard,' 1811 and 1812; C.H.A. G5/1/4.

4 John Jackson (1778-1831); son of a Yorkshire tailor, and later became a member of the Royal Academy.

5 Hon. Henry Edward John Howard (1795-1868), 4th son of Frederick, 5th Earl of Carlisle; Dean of Lichfield, 1833-68.

6 This painting now stands on an easel in the Long Gallery at Castle Howard.

7 Gentleman's Magazine, 1744, p. 340n.

8 Walpole's Visits to Country Seats, ed. Toynbee, p. 72. This famous collection of gems, with later additions, was sold to the British Museum by the ninth Earl between 1889-91; E. Miller, That Noble Cabinet (London, 1973), pp. 303-4n.

large and various collection of ancient marbles, chiefly portrait busts of imperial Rome, which were housed at Castle Howard.¹ Until Carlisle began his extensive series of purchases of old masters, it was the fourth Earl's collection of ancient marbles, which, though it included few objects of real importance, was the main attraction for visitors to Castle Howard.² The picture collection at this stage was composed of a large number of family portraits with, in Walpole's words, 'but few other fine pictures.'³

Carlisle brought back a certain number of pictures and other objects from his grand tour with a view to furnishing the new wing,⁴ but really seems to have started buying pictures only on a large scale in London in the early 1770s. In 1770 and 1771 he bought a Rubens, a Rembrandt, Zoffany's portrait of Garrick in the character of Abel Drugger, and two Vandyck sketches from Sir Joshua Reynolds;⁵ a Cuyp and two Wouwermans from 'C. Price Esq.'; two David Teniers and Parmegiano's 'Holy Family' from 'Blacwood';⁶ and many more from auctions at Christie's. For example, on five days of sales, 9-10 February 1770, 15 February 1771, 27/29 February 1772, Carlisle bought and had bought for him by his agent or by others acting for him, inter alia 'Mr. Dillun', twenty-four pictures for a total of £1459-5-0, including Guercino's

1 A. Michaelis, Ancient Marbles in Great Britain (Cambridge, 1882), p. 60.

2 A. Young, A Six Month's Tour through the North of England (London, 1770), ii. 47.

3 Walpole's Visits to Country Seats, ed. Toynbee, p. 72.

4 'Catalogue of pictures & bought at Rome by Myself,' [1770]; C.H.A. J14/30/1 : Carlisle to Selwyn, 16 Apr. 1768; Jesse, George Selwyn and his Contemporaries, ii. 291.

5 Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92), the portrait painter.

6 'Pictures purchased by me,' [1770], 1771; C.H.A. J14/30/2. For an account of Carlisle's purchase of the Zoffany, see C. Leslie and R. Taylor, Life of Sir Joshua Reynolds (London, 1865), ii. 15.

'Angelica and Medora' for £525, and 'Apollo crowning a poet attended by a muse' by one of the Poussins for £210.¹ It is clear that Carlisle's taste was fairly conventional in extolling the Flemish and especially the Dutch schools, and the slightly tendentious results of a cursory examination of the available sources of picture-buying based on foreknowledge of his preferences only confirms this. It is also clear that while he may have been buying discerningly, he was yet wealthy enough at this stage to be indiscriminating. In April 1772 Reynolds wrote of Carlisle, who had become a member of the Society of Dilettanti in 1767²:

Lord Carlisle is grown a furious Dilettanti tho he never comes to the Society, he buys everything that he thinks excellent and indeed has bought some very fine ones. He is now in Paris and gone it is said purposely to buy the Duc d'Choiseul's collection of₃ Pictures, which are entirely of the Flemish School.

In fact he had gone partly to check up on his mother, who lived abroad and had been reported ill, but he also viewed the pictures. 'I have seen the pictures,' he wrote to his wife, 'There are few Italian amongst them, some very good but not in the manner I most admire, I mean Dutch pictures...'⁴ A few days later he returned from Paris 'without making any purchases, the Pictures had all fix'd prices upon them, & those so very high, that it did not answer.'⁵ This suggests that he set himself some financial limits.

¹ Christie's Muniment Room, Sale Catalogues, nos. 7, 9, 12 (Jan.-Mar. 1770, Jan.-Mar. 1771, Jan.-Apr. 1772). Other artists whose pictures he bought were Vangoen (4), Crabattie, Cuyp (2), Rysdale, Barroccio, D. Fetti, Le Martin of St. Vincent-ins, Berghen, Le Seur, Wovermans, Huttenbourgh, Vernet of Rome, A. Vanderveldt, Le Nain, Both, Patel. (All names as written in original catalogues.)

² L. Cust, History of the Society of Dilettanti (London, 1914), p. 265.

³ Reynolds to Lord Grantham, 3 Apr. 1772; Bedford R.O., Lucas MSS. L30/14/326/1.

⁴ Carlisle to Lady Carlisle, 29 Mar. 1772; C.H.A. J15/1/2.

⁵ Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 48218 (Morley Papers), f.179; Mrs. Theresa Parker to F. Robinson, 9 Apr. 1772.

Within a couple of years, Carlisle entered on almost twenty years of seclusion from the art world. When he returned to it, wiser and less eager, his buying policy had changed somewhat. Instead of filling wall space, his aim now was to build up a choice collection of first-class pictures, in other words to concentrate on quality rather than quantity. Coupled with this development of taste was a reluctance to spend readily. He preferred to sell items he no longer cared for in order to finance the purchase of particularly desirable pictures. Of course, in weeding his collection in this way he was also improving its fineness. Two examples of Carlisle's new discernment and economy in the 1790s may be cited.

The first is his purchase of 'The Adoration of the Magi' by Jan Mabuse or Gossaert. The author of a short monograph on this picture, traditionally known, apparently, as the 'Naworth' or 'Castle Howard Mabuse,' concluded many years ago that Carlisle had probably purchased it privately himself, or through an agent, in Brussels or in London, about 1781-7.¹ In fact it was bought from the London connoisseur and art dealer Michael Bryan² in March 1796 for 500 guineas. In part exchange Bryan received on 16 March a Poussin valued at 200 guineas, possibly the Poussin Carlisle had bought in 1772, and three months later, on 28 June, the balance of 300 guineas.³ A few days before this Bryan sold for £300 a 'Nativity' by Annibale Carracci,⁴ which Carlisle had bought from Sir Joshua Reynolds for 350 guineas in 1770.⁵ It is not unlikely that this sum of £300 was used to make up the price of the Mabuse.⁶

1 M. Brockwell, The Adoration of the Magi (London, 1911), p. xiv.

2 Michael Bryan (1757-1821), the man who negotiated the purchase of the Italian pictures of the Orleans Collection.

3 Two receipts of 16 Mar., 28 June, 1796; C.H.A. J14/27/2-3.

4 Bryan to Carlisle, 20 June 1796; C.H.A. J14/29/6.

5 'Pictures purchased by me,' [1770]; C.H.A. J14/30/2.

6 This picture was sold to the National Gallery for £40,000 in 1911 by Rosalind, 9th Countess of Carlisle.

The second example of Carlisle's judicious buying in the 1790s concerns the celebrated collection of the Duc d'Orleans, Philippe Egalité. The Flemish, Dutch and German pictures from this collection had been sold to a syndicate of English collectors in 1792 and Carlisle had been among the purchasers of their surplus pictures which they had subsequently put up for sale.¹ In 1798, with his wife's uncle, the Duke of Bridgewater and his brother-in-law, Lord Gower, he bought the whole of the Italian pictures, the chief school of the collection. Carlisle's share was two-eighths of the total purchase price of £43,500, that is, £10,875-0-0.² Each of the purchasers reserved a number of paintings for himself. The whole collection was then exhibited in early 1799, and those remaining pictures which were not sold by private contract during the exhibition were auctioned off in February 1800. Though the records of the Orleans transaction are rather confusing, it would seem that Carlisle reserved around a dozen pictures for himself valued at over £6,000,³ and that he and his coadjutors made a profit on the whole transaction and so acquired their reserved pictures in effect for nothing. The important point is that Carlisle selected for himself what was considered to be the chef-d'oeuvre of the whole collection, namely the 'Three Maries' by Annibale Carracci, valued at 4,000 guineas.⁴ Sixty years later, after a vast exhibition in Manchester in 1857, this picture was widely agreed to be the most popular in England.⁵ As a picture-collector, Carlisle

1 W. Buchanan, Memoirs of Painting (London, 1824), i. 18, 165.

2 Memorandum of an Agreement, 13 June 1798; C.H.A. J14/27/1.

3 General Statement & Acct. of the Pictures of the Orleans Collection, n.d.; C.H.A. J14/27/13.

4 Buchanan, Memoirs of Painting, i.80.

5 F. Haskell, Rediscoveries in Art (Oxford, 1980), pp. 157-9.

has been neglected because some of the chief pictures he bought have since been disposed of, and because men like Gower, Bridgewater and others bought on such a vast scale. But his part in the Orleans transaction alone raises him to some considerable degree of importance among late eighteenth-century collectors, for the impact of the Italian pictures of the Orleans Collection on English taste was enormous. It has been pointed out that for the first time the English had a real chance of furnishing their homes with Italian pictures of the old masters.¹

By the summer of 1801 Carlisle had all the Orleans pictures hung in a very good light in what was then called the Green Drawing-Room, but which is now the Orleans Room, next to the Museum Room.² In that year too the first catalogues of his collection were produced.³ Shortly after his death it was described as the 'excellent collection at Castle Howard... which is much more remarkable for its value than its magnitude.' In the description which follows it is interesting to note how the family portraits, which once struck Walpole as the dominant flavour of the collection, were now relegated to a dismissive subordinate clause :

The Collection in Castle Howard consists, with the exception of a few family portraits, almost entirely of pictures by the old masters, in various schools and classes, but particularly of the Italian schools. They are partly contained in a picture-gallery, and partly dispersed about the different apartments, the former indeed, being not well constructed with regard to light, it has been found expedient to hang all the best pictures in the dwelling-rooms. The chief point

1 Ibid., pp. 39-44.

2 Carlisle to Jerningham, 9 Aug. 1801; Bettany, Edward Jerningham and his Friends, p. 63.

3 Carlisle to Jerningham, 9 Aug. 1801; Bettany, Edward Jerningham and his Friends, p. 63.

of interest in this collection is a small picture by Annibale Carracci well known under the name of the "Three Marys."¹

The conspicuous omission from this account is of the modern pictures of contemporary British artists. Of these, Carlisle bought at least seventy-one pictures by twenty-seven artists,² and it is surely by virtue of these acquisitions that he acquired also a considerable reputation as a patron and benefactor of rising artists. Among the above seventy-one pictures were four by Jackson, a native of Lastingham in North Yorkshire. He was 'discovered' by Lord Mulgrave, who obtained permission for him to spend five months around 1806 copying pictures at Castle Howard.³ In 1821 he was back, copying the 'Three Maries.'⁴ When Jackson moved to London, Carlisle, among others, contributed in a small way to the expenses of his lodgings, though Mulgrave bore the burden of it.⁵

Jackson is the only painter with whom Carlisle as patron and benefactor can definitely be linked. There is the case, however, of the historical painter, Henry Tresham.⁶ Tresham had once enjoyed the patronage of Carlisle's son-in-law,

1 The Parthenon, 1825, pp. 244-6. In 1913 Rosalind, 9th Countess of Carlisle, offered the pick of her whole collection to the Trustees of the National Gallery. They selected seven pictures, one of which was the 'Three Maries.'

2 'Pictures purchased by me of modern artists,' n.d.; C.H.A. J14/30/15.

3 Diary of Joseph Farington, 24 Mar. 1807; Greig, The Farington Diary, iv. 102.

4 Brit. Lib., Addit. MSS. 48226 (Morley Papers), f. 108; Morpeth to Lord Morley, 11 Nov. 1821.

5 Diary of Joseph Farington, 5 May 1804, 12 Apr. 1806; Greig, The Farington Diary, ii. 235, iii. 185.

6 Henry Tresham (? 1749-1814); member of the Royal Academy, historical painter, collector of pictures and decorative objects.

Lord Cawdor,¹ and it may have been through this relationship that he was first brought to Carlisle's notice. He had acquired a collection of Etruscan vases for £100. He sold one half of it for £800, and the other, with some additions, he made over to Carlisle in return for a life annuity of £300. The first quarterly sum of £75 was paid to Tresham in March 1811,² and they continued regularly until his death in September 1814.³ In all £1,050 was paid over a period of three and a half years : a fair exchange as it transpired for the vases were valued at £1000 by Carlisle in 1819.⁴ But whereas in the case of young rising artists Carlisle's help was obviously intended to create the conditions in which talents might blossom, in Tresham's case his only aim was to relieve him of financial anxiety in old age. It seems highly unlikely that Carlisle entered into the transaction for the sake of the vases alone. That the arrangement was personal rather than artistic, as it were, is strongly suggested by the fact that, though the vases were exhibited in the Museum Room during Carlisle's lifetime,⁵ they were sold shortly after his death.⁶ More research would certainly produce more details and further examples of Carlisle's collecting and possibly of his patronage and charity as well, but it is most unlikely that it would alter the conclusions that the evidence available at present suggests, which are that he enriched the Castle Howard collection with old masters

1 Dict. Nat. Biog. xix. 1129-30.

2 Francis Gregg's Accounts, March-May 1811; C.H.A.

3 Gentleman's Magazine, 1814, pt. ii.291.

4 'Valuation of Pictures etc. etc. etc. at Castle Howard Oct^r 1819;' C.H.A. J14/30/11.

5 Tatham, The Gallery at Castle Howard, unpaginated.

6 A Catalogue... of Painted Greek Vases... collected by the late H. Tresham... and... purchased from him by the late Earl of Carlisle... which will be sold by Auction... on... May the 3rd. 1826.

of the Italian schools, but that he did not neglect contemporary British artists, whom he tended to encourage rather by buying their paintings than by contributing directly towards their maintenance.

Of course most of the demands made upon the liberality and patronage of a man in Carlisle's position came from members of his own family. However, he was not always so obliging in this respect as the potential beneficiaries might have hoped. Ironically, the lack of attention he paid to one particular relation has ensured his immortality, and is probably the single most important reason why he is popularly known at all today.

In 1799 Carlisle was persuaded much against his will to become guardian to his first cousin once removed, the young Lord Byron,¹ who had been brought up in Aberdeen in total isolation from the world he entered after inheriting the title. The subsequent history of their relationship is well known, but the essential facts ought to be briefly recapitulated. Within a few weeks of meeting Byron's mother on 16 January 1800 Carlisle had been driven to desperation by her temper and caprice and refused to have anything more to do with her. Relations with his young ward were scarcely any better, but were at least superficially cordial. They met but rarely and Byron, though he observed a decent courtesy with his intimidating guardian, privately spoke of him with some bitterness and resented the lack of feeling and attention paid him. Finally an event occurred in January 1809 which severed contact between them for ever. In that month Byron came of age and wished to take his seat in the House of Lords.

¹ Byron, George Gordon, 6th Baron (1788-1824), the poet.

In order to save himself the trouble of presenting his credentials, he hoped to be introduced under his guardian's auspices, but Carlisle, in reply to his ward's request, merely informed him of the technical procedure for entering the house. Byron was enraged. In place of some complimentary lines on Carlisle which he had inserted in his English Bards and Scotch Reviewers then going through the press, he substituted a particularly damning passage, to which even more venomous additions were made in the second edition.¹ Carlisle was of course deeply wounded by what he called 'the vulgar malignity contained in Ld Bs Libel,'² and though within a year or two he could speak of Byron without asperity,³ he never showed himself desirous of renewing any intercourse with him. To his credit, Byron later regretted the severity of his attack and acknowledged his sins in the line in the third canto of Childe Harold (1816), 'And partly that I did his Sire some wrong,' which line was included in a stanza on the death of Carlisle's third son, Frederick, at Waterloo.⁴ It was said many years later that no one ever had the courage to show these lines to Carlisle.⁵ At the time, indeed, Morpeth admitted that 'after all that has passed I shall not be the person to point them out,' but he did think that his father would read them, and that he would be much affected by them.⁶ Whether or not Carlisle did so, he certainly read the early cantos of Don Juan, which, incidentally, he thought 'most disgusting,'⁷ and he and Morpeth did at least send their carriages to Byron's funeral in 1824.⁸

1 L. Marchard, Byron. A Biography (New York, 1957), i. passim : E.H. Coleridge, ed., The Poetical Works of Lord Byron (London, 1905), pp. 101-2, lines 722-39.

2 Carlisle to Morpeth, [9 Feb. 1814]; C.H.A.

3 Addit. MSS. 51577, ff. 118-9; Morpeth to Lord Holland, 28 Mar. 1812.

4 Coleridge, Poetical Works of Lord Byron, p. 189, 29th stanza.

5 Lord R. Gower, My Reminiscences (London, 1883), i. 101.

6 Addit. MSS. 51577, f. 173; Morpeth to Lord Holland, 5 Nov. [1816].

7 Memorandum book of Lord Carlisle, [1820]; C.H.A. J14/65/5, p. 4.

8 Marchard, Byron, iii. 1259.

In general Carlisle has been criticised for his treatment of his ward, but to explain his behaviour no reasons have been put forward beyond his own faults of character. But the history of Carlisle and Lord Byron must be placed in the context of Carlisle's relations with various members of the Byron family stretching back over a number of years. It is from the pre-history, as it were, of his contact with different members of that curious family, including his own mother, the poet's great-aunt Isabella, that there emerges at least some sort of rational explanation for his neglect of the poet.

Both guardian and ward shared equally wilful, stubborn and indiscreet mothers. Since the death of her first husband, the fourth Earl of Carlisle, Carlisle's mother¹ had caused nothing but trouble : by going to law over her late husband's will; by an unseemly second marriage which led to separation in 1769; and by a too zealous promotion of her daughters' interest, which nearly involved Carlisle in a duel in 1767,² and her daughter Juliana³ in a marriage with a Corsican army officer in 1771.⁴ The Dowager Countess had gone abroad in 1770 for reasons of health, but liking France so much she decided to settle there. To her relations in England almost the whole of the remaining twenty-four years of her life was a long saga of debts and indiscretions. In 1771 she took up with an army officer, the Baron de Weinheim, as he affected to call himself, but who was in reality one Monsieur Larcher, the black sheep of a

1 For a fuller account of the Dowager Countess, but taken from printed sources only, see W.H. Smith, Originals Abroad (New Haven, 1952), pp. 97-112.

2 Journal of Lady Mary Coke, 12 Apr. 1767; J.A. Hume, ed., Letters and Journals of Lady Mary Coke (Edinburgh, 1889-96), i. 209-10.

3 Juliana Howard (1750-1849), youngest dau. of Henry, 4th Earl of Carlisle.

4 Philip Howard to Carlisle, 21 Aug. 1771; C.H.A. J14/1/281.

surprisingly prosperous and respectable family resident at Cologne.¹ He later sold his commission and seems thereafter to have lived off the Dowager Countess. From the mid '70s she was in financial difficulties. She complained that her jointure was not regularly paid, though she was in fact overspending,² and she made matters worse by continuing to employ Germain Lavie after Carlisle had dismissed him in 1775.³ From December 1778, when her debts had risen to over £2,000, Carlisle and his friends made strenuous efforts to induce her to return alone to England with the promise that her debts would be fully paid. In 1783 they at last succeeded.⁴ But no sooner had her debts been paid, than she returned to Weinheim in France, where she again incurred heavy debts, partly, at least, by lending or giving money to one of her most dissipated nephews, the poet's father.⁵ In 1787 she again agreed to return to England and her debts were paid for the second time.⁶ On this occasion she remained in England, residing at Bath. Her connection with the Baron, though it had by now become a bye-word,⁷ seems to have been broken financially when he 'executed a general release to her Ladyship.' She was always short of money though, having actions brought against her for debt in 1789 and 1791, and receiving help with her rent,⁸ but she seems to have lived comparatively quietly until her death in January 1795.

1 Selwyn to Carlisle, 20 [June 1781]; C.H.A. J14/1/281.

2 Carlisle to Dowager Countess, copy, [1781]; C.H.A. J14/13/3.

3 Same to same, draft, [? Sept. 1775]; C.H.A. J14/13/2.

4 Indenture Tripartite between the Dowager Countess, Francis Gregg and Admiral John Byron, 21 Apr. 1784; Naworth MSS. N79/32.

5 Dowager Countess to Carlisle, 8 Nov. 1786; C.H.A. J14/13/12.

6 'Statement of Ly Dr Carlisle's Affairs 1787-1793'; C.H.A. J14/15.

7 W. Lewis, ed., Notes by Lady Louisa Stuart on George Selwyn and his Contemporaries by John Heneage Jesse (New York, 1928), p. 49.

8 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Aug. 1787-July 1789, July 1790-Feb. 1791, May-July 1791, July 1794-Mar. 1795; C.H.A.

Other Byrons were at least as proud and as poor, if not more so, than the Dowager Countess. For example, when Carlisle inadvertently omitted to address his uncle, the Rev. Richard Byron,¹ by his full title of 'The Hon, and Rev....,' Byron retorted with the needless assertion that the name of Byron carried with it 'an Idea of real Honour at least [as great] as that of Howard & making something [of] a better figure in History.'² But pride was not the only characteristic of the Byrons : poverty also seems to have been endemic among them. Furthermore, the head of the family, the fifth Baron,³ had squandered his resources and encumbered his estate so that he could not be applied to for relief. Indeed in 1791 he himself was forced to apply to the Government for a pension to enable him to keep up his dignity as a peer.⁴ In these circumstances, some members of the Byron family perhaps looked to Carlisle as the next best source of support.

This support might take many different forms, political, influential or financial. As was seen in the last chapter, Carlisle brought in his first cousin and heir apparent to the title, William Byron, as M.P. for Morpeth. This Byron's wife and cousin, Juliana Elizabeth,⁵ daughter of Admiral John Byron, was Carlisle's first cousin too. Having been widowed by William's death in 1776, she was left alone to bring up an infant heir to the title. The family tried to obtain a pension from the Government, but at first without success.

1 Rev. Richard Byron (1724-1811); Rector of Houghton, Co. Durham.

2 Byron to Carlisle, 5 Dec. 1775; C.H.A. J14/1/548.

3 Byron, William Byron, 5th Baron (1722-98); known as 'the wicked Lord'.

4 P.R.O., Pitt Papers, Series 30/8, vol. 118, ff. 253-4; Lord Byron to W. Pitt, 19 May 1791.

5 Juliana Elizabeth Byron (d. 1788), 2nd dau. of Admiral Byron; she m., secondly, in 1783, Sir Robert Wilmot, Bt.

Admiral Byron, Carlisle's uncle, wrote to him in February 1781 : 'Nothing has been done for either my daughter or her son and when Mr. Robinson¹ was applied to, he answer'd he knew nothing about it.'² This surprised Carlisle, having been personally assured by Lord North before he left for Ireland that a pension would be provided 'tho' it would be small.' So in March he wrote to both Robinson and North telling them 'that the Education & Support of the heir of that antient family must depehd upon his Mat.^{ys} Liberality.'³ It is not known whether or not a pension was granted. In any case Mrs. Byron remarried in 1783.

On a later occasion Carlisle used his influence with the Government to try to obtain help for the three children of his cousin Captain George Anson Byron.⁴ Byron, a naval officer, had gone out to India in command of the Phoenix frigate in 1788.⁵ While on that station he suffered an accident which caused him to return home and later occasioned his death on 11 June 1793, his wife having died the previous February. They left three children, only two of whom apparently survived, one to become the seventh Baron. Captain Byron had received £1000 from the East India Company, not as a reward for 'essential services', but in order to facilitate his return home. The month after his death Carlisle sought further financial assistance for the family through the Home Secretary.⁶ The following year, 'an additional, & recent misfortune having occurr'd to the unfortunate

1 John Robinson, Secretary to the Treasury.

2 Admiral Byron to Carlisle, 23 Feb. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/671.

3 Carlisle to J. Robinson, 24 Mar. 1781, and to Lord North, 24 Mar. 1781; C.H.A. J14/47, pp. 21-2.

4 George Anson Byron (1758-93), 2nd son of Admiral Byron.

5 St. James's Chronicle, 16-18 Oct. 1788.

6 Nat. Lib. Scot., MS. 1073 (Dundas Papers), f.43; Carlisle to Henry Dundas, 19 July 1793.

children of Capt Byron by the death of a near relation, from whose protection they might have derived some assistance,' Carlisle urged Pitt to carry out his intentions regarding the late Captain's family.¹ Pitt obliged with a pension of £50 p.a. for each child, and held out the prospect of further pensions to an equal amount from the East India Company.²

Sometimes Carlisle himself provided direct financial assistance for members of the Byron family. For example, in February 1779, when he was short of money himself, he gave £50 to his uncle George Byron,³ who, despite the trifling sums his brother the Admiral scraped together for him, was always in the same distressed state. Another of his brothers, the ill-humoured Reverend Richard, had actually refused to help him at all.⁴ But most of Carlisle's financial assistance was reserved for the one Byron who caused him the most aggravation of all, Mrs. Sophia Byron,⁵ wife and cousin of Admiral Byron. She was the Dowager Countess's closest confidante and acted as her ambassadress in England. Naturally she and Selwyn were on the worst of terms. When the plan was afoot in 1781 to persuade the Dowager Countess to return to England alone, Selwyn thought it would work, but expected that 'the greatest Obstruction will come from that insinuating Bitch the Adm:'s wife who is her Counsellor.'⁶ Even her husband, the Admiral, thought his wife had given unsound

1 Pitt Papers, 30/8/121, f. 19; Carlisle to Pitt, 3 Apr. 1794.

2 Pitt to Carlisle, 17 Apr. 1794; C.H.A. J14/1/737.

3 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Apr. 1778-June 1779; C.H.A.

4 Admiral Byron to Carlisle, 23 Feb. 1781; C.H.A. J14/1/671.

5 Sophia Byron (d. 1790), dau. of John Trevannion of Carhays, Cornwall; a great favourite with Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Thrale.

6 Selwyn to Carlisle, 24 June [1781]; C.H.A. J14/1/285.

advice to his sister. When Selwyn spoke to him he 'seemed to hint if he was himself consulted, he should advise her better.'¹ Evidently Mrs. Byron succeeded, for the plan concerning the Dowager Countess failed.

Admiral Byron, Mrs. Byron's husband, died on 10 April 1786 leaving her, according to one source with a comfortable jointure of £1600 p.a.² On the contrary, however, she was left quite indigent and none of her family came to succour her.³ It was left to Carlisle, who had no reason to wish to help her after she had caused him so much trouble, to come to her aid. Three days after the Admiral's death, he made his first payment of five guineas to her. Two further sums, in July 1786 and in January 1787, brought the total to twenty-five guineas. In February 1787 he undertook by 'a fresh subscription for her' to pay her an annual allowance, or 'Donation', of fifteen guineas. This was paid for three years, 1787-9, and was supplemented by other sums : five guineas in April 1787 to purchase regimentals for her son in the Nottinghamshire Militia;⁴ a present of ten guineas in September 1787 to discharge her rent; and twenty pounds in May 1789 for an unspecified reason. No allowance was paid for her in 1790, and in November of that year she died and was buried at Bath. In all she

1 Same to same, [? 13 June 1781]; C.H.A. J14/1/276.

2 Mrs. C. Lewis to Mrs. Piozzi, 8 May 1786; K. Balderston, ed., Thraliana : The Diary of Mrs. Hester Lynch Thrale (later Mrs. Piozzi) 1776-1809 (Oxford, 1951), ii. 739 n.3.

3 Diary of Mrs. Thrale, 1 Apr. 1789; *ibid.*, ii. 739.

4 This may have been Frederick George Byron, who was ensign in the Notts. Militia in 1777 and lieutenant by August 1781; A.E. Lawson Lowe, Historical Record of the Royal Sherwood Foresters; or Nottinghamshire Regiment of Militia (London, 1872), pp. 15, 20.

received £102-19-0 from her nephew, Carlisle.¹ It was not a particularly large sum, but significant in the circumstances.

Finally Carlisle was called upon to try to obtain promotion and a new posting for his young naval cousin, the son of the Rev. Richard Byron, Lieutenant Richard Byron,² who seems to have been a victim of Admiral Caldwell's supersession in 1795.³ In 1796 he wrote to Lord Spencer, First Lord of the Admiralty, on Byron's behalf, but to no avail.⁴ In 1797 he tried again, but with equal lack of success. This time he suspected that his attack on the Admiralty for its failure to intercept the French invasion fleet⁵ had decided Spencer against obliging him in any way. 'All this trouble,' Carlisle wrote in September 1797, 'I would have been saved had Ld Sr the soul of a flea, which would have made him above resenting my public conduct by a much nearer approach to a breach of promise, than true honour cd endure.'⁶ At last, however, in June 1798, Byron obtained promotion to the rank of commander, but he was still unable to find a posting. His reverend father continued to importune Carlisle on his son's behalf, but he doubted whether he could be of any further use to him.⁷

It was only a few months later that Carlisle was first approached by the agent of the young Lord Byron's family with a view to his becoming guardian to

1 Francis Gregg's Accounts, Nov. 1785-May 1788, Aug. 1788-July 1789; C.H.A.

2 Richard Byron (1769-1837); later became Rear-Admiral.

3 See Dict. Nat. Biog. iii. 700, under Admiral Sir Benjamin Caldwell (? 1737-1820).

4 Spencer to Carlisle, 20 Apr., 6 June, 1796; C.H.A. J14/1/751-2.

5 See above, p. 174.

6 Addit. MSS. 38734, f. 288; Carlisle to Huskisson, 4 Sept. 1797.

7 Addit. MSS. 38735, f. 106; same to same, 20 Aug. 1798.

the boy. It is important to remember that until that moment he had had no contact whatsoever with this branch of the Byron family and after his previous experiences with different members of the family he was naturally very reluctant to become further involved, beyond, perhaps, writing letters or speaking to the right people. But he could hardly refuse to do what they asked. Though the above evidence explains to some extent his subsequent neglect of his ward, it is still to be regretted that he did not treat him more graciously.

IX

CONCLUSION

Lord Carlisle died on 4 September 1825. His obituary in The Times on 8 September was fair and measured and reminded its readers of the qualities and achievements for which he would be remembered. But for a number of reasons little is recalled of him now.

In the first place, he was not a great parliamentary speaker. In the 1770s he had tried, with moderate success, to develop a speaking talent as a means of bringing himself to the notice of Lord North's Government, but as an Irish newspaper described him in 1781, his public speaking was always 'more convincing than pleasing,'¹ which suggests that while he may have been able to develop an argument formally, he failed to touch the hearts of his hearers.

Nor was he much more successful as a policy-maker, perhaps not surprisingly considering his inexperience. It is true that although his official career was short and therefore his opportunities limited, it is possible to discern some progress in his judgement, but he made several early errors, usually due to allowing his feelings too much sway. The Peace Commissioners' manifesto of 1778 was an ill-considered piece of bravado, which may have robbed him of the

¹ Dublin Evening Post, 18 Jan. 1781.

chance of responsible office the following year. The Commissioners' espousal of the loyalist cause in North America may have benefited trade between the two countries, but they were wrong deliberately to blind the Government to reality in the colonies, especially as Carlisle had discovered among Americans a much greater wish for independence than he had ever envisaged when he left England. Later, he and Eden, even though they had much more contact with patriots in Ireland than in America, grossly overestimated both their undoubted parliamentary successes, and the effects of their cultivation of native Irish interests, laudable though they were, and they failed to perceive the growth of the volunteer - backed extra-parliamentary popular movement for Irish legislative independence. At least, however, Carlisle did not try to resist it, but recommended that the British Government concede to it.

These failures to realise the full implications of certain situations were due to a certain naïveté which Carlisle brought to politics, and which often prevented him from appreciating how his own personal conduct appeared to others. It also led him in turn to over-estimate his own importance. There are, in his career, numerous instances of this : his whole attitude to politics in the 1770s; his offer to take peace terms to America; his threats to Lord North in 1779 over the issue of the secret orders to the commanders of the British forces in North America; and his two defeats over the Admiralty and Adultery Bill issues in 1797 and 1800. There is no doubt that later in life his political judgement was more mature, but he was always inclined to under-estimate the complexities in politics.

Finally, he never acquired a reputation as a man of business. Walpole said that he lacked application and this proved true. As with public speaking he had tried to improve his capacity for work in the late 1770s. He surprised Eden and Johnstone when they went to America and he and Eden became the two most businesslike of the Commissioners; he enjoyed the work of the Board of Trade, attended its meetings hardly without exception, and, partly because of his appointment to the viceroyalty of Ireland, he was personally responsible for the increase in the Board's business in the latter half of 1780; and he worked so hard in Dublin, so he suggested, that he damaged his health. But he lacked, for example, both Eden's capacity for work, and his desire to master the complexity of financial and commercial questions, even though Eden tried to influence him in these fields. He would himself probably have admitted that he never lost that taste for show, or what was called éclat, which had originally induced him in the early seventies to set about looking for a diplomatic posting.

Though Carlisle entered politics with only very vague ambitions, he did have an immediate need to supplement his income. He lacked both a creed, something which Fitzwilliam, for example, was born to, and an understanding of politics. He was more susceptible, therefore to the influence of other men, and this remained an important factor in his politics, even though as he gained experience he began more and more to assert his independence. When he began to seek political recognition in the early 1770s he seriously thought that his title, his estate and his parliamentary influence all combined would entitle him to some quid pro quo from the Government. Selwyn had encouraged this attitude in him ever since he returned from his grand tour, and thus although at the general election of 1768 he happily relinquished to the Government all his influence at

Morpeth, if not in Cumberland, he did begin to develop his electoral interests in Carlisle and Morpeth from 1770 onwards, and he also drew up grandiose plans for the completion of his house and for additions to the park at Castle Howard.

But around 1776, in the light of his straitened financial circumstances, he began to realise that he had to offer something more substantial to the Government, and so, backed by his father-in-law's influence, he began to develop aptitudes for speaking and for business, while reducing his expensive interference in local politics and shelving the embellishment of Castle Howard. His progress was modest, but he did secure, as the result of a deliberate search since 1774, an important diplomatic job.

His appointment to the Peace Commission reveals that Lord North expected to have difficulty in filling it, while the subsequent fracas over the secret orders, involving a whole new strategy for the colonial war, proves beyond doubt that although his original conception of the conciliatory propositions had been quite sincere, he eventually sent the Peace Commission out as a cosmetic measure when all hopes of peace had disappeared as new circumstances arose. The appointment also revealed the first steps which Eden took in what may have been a deliberately concerted plan to attach himself in some way to Carlisle. During the following five years the hand of Eden can be seen in many of Carlisle's occupations : in his commercial work at New York, and at the Board of Trade; in the establishment of contacts with London merchants trading to America, and in his direct patronage of their attempts to secure relaxation of parliamentary restrictions on the Atlantic trade; in his agitation for promotion in 1779, though Eden seems to have been a little too eager in this for Carlisle's liking; and finally in his appointment to the viceroyalty of Ireland.

The first flaws in the partnership between Eden and Carlisle appeared in 1782 over their recall from Ireland by the Whigs. For both men it was humiliating, but Fox softened the blow for Carlisle by drawing him into the new Government, while Eden, who had totally miscalculated Carlisle's reaction to Fox's blandishments, was left out in the cold. Carlisle's absence from England for fifteen months helped him to make the ideological leap from North to Rockingham, but during the brief administration Fox was not given time to develop that ascendancy over Carlisle, which he later succeeded in doing during the Coalition, partly, perhaps, in recompense for the shabby treatment which he, his family and his agent had meted out to Carlisle and others during and after the settlement of his debts. For almost ten years, despite his reservations about Fox's party methods Carlisle voted with the Whigs, acted as spokesman in the Lords on Indian affairs until the Hastings trial began, and showed himself receptive to Fox's teaching of Whiggery. It is doubtful, though, whether his heart was ever in it. The creed was too dogmatic and the method too aggressive. Carlisle was more at home in the world of Pittite politics, to which he turned in 1792. Thereafter, until 1805, his politics were designed either to keep Pitt in office, or to restore him to it.

During his career, Carlisle passed through a broad spectrum of political behaviour, and each different phase suggested another influence at work. But although, or perhaps because, these personal influences operated so forcefully on him, he was never drawn by them into wholehearted participation in their parties. Although loyalty to Lord Gower kept Carlisle loyal to Lord North in the middle 1770s, Gower did not carry him with him into the Bedford group. Though

Carlisle was loyal to the Whigs for ten years, it was Fox's friendship, and not his ideas, and certainly not his methods, which Carlisle found so irresistible. He worshipped Pitt, but he never became a committed personal follower; while it was this consideration for Pitt, and his own personal indifference to office or place which detached him from the Grenvillites. Until late in life Carlisle had no faith in party politics. He suspected party strife to thinly conceal power-seeking, and he could not understand it. He had a rooted aversion to parties and groups, and to acting with them. For years he was tossed about from one to another with no apparent consistency or loyalty to people or ideas. But after quitting Fox he achieved some political stability when he began to act like an independent. Independence normally means insignificance : though Carlisle gave his independence some substance by repeatedly demonstrating his indifference to office, his political influence inevitably declined. Politically he was out on a limb in the war years, even though he saw himself as an independent, but influential man of affairs.

To some extent he mirrored his rôle at Westminster in the county. As at Westminster he had little direct political influence locally, and socially he cut no figure in the county, but there is no doubt that he still played a leading rôle in county affairs, and in the East Riding, rather than the North where his estate lay. He was Lord Lieutenant at a particularly crucial time; he raised and led a corps of volunteers; and for several years he not only kept a pack of foxhounds, always a worthy thing to do, but brought to the settlement of territorial disputes arising from the development of the sport a sophistication altogether lacking in the more traditional squires of the area. At the same time he embellished his park with several grand features and acquired a notable collection

of pictures. All these things combined to build up his credit in the 1790s and early 1800s. It would obviously be fanciful to exaggerate the political calculations behind ostensibly social attributes, but there was a real parallel between his position in the county and in national affairs.

Historically, the important period in Carlisle's life was from 1792 to 1805, when he supported Pitt and called for a national government composed of men from all parties. His political life in the preceding years was but a preparation for this, and his behaviour was not a reaction so much against political crises at home and abroad as against the dangerous tendency of Foxite politics and Fox's personal commitment to parliamentary reform. But in his highly personal conception of politics Carlisle was not carrying the Namierite banner into later eighteenth century politics. He was not the survivor of a past age, but a man who had made some sort of political settlement for himself in reaction to recent developments in political behaviour which he had found difficult to accept. His political principles were not materialistic; in fact quite the opposite, and he did not reject as unconstitutional the dogmatic opposition of the Whigs in the 1780s. Had he done so he would have joined Pitt much earlier, perhaps when Eden went over. As it was he remained with Fox and criticised both sides for the violence which erupted during the Regency Crisis.

As a disinterested independent he was striking a blow for like-minded men against what he saw as the power-seeking of ins and outs. He saw himself as a powerful, but solitary arbiter between contending parties. On some occasions he came off worst in the struggle, but he carried on until he thought Pitt had betrayed the idea of broadbottom government. Accounts of him usually ignore

this latter part of his life, but it is as important to know that from the later 1780s he always refused all offers of office as to know that from 1775 to 1786, in which period he held all his public offices, his estates were in trust and he lived on a restricted income. There were, no doubt, others like him, men who are forgotten in the study of the rise of party. Along with the political attitudes they chose to strike, the revolutionary wars were largely responsible for eclipsing them, because it always seems that men who reject party are merely rallying around during the crisis. The wars may well have added stridency to their denunciations, but Carlisle's career suggests that there was more to it than that. It may be that these men, who have hitherto remained silent, have something to say about the progress of the rise of party and the obstacles it encountered.

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