

## STRANGERS AND BROTHERS: THE ÉMIGRÉ CLERGY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION IN GREAT BRITAIN AND THEIR IMPACT

Dominic Aidan Bellenger

*The French Revolutionary émigré community in Britain was disproportionately clerical in its composition. In 1800, official statistics from the Alien Office (formed in 1793 to monitor revolutionary refugees) revealed that more than half the remaining ten thousand émigrés were clergy. Most had been parish priests who had refused the oaths associated with the Civil Constitution of the Clergy. Numbers were further increased by the repatriation of many British Roman Catholic clergy who had been expelled from the sizeable network of Catholic schools and colleges at Douai, St Omer and elsewhere. Many émigré clergy settled in the London area and developed their own institutions, including chapels and social centres, making them effectively self-contained. A notable example was at Winchester, where several hundred were accommodated between 1792 and 1796 in the King's House, an unfinished royal residence. The émigré clergy were financially supported first from voluntary contributions and later by state subsidy. Public sympathy and charitable support from the Church of England were conditional on their desisting from proselytism, and they kept largely out of public debate. A few influential writers, however, emerged, notably Augustin Barruel, a leading conspiracy theorist who was read not only by counter-revolutionaries like Edmund Burke but also radical authors such as Percy and Mary Shelley, who drew on Barruel's *Memoirs, Illustrating the History of Jacobinism in Frankenstein*. Other Romantic writers who wrote, mostly sympathetically, about the emigrant clergy include William Wordsworth, Charlotte Smith, Fanny Burney and Hannah More. Above all, the émigré clergy were seen as sufferers for conscience's state and both as beneficiaries of a benign British nation and as a living warning of the consequences of revolution.*

Since the bicentenary in 1989 the previously neglected topic of the French Revolutionary emigration has received increasing scholarly attention, especially

in Britain.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the picture of the typical émigré in the British popular imagination, still influenced by *The Scarlet Pimpernel* and *A Tale of Two Cities*, remains that of an aristocrat escaping from the guillotine during the Terror.<sup>2</sup> The reality was far more nuanced: émigrés were as likely to be members of the Third Estate as of the nobility, and in Britain, where the emigration was disproportionately clerical, they were likely to be Roman Catholic priests: generally parish priests, usually from Brittany or Normandy, and in middle age.<sup>3</sup>

The early months of the Revolution had identified the French Church as a target for immediate reform, given its huge landed wealth, its hierarchical class structure, its top-heavy institutions and its close association with the monarchy. As early as July 1790, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy had imposed a remodelled, slimmed-down and nationalised Church to stand alongside a reordered civil society, of which it was to form an integral part: dioceses were to be made coterminous with the new *départements*, parishes with *communes*. Church officials, from top to bottom, were to be elected. The quirky patterns of centuries were swept aside, local variations smoothed out and vast numbers of redundancies decreed. This massive reorganisation was accompanied by forced resignations and a new contractual system between Church and State. When the plan was put to the vote, as it was by the oaths demanded of the clergy to bind them to the new order, more than half of them refused to accept. As the penalties against those who refused the oaths became more stringent, the spectre of militant anti-clericalism became more real. This trend accelerated markedly after the September Massacres of 1792, which claimed the lives of numerous clerics. Exile became the choice of many.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, among English language publications: Kirsty Carpenter and Philip Mansel (eds.), *The French Émigrés in Europe and the Struggle against Revolution, 1789-1814* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999); and Juliette Reboul, *French Emigration to Great Britain in Response to the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> Emma Orczy's *The Scarlet Pimpernel* (1907) has been filmed and televised extensively, as has Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), which still colours British perceptions of the French Revolution: see Colin Jones, Josephine McDonagh and Jon Mee (eds.), *A Tale of Two Cities and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Dominic Aidan Bellenger, "'Fearless Resting Place': The Exiled French Clergy in Great Britain, 1789-1815," Carpenter and Mansel 214-29.

<sup>4</sup> For statistics, see Donald Greer, *The Incidence of Emigration during the French Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951). Nigel Aston, *Religion and Revolutionary France, 1780-1804* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000) documents the impact on the Church. In 1800 there were 4,153 lay émigrés and 5,621 clergy, according to the official figures (see Accounts and Papers. 1800. No. 997, Vol. L. Abbot Collection,

The priests tended to travel to their nearest 'neutral' destination: to Switzerland and the Papal States, to the Iberian Peninsula, and to Austria and various German states in the east.<sup>5</sup> Those on the western seaboard of France took to the sea. For many, especially in Normandy, the French-speaking and British-controlled Channel Islands, especially Jersey, were the preferred destinations, although it was not long until the Channel Islands were threatened by France and the exiles moved to the British mainland. The numbers were considerable: by the end of 1793 there were as many as five thousand French priests resident in the British Isles, mainly in England, and by 1800 as many as seven thousand may have been resident in Britain for a longer or shorter time.<sup>6</sup>

The character of the clerical emigration was complicated by the contemporary return of many British Catholics to their homeland. The large network of British Catholic colleges, monasteries and convents had been dismantled by the Revolution. The repatriated Britons included priests, monks, ecclesiastical students, and – in much larger numbers than among the French émigrés – nuns. Numbers of these British repatriates ran into hundreds, probably more.<sup>7</sup> The demise of such well-established institutions as the English College in Douai, the Jesuit college at St Omer, Irish colleges across France, and a score of schools for the sons and daughters of the British Catholic gentry, was to prove to be more than a temporary phenomenon. The émigré clergy from France were a one-generation problem for the British government and people. The exiled British were, with rare exceptions, to settle permanently in Britain and at such centres as the newly founded colleges at Ushaw in County Durham and Ware in Hertfordshire (both replacing Douai), Stonyhurst in Lancashire (from St Omer),

House of Lords Record Office, London). Throughout the emigration, there was movement from one emigrant centre to another, which confuses the estimates, though in general the numbers began to decrease from 1801, with the Peace of Amiens and Napoleon's Concordat with the pope as contributing factors.

<sup>5</sup> See Carpenter and Mansel for an overview of the emigration. René Picheloup, *Les ecclésiastiques français émigrés ou déportés dans l'État Pontifical, 1792-1800* (Toulouse: Université de Toulouse, 1972), shows how the encroaching French armies and political uncertainty endangered the émigrés in some of their places of exile.

<sup>6</sup> See Dominic Aidan Bellenger, *The French Exiled Clergy in the British Isles after 1789* (Bath: Downside Abbey Press, 1986). See also footnote 4, above.

<sup>7</sup> Peter Guilday, *The English Catholic Refugees on the Continent, 1558-1795* (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1914) remains important but the female communities have received renewed attention in the six volumes of Caroline Bowden, Carmen M. Mansion, Michael Questier et al., *The English Convents in Exile* (London: Routledge, 2012-13). Tonya J. Moutray, *Refugee Nuns, the French Revolution, and British Literature and Culture* (London: Routledge, 2016) provides many useful insights.

and at Ampleforth in Yorkshire and Downside in Somerset (for the Benedictines): a re-institutionalisation of the British Catholic community was taking place. It was this emigration, rather than that of the French priests, which was ultimately to transform the fortunes of Roman Catholicism in the British Isles, a movement as significant in its own way as the much celebrated 'Second Spring' experienced in the community following the conversion of the future Cardinal Newman and other Anglicans in the middle of the nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

The scale of the emigration was a cause of anxiety to a British nation already bracing itself for conflict with a resurgent France. In 1793 an Aliens Act was introduced which attempted to record and regulate arrivals.<sup>9</sup> It was the first such act and it gave the government great powers. At the same time an Alien Office was established as a sub-department of the Home Office. It became, in effect, an intelligence agency which supervised all immigrants, rooted out extremists and arranged for their deportation.<sup>10</sup> The Alien Office remained in place until 1836. Alongside the Alien Office was a "relief" committee, established as a charitable body under the chairmanship of John Eardley Wilmot, who had previously been charged with the administration of the care of loyalists from the American Revolution.<sup>11</sup> This committee, which subsumed a number of similar initiatives, moved from voluntary to government control and eventually became part of the Alien Office. The charity was political from the beginning, as was made explicit by the backing of Edmund Burke,<sup>12</sup> but the joint efforts of Wilmot and the exiled bishop of St Pol de Léon, Jean François de La Marche, who had become recognised as the effective leader of the French clergy,<sup>13</sup> ensured it was as efficient in

<sup>8</sup> See Dominic Aidan Bellenger (ed.), *The Great Return* (Bath: Downside Abbey Press, 1994).

<sup>9</sup> An Act for regulating immigration into Great Britain, 33 Geo. 3 c. 4.

<sup>10</sup> See Elizabeth Sparrow, *Secret Service: British Agents in France, 1792-1815* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999); and Elizabeth Sparrow, "The Alien Office, 1792-1806," *Historical Journal*, 33 (1990): 261-384.

<sup>11</sup> See Maya Jasanoff, *Liberty's Exiles: American Loyalists in the Revolutionary World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011); and, for religious considerations, Peter M. Doll, *Religion and National Identity* (Cranbury, NJ: Farleigh Dickinson University Press, 2000).

<sup>12</sup> Edmund Burke, "The Case of the Suffering Clergy in France," *Evening Mail*, 17-19 September 1792, subsequently reprinted as a pamphlet.

<sup>13</sup> See Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 99-104. In general, the bishops were viewed by the British in a less positive light than the lesser clergy. La Marche was identified by Isaac D'Israeli as one of only four "evangelical" French bishops (Isaac D'Israeli, *Domestic Anecdotes of the French Nation* [London: C. and G. Kearsley, 1794] 104). The same author believed that parts of the French Church "were more corrupted than any branch of the government. Those who composed this party enjoyed enormous revenues, which they dissipated in a lazy and effeminate opulence, and were uniformly the antipodes of

distributing funds as it was in keeping the clergy under surveillance. Both the Alien Office and the Wilmot Committee were there to ensure that the French émigrés did not become the enemy within.<sup>14</sup>

As an institution, the Established Church of England was supportive of the work of emigrant relief, which is unsurprising given how much the Anglican and Gallican Churches had in common, not least their fierce royal-based nationalism. Bishops, deans and college principals added their names and offerings while many preachers praised the French clergy, despite their Catholicism, for their dignity, fortitude in suffering and loyalty to their king. Many such sermons were printed.<sup>15</sup> The fear of a French-style revolution in Britain was not far from the minds of many Anglican clergymen, who were ready in 1793 to organise church collections for the French clergy even if some parishioners thought there were worthier causes.<sup>16</sup>

In 1796 the Oxford University Press published, at its own expense, four thousand copies of the Latin Vulgate Bible for the use of the French priests.<sup>17</sup> Throughout the 1790s a cordial atmosphere was maintained, generally at a distance, between the clergy of the Church of England and those of the fallen Church of France. In some ways it was a more comfortable fit than the relationship with the native British Catholics. The Catholics in Britain were closer in mindset to Dissenters than to the French clergy, who had experienced the benefits of establishment. The British Catholics had lived on the knife-edge of toleration but did their best to welcome the émigrés and were thankful for the help the French gave in providing additional priests to assist in their chapels at a time of chronic shortage of clergy and growing congregations.<sup>18</sup>

What made the emigrants, and especially the clergy, problematic was their numbers. By the end of 1793 there were as many French clergy in the British Isles as all the Roman Catholic clergy who had been ordained for the English mission since the Reformation.<sup>19</sup> Accommodation was as acute a problem as financing. One idea was to use derelict public buildings. Such places had been adapted for prisoners of war and for housing military personnel and invalids. The Marquess

decency and morality. At court intrigues, at Paris libertines, and in their dioceses despots" (118).

<sup>14</sup> See Reboul 62-73.

<sup>15</sup> Reboul 80-82; Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 28-46.

<sup>16</sup> Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 34.

<sup>17</sup> Ian Gadd (ed.), *The History of Oxford University Press*, Vol. 2: 1780-1899 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) 385.

<sup>18</sup> Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 47-65.

<sup>19</sup> Dominic Aidan Bellenger, *English and Welsh Priests, 1558-1800: A Working List* (Bath: Downside Abbey Press, 1984).

of Buckingham, whose wife was one of the principal benefactors of the émigrés, suggested the King's House, Winchester, as a suitable venue.<sup>20</sup> Adjacent to the Great Hall of Winchester Castle, this was a royal residence built for Charles II. Never completed, it had fallen into decrepitude but was refurbished in 1792-93 as a residence for several hundred French priests. Communal life, with chapel and refectory at its heart, was easily organised and resembled the seminaries in which the priests had lived during their training. There was, however, some public discomfort about so many priests living and worshipping together in a cathedral city close to the Channel. The house in Winchester was decommissioned in 1796 and the priests placed in smaller residences at Reading in Berkshire and Thame in Oxfordshire, among others.<sup>21</sup>

The French clergy were to be found in all parts of Britain and Ireland but their centre was undoubtedly London, a place where an exile could blend in easily and find support and encouragement. In London certain areas became popular haunts for the émigrés, including – for different social classes and pockets – Marylebone and Somers Town, the latter newly built with many vacant houses. Shops, cafes, bookshops and other services provided for their needs, which in most cases were simple, given that many émigrés were living off handouts and not always able to eke out their pensions.<sup>22</sup> Chapels were quickly constructed. The one in Somers Town, built by the resourceful Guy Carron, a priest of notable piety and outstanding entrepreneurial ability, was the centre of a cradle-to-grave social centre for émigrés.<sup>23</sup> A chapel to act as a centre for the spiritual life of the emigrant community was planned by the bishop of St Pol de Léon in Carton Street, then known as Little Queen Street, in Marylebone; this chapel, dedicated to the Annunciation, was opened on 15 March 1799. After the restoration of the French monarchy, it became in 1815 the French Chapel Royal, hosting the weddings of the future monarchs Louis XVIII and Charles X, and retaining its French identity until 1911. It was a cramped and narrow chapel with a large gallery and was a place full of the melancholy lost dreams of an exile community.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> T.W. Copeland (ed.), *Correspondence of Edmund Burke*, 10 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958-78) 7:395-96 and 10:29, where Lady Buckingham is described as an "Angel."

<sup>21</sup> Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 73-79.

<sup>22</sup> See Kirsty Carpenter, *Refugees of the French Revolution: Émigrés in London, 1789-1802* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999) for the facilities and complexities of emigrant London.

<sup>23</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees* 87-89; Bellenger, *French Exiled Clergy* 104-109.

<sup>24</sup> "Survey of London: The French Chapel in Marylebone," UCL Blog (7 September 2018), at <http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/survey-of-london/2018/09/07/the-french-chapel-in-carton-street-marylebone/>. This contains a number of illustrations of the exterior and interior of the chapel.

A few émigré clergy were able to contribute directly to the cultural life of their host country. One such was Gervais de la Rue, a priest of the Bayeux diocese and former long-term resident of Caen, who was an émigré from 1792 to 1797. While resident in London, he researched extensively in the public records then kept in the Tower of London and was elected in 1793 as an honorary member of the Society of Antiquaries.<sup>25</sup> A true Enlightenment figure, his principal area of study was Anglo-Norman relations, although his publications ranged widely and included linguistics and natural history. His correspondents included Joseph Banks, Isaac D'Israeli and Francis Douce, the keeper of manuscripts at the British Museum.<sup>26</sup> In the wake of the Revolution and its armies, Europe had become awash with manuscripts from dissolved religious houses. A noted connoisseur, Rue built up a considerable personal collection, including what is now the Beaumont Collection at the John Rylands Library in Manchester.<sup>27</sup> Rue's network of scholarly contacts remained intact before, during and after the Revolution, demonstrating the possibility of active cross-Channel exchange in even the most difficult of times.

Ange-Denis Macquin, a priest from the diocese of Meaux, became a heraldic draughtsman at the College of Arms and acted as librarian and resident genealogist to William Beckford at Fonthill, where he became part of what was in effect a lived-out Gothic novel.<sup>28</sup> Honoured, like Rue, by the Society of Antiquaries, he also contributed to the political theatre of his adopted nation by designing Nelson's bronze funeral carriage and a royal throne for the House of Lords in the Palace of Westminster.<sup>29</sup>

Such sophisticated encounters were rare. The principal personal contact between the emigrant clergy and the British was through the teaching and learning of the French language.<sup>30</sup> Some French teachers had a precarious

<sup>25</sup> Minute Books, Society of Antiquaries of London, Vol. 24 (20 June 1793) 482: "Abbé de la Rue elected honorary member." Rue's paper on the Anglo-Norman poets of the twelfth century was read to the Society in translation by Francis Douce in 1796-97 (Minute Book, Vol. 26). *Annual Register* (1835) 236: obituary of Gervais de la Rue.

<sup>26</sup> *Annual Register* (1835) 236.

<sup>27</sup> John Rylands Library Special Collections: Beaumont Collection. This archive preserves over a hundred Norman charters dating from the twelfth century, which came to England from Caen in the nineteenth century.

<sup>28</sup> The Bodleian Library in Oxford preserves sixty-seven letters of Macquin to Beckford, in French mainly, on heraldic matters (Bodleian Special Collections, MS Beckford c23).

<sup>29</sup> *New Monthly Magazine* (October 1833): 475 – obituary of Ange-Denis Macquin.

<sup>30</sup> See Marcus Tomalin, *The French Language and British Literature, 1756-1830* (London: Routledge, 2016).

existence, while others found long-term employment. One of the latter was Noël Duclos, formerly principal of the college at Evreux and a canon of the cathedral there, who taught French to the pupils of Eton College<sup>31</sup> and published one of the many textbooks for learning French which appeared at that time.<sup>32</sup> Others acquired pupils of subsequent distinction: John Keats was taught by the Abbé Beliard at John Clark's school at Enfield, Middlesex;<sup>33</sup> John Henry Newman's French teacher at his school in Ealing was a French priest;<sup>34</sup> and the future prime minister Robert Peel was taught French by Jean Nicolas Voyaux de Franous, who was to establish a Catholic chapel in Chelsea.<sup>35</sup> Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle, an ardent Catholic convert and an important figure in the Victorian Gothic Revival, was inspired by his teacher, Abbé Giraud, at Maizemore Court near Gloucester, as was his fellow ecclesiologist Henry Best by Guillaume Beaumont in Lincoln.<sup>36</sup> In his autobiographical novel *Lavengro* (1851) George Borrow provides a colourful vignette of Thomas d'Etterville, a French teacher in Norwich.<sup>37</sup>

The most influential grouping of French teachers – though teaching philosophy and theology rather than language – was at St Patrick's College, Maynooth, outside Dublin, founded by the Crown in 1795 to replace the closed Irish colleges on the continent and to ensure the students were kept away from “the contagion in sedition and infidelity.”<sup>38</sup> Among the teaching staff were five émigré clergy, all Sorbonne trained, who were to have a formative influence on the college and on the Irish Catholic clergy. The textbooks of François Anglade and Louis Delahogue were to be in use until the middle of the nineteenth century and while the French professors may have appeared rigorist and Gallican, they

<sup>31</sup> *Windsor and Eton Express* (17 December 1831): death notice of Noël Duclos, who was buried at Eton by Provost Goodall. The curriculum at Eton was then purely classical. Duclos and other French teachers were invariably additional tutors, rather than full time teachers.

<sup>32</sup> Noël Duclos, *Introduction to the French Tongue for the use of Eton School* (London, 1804).

<sup>33</sup> Keats recalled French being “crammed down our Mouths, as if we were young Jack daws.” Nicholas Roe, *John Keats: A New Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) 21.

<sup>34</sup> John Henry Newman, *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* (London: Dent, 1955) 30.

<sup>35</sup> William J. Anderson, *A History of the Catholic Parish of St Mary's, Chelsea* (London: St Mary's, Chelsea, 1938) 20-22. Voyaux supported himself by “teaching Latin, French, the use of the globes and astronomy.”

<sup>36</sup> Edmund S. Purcell, *Life and Letters of Ambrose Phillipps de Lisle*, Vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1900) 4-5; Henry Digby Beste, *Priestly Absolution*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edn. (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1874) 173-75, 216.

<sup>37</sup> George Borrow, *Lavengro* (London: Dent, 1906) 96.

<sup>38</sup> See Jeremiah Newman, *Maynooth and Georgian Ireland* (Galway: Kenny's Bookshop, 1979).

remained grateful and loyal to the British nation and its king and preached against all kinds of subversion.<sup>39</sup>

The long-term impact of the émigrés was also ensured by the publications of the clergy beyond those intended for the classroom. Exile entailed plenty of enforced leisure, meaning that the French publishers in London and elsewhere were kept busy.<sup>40</sup> A few of the books were translated into English. The most influential of the authors was probably Augustin Barruel, an ex-Jesuit who had made his reputation before the Revolution as a controversialist. His history of the clergy during the Revolution, available in English as early as 1794 and dedicated to the British Nation, established the 'patriotic' credentials of the French clergy in Britain, and emphasised their noble sacrifices.<sup>41</sup> More influential still were Barruel's *Memoirs Illustrating the History of Jacobinism* (1797-98). This was to become one of the key works of conspiracy theory, featuring familiar elements such as the occult, Illuminati and Freemasons.<sup>42</sup> Burke immediately took up Barruel's lead. He assured the Frenchman on 1 May 1797 that he had personally known five of his "principal conspirators," who had "been busy in the plot you have so well described" by the early 1770s.<sup>43</sup> Other writers who followed Barruel's lead were the Scottish scientist and inventor John Robison, who reached similar conclusions in his *Proofs of a Conspiracy* (1797), assisted by the Scottish monk and secret agent Alexander Horn;<sup>44</sup> and Barruel's translator Robert Clifford, who applied Barruel's findings to Britain and Ireland.<sup>45</sup>

Barruel's dark analysis of the Revolution was to appeal widely and far beyond the political class. Percy Bysshe Shelley read Barruel's *Memoirs* at least twice, in 1810-12 and in 1814, and recommended it to others, albeit with the caveat that is "half filled with the vilest and most unsupported falsehoods."<sup>46</sup>

<sup>39</sup> See Michael Turner, "The French Connection with Maynooth College, 1795-1855," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 70 (1981): 77-87.

<sup>40</sup> Carpenter, *Refugees* 133-54.

<sup>41</sup> Augustin Barruel, *Histoire du clergé pendant la Revolution Française*, 3 vols. (London: J.P. Coghlan, 1793).

<sup>42</sup> Augustin Barruel, *Memoirs, Illustrating the History of Jacobinism*, 4 vols. (London: T. Burton and Co, 1797-98). See J.M. Roberts, *The Mythology of the Secret Societies* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1972) 199-213.

<sup>43</sup> *Correspondence of Edmund Burke* 9:319-20.

<sup>44</sup> John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy* (London: Cadell and Davies, 1797).

<sup>45</sup> Robert Clifford, *Application of Barruel's Memoirs of Jacobinism to the Secret Societies of Britain and Ireland* (London: Booker, 1798).

<sup>46</sup> *Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. F.L. Jones, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964) 1:264. See Morton D. Paley, *Apocalypse and Millennium in English Romantic Poetry*

Mary Shelley was so impressed by the sinister otherness of Barruel's conspirators that they serve as one of the influences behind *Frankenstein* (1818).<sup>47</sup> William Godwin, a resident of Somers Town, had not only read Barruel but also had direct dealings with numerous émigrés, including Abbé Carron, who added prolific authorship to his other accomplishments, and Armand Bertram Dulau, a former monk turned publisher and bookseller who made many French texts available to both English- and French-speaking customers.<sup>48</sup>

Less surprising was that in the many literary references to the émigrés it was their exemplary character which dominated. William Wordsworth's sonnet "Emigrant French Clergy," while seeking reform of the Catholic Church, presents "creed and test" as irrelevant in the face of human need. Published in his *Ecclesiastical Sketches* (1822) long after the emigrant crisis, the poem reveals how deeply the plight of the French refugees had affected him.<sup>49</sup> In the 1790s there were several more immediate literary reactions, especially from female authors. Elizabeth Inchbald's *The Massacre* (1792) was banned from the London stage,<sup>50</sup> but Fanny Burney's *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* found a sympathetic audience and called on women to lead the effort for the care of the clergy.<sup>51</sup> Burney's pleas were based on her personal experience. She had befriended a group of French aristocrats resident in Juniper Hall in Surrey and had married one of them, Alexandre d'Arblay.<sup>52</sup> In 1814 she drew on her own experience of exile in France with her French emigrant husband in her novel *The Wanderer*.<sup>53</sup> Hannah More in her *Considerations on Religion and Public Education*

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 18-19; and Hugh Roberts, "Setting Minds Afloat: Shelley and Barruel in Ireland," in Darby Lewes (ed.), *A Brighter Morn: The Shelley Circle's Utopian Project* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2003) 1-17.

<sup>47</sup> Paula R. Feldman (ed.), *The Journals of Mary Shelley, 1814-1844* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 1:88-92.

<sup>48</sup> William Godwin's Diary, <http://godwindiary.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/nav/Diary> (accessed 9 June 2019). On 10 July 1802, for example, he called on the Abbé Carron.

<sup>49</sup> See A.G. Hill, "Wordsworth and the Émigré French Clergy, 1790-1827," *Review of English Studies*, 55 (2004): 60-74.

<sup>50</sup> Unusual in being both a Catholic and a radical, Inchbald had nineteen of her plays performed on the London stage between 1784 and 1805, most of them satirical comedies, many translated from the French. *The Massacre*, her only tragedy, was not published until 2008 and was first performed, at Bury St Edmunds, in 2009.

<sup>51</sup> Frances Burney, *Brief Reflections Relative to the Emigrant French Clergy* (London: T. Davison, 1793).

<sup>52</sup> See Linda Kelly, *Juniper Hall: An English Refuge from the French Revolution* (London: Faber and Faber, 2009).

<sup>53</sup> Frances Burney, *The Wanderer; or Female Difficulties* (London: Longman, 1814).

(1794) echoed Burney's call for help to the émigrés.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, in *Rural Walks* (1795) Charlotte Smith described the events that drove the French clergy to seek refuge in England, presenting them as worthy recipients of national charity, and their collaboration with young learners of the French language as mutually beneficial.<sup>55</sup>

Strangers, as immigrants were traditionally known, had been welcomed to Britain in large numbers before the French Revolution, and in time most of them became integrated as citizens, contributing their talents wholeheartedly to the host country. The Huguenots driven out of France by the policies of Louis XIV provide the clearest case in point. The émigrés of the Revolution were different, marginal men and women, strangers to the majority of the population by virtue of their nationality as well as their religion, but attractive to writers by their very difference and separateness. In more than a merely formal way, the clergy especially were at once strangers and brothers to their British Roman Catholic co-religionists and to many members of the Established Church who saw in their broken dignity a salutary reminder of what were perceived as the horrors of revolutionary excess and a world turned upside down which could so easily follow in Britain. Despite the long tradition of anti-Catholicism and the pressures of a continuing war which had created a suspicion of anybody or anything French, the émigré clergy of France in Britain seem not to have met much hostility, although there was some.<sup>56</sup> In general, they were given the benefit of the doubt in a time of national danger and allowed a respite to calm their "harassed spirits" and rest their "shattered frames,"<sup>57</sup> an act of national charity that provided Britain with a keen sense of moral righteousness.

<sup>54</sup> Hannah More, *Considerations on Religion and Public Education with Remarks on the Speech of M. Dupont* (Boston, MA: Weld and Greenough, 1794).

<sup>55</sup> Charlotte Smith, *Rural Walks: In Dialogues. Intended for the Use of Young Persons* (Dublin, 1795), e.g., "Dialogue 3. The Ruined Monastery" (47-72). Smith's developing understanding of the emigrants is explored in Michael Wiley, *Romantic Migrations: Local, National and Transnational Dispositions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008) 12-34.

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, John James Mathias, *A Letter to the Lord Marquis of Buckingham... Chiefly on the Subject of the Numerous French Priests and Others of the Church of Rome and maintained in England at the Public Expense* (London, 1796), a standard anti-Catholic attack by a satirist and student of Italian with court connections.

<sup>57</sup> See Moutray 131, quoting Burney.