Empires in Perspective

Transoceanic Radical, William Duane

Nigel Little

Number 4

TRANSOCEANIC RADICAL, WILLIAM DUANE: NATIONAL IDENTITY AND EMPIRE 1760–1835

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BY

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CONTENTS

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Last, with love, I thank my family, Mary, Elizabeth, Nicholas and all members of the Besemeres and Little clans.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Charles Balthazar Julien Févret de Saint-Mémin, portrait of William Duane (1802). Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

INTRODUCTION

William Duane was the only eighteenth-century radical to have a press career spanning the nations of Ireland, England, India and America. He crossed the Atlantic and Indian Oceans many times and had three changes of nationality. If anyone can lay claim to being a 'Citizen of the World', it is Duane. His transnational identity – a composite one based on the different cultural worlds he inhabited – complimented the internationalist political ideology he came to embrace: Painite radicalism. The means by which he expressed his radicalism was the burgeoning print culture of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The years in which William Duane lived – 1760 to 1834 – were turbulent for Europe, the Americas and India. The background to his life includes the Seven Years War, the American War of Independence, the Anglo-Mysore Wars, the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, the War of 1812 and Bolivar's War. All of these conflicts touched on Duane or his immediate family and were the subject of the numerous newspapers that he published. He appears as a fleeting presence in the campaigns of the London Corresponding Society (LCS) in the 1790s and went on to play a significant role in the early Republican press in America. He emerged from the radical underworld of the British Empire to become a correspondent of the third American president – Thomas Jefferson – and a scourge of the Federalists.

Duane should be of interest to historians of imperialism and republicanism because of his double career: in empire from 1760 to 1795 and in the early American Republic from 1796 to 1835. His life covers a number of important, but contested, transformations in the eighteenth century. He was born into a British imperial world that spanned the Atlantic ocean and stretched from North America down to the West Indies and across to the British isles. During his life, Britain lost most of its North American possessions but consolidated and extended its power in South Asia until India became the main focus of British imperialism. Historians have traditionally termed this as a shift from the first British Empire to the second. P. J. Marshall, however, has cautioned against this view of empire. In *The Making and Unmaking of Empires* Marshall argues that the rise of a British Empire in India should not be studied in isolation from

the loss of the thirteen colonies.[1] William Duane's career in India and America would seem to reinforce that argument. The suppression of Duane and other radicals in India was the end result of a process of imperial transformation that began with imperial policy towards the thirteen colonies and ended with the imposition of censorship by Governor-General Wellesley in 1799.

By the end of the American War of Independence, the English parliament controlled an empire that had been transformed from the old Protestant 'Empire of Liberty', that included the thirteen colonies, to one where various national, religious and ethnic groups were ruled by authoritarian means. The new version of empire now excluded the thirteen colonies that had been turned into a sovereign republic by the American revolutionaries. Their alternative view of empire, however, was not lost to history but had two subsequent lives. First, it was subsumed into the wider historical narrative of the American nation-state. Second, older concepts survived in pockets of the empire, for example amongst newspaper editors, East India Company (EIC) army officers and private traders in Calcutta. In Federalist America, most transatlantic radicals – pro-democratic political exiles from the British Isles – came to embrace a type of counter-British Empire, based on democratic values, commerce and territorial expansionism to the west, that was camoflaged in the rhetoric of republicanism and American anti-British imperialism. Some radicals even rejected their previous opposition to slavery to conform to this counter-Empire. William Duane is an example of a transatlantic radical who embraced the old 'Empire of Liberty' as a Jeffersonian Republican in the early American Republic. It is a mistake to see the old 'Empire of Liberty' as dying in 1783: the existence of transatlantic radicalism is a sign that it did not. The transatlantic radicals, however, have been largely ignored in the broader historiography of British radicalism. The glimpses we have of Duane's period in England in important works on the 1790s – such as Jenny Graham's *The Nation, The Law and the* and John Barrell's *Imagining the King's Death* – remain brief and there is little recognition of the imprint of the transatlantic radicals on American history.[2] The transatlantic relationship for many British historians seems to end in 1783 and yet *The Making and Unmaking of Empires* points towards a much more complex relationship (as does the existing historiography of Federalist America).

Although historians of Federalist America have written extensively on transatlantic radicals of the early Republic, the subject of post-revolutionary American radicalism is decidedly absent from the historiography of British radicalism itself. In histories of 1790s radicalism in the British Isles, America is a destination that radicals go to; when they do they sail from the historiographical page. Studies of British radicalism in the 1790s have largely ignored America post-1783 partly because American radicalism is perceived as crucial to the fall of the first British Empire but not the existence of the second. But we need to

revise British historiography to better address the connectivity of radicalism in the English-speaking world and the British Empire. William Duane's existence in the presumed second phase of empire proves that there were British radicals – democratic republicans – who were deeply concerned with the American project, held on to older concepts of an 'Empire of Liberty' and were embedded in empire. Thomas Paine, the leading 'Citizen of the World', never ceased to be connected to America and his fascination was shared by the many radicals who emigrated. The phenomenon of transatlantic radicalism stands as a non-elite example that undermines any clear distinction between a first and second British Empire. The transatlantic radicals were important members of the 'two million Britons (meaning Americans) who claimed equality with their fellow Britons and were apparently challenging "what it meant to be British"'.[3] Duane's rejection of Britishness, and his embrace of American citizenship, was a rejection of a model of imperialism that was based on the subordination of English-speaking subjects to a British centre.

Historiography on Irish radicalism has been less prone to overlooking America due to the historical influence of Irish-Americans on Ireland. Irish historians are more aware of Ireland as connected to both Republican America and the wider British Empire due to the movement of peoples and its strategic location next to England. Ireland has been crucial to all phases of British imperialism due to it being a source of manpower – both from the ill-employed members of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy and from the lower classes who entered the rank and file of the army and navy. The threat of rebellion further entrenched Ireland's importance to imperial concerns. The Volunteer movement in the 1780s was an Irish attempt at maintaining the older empire against centralist tendencies even while the thirteen colonies were in the process of being lost. Duane had an interesting perspective on the Irish element of the British Empire because of personal experience and a certain alienation caused by his outsider status in terms of origins and religion. Although Duane's career in America has been researched in depth by Michael Durey and David Wilson in their work on Irish transatlantic radicals, his pre-American journalism has been largely neglected.[4] Apart from his inclusion in the historiography of the early Republic, it is important to consider Duane within the context of three other areas of study: imperialism, radicalism and studies on national identity.

Imperial History and the Transindian Radicals

The history of British and Irish involvement in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century India has recently undergone a re-evaluation due to the influence of postcolonial theorists such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha.[5] Although the interaction between postcolonial theory and history has led to

some interesting work, there has also been a reaction against some of the more reductive tendencies of this movement. Historians, such as C. A. Bayly in his criticism of Said in *Empire and Information*, have pointed to complexities in early colonial-era relations overlooked in the heady writings of the early post-colonial commentators.[6] Linda Colley has furthered Bayly's push for a more nuanced account of empire through her work on European captives of non-European states. If there is a need to rewrite the history of colonized peoples, as Said has argued from the 'distinct and separate point of view of the masses using unconventional or neglected sources', Colley adds that there is a parallel need to do the same for the colonizers 'who have been written about overwhelmingly from the top down'. According to Colley, 'ignorance about some of the vital but unprivileged occupational groupings involved in it – merchant seamen, soldiers, sailors, slave-ship crews, minor tradesmen, poor settlers – and especially about their ideas, remains considerable'.[7]

Despite the expansion of interest in the British Raj due to postcolonial studies, and the response of historians such as Bayly and Colley, a number of groups operating on its margins still remain unexplored. By the late eighteenth century Britain and Ireland were connected with Cape Town and India, and indeed the fledgling convict colony of Australia, through an established imperial trade route. Along this route convicts, imperial officials, traders, soldiers and sometimes radicals moved.[8] The radicals are important because knowledge of their existence may lead to a more complex understanding of imperialism and the global reach of radicalism in the eighteenth century. The radicalized newspaper editors are a group that can be placed alongside the categories that Colley uses. She mentions the subaltern lives of soldiers as important, but in the case of the early Raj one can be even more specific and mention the lower-ranked EIC army officers who had an ambivalent attitude towards EIC authority. These two groups were the main driving force behind a pro-revolutionary and Low Enlightenment movement among Europeans in India, and offer an interesting example of connections between the French Revolution and India in the eighteenth century that have remained hidden in the debate between the 'ancients' and 'moderns' of imperial history and postcolonial studies.[9] Their existence in the historiography on eighteenth-century radicalism also remains muted.

Eighteenth-century radicalism in the Anglo-American world has been a major field of research in recent decades. The careers of the transatlantic radicals who left Britain and Ireland for the United States have been dealt with in considerable detail. The pro-French radicals who ventured to France during the revolutionary years have also been the focus of research, as have those of the radicals who stayed in the British Isles to take a political role in the fraught decade of the 1790s.[10] This was an important period in the political life of Britain and Ireland due to the impact of the French Revolution. In Ireland a revolutionary

movement came into existence post-1789 but was defeated in the United Irish Rebellion of 1798. In its wake United Irish rebels fled the country (usually to America), were banished to another country, forced into army service in pestilence-ridden Caribbean islands or transported to Australia as convicts.[11] The radical Irish migrants to America had a significant impact on American politics as they became a vocal support group for the Republicans and their leader Thomas Jefferson. The 500 United Irish rebels transported to Australia were important at this nascent stage of settlement both by threatening rebellion (realized at Vinegar Hill in 1804) and, strengthening the Irish character of the New South Wales colony.

Although England did not endure a rebellion or insurrection on the scale of the United Irish Rebellion, it was not because there was a lack of revolutionaries. The LCS, for example, having emerged from radical Whiggism, became militant by emulating the French revolutionaries. Because of the dangers of popular loyalism (seen for example in the attack on the radical philosopher Joseph Priestley), and the direct government suppression of the LCS, America came to be seen as a place of asylum for political dissenters from Britain as well as Ireland. The secondary impact of British political refugees on the early American Republic attests to the energies unleashed in Britain by the French Revolution.

Missing from the historiography on radicalism, however, are the radicals who spent time in India as soldiers, newspaper editors and printers. They remain outside of two current historiographies: those devoted to imperialism in the eighteenth century, which have been traditionally focused on major imperial administrators and traders, and those works that concentrate on the phenomenon of eighteenth-century radicalism. Scholars studying the movement of eighteenth-century radicals to America and to France have neglected the smaller flow of radicals to India. Even where historians such as Kevin Whelan and James Epstein have attempted to broaden out the history of radicalism to include non-European regions, India is not mentioned.[12] In a recent contribution to *A New Imperial History*, Whelan argued that in the 1790s 'a republican triangle linked America, France and Ireland. Many activists visited all three countries. Serious United Irish-related incidents broke out in Jamaica, Newfoundland, Guernsey, South Africa, Botany Bay and the United States.'[13] The present book contributes to the more detailed global picture of radicalism in the 1790s that has emerged by concentrating on a member of a small but significant exodus of radicals from Britain and Ireland to India. Duane and this wider group might be described as transindian radicals, a term which like transatlantic denotes movement from Europe, but in this case through the Indian Ocean to India.

This book argues that Duane was part of a Low Enlightenment movement in India similar to the one Robert Darnton has charted in France or Iain McCalman has uncovered in Britain: it was not only England that had a 'radical under-

world', the empire did as well.[14] Compared with the amount of research done in the three other areas of study mentioned, this area is under-researched. This book is the first to consider this area as a whole, particularly the nexus between radicalism, journalism and disturbance in the EIC army. The book also seeks to contribute to British imperial history and to the history of eighteenth-century India and its nascent English press.

Duane and the other newspaper editors in India have often been viewed by historians as bellicose and crude. Bayly's comments serve as one example of this attitude: 'The Calcutta press gingered up the anti-Napoleonic rhetoric of fighting "tyranny and barbarism" with free trade hostility to the monopolies and diplomatic conceit of the remaining Asian kingdoms'.[15] Although the British newspapers in India were generally aggressive in their attitude towards native rulers they were not always so towards Britain's natural enemy – France. On one hand the bellicosity of a writer such as Duane should be understood within the framework of marketing. His newspaper was aimed at members of the EIC army; the EIC officers in particular were drawn to his letter pages as correspondents and read Duane's detailed account of military affairs. On the other hand, the newspaper was part of the wider Anglo-Indian community, a community that showed strong loyalist and imperialist attitudes towards relations between Britain and the native kingdoms. What complicated matters was the allegiance of a not insignificant number of editors to the claims of the French Revolution. Once war with France broke out in 1793, sympathy with the French Revolution clashed with these pro-British sentiments.

Although the Anglo-Indian press is often dismissed as a kind of side-show which distracts from the real history of the administration of the early Raj, if we are to deepen our understanding of eighteenth-century India, both colonial and non-colonial, the role of the press should be addressed. Not only were there connections between individual pressmen such as Duane and the wider Indian world of native courts and Indian bankers, but there were also, from the government's perspective, worrying connections between the editors and malcontent officers in the EIC armies of all three presidencies. This book considers the deportation of newspaper editors to be part of a developing policy of censorship in India partly in response to mutinous behaviour by junior officers in the EIC army. As I have mentioned, Marshall argues that a transition occurred from a British Empire founded on concepts of 'English liberty' – shared by free Englishmen living around the shores of the Atlantic (but including the Anglo-Indian community) – to one where imperialism meant parliamentary rule from England that was authoritarian and directed at imperial subjects not, for the most part, of British origin. William Duane and the other radicals in India become caught in the transition from the older imperial order to the newer one. Before debate was curtailed by censorship, the Anglo-Indian community existed as though the old

'Empire of Liberty' still existed. By the time of William Duane's deportation, it was clear to them that it did not. The deportations represent the last gasp of the British Empire that had existed before the American War of Independence. The imperial elite's draconian measures against the press and the EIC officers ensured India would be less unstable during a time of war with Mysore and France and heightened fears. And yet it transformed patterns of behaviour for Britons living in India and gave rise to the pithy phrase 'Athens at home; Rome abroad', itself a fitting epitaph for press freedom in India. Before the American War of Independence such a statement would have been complicated by the existence of two million Britons in North America; after the War it was not. Marshall has used elite voices to examine received ideas of the British Empire in the eighteenth century; the existence of a radical underworld can add to this reappraisal by offering a 'from below' perspective. Duane's antagonism towards the British Empire was largely shaped by his time in India. It is an important precursor to his 1795–6 period in London and his subsequent and lengthy career in Federalist and Jeffersonian America. From a radically reordered section of the old British Empire – the nascent United States of America – Duane became a superb polemicist against the new version of the British Empire he had encountered in India.

William Duane and Federalist America

Over the past decades there has been a development of interest in the careers of less well-known figures in the early American Republic and in particular in the past decade in the journalists and politicians who were engaged in the political struggles that marred the aftermath of the American War of Independence. The shift away from a sole fixation on the Founding Fathers originated in similar historiographical impulses to the ones that drove subaltern studies and which now has led to recent re-evaluations of imperial agents themselves. Colley has pointed out that her attempt to 'subaltern' the imperialists is a belated response to the challenge posed by social historians in the 1960s and 1970s whose impact on imperial history was minor.[16] Imperial subjects were largely avoided because the empire had become unfashionable. American history, however, did not suffer the same fate, as studies of various marginalized and ignored groups were undertaken. As part of this shift, various political players of the Federalist era, who had been overlooked in favour of the Founding Fathers, began to find themselves the subjects of historical research. This trend continued in the 1980s and 1990s, with significant research on outsider groups – such as transatlantic radicals – being undertaken. As one of the most politically outspoken of these journalists, William Duane has received particular attention and became the subject of a book – *American Aurora* – widely read beyond the confines of the circle of academic historians engaged in the study of his career.[17]

Alongside this specific interest, William Duane is often the subject of short summaries in overview histories of the early Republic.[18] The present book seeks to influence the early Republican historiography by offering an alternative reading of Duane, shaped by the study of a pre-American career that remains largely unknown in America. Many histories that quote Duane's writings from the *Aurora* mention that he is Irish. The special focus on his American newspaper the *Aurora* has had both a positive and negative impact on scholarly understanding of Duane's historical significance. On the one hand, more attention has been paid to wider influences on the body politic of early Republic America, particularly the role of the press in shaping public opinion and the political role of the people who wrote these newspapers. But, on the other hand, there is sometimes an insufficient attention to both archival and theoretical precision. Without a strict empirical mooring, Duane can easily become a totemic radical embodying the ideas and ideals of present-day Americans: people who consider themselves to be incarnations of the radicals of the eighteenth century. Any aberrations in Duane's thinking – for example his views on American slavery – are simply ignored. In seeking to remedy this tendency, noticeable in two recent works – *American Aurora* and *The American Counterrevolution* – I attempt to set Duane more carefully in his several historical contexts.

National Identity and Print Culture

By operating in such varied political and press milieux, Duane came into contact with a variety of emergent eighteenth-century nationalisms. Historical debate has complicated the meaning – and origin – of concepts of 'nation', 'nationalism' and 'national identity'. Although recognizing that ethnic identities that involve concepts of 'nation' stretch back to the Middle Ages, the use of 'nation', 'nationalism' and 'national identity' in this work relates to the particular states and empires of the late eighteenth century. National identity is understood here as connected to the emergence of the modern nation-state.[19] The role of the press in the eighteenth century has been an important element in the study of nationalism because, according to Benedict Anderson, the concept of 'nation' was 'born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm'.[20] Print culture – the printed conduit of the Republic of Letters – enabled people who had never met to be connected. The role of the press in the American and French revolutions was substantial. The press enabled American and French revolutionaries to construct different versions of statehood and different ways of belonging to the state.[21] Shutting down newspapers did the opposite: it suppressed competing versions. When Napoleon restricted the number of Parisian newspapers on 17 January 1800 from seventy-three to thirteen, it sent a clear signal to the popu-

lace that the anarchic days of the French Revolution were over.[22] Napoleon was not only closing down a particular set of newspapers, he was closing down competing versions of nationhood – various forms of republicanism, constitutional monarchism and the hardline monarchism of the pure royalists – and replacing them with his own.

Although never as extreme as Napoleon's censorship policies, the English government in the 1790s did suppress groups connected to pro-revolutionary newspapers, a suppression culminating in the Two Acts of 1795. Republican versions of Englishness were smothered by the loyalist reaction to the French Revolution. From 1793 onwards it became very difficult to argue that you supported the French Revolution and remained a loyal Englishman. English national identity became connected to monarchism and anti-revolutionary opinion.[23] The newspaper that Duane worked on in London in 1795, *The Telegraph*, was among a series of publications that drew the ire of loyalist opinion.

William Duane again found himself facing a hostile government when he began editing in Federalist America. Ultra-Federalists in Congress attempted to stop the Republican press campaigning against the Federalist government. They recognized the importance of the press to early American politics, as did others. A contemporary from Vermont wrote: 'All ranks and descriptions of men, read, study, and endeavour to comprehend the intelligence they [newspapers] convey ... as if they were sanctioned by irrefragable authority'.[24] Federalists and Jeffersonians used the medium of the press in the crucial first years of the American Republic in order to shape national identity: the ultra-Republicans placed heavy emphasis on democracy as intrinsically linked to American national identity whereas ultra-Federalists spoke of a military alliance with Britain to fight against France and the spread of democracy. William Duane, with his Anglophobic writings, attempted to consolidate the boundary between American and English national identities in order to weaken the Federalist party. He was defining the political and cultural boundaries of Americanness so as to exclude federalism, perceived as connected to England and therefore alien.[25] Duane was a narrator of a democratic national identity in America.[26]

Newspapers were a major form of communication in the eighteenth century and were important platforms for the construction of national identity. Because competing national identities can be connected to different versions of the nation-state, governments seek to control the press, if press freedom has not been normalized in the political culture, so as to ensure their survival. Napoleon successfully imposed censorship and shut down anti-government presses; the Federalists sought to stop the Republican newspapers because they genuinely believed that ultra-Republican opinion was a danger to the nation-state.[27] United Irish nationalism was partly suppressed through the closure of pro-United Irish newspapers such as *The Northern Star*. Although pockets of United Irish ideol-

ogy continued after the rebellion failed, Irish republicanism in the nineteenth century became aligned solely with the Catholic nation. An alternative national identity, and with it an alternative nation-state, was lost.

One way to examine the relationship between the press and national identity is to study a situation where national identity failed to emerge. The sidelining of any Creole nationalism among the Anglo-Indian community in eighteenth-century India is one such case. Any nascent Creole identity that existed among EIC officers, newspaper editors and private traders could not develop due to the tiny number of Anglo-Indians, reliance on metropolitan England and suppression of the press.[28] One needed to have the basis for a competing national identity as well as the means to express it. The Anglo-Indian community did not have the basis for such an identity and lost the means of expression because of censorship.

What was present in India, however, was a competing imperial identity. The support in the Anglo-Indian community for concepts of 'English liberty' in empire clashed with the newer imperialism that was being imposed from England. Marshall has argued that 'the British in India had a lively sense of their rights as Englishmen, periodically expressed in petitions and public meetings'.[29] For Governor-General Wellesley, this 'lively sense of their rights' detracted from his version of empire. Competing imperial identities were an important catalyst to censorship in India. A key factor in the suppression of the press in England, India and America in the 1790s was competing national and imperial identities. Duane attempted to offer an alternative vision based on democratic republicanism. It was one that was not welcomed in India or England and was contested in America.

William Duane was a trenchant critic of the legal and religious traditions of the English nation-state and sought to counter their influence on the nascent American Republic. His Deism played a major role in this critique. He had already rejected his family's Irish Catholicism and was a heterodox Dissenter outside of the Anglican confessional state. Deism encouraged Duane to become committed to Painite radicalism. According to J. C. D. Clarke, the most effective intellectual matrix containing 'collective consciousness from the medieval period to the age of revolutions was a dynastic one whose chief components were law and religion'.[30] Duane's rejection of Anglicanism, English Common Law and the monarchy is tied to his embrace of Deism. His religious heterodoxy and rejection of the legitimacy of the English nation-state were shared by a number of transatlantic radicals who established a Deist society in Philadelphia and Democratic Republican clubs. Rejection of tradition, or its defence in the case of England, is recognized in the historiography as crucial to the emerging national identities of the age of revolutions. Yet Clarke's criticism of Anderson – and by extension of Colley's *Britons* – is that nations are not so easily 'thought up'. For Clarke,

Britain is not an 'imagined community' that can be somehow 're-imagined'. English nationalism instead is made of a peculiar set of building blocks, such as religion, that are joined together through a complex historical process over many centuries. But in the period of the American War of Independence and early Republic, people critically, and violently, reshaped these building blocks and built a different political system. Clarke's work on nationalism and religion provides a useful counterpoint to the less concrete aspects of Anderson's writing. Even if revolutions lead to a radical reordering of the blocks of collective identity – for example religion, law and political ideology – nothing is made anew. What Anderson rightly points out, however, is that revolution's sharp impact can allow for more radical change. The vehicle for this radical change in 1776 and 1789 was the press.

In the 1790s William Duane systematically criticized three chief components of English national identity – religion, the monarchy and the legal system – in an act of revolution. He attacked the foundations of late eighteenth-century English identity. Yet he brought to his criticism an intellectual inheritance gained from English Civil War republicanism, the writings of John Locke and the Commonwealthmen, and Thomas Paine. He was also an inheritor of a process of religious change that stretched back to the Reformation and was essential to his conversion to Enlightenment Deism. The verb 'to imagine' is too weak for Duane's argumentative style. He did not just 'imagine' a counter-identity to that of the monarchical Anglican confessional state: he published, argued and fought his way as had the American Revolutionaries before him. He was part of a counter-consciousness to the dominant intellectual matrix that underpinned late eighteenth-century England. This counter-consciousness was in part accepted by all Americans but only fully accepted by the Jeffersonian Republicans. Duane contributed to the strengthening of American identification with democratic republicanism: after 1800 to be American was to be democratic.

Summary

The life of the Painite-Jeffersonian William Duane spans a number of important transitions that took place during the eighteenth century. An account of the life of this member of the United Irish in Philadelphia serves as an interesting counterpoint to the many biographies on better-known imperial figures such as Lord Cornwallis. Although Duane's career in America has been researched in depth, his pre-American journalism has been largely neglected. For Duane, living in empire did not enhance his career but instead drove him into an embittered Anglophobia. In turn, through his political writings, he played an important polemical role for the anti-British camp in the early American Republic. By the

time he returned to America he was a transatlantic radical with a fiercely anti-English message.

The early years of William Duane's life, in colonial America, Ireland and especially in 1780s London, have left relatively little trace in the official records. The sketchy record continues into his early period in India but is surprisingly intact for the period from 1791–4. In all, the EIC records contain over three hundred pages of commentary and correspondence surrounding the difficulties the EIC faced over Duane's editorial control of the two Calcutta newspapers, the *Bengal Journal* and *The World*. Although from 1787–9 the gap in the records tends to bear out Lucy S. Sutherland's argument – that Irish adventurers are near invisible in the EIC records,[31] – the available material on Duane has been underutilized. One example is the migration of itinerant printers to India in the eighteenth century which Duane was part of; even the exact place of Duane's birth, an important factor in his American career, is to be found within the EIC records.

In my analysis of Duane's Indian period I use material concerning his newspaper businesses as well as new information on his arrest and deportation. The political reasons for the dossier on Duane are also important for any discussion of censorship in Calcutta. The Blechynden diaries, especially those from 1791–5, are another excellent source for the period when Duane resided in Calcutta.[32] As they deal with the career of a man, Richard Blechnyden, who had connections with the French at Chandernagore and was himself an editor of a newspaper, they provide in part a prosopographical context for the research. For Duane's period in London I have used the government spy reports in the Public Records Office as well as the Francis Place papers in the British Library. His American period has been the most extensively researched and as such there is a wealth of secondary source material available, which has been used in the book. I have also used the correspondence of Duane and his family available at the American Philosophical Society and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania as well as a printed collection from the *Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings* (1907) and any extant letters from the collections of Thomas Jefferson's correspondence that touch on Duane. One of the disadvantages of writing on William Duane is that, unlike other early Republican figures such as Tench Coxe, he did not leave behind a large amount of written correspondence. The challenge lies not in sifting through significant personal correspondence but in establishing an analysis of his life and character using the fragments that remain. Even so, the correspondence between Duane and Jefferson has been under-utilized by historians, and the current volume fills this gap.

I undertake an analysis of Duane's character and self-perception and the development of his composite national identity. His career in America saw him draw from different elements of his past, although Irishness was held to be a

constant by his enemies. It is argued that William Duane appeared by 1795 to be a perfect version of Thomas Paine's 'Citizen of the World'. By the early 1800s he had become an American citizen. But his vision of citizenship was heavily inflected by Painite radicalism. Cut loose from the British Empire, this 'Citizen of the World' contributed to attempts to finish the project of nation-building that Thomas Paine had begun in the 1770s. Duane's complex historical relationship with Britain and its empire is muted in the historiography on the early American Republic because it does not sit well with Duane's intense Anglophobia in America. The book attempts to explain this apparent paradox – Duane's initial admiration of (expunged from his self-narrative by the time he is in America) and then subsequent hatred for England – through the seminal event of his life: his deportation from India in 1795. It was an event that shook Duane to the core and utterly changed his view of concepts of 'British liberty' and the British Empire itself. Being cut adrift from the British Raj made him a man without a nation and fuelled an intense desire to forge a nation in his own image. This helps explain the radical and passionate intensity of his American writings. Duane and the other transatlantic radicals wanted to create a nation-state in America for their kind: refugee 'Citizens of the World' who had escaped political hostility in the British Isles and, in Duane's case, the wider British Empire.

This biography has at the core of each chapter the specific newspaper Duane was working on – as befits an individual at the centre of the explosion in print culture in the late eighteenth century. Printed material – books, pamphlets and newspapers – was ever-expanding in the 1700s. In England in the 1620s 6,000 titles appeared; this became 21,000 in the 1710s and reached more than 56,000 by the 1790s.[33] The expansion of printed material and the growth of literacy has been the focus of an increasing number of historians.[34] Duane contributed as an apprentice printer, Grub Street writer and journalist, book publisher and newspaper editor. He became a well-known book publisher in America and brought out numerous works on the American War of Independence and the United Irish. Apart from the broader history of printing, the study of William Duane necessitates familiarity with newspaper history.[35] Due to the international scope of Duane's life, I have particularly benefited from the recent series of essays edited by Hannah Barker and Simon Barnes – *Press Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America*.[36] Duane's involvement in the lively Calcutta press scene – the number of weekly newspapers meant an inhabitant could read a different newspaper each day of the week – has entailed reading histories of the Indian press. Works such as P. Thankappan Nair's *A History of the Calcutta Press* have been important for collecting biographical data and references to other newspaper editors who clashed with the EIC government.[37] I began my research on Duane by reading these books, where I first came across a brief reference to his career in America. Because of the amount of research on his American

career it was a counterintuitive start; yet it revealed the paucity of research on Duane's pre-American career. While proving useful, these studies do not substantially connect eighteenth-century Indian newspapers – which were derived from developments in Britain – to the wider body of research on the press in the eighteenth century. This is partly because the study of eighteenth-century Indian newspapers is normally confined to introductory chapters in broad surveys on the Indian press. Even when there is more substantial study of the eighteenth century, for example on James Augustus Hicky, little context is given outside of direct events in India.[38] The same point can be made of transindian radicalism: when historians of the Indian press mention a figure like Duane, it is in isolation and not connected to the body of research on eighteenth-century radicalism. The one substantial study of printing in Calcutta is Graham Shaw's *Printing in Calcutta to 1800*.[39] Although it includes detailed information on the printers and their operations it is not a political study of the Calcutta press. On the other hand, the Calcutta press is not well known to British and American newspaper historians. Recent research on British newspapers covering Indian political events has been undertaken, but the quite significant English press that existed in Calcutta, and its connection to metropolitan newspapers, is still outside the historiography on the British and American presses.[40]

Duane's newspapers, when combined with his biographical record and its political and social context, mean we can reach a deeper understanding of Duane and his actions through five varying periods of his life: Ireland and the *Hibernian Advertiser*; 1780s London and the *General Advertiser*; Calcutta and the *Bengal Journal* and *The World*; 1790s London and *The Telegraph*; and Philadelphia and the *Aurora*. Apart from the *General Advertiser* and the *Aurora*, which were major metropolitan newspapers with large print runs, the *Hibernian Advertiser*, *Bengal Journal* and *The World* had subscriber numbers similar to those of newspapers in a smaller provincial town in England. In 1798 the *Aurora* had 1,500 subscribers whereas the *Bengal Journal* had something over 300 subscribers.[41] Because Duane would have carried his subscription list over from the *Bengal Journal* to *The World* it is likely that his second newspaper started with a similar amount of subscribers as his first. Yet by 1792 Duane was advertising five printing positions at *The World*, which means his subscriber list must have substantially grown. One has to note an element of caution in comparing his Indian newspapers to the *Aurora* as the high cost of printing in late eighteenth-century Calcutta, and the paucity of talented printers like Duane, meant the price of an Indian newspaper was higher.[42] The Indian newspapers also carried a significant amount of advertising – as befitted a major trading centre of the British Empire – which would have brought in extra revenue. The English population of Calcutta – embedded though it was in a major Indian metropolis – was similar to an English town of around 1,000.[43] Although the 300 recorded subscribers of the *Bengal Jour-*