

From Battleground to Playground: The British in Corsica from the Mid-Nineteenth Century to the Eve of the Second World War.

Submitted by Elizabeth Constance Raikes to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History January, 2019.

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Signature:

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to the late Professor Colin Platt (1934-2015), and those who go on being inspired by him and take heart from his encouragement.

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ABSTRACT

British interest in Corsica began in the mid-eighteenth century. In the changes that occurred in the island from 1794 to 1939, the British played a marked role. British involvement in the island is still evident with the survival of the Anglican Church in the capital city, Ajaccio, the names -- Rue Miss Campbell, *Bois des Anglais*, *Cascade des Anglais*-- and the monument to the British submarine, *HMS Saracen*, on Cupabia beach. The British came to the island as conquerors, sojourners, traveller-discoverers and permanent settlers, communities more usually associated with the formal or informal empire. This study investigates the nature, form and impact of these groups considering their motivation for going to Corsica, how far they were able to maintain and express a British national identity, their interaction with other communities, and their impact on the development of tourism, trade, industry and commerce.

Britain's political involvement in the island resulted in the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom of 1794-1796, and the legacy of that time was not forgotten. The perceived benefits of the island attracted a winter colony of sojourners in Ajaccio from the mid-nineteenth century. A few permanent settlers made investments in the economy, albeit with varying degrees of success; these investments gave an impetus to modernisation. Tourism received a stimulus towards the end of the nineteenth-century when traveller-discoverers came to follow their special interests in a place still seen to be unexplored. Then, in line with social and economic trends, tourism broadened its base and season. However, by the eve of the Second World War, the transition to mass tourism in the summer months was far from complete.

The British involvement in Corsica led to a long-lasting and deep connection between the two countries seen today in the annual service in Westminster Abbey that commemorates the death in 1807 in London of the Corsican general Pascal Paoli. This thesis shows how this rapport was developed and sustained. In doing so, it illuminates an under-researched British presence on the periphery of Empire and contributes to the concept of networks of multiple British worlds. Specifically, what can be seen in Corsica, at a micro-level, is a British presence that was part of a wider British Mediterranean world that mirrored both the growth and waning of the British Empire.

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Notes and Abbreviations

Terminology

The subject matter of this thesis involves a number of terms or themes that have multi-faceted and sometimes contested terms. For the purpose of consistency and clarity I have defined these terms to best reflect contemporary usage and the Corsican context.

The intertwined questions of *Britishness and Englishness* are live issues in historical writing today as they are in contemporary British society. The majority of sources are English rather than Scottish, Welsh or Irish. Much recent historical debate has centred on the question of primacy-whether English national identity or British national identity was the more potent or dominant historical force. The term 'national identity' is not consistently used in the historiography until the 1960s and is considered as part of a wider context that includes nation, nationality and nationalism. Identity is also shaped by contextual factors such as critical mass, space, strength and proximity of other groups, and is complicated by the custom of 'English' and 'British' often being seen as synonymous terms and by the assumed homogeneity of national groups.¹ In reality, the threads of national identities developed alongside one another and knit together in a fashion that defies separation. This does not give the historian carte blanche to substitute British for English or to alternate at will but it is not always possible to choose a single adjective. In this thesis the term 'Britain' refers to the whole island containing England, Scotland, Wales and their dependencies. 'British' refers not only to the inhabitants of the islands of Britain but also in its wider sense of describing a political or imperial connection. In spite of this, several individuals quoted in the thesis refer to themselves as English even when clearly Scottish by birth. And, British travellers in Corsica were usually referred to as 'Anglais' or 'Inglesi' applying to residents from any part of Britain. Therefore, I will use the terms interchangeably unless for particular emphasis.

'Our English Colony' was the term used by the Corsicans as early as

¹ Robert J.C. Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), p.23.

1866.² The British Dr Herbert Panmure Ribton (-1882) used the term 'colonisation' to describe the British influx in 1867.³ Both the Corsicans and the British used the term at the time of the establishment of the winter health station in Ajaccio and was understood at the time to be the grouping of a number of people of one nationality residing in a foreign city or country. The term 'colony' is being used here as it was understood from 1711 as 'a number of people of one nationality residing in a foreign city or country: the quarter thus occupied'.⁴ The word 'colonist' emerged in the early nineteenth century to reduce the stigma attached to the word 'emigrant', but according to James Belich, it failed to dominate as common usage.⁵ It was certainly still in use in mid-nineteenth century Corsica, but it shows how the meanings of terms evolve. The term colony today is more usually understood as deriving from a political act of colonisation but it can also be a localised grouping of outsiders which is the meaning taken for this thesis.⁶

This type of emigration was part of the phenomenon of mass migration that is most usually associated with permanent settlement in the dominions. The term migration has sharply contrasting forms and is sometimes also allied with diaspora. Diaspora is a contested term but in this context it means a voluntary leaving of one's home to reside elsewhere, more accurately dispersal.⁷ The term mostly appears in the context of this thesis in connection with the movement of peoples south in the winter for health purposes.

There are no simple distinctions between the terms colonist, settler, expatriate, tourist, sojourner, traveller or visitor. This causes difficulty in studying societies that are broadly similar. Some terms are used interchangeably and there are lengthy debates in a variety of disciplines about meanings. There

² *Journal de la Corse*, 1 May 1866.

³ Herbert Panmure Ribton, *Corsica in 1868, with a Comparative View of the Riviera of Genoa and of Corsica, Considered as Health Stations* (Nice: Visconti, 1868), p.62.

⁴ *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

⁵ James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Anglo-World 1783-1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp.149-51. According to Belich 'Emigrant' was the standard term for out-migrant, and was well established in the English language by the eighteenth century. Belich gives an historical view of how the words, colonist and settler came about and developed into a hierarchy of sort.

⁶ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Global History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp.2-3.

⁷ Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, 'Mapping the British World', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 31 (2003), 1-15 (p.3).

were permanent residents in Corsica. They established a permanent home in the island for employment or to exploit the natural resources. The term settler is the best term for these individuals. The English Colony in Ajaccio consisted of members who might today be termed expatriates. The word expatriate derives from the Medieval Latin *expatriatus*, the past participle of *expatriare* meaning to leave one's own country and reside in another. It is a term more recently used to describe people that do not plan to reside in their new country permanently and/or normally retain their British citizenship. In the context of nineteenth-century Corsica, the term sojourner is preferred in this thesis.

Sojourners were temporary residents, spending weeks or months of the winter away from home usually in one place. The length of time spent in a place is often used to differentiate between the various terms. It is one factor, but for the sojourners it was not just a matter of spending more time in one place, they also had a connection to the community they lived among and often a strong affinity to the place in which they were staying. They comprised the well-to-do (mobile elites), mostly rentier class, who had the leisure and the money to travel. It is a situation made more complex by the host communities of French Corsicans and non-Corsican French that the Corsicans sometimes refer to as the '*continentaux*'. The French called the sojourners *hivernants* (winter residents). Towards 1880 the *hivernants* became most numerous in a geographic space that extended from Hyères to the Gulf of Genoa. The British adopted the Italian term 'Riviera' to distinguish it from the Levante and the Ponante.⁸ The French and Germans continued to call this area the Midi until the end of the nineteenth century when the French used another term which became popular, the Côte d'Azur.⁹ The terms are used in this thesis in the context of the period under study.

The sojourners differentiated themselves from the Thomas Cook-type *tourists* who began to travel south in greater numbers in from the second half of the nineteenth-century and are generally considered the first step towards mass tourism. Mass tourism is a classic example of a simplistic notion the meaning of

⁸ Marc Boyer, *Les Villégiatures du XVIe au XXIe Siècle: Panorama du Tourisme Sédentaire* (Paris: Colombelles, 2008), p.112.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.113.

which has been extended and changing over time. It is a term broadly used to apply to the Cook's tourists in the mid-nineteenth century, to the extension of touring in the early decades of the twentieth century, the expansion of tourism with the introduction of paid holidays and the rise of the package holiday after the Second World War.

Many of the early sojourners were invalids suffering from consumption. Consumption tended to be the name given to a wide range of pulmonary complaints or chronic diseases of the respiratory system including: asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, bronchitis, and lung cancer and sometimes scrofula and scurvy, all of which in the nineteenth and early twentieth century were also known in medical circles by the name of phthisis. The link with tuberculosis was not made until the identification of tubercular lesions was found in post-mortem examinations following the discoveries of Robert Koch in the 1880s. Unless specifically referring to the post-Koch epoch, the word consumption is used in this study as it was most often used in the literature and by the individuals themselves.

This thesis does not enter the debate over the terms tourist or traveller. There is no word in general to describe a person who leaves his country with the intention of returning to it after a limited space of time, such as a tourist or traveller. *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defines the tourist as 'one who makes a tour or tours; especially one who does this for recreation; one who travels for pleasure or culture visiting a number of places for their objects of interest, scenery, or the like'.¹⁰ In the context of the time and in consideration of the type of visitors, the term traveller is mostly used for the elite sojourners and the professional classes who came to Corsica to pursue their leisure interests. The term tourist has greater traction for the types of visitor after the First World War who spent shorter periods of time in the island as a holiday destination.

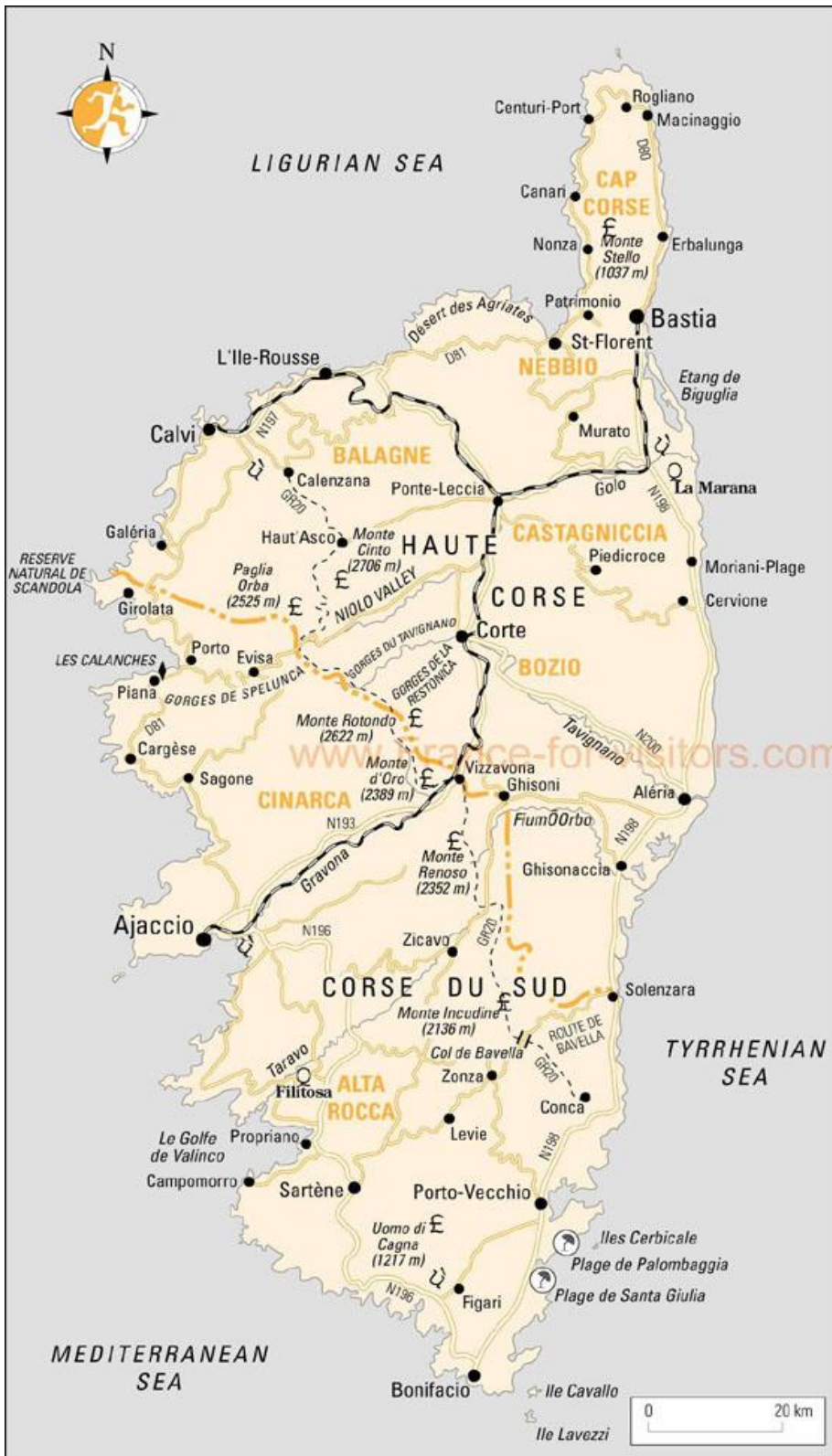
¹⁰ *The Oxford Shorter English Dictionary*.

Place Names -Spelling

In Corsica the French have changed the older Italian-style of spelling of many place and personal names for the French one e.g. Pascal Paoli rather than Pasquale. I have used the more modern spellings of names and that of the Michelin series maps for place names unless quoted in the original. Similarly, I have used the modern spellings of Leghorn (Livorno) and Menton (Mentone) unless part of a quotation.

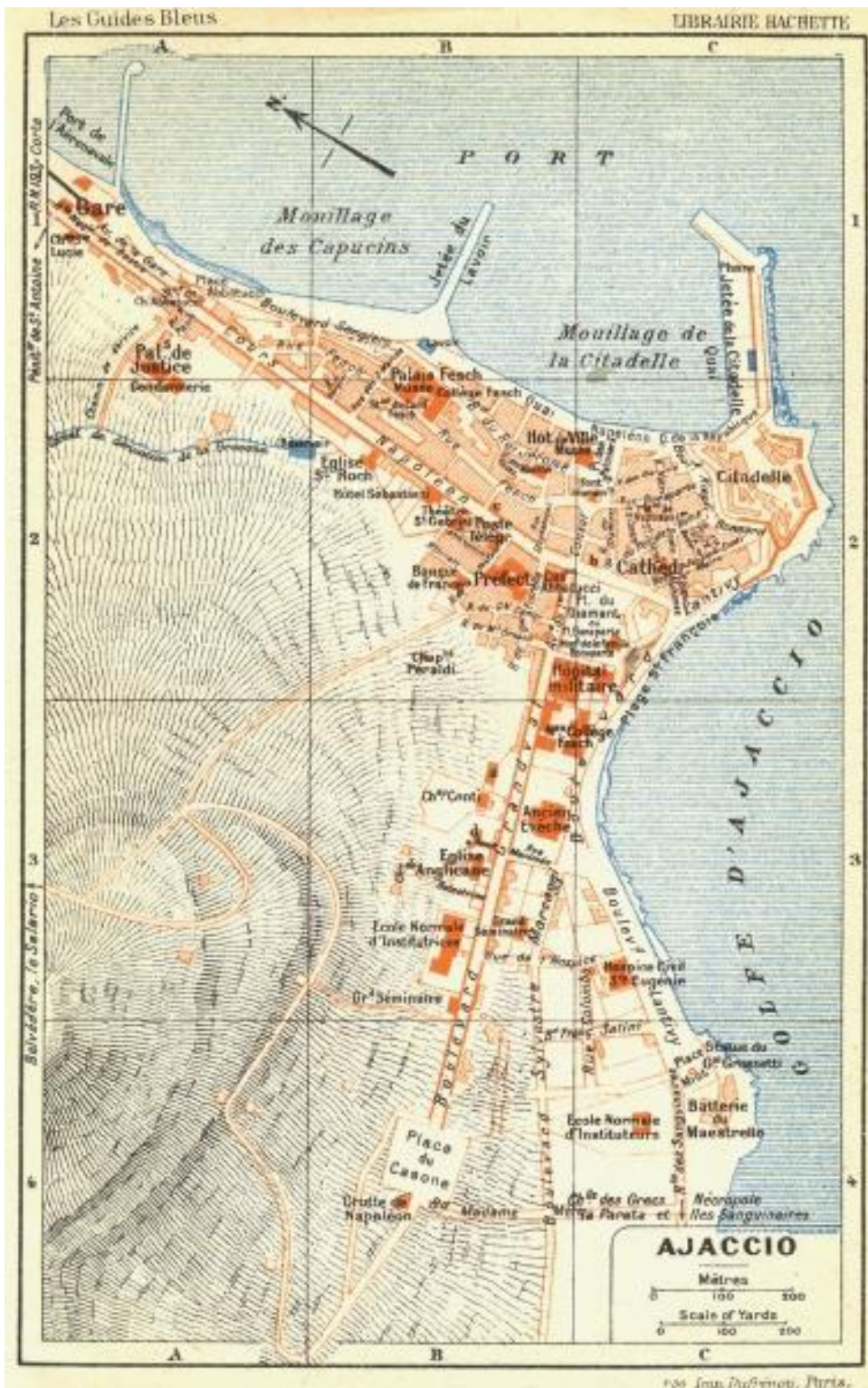
Abbreviations

AA	<i>Archives Départementales La Corse du Sud (Ajaccio)</i>
ACK	Anglo-Corsican Kingdom
AJ	<i>Alpine Journal</i>
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
BMJ	British Medical Journal
BT	Board of Trade
Ec.HR	Economic History Review
FO	Foreign Office
JDE	<i>Journal des Étrangers</i>
LCT	<i>La Corse Touristique</i>
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives, City of London
PLM	<i>La Compagnie des Chemins de Fer de Paris à Lyon et à la Méditerranée</i>
PP	Parliamentary Papers
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
SRF	Serbian Relief Fund
SWH	Scottish Women's Hospital
TNA	The National Archives



from www.france-for-visitors.com

Figure 1 Corsica



<http://www.digirev.us/>

Figure 2 Map of Ajaccio 1926

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

'The British world is a world of its own, and it is a world of many homes.'¹¹

Why would an individual or family in the nineteenth century set out for an inaccessible and underdeveloped island and choose to settle or spend the winter season there? That many did and formed an identifiable English Colony that survived until the Second World War, undertook commercial ventures, or chose to invest in the development of the island, is the general topic of this thesis. These communities in Corsica played a notable if complicated role in changing the island from what was perceived as a strategic asset in the late eighteenth-century to a desirable location for tourists and economic migrants a century and a half later. This study is concerned with the changes made and challenges faced by the English-speaking expatriate communities in making their impact on the island.

Corsica is situated in the Mediterranean, some three hundred kilometres from mainland France (Fig.1). At a distance of only 80 kilometres, it is closer geographically to Italy. With an area of 8,680 square kilometres, it is less than half the size of Wales. It is the most mountainous island of the Mediterranean, with its tallest mountain, Monte Cinto, at 2,685 metres second only to Mount Etna. Forests cover a quarter of the island. In 1768 the Genoese ceded their interest in Corsica to the French and, since then, with the exception of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom (ACK) (1794-96), it has been an integral part of the French state.¹²

It was the events leading up to the establishment of the ACK that first created a connection between the island and the British. The ACK created a legacy of memory that resulted in close ties and friendship between the British

¹¹ Lord Burnham, 1920, owner of the *Daily Telegraph*, quoted in Carl Bridge & Kent Fedorowich, eds., *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (London: Cass, 2003), p.7.

¹² In 1970 the island was made an administrative region, the *Collectivité Territoriale de Corse*.

and the islanders that survives to the present day. Corsica's history had been one of conquest and occupation. The sequence of invasions began in 7,000 BCE with the Ligurians, followed by the Greeks, Phoenicians, Romans, Vandals, Goths, Byzantines, Arabs, Spaniards, Pisans and Genoans until it passed to the French. The island became known to the British during the Enlightenment when it was fighting for its freedom. Following the visit of James Boswell in 1756 and the publication of his book, *An Account of Corsica the Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*, there was some public support for Corsica's battle for independence.¹³ However, it was not until almost the end of the eighteenth century that the British government took a strategic interest in the island for its potential to command and influence events in the Mediterranean.

From the mid-nineteenth century the British settled in small permanent and semi-permanent communities in the island. The capital, Ajaccio, became a winter health station. It was one of a number of such sojourner colonies that were established in and around towns on the Mediterranean and Atlantic shores. These settlements were a 'playground for the rich or the merely comfortable' and were inhabited mostly by northern Europeans who had a common identity of class and social status.¹⁴ For a long time the British were predominant. Their winter world was characterised by long stays and included the provision of Anglican Churches, British shops and doctors and the kind of social life that would have been familiar back at home. These winter health stations, including Corsica, benefited from enhanced mobility from the mid-nineteenth century. The railway network spread from the 1840s, steam ships crossed the Atlantic from the 1860s, the Suez Canal opened in 1869, and by the 1880s steam ships were going to Australia and East Asia. In addition, from the 1860s the telegraph enabled better communication.

The health stations were a phenomenon originally driven by the cult of invalidism or what is sometimes called the health diaspora of the nineteenth

¹³ James Boswell, *An Account of Corsica: the Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*, 3rd edn (London: Dilleys, 1769).

¹⁴ John M. Mackenzie, 'Empires of Travel: British Guide Books and Cultural Imperialism in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries' in *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict*, ed. by John. K. Walton (Clevedon: Channel View, 2013), pp.19-38 (p.19).

century, when wintering abroad for the mobile elites was believed to be the most effective treatment for certain pulmonary complaints, most significantly, consumption. The climate of the south was not just for invalids but also for those who wished to escape the gloom of the northern winter, growing industrialisation and urbanisation. As leisure-related tourism grew alongside health-related tourism, these resorts increasingly became more luxurious with diverse entertainments. The popularity of the Riviera resorts led to problems associated with over-population and overdevelopment, and with a certain democratisation of tourism there was a push to escape the 'Cockney' hordes who were considered by mobile elites as much the 'Other' as the surrounding foreigners.¹⁵ Alternative destinations on the periphery were sought after and Ajaccio became one of the last winter health stations in the Mediterranean to be established.

Corsica also had a small body of British settlers, mostly residing in the commercial centre of the island, Bastia, who may be considered part of the phenomenon of migration. In the case of Corsica it was a movement of the wealthier class rather than an exodus of the poor, the more usual focus of economic migration historical research. The settlers were largely attracted to Corsica when the island began to take its part in the growing world economy, which from the nineteenth century had been given an impetus by industrialisation and the developing support networks of banking and law. This resulted in increased settlements overseas which were often established on the basis of promising and, sometimes, exaggerated claims of value of the availability, quality and ease of extraction of natural resources. Much of this kind of settlement took place within the Empire. However, there were also places where similar pockets of development occurred outside the protection and support of the formal Empire. Until recently these places, such as Latin America and the Treaty Ports in China, have been overshadowed in the historiography. This thesis adds to the growing body of work in respect of these places: in particular it makes connections between migration to the Empire and migration within Europe which are mostly treated separately and more focussed on the period of decolonisation.

¹⁵ A term popularised by Leslie Stephen editor of *Cornhill Magazine* 1871-83.

It was not just the prospect of progress and profit that drew the British to unexplored peripheral areas such as Corsica. Leisure and pleasure seekers were attracted to the island. John Mackenzie asserts that empires were built 'not only on the sword and the gun, the Bible and the flag, Christianity and commerce but also the guide and the map'.¹⁶ Just as the Empire became a destination for special interest scientists, adventurers and explorers, missionaries, teachers, developers, administrators as well as speculators, so too did places such as Corsica. A wider variety of travel-related literature, both non-fiction and novels of adventure such as those of Rider Haggard, inspired a desire to visit places off the beaten track where there might be danger or at least a frisson of excitement. Tales of explorers like David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley motivated others to adventure. Corsica provided an interesting and easier way to access the experience. Thus, the development of tourism in the island is set within the social and cultural ethos over time and coincident with the expansion of Empire and British World.

From the later nineteenth century, the rise of the professional classes and paid holidays generated a desire for vacations that would now be described as 'niche tourism' where individual leisure pursuits-natural science and mountaineering, for example, were increasingly sought in lesser known areas abroad. These traveller-discoverers came outside the winter months and stayed for shorter periods of time. In Corsica they opened up the interior laying the foundations for the expansion of tourism from the 1920s and the eventual shift towards mass tourism and the coasts.

In order to manage the extended timescale, the thesis is divided into three overlapping sections preceded by a scene setting chapter. Chapter Two shows how the ACK lasted a mere two years, but the perceptions of the island gained at that time created the foundation for the future. The island was depicted as an unknown land, a rural idyll with a benign winter climate and that it was a land of promise with unexploited natural resources. The first section (Chapters Three to Six) considers the winter sojourners – their motivations for

¹⁶ Mackenzie (2013), p.22.

going to Ajaccio, the experiences and influence of the early pioneers and their impact on the development of the city. Chapters Three and Four are devoted to the establishment of the English colony in Ajaccio from the 1860s and development of the city to the 1880s and considers, in particular, the contributions of Miss Thomasina Campbell (1804-88) and Major William Murray (1835-94). The chronology of this section ends with the death of Miss Campbell in 1888 which is coincident with the period when the health station was reaching its apogee.

Chapters Five and Six illuminate the lived experiences of the sojourner colony in Ajaccio within the context of a Mediterranean coastal zone. It covers how they related to other expatriate communities and their hosts. The winter colonists brought with them the behaviour pertinent to their class and a 'cultural glue' of British symbols, values, institutions and belongings which helped the community survive and thrive in unfamiliar environments. Recent imperial historians and postcolonial scholars have advocated this networked notion which held together the British world consisting not only of sentiment and shared institutional values but a plethora of networks.¹⁷ These chapters consider what were the features and commonalities that gave the English colony meaning and identity and distinguished it from other communities. Current debates relating to immigration and integration of various ethnic groups into British society are invigorating the argument about the question of 'Britishness' or 'British identity'. These chapters contribute to the discussion by exploring the nature of 'Britishness' within a specific historical context. The boundaries that defined and limited their sense of identity and community in Corsica are considered and the impact of the construct of communities on 'otherness' as a binding oppositional element to identity formation is examined.

Chapters Seven and Eight consider the small settler community mostly based in and around Bastia, the commercial centre in the north of the island. This section examines the contribution and impact of the settlers on trade,

¹⁷ In particular see Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a and 2003b); Alan Lester, 'Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire', *History Compass*, 4/1 (2006), 124-41 (p.130); Gary B. Magee, and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, c.1850-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

industry and commerce. The approach is led by case studies of two pioneers Major Murray and Arthur Southwell (1857-1910). Murray purchased a large agricultural plantation close to Ajaccio which specialised in the growth of Corsica's most important export at the time, the cédrat. Southwell settled in Bastia and became British vice-Consul, Lloyds and Thomas Cook's agents. He was involved in industry, particularly mining, and other commercial activities in the city. The focus is mainly on the period 1880-1914 which was a relatively more economically vibrant time in the island's history. It is a chronology that mirrors that of the British world identified by Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, which is said to have reached its maximum strength from the beginning of the twentieth century to the eve of the First World War.¹⁸

The final part of the thesis, (Chapters Nine and Ten) considers the transition from the winter visitor to the beginnings of recognisable mass tourism. The period 1880-1914 was the heyday of the colony in Ajaccio when the city received annually around a thousand foreign sojourners, some three hundred of whom were probably British. Few of the aristocracy visited Corsica. The mainstay was the rentiers, part of *Queen's* top 10,000, who were joined by the professional classes and from the 1920s the wealthier leisure traveller.¹⁹ Chapter Nine charts the change and continuity among the sedentary colony and the beginnings of a peripatetic, shorter-term tourism industry. This development was led by groups of professionals, traveller-discoverers who engaged in active tourism and explored the interior of the island in their vacations in pursuit of their leisure interests. In addition, from the end of the nineteenth century a greater number of purely for pleasure visitors started to tour the island enabled by newly-introduced motorised transport and the completion of the limited railway network. Chapter Ten reviews Corsica's response to the democratisation of tourism from the 1920s when tourists were increasingly short-stay visitors who came in the spring and then the summer months. These tourists still sought an exotic and authentic experience but expected the modern accoutrements of living as experienced at home.

¹⁸ Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a), p.11.

¹⁹ For the social revolution of 1780-1880 and the rise of the middle and professional classes see Harold Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

The British in Corsica are deserving of attention for a number of reasons. The island provides a manageable spatial framework in which to examine several key historiographic themes: the British world and globalisation, Britishness, travel and tourism, and the history of Corsica in an area outside the confines of Empire.²⁰ The thesis shows how elite communities, a relatively neglected field of research, can be studied in a number of distinct but overlapping and interconnected 'worlds'. The small English colonies within the island can be considered part of the British Mediterranean world which is under-explored but, from the mid-nineteenth century was part of the emerging globalisation and consumer revolution that affected Britain's relations with the rest of the world. Smaller communities, particularly those of the elites, are less prominent in the discussions about settlers and the relationships between the British at home and overseas. Furthermore not all commodities were of equal value in a global market; some such as cotton were more likely to fully integrate into a global economy whereas for the niche produce of Corsica (the cédrat), it was challenging.

Within the core of the thesis are case studies which bring a human dimension to the forces of change and give a different perspective to the more usual political, social or economic units of analysis.²¹ The concept of Britishness abroad in an area beyond empire extends the general narratives into practical experience. The underlying themes of diaspora (mobility), identity and culture, the building blocks of settlement, have an analytical value with common links that apply to communities of Britons wherever they may be.²² Migration created large scale demographic change but equally sojourners and settlers and then tourists in Corsica were the impetus for smaller scale transformation. The thesis traces the evolution and influences of these

²⁰ See Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a and 2003b), p.5. The term had its origin in a series of conferences between 1989 and 2007 devoted to the shared characteristics of British settler colonies in their commercial, cultural and political British experiences. The concept of the 'Anglo-World' was devised by James Belich who sought to explain the contribution of Anglophone settlers to the evolution of the world economy in the long nineteenth century.

²¹ A recent trend has seen the increasing use of 'historical life-writing', or individual biographies to illustrate global and imperial interconnection. For example, see Simon J. Potter and J. Saha, 'Global History, Imperial History and Connected Histories of Empire', *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 16, (1) (Spring 2015), doi.org/10.1353/cch.2015.009 (last accessed 12 June 2018).

²² In the context of this thesis, the term mobility (of people, goods and capital) is generally preferred to diaspora.

communities over a long period as Corsica moved from being a strategic asset to a desirable holiday destination.

Methodology

In order to make sense of the physical evidence, this thesis interrogates multiple archives. There are a variety of primary sources available, in paper form and digitally, in French and English, located in Britain and in Corsica. There are a significant number of narrative accounts written by visitors to the island which are complemented by travel literature and fiction, professional journals, the press and periodicals; company records, official sources, and family history records. This built up a vivid account of the way the British lived in Corsica, their values and attitudes to other communities.

An interdisciplinary approach and an extended chronology added to the challenge in the volume of works to be studied, but the types of sources were similar across the period. Some sources were used more extensively in different parts of the thesis. Case studies of the early pioneers and settlers provide a more in depth insight into how the British in Corsica fitted into the extended British world and the impact they made, whilst being cautious about making generalisations from the findings.

Much data is drawn from individual narratives which are available across the period of the study. Not all were intended for publication, but all accounts intended to be read by others are likely to contain exaggeration or even fiction and memory is subjective. Most were published shortly after the time of a visit; some a few years later. It is clear that many borrowed, sometimes liberally, from works that had gone before. These narratives may not be representative. Most works were written by the more affluent that chose to make themselves known by recording their experiences. Thus, there is a risk of extrapolating patterns about entire communities from a selective group. However, this social bias is not necessarily a disadvantage because it is largely these groups who are the subjects of this thesis. In general, representations of Corsica predominantly reflected a romantic view of the landscape and its people and contain observations on local customs, religious and superstitious practices and

practical experiences of travel, agriculture, bandits and the hotels. Some accounts were more critical pointing out, for instance, shortcomings in food and accommodation. In addition, travelogues do not give a full picture. What tend to be omitted are individuals such as employees and missionaries, for example, who are outside the social class of the author. Nevertheless, the evidence of triangulation with other sources and the comparative homogeneity of the narratives suggest that their value is significant.

Narrative accounts fulfil a documentary role for all aspects of this thesis and allow the examination of similarity and difference over time. The earliest post-Napoleonic War publications came from Robert Benson and William Cowen who visited the island for work.²³ Benson's purpose was to execute the wishes of Pascal Paoli's testament and Cowen was commissioned to paint scenes from Napoleon's life. Both works range far wider than their objectives. The mid-nineteenth century accounts of the Two Ladies, Miss Thomasina Campbell and Edward Lear (1812-88) are particularly useful for illuminating the start of the winter health station in Ajaccio and the state of Corsica at that time.²⁴ In these works there is a strong element of discovering an unknown island. Towards the peak of popularity of the health resort, the books of Gertrude Forde and John Barry project similar views.²⁵ After the First World War, the publications of Alfred Radclyffe Dugmore, Maynard Williams and Hildegarde Hawthorne are informative about the island when it was becoming more popular as a tourist destination.²⁶ The later works were more impressionistic, are more judgemental and attempt interpretations of Corsica. A critical drop in numbers of publications from the late 1920s reflects a fall in interest in the island.

²³ Robert Benson, *Sketches of Corsica; or a Journal Written during a Visit to that Island, in 1823* (London: Longman, 1825); William Cowen, *Six Weeks in Corsica* (London: Cautley Newly, 1848).

²⁴ *A Winter in Corsica: With the Journey There and Back: With Frontispiece and Map by Two Ladies* (London: Low, 1868); Thomasina M.A.E. Campbell, *Southward Ho! Corsica* (London: Hatchard, 1868); Edward Lear, *Journal of a Landscape Painter in Corsica* (London: Bush, 1870).

²⁵ Gertrude Forde, *A Lady's Tour in Corsica* (London: Bentley, 1880); John W. Barry, *Studies in Corsica Sylvan and Social* (London: Low, Marston, 1893).

²⁶ Alfred Radclyffe Dugmore, *Corsica the Beautiful* (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1927); Maynard Owen Williams, 'The Coasts of Corsica: The Impressions of a Winter's Stay in the Island Birthplace of Napoleon', *National Geographical Magazine*, 44, 3 (September-December 1923), 221-310; Hildegarde Hawthorne, *Corsica the Surprising Island* (New York: Duffield, 1926).

Medical tracts relating to the island illuminate Corsica as a winter health station. Sources are available digitally or at the British Library or Wellcome Institute. Contemporary medical journals such as the *British Medical Journal* and *Lancet* are invaluable for tracking medical thinking about consumption and the best place for its treatment. The articles were not just a series of facts and figures but include information as to what individuals could expect to find in various places. Through these sources it is possible to trace the development of Ajaccio across time and enable comparisons with alternative resorts. There are also a number of works by the medical fraternity which include a significant amount of information on Corsica. Dr Ribton's, *Corsica in 1868*, is devoted entirely to the island. His work may not be free from positive bias; his glowing account of Ajaccio and its climate may have been slanted to encourage patients to rent the 'cottages' he seems to have acquired.²⁷ However, his views were supported by Dr James Henry Bennet who had his own practice in Mentone and no reason to gain from promoting the island.²⁸ Ribton and Bennet's work are far more than a medical justification for visiting Corsica. They include detailed descriptions of Ajaccio and, in the case of Bennet many other places he visited on his tour of the island. Both men's work had more of the nature of a guidebook.

Guidebooks are a rewarding source for this thesis. They met the needs of, and reflected the cultural aspirations and perspectives of, their upper and middle class readership, the subjects of this study. They not only directed the 'tourist gaze' but played a part in maintaining the stereotypical images of places and peoples. They contained a large quantity of preliminary data (advice on clothing, health, accommodation and transport; the nature of the people to be encountered and the history of a place) useful to the historian. The first Baedeker to include Corsica was the 1868 guide to *Northern Italy*.²⁹ The Murray Handbooks are the most notable British supplier of guides. The first for Corsica was combined with Sardinia and was also published in 1868.³⁰ Guide

²⁷ Ribton.

²⁸ James Henry Bennet, *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean: Or, the Riviera, Mentone, Italy, Corsica, Sicily, Winter Climates*, 4th edn (London: Churchill, 1870).

²⁹ Karl Baedeker, *Northern Italy as far as Leghorn, Florence and Ancona, and Corsica* (Koblenz: Baedeker, 1868).

³⁰ John Murray, ed., *A Handbook for Travellers in the Islands of Corsica and Sardinia* (London: Murray, 1868).

books that included the island were more numerous from the 1880s which, unsurprisingly, coincided with the island's growing popularity. With the expansion of tourism from the 1920s, new guides came from travel firms such as Thomas Cook and shipping agencies like Paris-Lyon-Marseilles (PLM).³¹ These were more likely to contain bias since the companies were eager to promote their tours. For example, they played down the danger from the bandits. Bias was only one of the well-charted disadvantages to the guide book; they could be unreliable and went out of date quickly.³²

Guidebooks were complemented by travel journals of the 'where and how to go variety' catering for a readership increasingly differentiated by social class and particular interest. From 1894 the *Queen Book of Travel*, aimed at the top 10,000 people, began to issue its annual compendia of up-to-date travel information including lists of all the principal resorts. It placed particular emphasis on health resorts, including Ajaccio, indicating their appropriateness to the reader's social and economic situation. The *World Wide Magazine* was a monthly illustrated publication that was first issued in 1898. It was aimed at a wider social class and specialised in "truth is stranger than fiction" and, as such, included somewhat untypical narratives. However, there are some articles from travellers to Corsica in the early twentieth century when there are fewer alternative sources.

Travel literature can be triangulated with other evidence. The traveller-discoverers not only recorded their finds and achievements in specialist magazines such as the *Entomologist*, but also included rich descriptions of the landscape and life in Corsica.³³ The *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* (RGS) published 1830-80, also contained papers from travellers and academic geographers and was supplemented by reviews, maps, etc. The Alpine Club archives contain a wide-ranging collection of documents going back to the earliest days of mountaineering, including unpublished accounts of visits to Corsica. The *Alpine Journal* (AJ) is a record of mountain adventure and scientific observation which, with gaps for the world wars, has been published

³¹ *La Compagnie des Chemins de fer de Paris à Lyon et à la Méditerranée* (PLM).

³² For a detailed review of the guidebook's advantages and disadvantages see Nicholas T. Parsons, *Worth the Detour: The History of the Guidebook* (Stroud: Sutton, 2007).

³³ A good example is George Maw's *A Monograph of the Genus Crocus* (London: Dulau, 1886).

since 1863 and contains detailed descriptions of ventures to Corsica from the mid-nineteenth century.

The daily and periodical press are a rich source for gleaning information about Corsica over time. National and provincial papers are available in digital form, although metropolitan London publications overshadow the provincial. Letters, news reports and features cover many of the aspects of this thesis. Much of the daily press reporting was of adverse events – cholera, earthquakes, the bandits and the mishaps of visitors. This was balanced by letters from visitors to Corsica in praise of the island and setting right misreporting. There was a focus on anniversaries, such as the death of Admiral Lord Nelson, the ACK and much fascination with Napoleon and the Bonaparte family. Newspapers such as *The Times* were also a good source for company information. Copy was often replicated in the American press. The Americans became interested in Corsica initially in the eighteenth-century with the popularity in America of the Corsican leader Pascal Paoli. Greater numbers visited the island when steamship crossings became faster and more frequent from the mid-nineteenth century.

The older elements of the periodic press, such as *The Badminton* and *Cornhill Magazines*, aimed at the higher end of society, contained articles contributed by individuals who, as well as visiting Ajaccio, had taken sporting or leisure holidays in the island. Articles in periodicals such as the *Nineteenth Century*, *Edinburgh Review*, *Quarterly Review* and *Westminster Review* had more in depth analysis, although there was an element of generating controversy.³⁴ From the twentieth century 'court and social' was covered in papers like the *Illustrated London News*, *The Times* and *Daily Express*. These sources are helpful for identifying fashionable places, the names of individuals who went to the island, the reason for and length of stay, and also included the appointments of vicars to the Anglican Church.

For the Anglican Church, there are limited but useful records of The Colonial and Continental Church Society held at the London Metropolitan

³⁴ This aspect of the periodical is covered in Louise Henson and others, eds., *Culture and Science in the Nineteenth-Century Media* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004).

Archives.³⁵ These records provide a good marker for identifying the history of the church and, thus, the growth and decline of the winter sojourner phenomenon. Other public sources such as official reports from the British consuls and company data are held at the National Archives. Parliamentary Papers (available digitally), are useful for considering contemporary perceptions and the activities and influence of the British in Corsica. There are disadvantages to these sources. Reports were subject to bias by their authors. More than one Corsican consul, for example, exaggerated the state of affairs in order to get a pay rise or a transfer. There are also gaps in the record where some consuls were less diligent than others. Reports were formulaic but occasionally contained additional information. The Foreign Office usually accepted the figures and analysis given, but it was not easy to collect data in Corsica and there is uncertainty about its accuracy. Similar style reports were made by the Corsican Préfet; only a few survive in paper form in the Ajaccio archives. They are even more limited than those of the British consuls and have no supplementary information.

In respect of sources in French, Corsican statistical information is approached with care. The data suffers from gaps and inaccuracies but there is sufficient to form views that can be triangulated with other sources. Most surviving data is held in the archives in Ajaccio in paper form. Data collection and recording was basic. Census information, particularly in certain years, is suspect although trends can be discerned and comparisons made. Statistics of visitor numbers and expenditure per capita cannot be compiled, making it difficult to assess the impact of the British activities. Proxy measures, such as increase in numbers of hotels, bicycles and cars could be used but they are not entirely satisfactory surrogates. For this study, the most useful information is hotel registers and passenger lists. However, the data is fragmentary and not continuous particularly from the earlier and later parts of the period making reliability and comparability over time difficult. The registers of the Grand Hotel and Hotel des Étrangers are most regular from 1901-05 and the most complete although, as with the passenger lists, the entries are sometimes indecipherable. Spelling of British names is arbitrary and surname and Christian names are

³⁵ The Colonial and Continental Church Society was the body that supervised the British Churches overseas which fell under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Gibraltar.

sometimes confused. In addition the data is not in a form helpful to historians. For example, there are passenger lists but no clear separation of tourists and Corsicans returning from the continent. However, the information is objective, and it is easier for British researchers to recognise names and preliminary assessments can be made as to social status and age of travellers. Where the information is available, there is a strong correlation with the British sources.

The Bibliothèque National de France provides digital access to some French journals and historical texts. Individuals in Corsica such as Jean-Pierre Girolami, former editor of the *Corse Matin*, Jean-Christophe Ortoni, *Chargé de Mission Patrimoine Culture*; and Francis Beretti, *Professeur chez Education Nationale*, one of Corsica's foremost historians on the British and Corsica (although mostly focussed on the earlier period covered in this thesis) have been helpful. Some Corsican newspapers survive in paper form. Of most use to this thesis are the journals printed for the foreign visitors. Although limited in number and period, they reported world events of note of interest to the British community, what was on, the facilities of the towns and arrivals and departures of foreign visitors. Arrivals and departures, though, were only of those individuals who had chosen to register their details, and as these sources were compiled by the tourism industry, they are not uncritical.

This is a study of a small island and, as such, may not be typical. Therefore an element of comparison has been used. Comparison enables key questions to be investigated such as motivation, relationship with other expatriates and host communities, the boundaries of British identity and what strengthened the sense of community. Comparative history, though, has its challenges. Choice of comparison has been guided by places that contemporaries would have recognised as being suitable alternatives for visitors. These places are more likely to draw out similarities but are useful for explaining general phenomena. Differences are more illuminating in exposing the challenges, uniqueness or local inflections. For the sojourner, by the end of the nineteenth century there were health stations from Madeira to the Crimea, Algeria to the banks of the Adriatic and further afield. The nearest alternatives would have been the rival resorts of the Riviera or North Africa: French Algiers or one of the stations in Egypt: Alexandria or Cairo. A useful comparator to the

winter health resorts are the Indian hill stations which were seasonal sanctuaries for the British elite from the harsh climate and alien culture of India where a British way of life could be maintained.³⁶

In respect of settlers, to the best of existing knowledge there is no evidence of large scale British agricultural or industrial endeavours on the Riviera, such as could be found in Corsica. Therefore parallels are sought from other expatriate groupings. Smaller expatriate communities existed in North Africa, Latin America: Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil; Mexico or Chile, for example. These places feature less conspicuously in debates about the British overseas British, although more recent work is examining these mini Britains.³⁷ Tourism became ubiquitous across the Mediterranean, but the shift to summer sun is best compared to the Riviera.

Literature Review

This thesis involves an understanding of a number of historiographies (the British world and globalisation; Britishness, travel and tourism and the history of Corsica) which reflect the extent to which history intersects with concerns of literary scholars, anthropologists and sociologists and its increasing interdisciplinary character. The study has also required familiarity with a broad body of literature including, the history of medicine, maritime history, the various subcategories of tourism and identity theory. General studies of British society from the mid-nineteenth century, particularly those dealing with the aristocracy, the middle classes, leisure and consumption, have been invaluable in understanding the context and for providing a benchmark for social change.³⁸

The British World

The British World is an abstract concept generally envisaged as a large-scale sub-division of the British Empire characterised by fuzzy boundaries. It is

³⁶ Dane Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (London: University of California Press, 1996).

³⁷ See Robert Bickers, ed., *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons Over the Seas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

³⁸ See for example, David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (Basingstoke: Pan Macmillan, 1996); K. Theodore Hoppen, *The Mid-Victorian Generation 1846-86* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998) and Perkin.

neither a singular nor stable construct. It is part of the fields of enquiry that have blossomed over the last decade known as “Britain and the World” based on the assumption that understanding Britain’s engagement with places outside its shores which enables a better understanding of global and British history.³⁹ This thesis contributes to the discussions in recent works around the construct of a British world that has emerged as a lively field of research that highlights the importance of transnational and global connections. This study owes a debt to those post-war giants of Imperial history (Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher and Peter J. Cain and A.J.Hopkins). Historiographies of that period have been ably set out by John Gascoigne and David Lambert and Alan Lester.⁴⁰ As summarised by Bridge and Fedorowich a number of terms to describe the foundations of imperial history came into historical parlance: informal empire, the official mind, the periphery and the metropole and gentlemanly capitalism.⁴¹ All were limited and ‘downplayed the crucial human dimension of empire’ and mostly had an emphasis on the non-white empire and decolonisation.

The focus of the British World is on the cultural, political, economic and demographic links that underpin a sense of common imperial identity, rather than an emphasis on root causes. An important part of the studies of the British World most closely associated with the works of John Darwin and Belich, is the emphasis on ‘colonies of settlement’ rather than those of ‘conquest’ or the ‘dominions’ over ‘dependent’ colonies.⁴² The focus on settlement builds on the late twentieth-century movement that brought the Empire back into the history of modern Britain.⁴³ Rachel Bright and Andrew Dilley have produced an excellent critique of the historiography of the growing literature on the British

³⁹ For a discussion on the approach of this field see Tehila Sasson and others, ‘Britain and the World: A New Field’, *Journal of British Studies*, 57 (October 2018), 677-708.

⁴⁰ John Gascoigne ‘The Expanding Historiography of British Imperialism’, *Historical Journal*, 49, 2 (2006), 577-92; David Lambert and Alan Lester. *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006) pp.4-5; Lester (2001).

⁴¹ Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a).

⁴² See Sasson and others, p.689; Belich; Daniel Maudlin and Bernard L. Herman, *Building the British Atlantic World* (North Carolina: Chapel Hill, 2016); Kent Fedorowich, ‘The British Empire on the Move’ in *The British Empire, Themes and Perspectives* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), ed. by Sarah Stockwell, pp.63-100; John Darwin, *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830-1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁴³ Among the studies of this concept Andrew Thompson’s, *The Empire Strikes Back* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005) stands out. For a discussion on the origins of the British world concept see Phillip A. Buckner, ‘Introduction: The British World’, *History of Intellectual Culture*, 4, (1) (2004), 1-4. For a consideration of its influence on Imperial history see Saul Dubow, ‘How British was the British World? The Case of South Africa’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37, (1) (March 2009), 1-27.

world.⁴⁴ The British world concept has been criticised for possessing ambiguity over the meanings of the building blocks of diaspora, culture and identity.⁴⁵ However, the ideas are now being utilised to explain the origins of globalisation. Magee and Thompson, for instance, claim that the ‘first phase’ of ‘modern globalisation’ was ‘nurtured within the confines of the British world’.⁴⁶

The British in Corsica were part of an extended British world within a neo-British Mediterranean zone.⁴⁷ In the last thirty years there have been a number of studies that have analysed the role played by the British in the Mediterranean during the nineteenth and twentieth century.⁴⁸ However, this area is under-represented in the historiography of the British overseas experience. One of the more recent publications, Robert Holland’s *Blue-Water Empire*, asserts the ‘British left an imprint on the Mediterranean’.⁴⁹ However, Holland’s main focus is political, administrative, military and strategic. Thus there is a concentration on those places where there was British control: Egypt, Gibraltar, Minorca, Malta, Corfu and Cyprus. Significantly, Holland believes that ‘So entrenched did the British become in significant parts of the Mediterranean that their presence became something deeper: a world of its own, though like all such phenomena, one shot through with other worlds’.⁵⁰ This ‘world of its own’ was populated by colonies of elite communities that were encountered in socially select destinations on the shores of the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts in the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

The nineteenth and early twentieth century, from the fall of Napoleon to the eve of the First World War, was a time when people ‘in their hundreds of

⁴⁴ Rachel K. Bright and Andrew R. Dilley, ‘Historiographical Review: After the British World’, *Historical Journal*, 60, 2 (2017), 547-68.

⁴⁵ For a summary of the criticisms of the concept see Tamson Pietsch, ‘Rethinking the British World’, *Journal of British Studies*, 52 (April 2013), 441-63.

⁴⁶ Magee and Thompson, p.231.

⁴⁷ Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a), p.3 identify the term ‘neo-Britains’ as being coined by John G.A. Pocock in 1974 and taken up by James Belich in 1998.

⁴⁸ John Pemble, *The Mediterranean Passion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Jim Ring, *Riviera: The Rise and Fall of the Côte d’Azur* (London: Murray, 2005); Michael Nelson, *Queen Victoria and the Discovery of the Riviera* (London: Tauris Parke, 2007); Ted Jones, *The French Riviera* (London: Tauris Parke, 2009); Richard Mullen and James Munson, *The Smell of the Continent* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2009); Robert Holland, *Blue-Water Empire: The British in the Mediterranean Since 1800* (London: Penguin, 2013).

⁴⁹ Holland (2013), p.5.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

thousands set out to discover Europe'.⁵¹ John Pemble's classic cultural history of the Victorians and Edwardians in the south shows how the Mediterranean became 'a significant part of the British way of life and the British way of death'.⁵² Pemble's work is wide-ranging covering for example, journeys, motives, destinations and health but it does not look in depth at any one community. There are some works in French. Most relevant to this study are the two works of Marc Boyer which provide relevant background to the development of the winter visitor phenomenon on the northern Mediterranean coasts.⁵³ It was an 'incredible diaspora' of the elite, but it is a relatively neglected field of research.⁵⁴ Boyer's works explore the motivations of the *hivernant*, their significance and length of stay, emphasising the role of the English. In addition, there are a number of articles or chapters within books, mostly tourism-focussed, that chart the development of some of the resorts, although there are few individual histories.⁵⁵

As well as sojourners, Corsica also had a small enclave of settlers. This work seeks to be a helpful addition to the limited number of studies of expatriate British communities in various parts of the world. The study of communities outside the formal or informal influence of Empire is still a relatively neglected field of research. Most of the literature on migration considers Europe and the Empire separately. The historiography of colonial settlement is more comprehensive but has little focus on the elite communities; many studies are focussed on agriculturalists who were often driven to leave for economic reasons. Robert Bickers was one of the first to consider other clusters of expatriates. His iconic *Britain in China* was set in the wider context of those Britons who went overseas outside the dominions and who were not part of the

⁵¹ Mullen and Munson, p.xi.

⁵² Pemble, p.iii.

⁵³ Boyer (2008) and Marc Boyer, *L'Hiver dans le Midi: l'Invention de la Côte d'Azur XVIIIème – XXIIème siècle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009).

⁵⁴ Boyer (2009), p.11.

⁵⁵ For example see Joan Carles Cirer-Costa, 'The Beginnings of Tourism in Majorca, 1837-1914', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39, (4) (2012), 1779-96; Kenneth J Perkins, 'So Near and Yet So Far: British Tourism in Algiers, 1860-1914' in *The British Abroad Since the Eighteenth Century*, eds by Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan, 2 vols (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), II, pp.217-35; Robert Kanigel, *High Season: How One French Riviera Town has Seduced Travellers for Two Thousand Years* (London: Penguin, 2002); Mak Lanver, *The British in Egypt: Community, Crime and Crises 1822-1922* (London: Tauris, 2012).

colonial or military services.⁵⁶ Also considered are anthropological studies of contemporary expatriate groups in an attempt to characterise and differentiate experiences. Anne-Mieke Fechter argues in her work on European expatriates in Indonesia that they are unlikely to involve themselves in local politics and culture, kept generally aloof from local people and were expected not to go native.⁵⁷ Karen O'Reilly comes to similar conclusions in her work on the contemporary British expatriate in Spain.⁵⁸

The study of wider communities bears out the networked conception of empire with multiple meanings which can be viewed as a precursor of globalisation.⁵⁹ This thesis provides an example from outside the geographical framework of formal or informal empires and, as such, spans both the British world and globalisation.

Globalisation

In the last thirty years, there has been a growing awareness of transnational histories, networks of transoceanic systems and histories of migration and diasporas which has resulted in a shift from the nation state as the basic unit of historical analysis and, thus, imperial to global. In addition, oceans and seas (Atlantic, Indian and Pacific) have provided frameworks to trace transnational exchanges of goods, people and ideas resulting in the identification of shared cultures and identity.⁶⁰ These studies tend to be large scale comparisons. This study is a microhistory but tells a transnational story that allows consideration of a more detailed spatial structure to show how Britons lived in a global frame, outside the affiliation of Empire.

Globalisation is a contested term, but Simon Potter and J. Saha have provided a useful overview of the differences, similarities and overlaps between the studies of imperialism and globalisation.⁶¹ The scholarship of Bridge and Fedorowich and Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson, in particular, have

⁵⁶ Robert Bickers, *Britain in China: Community, Culture and Colonialism, 1900-1949* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999); Bickers (2010).

⁵⁷ Anne-Mieke Fechter, *Transnational Lives: Expatriates in Indonesia* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2016).

⁵⁸ Karen O'Reilly, *The British on the Costa del Sol* (London: Routledge, 2000).

⁵⁹ Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a and 2003b); Magee and Thompson.

⁶⁰ For example see Maudlin and Herman.

⁶¹ Potter and Saha.

highlighted the way in which networks (family, business, religious, scientific, for example) and connections within the Empire and the British world were linked through economics, trade, employment and culture which are part of the history of globalisation in the nineteenth century.⁶² These networks were enabled by better communications through the development of rail, steamships and the telegraph. There has been a renewed focus on economic forces within extended frames of reference that encompass the Anglophone settler world. Belich's pioneering study, for instance, places economic dynamics at the heart of settler expansion and the evolution of the world economy in the long nineteenth century arguing for distinctive Anglophone colonies owing to unique global connections.⁶³

Migration is viewed as the key element that not only formed the bonds of Empire, but was the main driver of global connection.⁶⁴ Belich outlined a 'settler revolution' that transformed colonial practice although focussed mainly on the American West and the dominions.⁶⁵ Much of the impetus was technological change which transformed the pattern of relationship between the centre and the periphery which enabled many more to travel farther and faster resulting in a 'mass transfer of people'.⁶⁶ The settlers in Corsica were part of the phenomenon of British migration from the 1880s to the 1940s. Migrants and their networks transferred not only themselves but investment capital, culture and identity and political ideas.

Corsica promised land and natural resources for individual exploitation and investor opportunity. Bernard Attard and Andrew Dilley have contributed a thoughtful overview of the historiography of money, finance and Empire.⁶⁷ It is now recognised that the empire expanded as much through the initiative and enterprise of its individual citizens as it did through official activity. Some of the sojourners and settlers in Corsica made significant capital investments in the

⁶² Magee and Thompson; Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a).

⁶³ Belich.

⁶⁴ For a general overview, William Roger Louis, editor-in-chief, *The Oxford History of the British Empire*, 5 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998-1999) is a good starting point, particularly for migration, but is limited in respect of the colonies of white settlement.

⁶⁵ Belich.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p.126.

⁶⁷ Bernard Attard and Andrew Dilley, 'Finance, Empire and the British World', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 41, (1) (2013), 1-10.

country. Finance is seen as integral to the formation of a British world without which neo-Britains would 'have been impossible, or at the very least would have taken a radically different form'.⁶⁸ Direct investment served to transmit technology without which progress was unachievable. Most research on investment has been concerned with the colonies of settlement or informal Empire such as Latin America.⁶⁹ In Corsica it was mining that was particularly attractive to British speculators. The works of Mira Wilkins, Charles Press and Jon Harvey, and Ian Phimister and J. Mouat are essential starting points for the context of the Corsican ventures and Phimister's case studies offer valuable perspectives for comparison.⁷⁰

Globalisation has its critics. They argue that connection, scale and integration create new forms of exclusion and dissolved ties to place and that most studies remain focused on the western world.⁷¹ This study contributes to this debate by considering the power of Corsica as a place and what it meant to people at a local and national level by going deeper into the experiences of migrants and understanding the inter-dependencies to the wider world.

Britishness

Global networks bound together a 'diaspora of neo-Britain's' that helped construct a 'wider British identity and culture'.⁷² Identity is a recurring theme in this thesis. Much of the literature on identity is dominated by a focus on the historical origins of the nation. The best known writers on nationalism and

⁶⁸ Attard and Dilley, p.3, use railways as an example of a need for capital that the settlers could not provide and which might not realise investment for some time.

⁶⁹ For example see Matthew Brown, ed., *Informal Empire in Latin America* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008).

⁷⁰ Charles Harvey and Jon Press, 'Overseas Investment and the Professional Advance of British Metal Mining Engineers 1851-1914', *Economic History Review (Ec.HR)*, 42, (1) (February 1989), 64-86; Charles Harvey and Jon Press, 'The City and International Mining, 1870-1914', *Business History*, 32 (3) (1990a), 98-116; Charles Harvey and Jon Press, 'Issues in the History of Mining and Metallurgy', *Business History*, 32 (1990b), 1-14; Mira Wilkins, 'The Free-Standing Company, 1870-1914: an Important Type of British Foreign Direct Investment', *Ec.HR*, 41, 2 (1988), 259-82; Ian Phimister and J. Mouat, 'Mining, Engineers and Risk Management: British Overseas Investment 1894-1914', *South African Historical Journal*, 49 (2003), 1-26; Ian Phimister, 'Late Nineteenth-Century Globalization: London and Lomagundi Perspectives on Mining Speculation in Southern Africa, 1894-1904', *Journal of Global History*, 10 (2015), 27-52.

⁷¹ See Jeremy Adelman, *What is Global History Now?* (2 March 2017), <https://aeon.co/essays/is-global-history-still-possible-or-has-it-had-its-moment> (last accessed 1 July 2018).

⁷² Bridge and Fedorowich (2003b), p.5.

national identity are Ernest Gellner, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, Benedict Anderson, Anthony Smith and John Hutchinson. Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* is influential, but his emphasis is on the modern origins of nations.⁷³ Anderson's seminal work sets out a general theory of national identity and the cultural roots of nationalism. In his view nationalism emerged from products of modernity: capitalism, the press, the novel and vernacular languages. He defines the nation as an imagined community, a category of belonging. This thesis is not about nationalism but on what being British abroad meant outside the Empire. Robert Young argues that the notion of an English ethnicity is premised on settler colonial endeavours in an expanding British World.⁷⁴

There is a growing historiography on the cultural expressions of identity. The debate was given impetus by Linda Colley and scholars are now tackling issues of national identity, cross cultural exchange, and the way in which settler narratives reflect the culture settlers brought with them.⁷⁵ Krishnan Kumar has traced the making of English identity and considered how when the British went overseas they took their culture and lifestyle with them through 'its institutions, its ideas, the appeal of its values and way of life, it spread an idea of Britishness'.⁷⁶ Britishness tends to be widened into general descriptions of culture and the analysis of cultural expressions of identity constitutes an important strand in current sociological discourses. Of particular relevance for this thesis is the work of scholars from the 1990s that gave more attention to considerations such as language, myth, symbols and ceremonies and items of portable culture. Michael Billig refers to this as 'banal nationalism' whereby everyday representations build a shared sense of national belonging, and Edensor identifies material culture as a visual expression of identity.⁷⁷ Billig's

⁷³ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1983).

⁷⁴ Young, (2008).

⁷⁵ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1994). Peter Mandler gives a wide ranging examination of identity through national character in *The English National Character: the History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair* (Bury St Edmunds: Yale University Press, 2006). See also, Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a); Catherine Hall, *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830-1867* (Cambridge: University of Chicago Press, 2002) and Catherine Hall, ed., *Culture of Empire: Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); Philip A. Buckner and R.D. Francis, eds, *Rediscovering the British World* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2008).

⁷⁶ Krishan Kumar, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

⁷⁷ Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage, 1995); Tim Edensor, *National Identity*,

work was a step forward in examining the ways in which individuals use their taken-for-granted categorisations of nation, national identity and national culture to make sense of their social world. These ideas are built upon by John Plotz whose study of portable culture is particularly applicable when considering how British sojourners attempted to create the British world within the unfamiliar environment of Corsica.⁷⁸

This thesis contributes to the debate by examining, in the context of Corsica, the question asked by Richard Price as to ‘what other elements, aside from empire, constituted British modernities’ – for example, class, customs, ideas of liberty and hostility towards ‘others’.⁷⁹ However, there is little research on how host communities were viewed outside the Empire. In considering how the British related to other communities the pioneering work on social identity theory is considered by many as the major theoretical framework for understanding group phenomena.⁸⁰ According to this theory, the development of an individual identity is possible in an environment where social identity is a cognitive mechanism that contributes to group action. Tajfel proposed that group members are driven to maximise their group’s positive distinctiveness where belonging is provided by in-group inclusion, and distinctiveness through intergroup differentiation.

The situation in Corsica was challenging because of the complexity of communities. There were the foreign sojourners and two host peoples: the Corsicans and the continental French. Both the British and the continental French had long stereotyped Corsica as a wild and exotic land. At the macro level the Corsicans were homogeneously regarded as primitive and lazy, much akin to descriptions of colonised peoples. Charlie Galibert, recognises Corsica as France’s most prominent “internal other”, as does Matei Candea who identifies Corsica as a ‘potent internal other’ for France.⁸¹ The ‘Other’ is

Popular Culture and Everyday Life (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p.1.

⁷⁸ John Plotz, *Portable Property: Victorian Culture on the Move* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

⁷⁹ Richard Price, ‘One Big Thing: Britain, its Empire, and their Imperial Culture’, *Journal of British Studies*, 45, (3) (July 2006), 602-27 (p.611).

⁸⁰ See Henri Tajfel, *Social Identity and Intergroup Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) and other works.

⁸¹ Charlie Galibert, *La Corse, une Île et le Monde* (Paris: Presses Universitaire de France, 2004) and Sarrola; *14-18: un Village Corse dans la Première Guerre Mondiale: Essai d’Anthropologie*

derived from Edward Said's pivotal work, *Orientalism*.⁸² *Orientalism* was an analysis of western representations of the "Orient" (the Islamic World, South and East Asia) and the role of the 'other' in justifying European imperial dominance and in defining the nature of Europe. Said's work and the discussion it provoked shifted historiographical emphasis from the overarching relationship between imperial and representation power to more particular instances of intercultural exchange and encounter, and has had a significant impact on postcolonial studies in a range of fields. He argued that the Orient was shown as exotic, mysterious and sensual, but also cruel, despotic and sly, much like many of the indigenous peoples of the Empire. Since Said, the debates have linked culture with colonialism. The Imperial 'Other' has received a much larger share of post-colonial studies. This thesis supports Marjorie Morgan's plea to re-evaluate the continent as the 'Other'.⁸³

In Corsica, both Corsican and French provided an oppositional element. For many years the Corsicans and the British shared a common enemy – the French. In the substantial scholarship about the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Anglo-French relations have been treated at a national level. Robert Gibson has charted the nature of such connections since the Norman Conquest showing the rivalry and the volatile nature of the relationship between France and England up to the early twentieth century.⁸⁴ Linda Colley and others have defined Francophobia as a defining national element in British national identity but there are few works that consider the issue at a local level. An exception is Isabell Avila's research on the French and British Geographical Societies at the beginning of the 1870s which provides an illustration of different nuances at a more micro level which may also be seen in this study.⁸⁵

Historique (Ajaccio: Albiana, 2008); Matei Candea, *Corsican Fragments* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010). See also Robert Aldrich and John Connell *France's Overseas Frontier*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). *Cambridge Books Online*. <http://0-x.doi.org.lib.exeter.ac.uk/10.1017/CBO9780511584787.01> (last accessed 28 October 2013).

⁸² Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).

⁸³ Marjorie Morgan, *National Identities and Travel in Victorian Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001).

⁸⁴ Robert Gibson, *Best of Enemies: Anglo-French Relations since the Norman Conquest* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1995).

⁸⁵ Isabelle Avila, 'Interactions Between the French and British Geographical Societies at the Beginning of the 1870s', in *Mutual (in)Comprehensions: France and Britain in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), ed. by Rosemary

Travel and Tourism

Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan assert that there were ‘two principal reasons for the British to have travelled outside the Isles and experienced other cultures: tourism and imperialism’.⁸⁶ This is an oversimplification. The global impact of exploration and travel since the eighteenth century has depended upon defining travel as a cultural experience that generates images, dreams and promises of alternatives to life at home.⁸⁷ This thesis considers travel and tourism as a developing cultural activity for the wealthier classes seeking leisure and recreational travel.

The study of tourism in Corsica has involved considering a number of specialist historiographies: the history of medicine, travel writing and literary tourism, the history of the natural sciences, leisure and mountaineering. Connections with the social sciences, for example, reflect the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of the topic. Anthropology, for instance, has focussed on the study of the social, cultural and economic impact of tourism on societies and populations. The anthropological approaches of Candea and Galibert in their Corsican works have been helpful in understanding tourism in the Corsican context.⁸⁸ Dean MacCannell’s *The Tourist*, first published in 1976 is regarded as a classic analysis of travel and sightseeing using social science to focus on the individual and move away from the early dependence of economic constructs.⁸⁹ James Buzard’s, *The Beaten Track* is illustrative of this approach. Buzard, though, continues the long-established debate on the typologies of tourism, arguing for the demarcation from ‘traveller’ from ‘tourist’.⁹⁰ He does connect tourism and the idea of anti-tourism to industrialisation and democratisation as well as the emergence of leisure as a central social arrangement. John Walton’s *Histories of Tourism* has a useful historiography of the subject and is updated by Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan’s two volumes of

Mitchell, pp.244-65.

⁸⁶ Martin Farr and Xavier Guégan, eds, *The British Abroad Since the Eighteenth Century*, 2 vols (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), II, p.1.

⁸⁷ Ibid. p.2.

⁸⁸ Candea; Galibert (2004 and 2008).

⁸⁹ Dean MacCannell, *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class*, 3rd edn (Berkeley: University of California, 2013)

⁹⁰ James Buzard, *The Beaten Track: European Tourism, Literature and the Ways to Culture, 1800-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993).

The British Abroad since the Eighteenth Century.⁹¹ The first volume, 'Travellers and Tourists' is of most relevance to this study since the collection links perceptions of travellers with their motivations. However, there is an emphasis on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and specific localities such as seaside resorts or spas. This thesis redresses that balance with its section on the twentieth century, and in incorporating the cultural, social and economic changes that impacted on tourism over an extended chronology.

In the mid-nineteenth century the initial impetus to go south in the winter was to improve health. It was the 'science' of climatology that led both invalids and non-invalids to seek out the climate of Corsica. The study of the rise and fall of the winter health station in Ajaccio provides a practical example of the social and cultural impact of disease and the state of medical knowledge and medical practice, aspects that are scantily covered in the historiography. Mark Jackson's *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Medicine* is a basis for looking at the development of medicine and the trends in research. However, it contains little of relevance to the aspect of health tourism covered in this study.⁹² In respect of treatment of disease, in 1998 John C. Burnham published an overview of the historiography of medicine from the seventeenth century to the present. He showed that the focus before the mid-twentieth century was largely on individual physicians and was positivistic or progressive within a framework of the 'onward and upward' march of medical science.⁹³ This fits in with the influence doctors had on the popularity of a resort, each having their own theory as to the treatment of consumption/tuberculosis and the best place to treat it. The creation of the Society for the Social History of Medicine in the 1970s heralded new approaches within medical history. The challenges in relation to tuberculosis were taken up by social historians from the 1980s when there was a growing interest in the interrelationship between the biological and cultural realities in the conception and treatment of disease.

In Corsica, as elsewhere, the search for health became more a quest for

⁹¹ Walton; Farr and Guégan.

⁹² Mark Jackson ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Medicine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁹³ John C. Burnham, 'How the Idea of Profession Changed the Idea of Medical History', *Medical History Series*, Supplement 18 (London, 1998).

general well-being in the sun. The pursuit of leisure took on greater significance. There is an enormous breadth as to what can be classified under the umbrella of leisure, and scholarship continues to debate definitions, meaning and purpose.⁹⁴ It is 'multiple and contested' with a complex inter-connection between economics, politics and consumer capitalism; geography, spatiality and mobility.⁹⁵ It is generally accepted that the turning point for the expansion of leisure came with industrialisation and the railways and gathered momentum from the mid-nineteenth century, the time of the foundation of the winter station.

An important aspect of leisure was the participation in sport. It was part of sojourner life both to relieve boredom and to facilitate socialisation. Upper-class attitudes to sport and their involvement in it have been of minor interest. Most leisure historiography has been concerned with the working classes and sporting historiography tends to be Britain-focussed and concentrated on the history of individual activities. There is very little historical research on the British and leisure abroad. This thesis goes a small way to filling the gaps and provides a useful counterpoint over time, space and class.⁹⁶

Leisure is inextricably linked to sightseeing as defined in John Urry's concept of the 'tourist gaze', and natural or cultural amenities were pull factors.⁹⁷ Since Urry, there has developed a network of disciplines within tourism studies as exemplified by the work of Keith Hanley and J.K. Langdon who consider the interdisciplinary and collaborative approach between the literary critic and the cultural historian.⁹⁸ The landscape of Corsica has been eulogised by all writers since the ACK. The island was constantly portrayed as unknown and little-explored and the idea of the 'romantic gaze', or 'Otherness',

⁹⁴ See Karl Spracklen, *Constructing Leisure: Historical and Philosophical Debates* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). For the current state of leisure scholarship, see Mike Collins, 'Looking Back at Leisure: an Abridged Version of "The Growth of Many Leisures? Three Decades of Leisure Studies 1982–2011"', *Leisure Studies*, 36, (2) (2017), 163-69, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2017.1288755> (last accessed 23 July 2018).

⁹⁵ Editorial, 'Views on Leisure Studies: Pasts, Presents and Future Possibilities?' *Leisure Studies*, 36, (2) (2017), 153-62. This article gives a good overview of the current thinking in leisure scholarship.

⁹⁶ Mike Huggins explores upper class sport and the historiographical gaps in 'Sport and the British Upper Classes c.1500-2000: A Historiographic Overview', *Sport in History*, 28, (3) (September 2008), 364-88.

⁹⁷ John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze: Leisure and Travel in Contemporary Societies* (London: Sage, 1990).

⁹⁸ Keith Hanley and J.K. Langdon, *Constructing Cultural Tourism: John Ruskin and the Tourist Gaze* (Bristol: Channel View, 2010).

appealed to those in search of adventure or novelty. Amelia Edwards' travelogue of her first excursion to Egypt in 1877 created a romantic notion of ancient Egypt. Both Edwards in Egypt and Lear for Corsica fashioned images that were long-lasting.⁹⁹ An authentic experience was also sought. Repeated descriptions of the island as a rural idyll mask a number of cultural expressions about anti-modernisation, bucolicism, nostalgia and concern for heritage. These are not simple phenomena and their cultural effects are beginning to be debated.¹⁰⁰

Buzard argues that Romanticism played an important part in shaping the development of tourism. This is evident in Corsica when considering the contribution of the visitors who came for the natural histories and sciences.¹⁰¹ Jennifer Baker asserts that the Romantic Movement, which is portrayed as a continuum from the Enlightenment, is less defined by dates as some writers assert.¹⁰² Baker is unusual in considering the cultural dimension of natural science. The historiography of natural history and science focuses largely on the developing sciences of natural history (botany, entomology and ichthyology), along with geology and geography and the key individuals involved. In particular, it lacks a spatial dimension and groups of professionals are rarely considered. This thesis, which examines the impact of the professional groups who were attracted to Corsica in pursuit of niche interests, enriches the historiography.

The alpinists who came to Corsica provided some of the finest descriptions of the island supporting Ann Colley's argument that the concept of the romantic sublime was still a factor to be reckoned with.¹⁰³ Mountaineering accounts demonstrate an interest in the scenery of the island as well as the desire for first ascents and add to the debate seen in recent works that have

⁹⁹ Nicholas Lanoie, 'Inventing Egypt for the Emerging British Travel Class: Amelia Edwards; a Thousand Miles up the Nile', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 40, (2) (2013), 149-61. For another example see Robert F. Hunter, 'Tourism and Empire: The Thomas Cook & Son Enterprise on the Nile, 1868-1914', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 40, (5) (2004), 28-54.

¹⁰⁰ See Simon Thurley, *The Men from the Ministry* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

¹⁰¹ Buzard.

¹⁰² Jennifer J. Baker, 'Natural Science and the Romanticisms', *ESQ: A Journal of the American Renaissance*, 53, 4 (2007), 387-412.

¹⁰³ Ann C. Colley, *Victorians in the Mountains: Sinking the Sublime* (Farnham: [n.pub.], 2010).

considered the culture of mountaineering. It is argued that Victorian men could assert an imperialist masculinity, so bolstering their sense of being active participants in the developing project of empire and the ongoing maintenance of British world power or, alternatively it was a way in which they could imagine themselves as heroic, their physically demanding and dangerous exploits offering a contrast to the sedate workday world.¹⁰⁴ The focus on the aesthetic dimensions of Victorian mountaineering was not considered in the otherwise valuable works of Peter Hansen and Elaine Freedgood.

The Corsican landscape was a growing attraction for literary tourists. In the same way that Sir Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake* inspired tourist visits to Scotland, the French vendetta novels of Prosper Mérimée, Alexandre Dumas and Guy de Maupassant set an image of Corsica that was to inspire travellers for generations. Interest in literary tourism has seen a considerable growth since the mid-1990s. Most of the research on the French novelists has focussed on the inspiration for their stories rather than their impact on place. Nicola Watson's *The Literary Tourist and Nineteenth-Century Culture* provides an analytical history of the rise and development of literary tourism in nineteenth-century Britain.¹⁰⁵ Less work has been done on the attraction of places and the heroes or villains associated with them, for example, Napoleon and the Corsican bandits; both provided a motive for visiting Corsica.

There is a large volume of published studies on Napoleon that cover his life and achievements, civil and military. By 1832 it has been claimed that more books had been written about Napoleon in English than on any other person.¹⁰⁶ As Napoleon's fame spread, so too, did the number of works written about him, prints that caricatured him and portraits that captured a man who both 'fascinated and baffled' friends and foe alike.¹⁰⁷ This body of work was added to

¹⁰⁴ See Peter Hansen, 'Vertical Boundaries, National Identities: British Mountaineering on the Frontiers of Europe and the Empire, 1868-1914', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 24, 1 (January 1996), 48-71 and Elaine Freedgood, *Victorian Writing about Risk: Imagining a Safe England in a Dangerous World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.104.

¹⁰⁵ Nicola J. Watson, ed., *The Literary Tourist and Nineteenth-Century Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

¹⁰⁶ Tim Clayton and others, *Bonaparte and the British* (London: British Museum Press, 2015), p. 17.

¹⁰⁷ *Start the Week*, BBC Radio 4, 20 October 2014.

in 2014 and 2015 with the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo.¹⁰⁸ The publications contain many different interpretations of the man. The works of Sudhir Hazareesingh's and R. S. Alexander are most useful although do not specifically cover the attraction of Napoleon for tourists or the relationship between Napoleon and Corsica.¹⁰⁹

Another tourist attraction was the 'honourable bandit'. The concept of 'social banditry' first came into common parlance and received critical attention with the publication of Eric Hobsbawm's *Bandits* in 1969.¹¹⁰ Until Stephen Wilson's research in the 1980s the debate was couched as peasant solidarity. Wilson's systematic examination of the Corsican bandit and the vendetta, combining social anthropology and history, focussed on the rural structures that encouraged its emergence and continuation. His work was awarded the *Prix du Livre Corse*.¹¹¹ It covers the period to the end of the nineteenth century, but the phenomenon of banditism continued to be an attraction until the 1930s. Wilson's work is complemented, and the gap covered, by two anthologies in French.¹¹² All three works provide accounts of feuds and other forms of conflict in Corsica tackling the causes and impact, but there is little focus on banditry as an adjunct to tourism.

An important sub-section of leisure and tourism is travel writing. This genre was first given sustained attention by Paul Fussell. In his 1980 study of interwar travel writing, *Abroad: British Literary Travelling between the Wars*, Fussell argued for a re-evaluation of travel books as 'literary phenomena'.¹¹³ His pioneering study worked within the bounds of traditional literary biography and criticism. A renewed interest in travel writing coincided with the rise of postcolonial theory. Said's *Orientalism* and Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes* were ground breaking works linking travel and exploration with the imperial and

¹⁰⁸ For example see Andrew Roberts, *Napoleon the Great* (London: Allen Lane, 2014).

¹⁰⁹ R.S. Alexander, *Napoleon* (London: Arnold, 2001) and Sudhir Hazareesingh, *The Legend of Napoleon* (London: Granta, 2004).

¹¹⁰ Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (New York: Delacorte, 1969).

¹¹¹ Stephen Wilson, *Feuding, Conflict and Banditry in Nineteenth-Century Corsica* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹¹² *La Corse et Ses Bandits, le Xixième Siècle* (Ajaccio: DCL, 2000) and *La Corse et Ses Bandits, le Xxième Siècle* (Ajaccio: DCL, 2000).

¹¹³ Paul Fussell, *Abroad: British Literary Travelling Between the Wars* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp.202-15.

transculturation.¹¹⁴ Burdett and Duncan's *Cultural Encounters* was one of the first to cross boundaries to consider travel writing in the light of the way cultural history is told.¹¹⁵ The staple of the tourist, the guide book, though, has had relatively little attention. The exception is Parsons' *Worth the Detour* which is a study of guidebook history set within the social and cultural contexts that moulded its development.¹¹⁶

Corsica

British travellers explored countries and empires other than their own, but their accounts have been overshadowed by a focus on Empire. Corsica is a case in point. There are few scholarly works published in English on Corsica alone and none that directly cover the sojourner or settler communities. The largest body of work, published in the 1970s and 1980s, mainly focuses on the ACK and the Corsican leader, Pascal Paoli (1725-1807).¹¹⁷ In French, Francis Beretti and Frances Vivian's latest work sheds new light on Paoli's relations with the British when in exile in London.¹¹⁸ Beretti has also produced tracts concerning the British consuls in Corsica and the travellers John Symonds, Edward Lear, Dorothy Archer and the artist, James McNeil Whistler.¹¹⁹ A short book edited by Michel Vergé-Franceschi contains eight articles on the British and Corsica but consists in large part of quotations from the primary sources.¹²⁰ More modern books and articles have focused on the problems of Corsica and concerns about 'Frenchness' and the question of Corsican difference from the French. The works of Galibert and Candea provide useful background to understanding

¹¹⁴ Said; Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

¹¹⁵ Charles Burdett and Derek Duncan, eds, *Cultural Encounters: European Travel Writing in the 1930s*, (New York: Berghahn, 2002).

¹¹⁶ Parsons.

¹¹⁷ Desmond Gregory, *The Ungovernable Rock* (London: Associated University Presses, 1985); Peter Adam Thrasher, *Pasquale Paoli* (London: Constable, 1970).

¹¹⁸ Francis Beretti and Frances Vivian, *Pascal Paoli en Angleterre* (Ajaccio: Piazzola, 2014).

¹¹⁹ Francis Beretti, 'Quelle Vie! Ou une Anglaise en Corse Entre les Deux Guerres Dorothy Archer (1889-1978)', *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences Historiques et Naturelles de la Corse: Revue Trimestrielle*, 199, (686) (1961), 71-93; and 'Consuls de Grande-Bretagne en Corse (1816-1916)', *Études Corses*, 11 (1978a), 77-78; 'Whistler à Ajaccio en 1901', *Bulletin de la Société des Sciences Historiques et Naturelles de la Corse*, 629 (1978b), 42-53; 'Les Anglais Redécouvrent la Corse', *Études Corse*, 14 (1980), 3-11; 'Remarks on Corsica de John Symonds (1767): un Journal de Voyage Inédit.', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 256 (1988), 259-81; 'La Corse et les Corses: Impressions de Voyage: Edward Lear: Impressions de Corse (1868)', *Strade*, 14 (June 2006), 29-33.

¹²⁰ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, ed., *La Corse et l'Angleterre XVIIe-XIXe Siècle* (Ajaccio: Piazzola, 2004).

to the Corsican character and why the relationships between the British and the Corsicans developed as they did.¹²¹ There are two studies of Ajaccio which are directly relevant to this study. Francis Pomponi's *Histoire D' Ajaccio* is economically focussed and provides both context and evidence as to the development of the city.¹²² Paul Lucchini's *Ajaccio, Station d'Hiver* has a greater focus on the time period of the sojourner but is largely descriptive. The comprehensive *La Corse et le Tourisme: 1755-1960*, the book that accompanied the exhibition of the same name at the museum in Corte in 2006, has been valuable as a source that covers the period of this thesis and provides a corrective to the sometimes Anglophone focus of the winter health station.¹²³ Few publications relate to the development of Bastia, although Alain Gauthier has produced a comprehensive work on Corsican mines and miners.¹²⁴ All these works give valuable glimpses into the foundations of and continued connections between the Corsicans and the British across time that were established in the events leading up to the establishment of the ACK.

¹²¹ Galibert (2004 and 2008); Candea.

¹²² Francis Pomponi, ed., *Histoire d' Ajaccio* (Ajaccio: La Marge, 1992).

¹²³ Paul Lucchini, *Ajaccio, Station d'Hiver* (Ajaccio: Journal de la Corse, 2007); Binet Clarysse, ed., *La Corse et Le Tourisme: 1755-1960: [Accompagne l'Exposition La Corse et Le Tourisme de 1755 à 1960 Présentée au Musée Régional d'Anthropologie de la Corse du 13 juillet au 30 décembre 2006]* (Ajaccio: Albiana, 2006).

¹²⁴ Alain Gauthier, *Mines et Mineurs de Corse* (Ajaccio: Albiana, 2011).

Chapter Two

A Legacy of Memory

'I rather suspect that this small island will one day astound Europe.'¹

Introduction

In September 2013 a group of Corsicans and Britons convened on Cupabia beach in front of a memorial to the British submarine, *HMS Saracen*. They were commemorating the role played by the boat in the liberation of Corsica in September 1943. It represented the continuation of a relationship between Britain and Corsica that had its foundations in events of the eighteenth century and which has been maintained ever since. Interest in Corsica grew from the early eighteenth century. Henry Fielding's comedy *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* was set in Corsica because, as he said, all the important events of Europe took place there.² The play was prompted by the Corsican Wars of Independence (1728-69), a revolt against 400 years of Genoese rule. In 1732 the *Gentleman's Magazine* reproduced a document which was an English translation of a letter from the Corsicans addressed to the outside world. The letter was a justification for their revolt and an appeal for help.³ This was the first time that the island featured on the wider stage in Britain in a press (both periodicals and books) that was expanding and which became important in forming public opinion. At this time Corsica was a province of the Genoese empire, the waning of which gave the islanders an opportunity to fight for their freedom.

It was not until the protection of British interests in the Mediterranean became a strategic imperative, that action was taken to support the Corsicans. The resulting Anglo-Corsican Kingdom (ACK) (1794-96) lasted a mere two years, but the British left an impact in the island and their presence created a legacy that was to last for the next two hundred years or more. This chapter

¹ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, ed. by Victor Gourevitch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.78.

² Julia Gasper, *Theodore von Neuhoff, King of Corsica: The Man Behind the Legend* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2013), p.1. Fielding's play appeared for the first time in 1737.

³ Francis Beretti, 'Pascal Paoli dans les Gazettes de Son Temps', *Études Corses*, 67 (December 2008), 9-17 (p.9).

examines how the British came to have an interest in Corsica, the empathy that was established between two island peoples and the formation of the perceptions of the island that influenced its subsequent development.

Little was known about Corsica until James Boswell (1740-95) visited in 1765 and took up the cause of Corsican independence. His *Account of Corsica: The Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*, first published in 1768, was enthusiastically received. The book appeared at a propitious time in the history of British travel when there was a heightened interest in voyages to exotic lands. Captain Wallis had recently returned from Tahiti; James Cook had just sailed to the South Seas and Laurence Sterne died in March having just published his second novel *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*.⁴ Thomas Curley considers Boswell's travel book 'a distinguished example of eighteenth-century literature' that used 'travel book conventions for a radical romantic celebration of liberty'.⁵ It enjoyed a much wider circulation in Boswell's lifetime than his now more well-known biography of Samuel Johnson.⁶

Boswell portrayed Britain and Corsica bound together as islands of liberty. Liberty was a phrase used by many British writers in the eighteenth century but there were few definitions of what it meant. According to Rachel Hammersley, it was 'essentially neo-Roman, and was mainly concerned with the protection of basic civil liberties, such as freedom of speech, the protection of private property, and freedom from arbitrary arrest'.⁷ It is tempting to view this espousal of the Corsican cause as an early example of the 'pre-history of human rights'.⁸ Brendan Simms and David Trim see a direct connection between the struggle between the European states at this time and the battles for liberty among them.⁹ However, although there was much public sympathy for

⁴ Thomas M. Curley, 'Boswell's Liberty-Loving *Account of Corsica* and the Art of Travel Literature in 1713-1768', *New Light on Boswell: Critical and Historical Essays on the Occasion of the Bicentenary of "The Life of Johnson"*, ed. by Greg Clingham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.89-103 (p. 89).

⁵ Curley, p. 89.

⁶ Frederick Pottle, 'Boswell's Corsica', *Yale University Library Gazette*, 1, (2) (October 1926), 21-22 (p.21).

⁷ Rachel Hammersley, *The English Republican Tradition and Eighteenth-Century France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p.16.

⁸ Abigail Green, 'Humanitarianism in the Nineteenth-Century Context: Religious, Gendered, National', *Historical Journal*, 57, 4 (2014), 1157-75 (p.1157).

⁹ Brendan Simms and David J.B. Trim, eds, *Humanitarian Intervention: A History* (Cambridge:

the plight of the Corsicans, Boswell did not achieve his aim of persuading the British government to intervene. That had to wait until 1794 when there was strategic justification for intervention. This resulted in the short-lived ACK when, for a while, it was Britain's heroes, Horatio Nelson (1758-1805), Samuel Hood (1724-1816), John Moore (1761-1809) and Cuthbert Collingwood (1748-1810) who held centre stage.

'Mobilisation of Empathy'¹⁰

'The spirit of liberty has flourished in modern times, we may appeal to the histories of the Swiss, and of the Dutch, and the boldest proofs of it are to be found in the annals of our own country. But the most distinguished example of it exists in the island of Corsica.'¹¹

Significant interest in the events in the island began with the arrival in Corsica of the Westphalian Baron, Theodore von Neuhoff, in March 1736. Theodore came to the aid of the Corsicans in their fight for independence from the Genoese. His subsequent election as king of Corsica attracted notice across Europe. The English believed they understood what it was like to fight against tyrants, and Theodore was an instant *cause célèbre*.¹² In October 1736, a month after the Gin Act was passed in Britain, the name "King Theodore of Corsica" was given to a brand of gin.¹³ The press reported the facts of the rebellion, echoed the points of views of all opposing parties and carried details of Theodore's exploits. Initially, Theodore was taken seriously. Voltaire's *The History of the War of 1741* portrayed him sympathetically.¹⁴ When the Corsican king arrived in London in January 1749, Horace Walpole (1717-1797) took up his cause. But, Theodore was imprisoned for debt and died shortly after leaving the Fleet prison in December 1756. A reviewer of Boswell's book thought Theodore to be 'one of the worse men, and most impudent impostors, that history can produce'.¹⁵ What

Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 91.

¹⁰ Quoted by Green, p.1161.

¹¹ 'On Account of the Cession by the Genoese of France to Corsica', *Universal Magazine* (August 1768), 57-63 (p.57).

¹² Vergé-Franceschi (2004), p.133.

¹³ Gasper, p. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Quoted by Rhona Brown in 'Rebellious Highlanders: The Reception of Corsica in the Edinburgh Periodical Press, 1730-1800', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 41, (1) (2016), 108-28

ensured his lasting renown was his epitaph composed by Horace Walpole which marks his burial place in St Anne's churchyard, Soho:

The grave, great teacher, to a level brings
Heroes and beggars, galley slaves and kings
But Theodore this moral learned ere dead:
Fate poured its lessons on his living head,
Bestowed a kingdom, but denied him bread.

'Hero' or 'beggar', this curious episode in Corsican history and links with Britain were never totally forgotten. Periodically Theodore's story was revived; The 'King without a sixpence' came to public attention from time to time as part of a 'Curious Corner of London' or a London 'oddity.'¹⁶ Articles on Theodore followed in the wake of the ACK and the publication of memoirs written by his son.¹⁷ Ferdinand Gregorovius' book on Corsica, translated into English in 1855, included a significant section on Theodore and set off a flurry of interest with newspapers like the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph* and other publications that periodically refreshed his history.¹⁸ Since then, the story of Theodore has appeared in almost every account of travels in Corsica (often copied directly from Gregorovius) as an interesting anecdote and an extraordinary event in the struggle for Corsican independence. Until recently the view of Theodore as an opportunistic adventurer with a mysterious background predominated. However, in 2014 an exhibition in the museum at Sartène in Corsica and Julia Gasper's book, *Theodore von Neuhoff*, redressed the balance.¹⁹ Whatever the prevailing view of his achievements, the story of his life took on 'more of the character of romance than of the sober realities of history' and contributed to the attraction of the island.²⁰

(p.114).

¹⁶ Examples of later references to Theodore's death and burial can be found in: *Morpeth Herald*, 24 April 1880; *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 14 May 1886, 12 December 1901, 5 January 1909; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 28 May 1890; *Daily Picayune*, 4 June 1896; *Daily Mail*, 25 October 1900; *Kansas City Star*, 27 March 1906; *The Times*, 5 January 1909; *Tamworth Herald*, 4 December 1922; *Daily Express*, 3 September 1924; *Sunday Times*, 30 July 1933.

¹⁷ See for example, *Weekly Entertainer*, 2 & 27 February 1797 and 13 September 1824; *Ladies Monthly Magazine*, 1 January 1824.

¹⁸ Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Corsica in its Picturesque, Social and Historical Aspects: the Record of a Tour in the Summer of 1852*, trans. by Russell Martineau (London: Longman, 1855); *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 12 July 1855. Gregorovius (1821-1891) was a German historian who went to live in Italy in 1852

¹⁹ Gasper.

²⁰ *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1856.

Theodore's exploits may have come to nothing, but he succeeded in making Corsica the subject of conversation.²¹ Corsican rebels were seen as peoples resisting foreign invasion and a despotic power. It was a myth which had its roots in the British fascination with Mediterranean and Classic culture in which islandness 'granted the preservation of classical virtues'.²² In the context of a war with France (the French and Indian War, 1754-1763), British intellectuals praised the determination of the 'Brave Corsicans' to fight for their liberty.²³ In 1755 the Corsican leader, Pascal Paoli, proclaimed Corsica an independent sovereign nation. Paoli had already come to the attention of Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Rousseau wrote, 'If there is a country in Europe capable of legislation it is the island of Corsica. The courage and determination with which these brave folk were able to recover and defend their liberty deserve some wise man coming along to teach them how to preserve it.'²⁴

Rousseau's praise was echoed by Voltaire and Frederick the Great of Prussia, but it was Boswell who, after visiting Rousseau in 1764, went to Corsica and brought the island to greater public notice. He had the express aim of meeting Paoli. Boswell's book exploited the British love of freedom with the commonly expressed anti-Gallicism. It portrayed Corsica as a bastion of liberty and the Corsicans as a people fighting against oppression. Boswell combined a record of his travels with topographical descriptions of the island. It was the first summary in English of the history of Corsica and included biographical detail and praise of the Corsican leader. It was an immediate success going into three editions in the year of publication and was translated into French, German and partly into Russian. Newspapers and reviews printed long extracts. Most historians agree that this book brought the island into public consciousness and gave an immediate impetus to the Corsican cause which gained increasing levels of public sympathy in the 1760s.

²¹ Antoine-Marie Graziani, *Pascal Paoli: Père de la Patrie* (Paris: Talandier, 2004).

²² Marcel A. Farinelli, 'Island Societies and Mainland Nation-Building in the Mediterranean: Sardinia and Corsica in Italian, French and Catalan Nationalism', *Island Studies Journal*, 12 (1) (2017), 21-34 (p.29).

²³ Vergé-Franceschi (2004), pp.317-19.

²⁴ Quoted by Kenneth White, *Across the Territories: Travels from Orkney to Rangiro* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 2004), p. 100.

The threat of the Mediterranean domination by France was one of the tactics used by Boswell and some supporters of the Corsican cause to promote the strategic advantages of the island to the government. However, while the plight of the people appealed to public sympathies, the government was not persuaded to any form of intervention. Boswell's opinions held little sway in respect of those who had any influence in British political life: 'Foolish though we are we cannot be so foolish as to go to war because Mr Boswell has been to Corsica'.²⁵ Although Edmund Burke had stressed the strategic implications for Britain of French dominance, the Corsica issue was displaced by more urgent problems in America and renewed political unrest on the home front. George III was sympathetic to Paoli but desired peace.²⁶ The Cabinet was divided on the issue. However, in 1735 and 1736 'two small English ships, laden with supplies', offered support to the Corsican rebels.²⁷ They had no British government support. The opposition made much of the government's apparent indifference, and small amounts of aid in the form of arms, equipment and a naval ship were again sent in 1748, but with little impact. The majority agreed with the views of Campbell of Cawdor in the spring of 1768:

I should think every impartial man must look upon the proceedings of the French in regard of that nation as unjust, ungenerous, mean and cruel. I have no doubt that it would be very justifiable, of any other nation to assist the Corsicans but it is the first duty of every government to take care for the safety of their own people. I fear the late war in which there was such an extravagant profusion of the Blood and Treasure of Britain has not left us in a condition to enter into any War that is not necessary for our own protection.²⁸

Others like Andrew Burnaby (1732-1812), chaplain of the British factory of Leghorn, and for a few years acting consul in Livorno, stressed the importance of trade which in his view was as important as liberty. He had seen in Livorno the impact that the proclamation of 1731 forbidding trade with the island (renewed or reinforced in 1753 and 1762) had on commerce. Theodore had

²⁵ Remark of Lord Holland quoted in Beretti and Vivian, p. 44.

²⁶ Burke argued that the recent French acquisition of Corsica went against British interests: 'Corsica naked I dread not, but Corsica a Province of France is terrible to me.' Quoted by Luke Paul Long, 'Britain and Corsica 1728-1796: Political Intervention and the Myth of Liberty', (Doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 2017), p.19, <http://hdl.handle-net/10023/13232>.

²⁷ Thadd Hall, *France and the Eighteenth-Century Corsican Question* (New York: New York University Press, 1971), p.31.

²⁸ Beretti and Vivian, p. 45.

also used this tactic offering Corsican oil, wine, wool, leather and wood - all things Britain purchased at that time from Greece - in exchange for assistance to the Corsican patriots.²⁹

Boswell's support for the Corsican cause was a romantic ideal. His campaign of writing and fund-raising coincided with a turbulent period in British politics which he was able to exploit to his and Corsica's advantage. The work was published by Edward and Charles Dilly, leading political opposition booksellers, and articles and reviews of his book appeared in the *Universal Magazine* and the *Gentleman's Magazine* both known for their support of the progressive politics of the time. His advocacy prompted a number of poems and plays by authors seeking reform in British politics. They used the Government's failure to intervene in Corsica as a weapon of opposition. The ideas promoted by Boswell, Edward Burnaby Greene and Anna Laetitia Barbauld supported the righteousness of armed rebellion as well as concepts deemed more modern such as the 'limits to monarchical power, defence of property, taxation by consent and the right to free exercise of religion'.³⁰ Greene's *Corsica, An Ode*, published in 1768, described the Corsicans as 'Heroes, whose undaunted soul/Spurns haughty Genoa's rude control' but who would fail without British aid and who would lose the island to the French.³¹ Barbauld's poem, *Corsica*, describes 'the glorious conflict' where the islanders are described as the 'genuine sons' of liberty culled from the 'generous stock/Of ancient Greece where Corsica stands as a 'fort of freedom; that amidst the waves/Stands like a rock of adamant, and dares/The wildest fury of the beating storm'.³² When the poem was published in 1773 the Corsican cause was already lost. The dream of independence fell with defeat by the French at the battle of Ponte Nuovo in 1769. Paoli became 'a metaphor for heroic defiance' as he, with several supporters, chose exile in London.³³

²⁹ Vergé-Franceschi (2004), pp.44-45.

³⁰ Simms and Trim, p. 91.

³¹ Robert Jones, 'What Then Should Britons Feel? Anna Laetitia Barbauld and the Plight of the Corsicans', *Women's Writing*, 9:2 (2002), 285-98 (p.292), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09699080200200227> (last accessed 14 August 2015).

³² Jones (2002), p.296.

³³ 'Islands', *Acts of Union and Disunion*, BBC Radio 4, 7 January 2014; 'Sea', *Acts of Union and Disunion*, BBC Radio 4, 8 January 2014. For an account of Paoli's first exile in London (1769-1790) see Beretti and Vivian, pp. 71-84.

A Land of Heroes

Corsica was 'full of heroes, of heroic deeds, of romantic achievements' with chants and national songs that 'to this day, breathe a spirit of defiance and a love of vengeance unknown to inhabitants of more peaceful regions'.³⁴ The heroes were both Corsican and British and both left an imprint of their presence in the island and in Britain. For much of the nineteenth century the deaths of the participating heroes, the anniversaries of noteworthy events or historical curiosities surrounding the ACK kept the memory alive.³⁵

Boswell had ensured that the image of a brave island people fighting for their liberty under an educated leader was prominent in the eighteenth-century. The first cohort of visitors went to Corsica as an extension of their Grand Tour when, in the second half of the century, it became increasingly common to visit the 'free' countries with Switzerland at the head of the list that included the Corsica of Pascal Paoli as a 'pole of philosophical attraction'.³⁶ After Boswell, between 1766 and 1769, Paoli received some twenty British travellers including, for the first time, visitors of high rank such as Lord Frederick Hervey, later Bishop of Derry and Earl of Bristol in 1766; Lord Pembroke and Viscount Mountstuart in 1769 as well as the agronomist and academic, John Symonds in 1767. Some of these visitors recorded their experiences and helped spread Paoli's fame across Europe.

In exile in London Paoli kept the Corsican cause alive, but in 1789 he was welcomed back to France. This was not popular with his local Corsican rivals, and when violence broke out in the island in 1762, Paoli broke with France and turned to Britain for support.³⁷ This time the response was different not for any humanitarian sympathy, but following the loss Minorca in 1756 and Toulon in the autumn of 1793 to French Republican forces, the British needed a base to control the western Mediterranean. In January 1794 Sir Gilbert Elliot,

³⁴ Bennet (1870), p. 269.

³⁵ *The Evening News (Portsmouth)*, 17 May 1886, is typical of such a record, listing naval anniversaries recalling the surrender of Bastia to 'Lieutenant Colonel Villetes and Captain Horatio Nelson'.

³⁶ Binet, p.46.

³⁷ 'An Historical Account of the Island and Kingdom of Corsica', *Edinburgh Magazine* (September 1794), 188-93.

Colonel John Moore and Major George Kohler were sent to Corsica to meet Paoli and test out his motives and the views of the people. After a week's residence they reported that 'Pascal Paoli enjoyed popularity with the masses and desired to be "English" while expressing a hope for a reasonable degree of liberty in internal government'.³⁸ Moore and British naval heroes Hood, Nelson and Collingwood all took a part in the campaign to take the island and from June 1794 an ACK came into existence.

Elliot was created the British Viceroy, but establishing his authority and governing the island was beset by problems. He had to cope with fierce rivalries between the army and the navy. Nelson, who strongly supported Elliot, was at loggerheads with Moore, an admirer of Paoli and destined to be a hero dying at the Battle of Corunna in January 1809. In 1795 both Moore and Paoli were sent back to London. There were also warring Corsican factions, many of whom believed Paoli should have been granted the viceroyship. Communication with London was difficult and it appeared that some ministers had little idea of events in Corsica; one admitted that 'news from the island felt like that from the moon'.³⁹ Corsican rebels began to look towards, the Ajaccio-born Napoleon who had been campaigning in Italy. When a small French expeditionary force arrived from Leghorn on 19 October 1796, partially composed of Corsican chiefs, many of the local inhabitants who had rallied to the British flag now deserted it. The British government ordered withdrawal from the island. Despite one brief period in 1814 when an Anglophile faction again asked Britain to take control of the island, 1796 marked the beginning of the uninterrupted inclusion of Corsica as a department of France. With the British re-taking of Minorca from Spain in 1798 there was no further need for the island.

Nevertheless, the ACK produced long lasting physical legacies. The initial attack on Corsica took place in February 1794 at St Florent, a small port on the north coast of the island that provided a suitable base for conducting operations. It was heavily guarded at the mouth of Martella Bay by a tall round

³⁸ Elisa A. Carillo, 'The Corsican Kingdom of Pascal Paoli', *Journal of Modern History*, 34, (3) (September 1962), 254-74; James Carrick Moore, *The Life of Lieutenant General Sir John Moore*, K.B (London: Murray, 1834).

³⁹ Gregory; John Holland Rose, *The Cambridge History of the British Empire: the Growth of the New Empire 1783-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), p. 61.

tower. The British fleet was damaged and initially repulsed by fire from this tower. This so-called 'minor affair [...] startled England into a new scheme of fortification [...] and Martello towers sprang up like mushrooms along our coast'.⁴⁰ With the ending of the Napoleonic Wars there was a celebration of heroes like Nelson. The battle for Calvi in 1794 had set the seal on the Anglo-Corsican victory but it may have gone down as just another event in history had it not been for the piece of French shrapnel that raised the grit that caused the loss of the sight of Nelson's eye. The site of the mishap is marked by a plaque, and in places on the walls of Calvi citadel the marks of the British canon are still visible. A visitor to the commercial capital, Bastia in 1846 could find no sign of the Emperor but often heard mention of Nelson.⁴¹

It is to be expected that, over an extended period of history, interest in the island would wax and wane and this was true of events in Corsica to a certain extent. By 1855 it was said that 'The chief interest of this little book [*Account of Corsica*] has now passed away, except for those who are curious in Corsican affairs'.⁴² Interest in Boswell himself and his work on Corsica revived periodically: *Macmillan's Magazine* featured an article on 'Corsica Boswell' in 1892; *Pall Mall Magazine* in 1901 and *Sunday Times* in 1923 ran similar features.⁴³ Pottle followed up his 1926 article 'Boswell's Corsica' with a work, *The Literary Career of James Boswell* (Oxford, 1929), which had been preceded by George Mallory's *Boswell, the Biographer* (London, 1912) and there have been many others since.

Interest in Paoli also had its peaks. Thanks to Boswell, Paoli became firmly established as a heroic figure. In America he is remembered for his attempt to establish, some thirty years before American independence, a model of constitutional government based on the right to liberty and there are towns named after him in five states. He had a special connection with Britain, spending two long periods of exile there. His death in London 1807 and burial

⁴⁰ *Daily Mail*, 7 February 1928.

⁴¹ 'A Day in the Highlands of Corsica', *Chambers Edinburgh Journal* (13 June 1846), 372.

⁴² 'Review of Ferdinand Gregorovius, *Corsica in its Picturesque, Social, and Historical Aspects*, (London: Longman, 1855)', *Edinburgh Review* (April 1855), 442-80 (p.459).

⁴³ E. S. Shuckburgh, 'Corsica Boswell', *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1 May 1892, 432-48; M.A. Stobart, 'Boswell in Corsica', *Pall Mall Magazine*, 25, 102 (October 1901), 225-35; *Sunday Times*, 8 July 1923.

in the old St Pancras cemetery attracted obituaries in the same journals that promoted him in life: *Universal Magazine*, *Gentleman's Magazine* and *Athenaeum*.⁴⁴ The *Universal Magazine* considered that 'few foreigners, however highly distinguished, were so much caressed in this country as Pascal Paoli'.⁴⁵ There was some agreement with this sentiment for he was considered of sufficient merit for the commission of a marble bust for Westminster Abbey on which he is described as 'one of the most eminent and most illustrious characters of the age in which he lived'.⁴⁶ The *Gentleman's Magazine* observed that 'Corsica has given birth to two men [Paoli and Napoleon] who, however different in degrees of military talents, and widely differing in the application of them, have fixed a celebrity on a country otherwise of no great importance in European history'.⁴⁷ For the islanders, 'Napoleon fills the heart of the Corsican with pride, for he was his brother; but if you mention Paoli to him, his eye lights up like that of a son to whom one names an honoured departed father. The fact is Corsica was neglected by the greatest and most celebrated of her sons.'⁴⁸

When the artist, William Cowen, went to Corsica in 1840, Napoleon was his main focus and Paoli was fading into obscurity in Britain. Gregorovius brought the Corsican leader to the fore again with a chapter devoted to the sympathetic treatment of Paoli in preference to Napoleon: 'When Napoleon, on board *HMS Bellerophon*, implored the hospitality of England, he [...] compared himself to Themistocles when seeking protection: but he had no right to compare himself to the great Athenian citizen; Pasquale Paoli alone was the banished Themistocles.'⁴⁹ Gregorovius, whose book was more widely reviewed than that of Robert Benson or Cowen, chose to visit Paoli's birthplace in the village of Morosaglia, 'I was delighted to stand in the little room in which Paoli was born, and felt more pleasurable emotions there than in the chamber of Napoleon's birth.'⁵⁰

⁴⁴ 'Further Particulars of General Paschal [sic] Paoli, Whose Death Was Announced at p. 180', *Universal Magazine*, 7, 40 (March 1807), 252-56; *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1808.

⁴⁵ 'Further Particulars', p.255.

⁴⁶ On the anniversary of Paoli's death, his life is commemorated by a service in Westminster Abbey.

⁴⁷ *The Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1846.

⁴⁸ G.F. Bowen, 'Corsica', *National Review*, 18 (December 1891), 558.

⁴⁹ Gregorovius, p. 230.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

Paoli's legacy of liberty continued. Just as the British public had been moved by the plight of the Corsicans, they had the same response to the struggle of Greece in the 1820s to free itself from the rule of the Ottoman Empire. There was also public support for the political exile Kossuth, the former Governor-President of Hungary who visited Britain as a fugitive in 1848.⁵¹ When Garibaldi, the Italian revolutionary hero visited London in 1864, it was described as 'one of the great events of the age' with 'vast crowds' turning out to welcome him.⁵² As the historian George Malcolm Young remarked: 'the soldier, the emigrant, and the explorer, the plots of Napoleon III and the redshirts of Garibaldi take and fill the imagination.'⁵³ Garibaldi and the other figures of the Risorgimento were cast in the same mould as Paoli. 'In choosing exile Paoli was once a household word in this country, an object of popular regard like that of Garibaldi and for much of the same reasons.'⁵⁴ Paoli's monument in Corte was noted by Edward Lear in 1868 along with that of the other Corsican heroes associated with the city.⁵⁵ Interest was reawakened in 1889 when Paoli's body was exhumed and his remains taken to his birthplace at Morosaglia. The various records of the proceedings, in both national and regional press, refer to him as the 'distinguished Corsican patriot' and are peppered with words like 'brave', 'gallant', 'hero' and contain extensive details of his life and the history of Corsica in its struggle against tyranny.⁵⁶ It was claimed in 1890 that Paoli was forgotten, save by a few 'beyond the limits of Corsica, but he was certainly remembered in Britain where on the anniversary of his death, his life is commemorated by a service in the Westminster Abbey.'⁵⁷

⁵¹ Christina Li Xia Loong, 'A Cultured English Public in Italy: Expatriates, Cultural Propaganda and the British Institute of Florence, 1900-1940', (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Sydney, 2012).

⁵² Holland (2013), p. 69.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ 'Exhumation of a Patriot's Body', *Lloyds Weekly Newspaper*, 1 September 1889.

⁵⁵ Lear, pp. 169-172.

⁵⁶ *Observer*, 1 September 1889; *Lloyds Weekly Newspaper*, 1 September 1889; *Sunday Times*, 1 September 1889; *Morning Post*, 2 September 1889; *Manchester Guardian*, 2 September 1889; *The Times*, 2 September 1889.

⁵⁷ Ernest A. Vizetelly, 'Paoli the Patriot', *Westminster Review*, 134 (1 July 1890), 357.

Images of the Island and the Islanders

Paoli was admired for his enlightened views and learning. However, general portrayals of the Corsican character are complex and contradictory. Two deep-seated beliefs emerged in the eighteenth century. Corsicans were seen homogeneously as a heroic and hospitable race, but the same people were also deemed to be primitive and lacking civilisation. The island was considered to be unknown, as having the virtues of a benevolent climate, glorious landscape and rich natural resources.

Boswell's was the first detailed portrayal of the islanders. To him they were courageous and liberty-loving, 'brave and resolute', 'valiant' and on the eve of becoming 'free and independent people'.⁵⁸ Boswell saw the violence as the other side of bravery. He acknowledged 'a people [...] brave [...] but extremely violent in their tempers'.⁵⁹ His book 'offered a portrait of the congenitally quarrelsome Corsicans as heroic freedom fighters in a truly Spartan mould, who had chosen as their general a martial but modest judicious paragon of leaderly virtues'.⁶⁰ These virtues included: the founding of a university based on a classical and religious curriculum and the establishment of a national printing press and mint. Agriculture was promoted and there was an attempt to extinguish the vendetta. These manifestations of the Enlightenment had attracted Rousseau at a time when different customs and lifestyles did not mean inferior civilisation.⁶¹ Rather, Corsica was seen as the home of 'enlightened liberty and neoclassical heroism'.⁶²

The legendary Corsican hospitality was a virtue. Boswell found the Corsicans extremely welcoming as did Lady Elliot although she was 'not reconciled to seeing every peasant carrying a knife, gun and pistol'.⁶³ Lear's

⁵⁸ Boswell, *An Account of Corsica*, p.7.

⁵⁹ Jones (2002).

⁶⁰ William Doyle, 'Review of James Boswell, *An Account of Corsica, The Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*', *French Studies*, 1 (2) (April 2007), 227.

⁶¹ Ibn Warraq, *Defending the West: a Critique of Edwards Said's "Orientalism"*, (New York: Prometheus, 2007), p.168. Warraq is the pen name of an anonymous author critical of Islam.

⁶² Brown (2016), p.127.

⁶³ Sir Gilbert Elliot-Murray-Kynmound and Emma, Countess of Minto, *Life and Letters of Sir Gilbert Elliot, First Earl of Minto from 1751 to 1806, when his Public Life in Europe was Closed by his Appointment to the Vice-Royalty of India* (London: Longmans, 1874), p. 294.

impressions of the Corsicans were more favourable than those of the majority of travellers who have written about them since. He was treated with the utmost politeness and enjoyed their hospitality. Dorothy Archer was still able to say in 1929 that, 'The poorest peasant will entertain you in his home, offering the best at his disposal, with the most perfect manners in the world.'⁶⁴ Benson described the duty of the Corsican to offer hospitality without recompense to any traveller but also remarked that they 'omit the Christian precept of the forgiveness of injuries; on the contrary, they teach them to revenge insults'.⁶⁵

Benson's portrayal of idleness and violence, which went hand in hand with backwardness and superstition, was recurrent. Most writers referred to the Corsican unwillingness to labour. Even Boswell observed that the chief satisfaction of the islanders when not engaged in war or hunting seemed to be that of 'lying at their ease in the open air'.⁶⁶ Opinions hardened during the ACK. Collingwood found them altogether 'a curiosity in Europe. Surrounded by civilised nations, there seems to have been no improvement in their manners, nor their arts, since the Christian era'.⁶⁷ Collingwood was one of the first to describe the Corsican vendetta: 'They have no idea of restraint by laws; or making an appeal to them when injured, the blood of the offender can alone appease them; they are always armed, even when they go to church. Such is our new kingdom.'⁶⁸ Cowen had been warned not to attempt a tour through a country that was 'inhabited by people, generally considered as semi-barbarian.'⁶⁹ Thomas Forester reinforced this view: 'It is true that the Corsicans did not eat their fathers or grill their prisoners of war; but it is far from a violent employment of metaphor to say that rivulets of blood trickled down their mountains during the period of hereditary brigandage.'⁷⁰

It was that image of the Corsican brigand or bandit that most captured

⁶⁴ Dorothy Archer, *The Scented Isle*, 2nd edn (London: Methuen, 1929), p.35.

⁶⁵ 'Review of Robert Benson, *Sketches of Corsica* (London: Longman, 1825)', *Literary Gazette*, 462 (26 November 1825), 755-56 (p.756).

⁶⁶ Quoted in Peter France, 'Western European Civilisation and its Mountain Frontiers (1750-1850)', *History of European Ideas*, 6, (3) (1985), 297-310 (p.303).

⁶⁷ Quoted by Max Adams in *Trafalgar's Lost Hero: Admiral Lord Collingwood and the Defeat of Napoleon* (New Jersey: Wiley, 2005), p. 138.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁶⁹ Cowen, p. 28.

⁷⁰ 'Review of Thomas Forester, *Rambles in the Island of Corsica and Sardinia* (London: Longman, 1858)', *Athenaeum*, 1600 (26 June 1858), 816.

the imagination. Bandits even became part of the tourism economy. By the time visitors started to go to the island in any numbers from the mid-nineteenth century, the bandits had become heroes of popular tales and songs. It was a revival of the heroic image of Paoli. Outlaws were seen as ‘bandits of honour’, romantic images of men who lived in the mountains having escaped from unjust authority. It was a cliché perpetuated by travellers up until the late 1920s. Bandits eventually fell out of favour but left a heroic legacy. A bandit who became an outlaw was said to have “taken to the bush” which is known as the *maquis*. This served as a metaphor and inspiration for the French Resistance in the Second World War who called themselves the ‘Maquis’.⁷¹

Early writers who supported the Corsican cause offered excuses. The *Royal Magazine* in 1762 blamed the Genoese for representing the Corsicans as ‘uncivilised, brutish, cruel and revengeful’ when it was known that the ‘Corsicans are bold and valiant’.⁷² The *Universal Magazine* attributed Genoese harassment for the Corsicans having ‘no leisure to improve themselves in any art or manufacture’ with the result that the ‘Corsicans are yet so backward, that they hardly make any linen at all.’⁷³ Lady Elliot was sympathetic: ‘The people are at present indolent, but when one considers their wretched condition, one can hardly wonder that they should not choose to sow for others to reap.’⁷⁴ Boswell put down their violent temper to ‘the effect of a warm climate, which forms the human frame to an exquisite degree of sensibility [...] being equally the occasion of impatience, sudden passion, and a spirit of revenge, tending to the disorder of society’; a northern European view in general acceptance in Britain at the time.⁷⁵ Protestant writers believed that idleness and superstition were caused by the Catholic religion with its ‘indulgent over-abundance of Catholic feasts and saints’.⁷⁶ However, few went as far as the writer in 1926 who alleged that ‘worship of the devil still goes on in parts of the country’.⁷⁷

⁷¹ Farinelli, p.30.

⁷² ‘A Succinct Account of the Island of Corsica’, *Royal Magazine* (June 1762), 273-76 (p.274).

⁷³ ‘The Present State of Corsica with respect to Government, Religion, Arms, Commerce, Learning, the Genius and Character of its Inhabitants’, *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, 42, 293 (May 1768), 258-64 (p.262).

⁷⁴ Elliot and Minto, p. 297.

⁷⁵ Quoted by Jones (2002), p.289.

⁷⁶ Giordano Nanni, *The Colonisation of Time* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), p.47.

⁷⁷ *Daily Mail (Hull)*, 11 November 1926.

Ultima Thule: A Land of Bounty

'If the country was in a state of cultivation and the people in a state of civilisation, it would be Elysium [...] The living here is quite luxurious; I never saw such quantities of game and fish, and the pork is the finest in the world-fed on chestnuts.'⁷⁸

Lady Elliot's opinion was shared by many of the early travellers whose accounts of their experiences excited curiosity about a country that was considered an '*Ultima Thule* in southern Europe' and was 'less known in England than New Zealand'.⁷⁹ The early writings outlined the attractions of the island that encouraged visitors. Corsica was seen as a land of promise, an unknown island open to exploration and the potential for exploitation of the natural resources, with a benign climate and a sublime landscape.

The beauties of the landscape had been lauded from the time of Boswell. Some writers have claimed that the visitors of the eighteenth century were insensitive to the splendours of the countryside. M.A. Stobart in 1901 asserted that Boswell suffered from the 'scenic blindness of the eighteenth century': 'he did not have a word to say about the wondrous beauty of the Corsican scenery [...] beyond a brief allusion to aromatic shrubs there is no sentence in the whole book to make us suspect the grandeur of the mountains, the passes and forests and rushing streams.'⁸⁰ But Boswell does describe the topography in a new way with the mountains and valleys having, 'a peculiar grand appearance, and inspire one in the genius of the place, with that undaunted and inflexible spirit that will not bow to oppression'.⁸¹ He is not, as has been suggested seeing the mountains as a 'sublime place to be experienced' but as a patriotic landscape, as heroic as the men who defended it, and as such was a 'personification of everything Corsica might stand for'.⁸² Barbauld described the landscape in a

⁷⁸ Elliot and Minto, p. 294.

⁷⁹ Thomas Forester, *Rambles in the Islands of Corsica and Sardinia* (London: Longman, 1858), pp. A3, vi.

⁸⁰ Stobart, p.226.

⁸¹ Quoted in 'Situation, Extent, Air, Soil, and Production of Corsica', *Universal Magazine*, 42, 292 (April 1768), 171.

⁸² Jones (2002), p.294; Robert Zaretsky, 'Upon the Rock', *Southwest Review*, 97, (2) (2012),

similar vein: a land of 'lofty pines/And hard fir, and ilex ever green', that waves its 'giant arms/O'er the rough sons of freedom'.⁸³

Collingwood, who was not impressed with Corsica gave a different view: 'A more miserable prospect than that island presents is scarce to be conceived of, the most savage country, barren brown mountains rearing their rugged, wrinkled heads to the skies.'⁸⁴ This perhaps was understandable as he was writing in the heat of August. Moore, who was there at the same time, appreciated the scenery in a way that it might be described today. He agreed that some parts were 'barren and uncultivated', but 'many parts were beautiful and romantic: for there are mountains and woody tracts, with rivers and torrents, which make for exquisite scenery'.⁸⁵ Nelson held similar views. He described the port of Bastia as 'a beautiful place, and the environs delightful with the most romantic views beheld'.⁸⁶ Elliot in a letter to Lady Elliot described it as a

fairy land [...] The rivers are rapid, craggy, and crystal. There was never water so perfectly pure and of such beautiful white transparency as the Restonica... The brightness and splendour of the Restonica make it what one may call *precious water*, as one talks of the *precious stones*. I had heard of the water of a diamond before, now I see it, for it is really diamonds in solution.⁸⁷

The post-Napoleonic War writers brought to a wider audience the romantic and picturesque beauties of the island. By the time of Benson's visit there was no doubt about the attraction of the landscape: 'Like other mountain countries, Corsica is exceedingly picturesque; indeed, man has left so few traces of his industry in the island that the painter, who shrinks at the sight of cultivated fields and flower gardens, may here revel undisturbed amidst wild and majestic scenes [...] the rugged mountains, the rich but neglected valleys, the boisterous torrents, and the trackless forests.'⁸⁸ Cowen was even more

244-50 (p.254).

⁸³ Jones (2002), p.294.

⁸⁴ Adams (2005), p. 47.

⁸⁵ Major General Sir J.F. Maurice ed., *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, (London: Arnold, 1904), p. 153

⁸⁶ Letter to Fanny Nelson, 15 February 179, Nicholas Harris Nicolas, ed., *The Dispatches and Letters of Vice Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson 1795-1797* (London: Colburn, 1845-46), p. 395.

⁸⁷ Elliot and Minto, pp. 255-57.

⁸⁸ Benson, p.44.

enthusiastic: 'It is strange that this country has been so long neglected by the sketching tourist – an island full of sublime scenery! A sweet interchange of hill and valley, rivers, woods and plains. Now land, now sea and shores with forests crowned, rocks dens and caves.'⁸⁹

Benson and Cowen visited Corsica for business. Gregorovius was attracted by 'Its unknown solitudes and the legendary fame of its scenery and its people'.⁹⁰ Forester was persuaded, despite Gregorovius' work, that 'Corsica was still open to survey from an English point of view, and that it possessed sufficient legitimate attractions to sustain the interest of such a work'.⁹¹ Almost every writer since has used the device of Corsica being unknown. Being little known and unexplored was an incentive for British mountaineers in search of first ascents, natural scientists looking for new or rare species and the prospect for writers and artists to sell works on an unfamiliar and exotic land.

The island's climate became a significant attraction. Writing to Lady Elliot in 1794 Sir Gilbert told her that Corsica was 'like Scotland with a fine climate'.⁹² On arrival Lady Elliot agreed telling her sister that, 'The weather is now charming; every door and window of the house is open [...] on a winter's day one might sit and bask and feed one's eyes with beauty.'⁹³ Benson drew attention to the climate of Ajaccio: 'By spring the cold weather is unknown at Ajaccio; a few flakes of snow which appear at intervals of fifteen to twenty years are considered a phenomenon. A large palm tree growing without artificial protection at the Préfecture evinces the character of the climate.'⁹⁴ The city's potential had been recognised by Moore. He declared: 'The Gulf of Ajaccio is beautiful', and that 'no place in the island' could be compared to the city.⁹⁵ Elliot was likewise impressed believing that one day Ajaccio would be 'a considerable place'.⁹⁶ The *Universal Magazine*, in 1794, brought the city to the attention of the public:

⁸⁹ Cowen, p. 2.

⁹⁰ Gregorovius, preface.

⁹¹ Forester, p.vii.

⁹² Elliot and Minto, p. 257.

⁹³ Ibid., pp.293-94.

⁹⁴ Benson, p. 6.

⁹⁵ Maurice, p. 133.

⁹⁶ Elliot and Minto, p. 301.

Ajaccio is the handsomest town. It has many good streets and beautiful walks, with a citadel and a palace in which the Genoese governor used to reside. The inhabitants are the most genteel people in the island and here are the remains of a colony of Greeks, which formed a settlement in 1677. It has a wide, safe and commodious harbour, with a good mole.⁹⁷

Half a century later Ajaccio began to attract British visitors as a winter health station.

As well as the climate and landscape, all the early observers noted the potential of the island's natural resources: 'Such is the island of Corsica which, if properly cultivated, would produce large quantities of corn and wine and prove a valuable acquisition to a maritime power.'⁹⁸ In 1768 the *Universal Magazine* published an extensive article on Corsica which described 'fruitful valleys [...] mineral springs which the inhabitants find to be very efficacious [...] fish, oysters, coral [...] cattle, butter, milk [...] mouflon, [...] grains, honey [...] a great many mines of lead, copper, iron and silver [...] alum and salt-peter [...] granite, some of it approaching in quality to the oriental granite, which was so famous at Rome.'⁹⁹ Another article appeared the following month; 'Corsica is naturally rich in many productions; so that there is no question but this island might carry on a pretty extensive commerce in oil, wine, honey, beeswax, salt, chestnuts, silk, resin, boxwood, oak, pine, porphyry, marble of various kinds, lead, iron, copper, silver, and coral [...] We may expect to see the Corsicans distinguish themselves as a commercial nation.'¹⁰⁰ The *Universal Magazine* was clearly trying to persuade the government of the value of intervention in Corsica and these 'riches' went unheeded. Nevertheless the potential of the island was recognised by Nelson in 1795 when he wrote to William Suckling: 'The more I see of its produce, and convenient Ports for our Fleet, the more I am satisfied with Lord Hood's great wisdom in getting possession of it. The pine of this

⁹⁷ 'Account of the Island and Kingdom of Corsica', *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure*, 95 (September 1794), 173-77 (p.176).

⁹⁸ 'A Succinct Account', p.276.

⁹⁹ 'Situation, Extent, Air'. This article was reproduced almost word for word in *Universal Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure* in September 1794 with minimal changes.

¹⁰⁰ 'The Present State of Corsica', pp.261-62.

Island is of the finest texture I ever saw.’¹⁰¹

Such promise, though, was never realised. Nelson blamed it on the French: ‘Every article of the Island was suppressed, as it interfered with the produce of the South of France.’¹⁰² Others like Collingwood agreed that ‘The valleys are fertile and the sides of the mountains produce a fine grape’ but ascribed the reason for non-cultivation to the ‘natives’ who if they ‘were less savage than they are it might abound in corn and wine and oil’.¹⁰³ Moore, on arriving at the mountain village of Ota, noted that: ‘The hill upon which it stands is, by means of supporting walls, planted with vines, olives, fig-trees &c., it proves how much might be done in other parts of the island were the inhabitants industrious.’¹⁰⁴ In 1795 Lady Elliot observed: ‘Oil and wine are in abundance, but not so good as they might be with care and attention [...] If the island should continue under our protection and any pains are taken to improve its productions, or rather the means of cultivating them, it might have as extensive a trade as any part of Italy.’¹⁰⁵

The opinions recorded in these personal letters and diaries did not reach the wider public but their views were confirmed by visitors after the Napoleonic Wars. Benson reflected the comments of the earlier observers,

Money is seldom employed in the interior except for the principal towns [...] the rent of land is generally paid by a certain quantity of the produce [...] Such then is the primitive state of the island in a commercial and agricultural point of view. That it is a country possessing great capability of being productive, the wild vegetation growing so luxuriantly in its vallies (sic), abundantly indicates; but, unhappily, no excitement has hitherto been given to Corsican industry.¹⁰⁶

It remained largely the case until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when a few British individuals attempted to turn the promise into reality by investing in agriculture and industry.

¹⁰¹ Nicolas, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁰³ Quoted by Adams (2005), p. 138.

¹⁰⁴ Maurice, p. 120.

¹⁰⁵ Elliot and Minto, p. 297.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Review of *Sketches of Corsica*’, p.756.

Conclusion

The British communities in Corsica should be seen in the context of Britain's activity in and around the Mediterranean since the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Corsica rebellion of 1729-1769 and the brief interlude of the ACK might have remained obscure struggles in the wider events of European history had it not been for the enduring legacy that established a cultural affinity between the British and Corsicans that has stood the test of time. What emerged from the ACK was a 'halo of romance' around the factors that were to attract the British to the island up to the eve of the Second World War. Corsica held out promise to those who travelled seeking health, adventure, fame and fortune or leisure.¹⁰⁷

The personal memoirs compiled during the time of the ACK and the accounts of writers who visited Corsica in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars: Benson (1823), Cowen (1840), Gregorovius (1852) and Forester (published 1858), all reinforced the perceptions of the island that lasted over the time frame of this thesis. After the Napoleonic War freedom had become a 'great popular ideal' and a 'new romanticism' brought a different focus on the Mediterranean region with travellers eager to visit the island. A growing number of these visitors from the mid-nineteenth century wrote about their experiences. They began to see the island in its more romantic and picturesque aspects. They filled the imagination and crystallised and reinforced the myths and stereotypes about the Corsican character. What they portrayed was not without contradictions. Corsica was seen as a land of heroes fighting for their liberty under an enlightened leader, Pascal Paoli. It was a cause that was noble and worthwhile. Yet, it was also deemed, 'in the language of imperialism', to be 'savage, barbarian and uncouth'.¹⁰⁸ It was beautiful or barren, healthy and unhealthy with undeveloped bounties soon to come to fruition or doomed to unrealised potential by the endemic idleness and violence of the Corsican nature. All agreed that the island was mysterious and unknown, a perception that has endured into the twenty first century, albeit as somewhat of a cliché.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Ansted, p.91.

¹⁰⁸ France, p.297.

¹⁰⁹ In June 2015 the *Mail on Sunday* referred to Corsica as 'France's best kept secret'.

From the mid-nineteenth century, the island began to attract an increasing number of British visitors who settled as sojourners in a semi-permanent winter colony in the capital city, Ajaccio, or as permanent settlers in the city of Bastia. As the birthplace of the Emperor, Ajaccio became a place of pilgrimage but benefited most from the island's climate that set the city on the road towards the development of a winter health station. In 1903 it was said that 'A hundred years ago we owned this delightful "Isle of Unrest" for just two years before we retired in favour of the French and thus lost the finest sanatoria in Europe.'¹¹⁰ The health station was not 'lost', and a small group of British winter sojourners resided in the city in the winter months up to the eve of the Second World War. In Ajaccio they found hope of a respite from consumption, escape from the industrial revolution and the perceived overcrowding and filth that progress had brought to favoured resorts such as the French Riviera.

¹¹⁰ *Manchester Guardian*, 12 November 1903.

Chapter Three

Ajaccio: Becoming a Winter Health Station

'In winter we may wisely follow the swallows, and seek the shores of the Mediterranean, where the skies are eternally blue, where the orange groves spread their golden glories, where the sun does not veil itself, and where Nature smiles through winter with benign grace.'¹

Introduction

This chapter considers why and how Ajaccio became a winter health station and part of a British Mediterranean world. It was a region which was recognised as being 'remarkable for the luxuriance and semi-tropical character of its vegetation, and enjoys a climate unequalled, within the same latitudes in Europe'.² The climatic benefits drew the mobile elites from the north to favoured resorts of the south. In the winter, these places became hosts to significant numbers of the upper classes who formed 'colonies'.³ Invalids helped create the emerging culture of tourism where 'in every health resort the consumptive has been the pioneer: for him hotels were constructed, for him greater facilities of travel were procured'.⁴ The cultural identity of the elite, who held similar values and beliefs, shaped a distinct British Mediterranean zone characterised by colonies that were often separate from the host and other communities and which supported an Anglican church, had access to British doctors, dentists and even shops. Ajaccio, in Corsica, became one of the last winter health stations to be established in the Mediterranean.

By the time the winter station in Ajaccio was inaugurated in the mid-nineteenth century, the idea of travelling for health was well established. Colonies for the consumptive had been established all around the Mediterranean shore and along the Atlantic coast. By the end of the eighteenth

¹ Special Correspondent, 'The Riviera', *BMJ*, 9 February 1884.

² Charles Theodore Williams, 'Notes on the Climate of the South of France', *Lancet*, 22 September 1865; Charles Theodore Williams, *The Climate of the South of France as Suited to Invalids* (London: Churchill, 1867).

³ See Pemble.

⁴ D.W. Samways, 'The Consumptive on the Riviera', *BMJ*, 26 December 1903.

century the well-off travelled for health in the summer to British and foreign spas. The movement to the shores of the Mediterranean was different – it took place in the winter and the length of stay was significantly longer. Historians usually date the discovery of the health-giving properties of the Riviera to the visit of the novelist Tobias Smollett to Nice in 1765. In his *Travels Through France and Italy*, Smollett explained how the climate had cured his pulmonary complaints.⁵ Others followed and there came to be a widely held belief in the curative powers of the climate.⁶

The phenomenon of the winter health station was a response to the cult of invalidism, 'a dominant, if imprecisely defined, feature of England's medical culture'.⁷ Consumption was the greatest killer in Victorian Britain. In the first decade of the twentieth century it was still thought to be responsible for one death in every eight.⁸ In the eighteenth and nineteenth century consumption itself was fashionable and was viewed as a romantic disease.⁹ It was the 'age of the beautiful death' in which art and literature depicted dying and death bed scenes in an aura of sentimentality.¹⁰ The disease featured in novels and operas, and many 'geniuses' were afflicted. Artists and writers suffering from consumption went abroad and where they stayed others came.¹¹ Doctors began sending their wealthy patients 'south' in the belief that the only serious hope of recovery or arrest of illness lay in a long sojourn, usually of more than one winter and spring, in a warmer climate which could perhaps prolong life or

⁵ Tobias George Smollett, *Travels Through France and Italy*, 2nd edn (London: [n.pub], 1766).

⁶ See James Clark, *The Sanative Influence of Climate: With an Account of the Best Places of Resort for Invalids in England, the South of Europe, &c.* 3rd edn (London: Murray, 1841).

⁷ Maria H. Frawley, *Invalidism and Identity in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p.3.

⁸ Linda Bryder, *Below the Magic Mountain: A Social History of Tuberculosis in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), p. 1.

⁹ Anna Richards, 'Review of Consumption and Literature: The Making of the Romantic Disease', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 82, (3) (Fall, 2008), 725-26 (p.725).

¹⁰ Tony Seaton, 'Thanatourism and its Discontents' in *The Sage Handbook of Tourism Studies* by Tazim Jamal and Michael Robinson (London: Sage, 2012), pp.521-32 (p.532). Thanatourism is a rarely used word. It means the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death.

¹¹ Artists, writers and musicians whose deaths have been attributed to consumption or tuberculosis include: four of the Brontë sisters and Branwell Brontë, Honoré de Balzac, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Charles Kingsley, D.H. Lawrence, George Orwell, Katherine Mansfield, Washington Irving, John Keats, Guy de Maupassant, Alexander Pope, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Dylan Thomas, Aubrey Beardsley, Paul Gauguin, Elizabeth Siddall, James Whistler.

at least make the dying more bearable.¹² Ajaccio was the latest best place.

Consumption was little understood. Dr Henry Panmure Ribton, for example, was not alone in believing that consumption was 'A disease not of the lungs alone but of the whole system [...] associated with a deficient action of the skin'.¹³ By the nineteenth century scientific analysis of climate replaced that of mineral water which had been the basis of spa medicine. Some doctors warned against an invalid putting too much hope in the power of place to affect a cure, but climatotherapy, or climatology, as it had come to be known, became widely accepted and embedded within mainstream medicine.¹⁴ The attributes of each resort were refined and places were classified into suitability for the different types of diseases. Ribton, for instance, produced an array of statistical analysis, including temperature, humidity and rainfall to support the case for Ajaccio.¹⁵ Debates as to the efficacy of climates and place had been heightened with the emergence of a specialised medical press, especially the founding of the *Lancet* in 1823 and the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) in 1840. There was, though, no agreement as to the best place, but a change of air was universally believed to be beneficial.

From the early nineteenth century there was an international network of British physicians established in the European resorts; as early as 1819, for example, there were at least five English speaking physicians in Madeira.¹⁶ The presence of doctors in a station was considered a mark of approval. Dr James Clark in Rome, Dr Alexander Taylor in Pau, Dr Robert Scoresby-Jackson in Algiers and Dr Edwin Lee in Nice were all credited with being a catalyst for the development. From the middle of the nineteenth century the number of doctors abroad expanded. The Medical Registration Act of 1858 recognised, for the first time, the separate concept of the qualified or registered medical practitioner and

¹² Robert Louis Stevenson's essay "Ordered South" featuring his stay at Menton was first published in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1874.

¹³ Ribton, p. 44.

¹⁴ Robert Edmund Scoresby-Jackson, *Medical Climatology: Or a Topographical and Meteorological Description of the Localities Resorted to in Winter and Summer by Invalids* (London: [n.pub], 1862), p.vii.

¹⁵ Ribton, p. 44.

¹⁶ Clark Lawlor and Akihito Suzuki, 'The Disease of the Self: Representing Consumptive, 1700-1830', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 74, (3) (Fall, 2000), 485-94 (p.471).

is associated with the beginning of the rise in both earnings and status of doctors which led to an expansion of practitioners overseas who could benefit from the richer clients. It was in the financial interests of these doctors to promote their chosen resorts. By the mid-1860s the proponents of Ajaccio, Dr James Henry Bennet (1812-1898) and Ribton, had with other British doctors established winter practices in resorts in the south of France. Thanks to Bennet, according to Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), Menton was 'Britain's main overseas sanatorium'.¹⁷

Expansion was enabled by technological developments, particularly railways and steam ships that made going south quicker. From the mid-1850s the traveller could reach the south of France from Paris in eighteen hours. The journey was transformed when the PLM railway reached Marseilles in 1855 and Menton in 1870. In 1861 when Thomas Cook organised his second visit to France, passports were no longer required and simpler money changing facilities and the standardisation of rail time made travelling easier. Soon afterwards it was possible to travel from London to Paris as quickly as from London to Edinburgh and at far less cost.¹⁸

It was not just transport. Accessibility was enhanced by the increasing information about the resorts, initially from the medical fraternity. In publicising favoured resorts, the boundaries between medical science and travel literature were blurred. Ribton's *Corsica in 1868*, included significant non-medical details of Ajaccio and its surroundings.¹⁹ There were also more individual narratives by non-medical travellers that inspired others to follow in their footsteps.²⁰ It is evident that these authors were a 'representative type, a figure widely recognised to the English reading public and commanding a particular kind of authority'.²¹

¹⁷ Jones (2009), p.167. In Menton there is a *Rue Henry Bennet*, and a monument was erected to him in the *Rue Partouneaux*.

¹⁸ Peter Thorold, *The British in France* (London: Continuum, 2008), p.93.

¹⁹ Clark's *The Sanative Influence on Climate* is an earlier example.

²⁰ For example see Augustus J.C. Hare, *A Winter in Mentone* (London: [n.pub], 1862); William Chambers, *Wintering at Mentone* (London: [n.pub], 1870); William Bryant Aspinall, *San Remo as a Winter Residence: By an Invalid, 1862-1865* (London: [n.pub], 1865).

²¹ Frawley, p.117.

Corsica's capital city, Ajaccio, was only one of a number of the health resorts along the Mediterranean shores. However, there were particular events that made Corsica more attractive from the middle of the century.

Communication was made simpler by the underwater telegraph that linked England and France by August 1850 and extended to Corsica in 1865. The island became more attractive when the banning of the carrying of firearms in 1852 decreased the fear of being attacked by bandits. In 1868 Ajaccio was linked by steamship to Nice, a shorter journey than that from Marseilles.

Ribton believed Ajaccio to be the best place for certain diseases, but many invalids ignored medical advice and followed fashion. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the most favoured health resort was Montpellier, but the efficacy of its climate began to be doubted. During the Napoleonic Wars, English invalids had ventured farther to Madeira. After Waterloo there was increased choice. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Pisa, Rome and Naples competed with Malta and Malaga. Resorts developed in North Africa where Algiers became known as the 'Torquay of Africa'.²² Ajaccio also had to compete with Pau, Biarritz, Archacon; Cairo, Tunis, Malaga and San Sebastian. And, there were resorts further afield such as the West Indies and the west coast of the United States.²³ The Riviera was always in favour and fashion led to the growth of resorts such as Cannes and Marseilles. Cannes remained popular, but Marseilles lost its allure; so much so that a writer in *Macmillan's Magazine* in 1866 stated that 'a stranger would as soon think of living there as he would in Liverpool or Manchester'.²⁴ The glamour of the Riviera, as a whole attracted so many that in 1882 Guy de Maupassant, in an article entitled 'Chez la Mort', called it the 'cemetery of Europe'.²⁵

²² Joëlle Redouane, 'La Présence Anglaise en Algérie de 1830 à 1930', *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 38 (1984), 15-36 (p.22).

²³ Frawley, p.125; David Blackbourn, 'Fashionable Spa Towns in Nineteenth-Century Europe', in *Water, Leisure and Culture*, eds by Susan C. Anderson, and Bruce H. Tabb (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p.12.

²⁴ Thorold, p.117-18.

²⁵ Tania Anne Woloshyn, 'La Côte d'Azur: The Terre Privilégié of Invalids and Artists, c.1860-1900', *French Cultural Studies*, 20, (4) (November 2009), 383-402 (p.388).

By 1882 numbers spending the winter in these resorts had been swelled by healthier individuals who sought an escape from the British winter and an environment free from the perceived evils of modernisation. The period 1750 to 1850 had been a time of rapid modernisation in some parts of Europe. The most popular Riviera resorts became crowded as the democratisation of travel attracted a broader spectrum of tourists who were perceived to have introduced and encouraged dissipation and decadence. This created the culture of the anti-tourist. The reaction of the elites was to scorn and shun 'for they [the elites] built their travellers' identities in opposition to the crowd'.²⁶ The upper classes searched for new areas where travel was still a class privilege and where for the invalid there might be a better hope of survival. Some made their way across the Mediterranean to Ajaccio. Corsica was viewed as an unspoiled island where the romanticism and simplicity of the past could still be experienced. In addition, the cost of living was cheaper and it was imagined not to be associated with the kind of evils that the sojourners believed were to be encountered on the favoured Riviera that resulted from overpopulation and overdevelopment.

A City of Hope

'Escape from illness by moving to another place-to almost any other place-is probably as ancient as hope.'²⁷

The selection of the right health station was vital in determining 'recovery or a fatal termination'.²⁸ Ajaccio was the latest place to promise hope for the former. The foundation of the city's development as a health resort was the therapeutic benefits of its climate which were promoted by the medical profession at the same time as the island became more accessible with the introduction of steamers from Nice to Ajaccio and the underwater telegraph.

The personnel involved in the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom (ACK) and early nineteenth-century visitors like Robert Benson and William Cowen had

²⁶ Buzard, p.153.

²⁷ Thomas Dormandy, *The White Death: A History of Tuberculosis* (London: Hambledon, 1999), p.105.

²⁸ Ribton, p. 43.

remarked favourably on the climate. The first doctor to vaunt the climate was Alphonse Donné, rector of the Academy of Montpellier, who had come to Ajaccio in 1851 with his wife who was in poor health. She recovered completely. Donné published a series of articles in 1852 praising the city which he turned into a book published in 1872. In it he declared that 'Ajaccio is Montpellier with more heat, but without wind and dust; with some spots on the Grecian islands it is one of the finest climates in the world'.²⁹ It was Dr Bennet who first drew Ajaccio to the attention of the wider British public. Bennet had come to Menton in 1859 suffering from tuberculosis and expecting to die.³⁰ He survived and began to investigate the climatic properties of other winter stations; he was of the view that healthy resorts were not numerous.³¹ He was anxious to increase their number, and believed that he might find what he was looking for in Corsica. He visited the island three times.³² His *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean*, first published in 1862, not only featured the Riviera resorts but also Ajaccio. Bennet was a strong advocate for the island and believed that he was the first to point out 'the exceptionally sheltered situation of Ajaccio' which 'rendered it a suitable residence for invalids requiring a moister climate than that of the Genoese Riviera'.³³ Bennet's opinion was supported by the Brown family who during their visit to Corsica in 1863, 'found Dr and Mrs Walker perfectly remoulded, at least the former, I never saw him look so well, and in his walks as strong as any of the natives here. The climate is superior to Mentone or Nice, as least as far as all writers agree, because in Corsica you have both winter and a summer climate, and so dry that the consumptive with half a lung can live'.³⁴

Bennet's colleague, Ribton, was convinced that the climate of Ajaccio possessed 'very great advantages to the pulmonary invalid' and such an individual 'will be much more certain of deriving benefit from the insular climate

²⁹ Alphonse Donné, *Change of Air and Scene: A Physician's Hints; with Notes of Excursions for Health Among the Watering Places (Inland and Seaward), Switzerland, Corsica, and the Mediterranean* (London: King, 1872), p. 253.

³⁰ Bennet (1870), p.228. At this date Menton was still part of Italy; the town voted, with Nice, to become French in 1860.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

³⁴ *Westmorland Gazette*, 28 March 1863.

of Ajaccio than by any of the continental stations along the shores of the Mediterranean'.³⁵ Ribton justified his assessment with climatic statistics and pointed out that the city had the advantage over its Mediterranean rivals in that it was situated on an island where 'there is not the feeling of imprisonment which is usually a necessary consequence of the sheltered position which a health station must occupy.'³⁶ An article in the *Cornhill Magazine* supported Ribton's conclusions:

There are many who find the air of Cannes and Nice too dry and exciting, and who are surprised, when they expect a summer in the midst of February, to be greeted with winds far colder than the easterly blasts from which they fled in England. Such persons would probably benefit from a residence at Ajaccio, where, with a splendid southern sun, and a temperature dry as well as warm, there is no irritating harshness in the air, and no sharp cutting mistral.³⁷

Ribton dwelt at length on the shortcomings of the climate at various rival stations. At Nice, and other places on the Riviera, it was the wind that was the problem. Elsewhere, it was the cold or damp, and everywhere there was dust. Ribton's work was judged 'remarkable for the comparison between the climate of the Italian Riviera and that of Corsica, a comparison all to the advantage of Ajaccio'.³⁸

Ribton's opinion may be exaggerated since it appears that he had obtained three cottages in the city with a view to leasing them to foreign invalids, nevertheless his work was endorsed by others. Dr Pietra-Santa, who was commissioned by Napoleon III to investigate the merits of the climate of Ajaccio, classed the town as 'one of the best winter stations of the Mediterranean'.³⁹ The German doctor, Adolf Biermann, is also recorded as having come to Ajaccio gravely ill, and believing himself to be 'miraculously cured' became a protagonist for the island.⁴⁰ Biermann was held responsible for

³⁵ Ribton, pp. 31-54.

³⁶ Ribton, p. 66.

³⁷ 'Ajaccio', *Cornhill Magazine*, 18,106 (1868), 496-506 (p.505).

³⁸ Dr Paul Picard, *La Station Hivernale d'Ajaccio en 1872-1873* (Ajaccio: Pompeiani, 1872), p.6. Picard is referring to Ribton's *Corsica in 1868*. Picard trained as a surgeon in Paris and became the chief surgeon at Marseilles.

³⁹ Lucchini, p. 15.

⁴⁰ Picard (1872), pp. 6-7. Dr Biermann's book *Die Insel Corsica and Ajaccio als Climatischer Kurort* was published in Hamburg in 1868 and he followed this up with *Climatische Kurorte* published in 1872.

the 'large number of Germans' who came to Ajaccio for the winter of 1868-69'.⁴¹ Dr Paul Picard, too, had gone there thinking he was dying but recovered his health and published a book in 1872 setting out the benefits of the island's climate.⁴²

By the later nineteenth century books such as Picard's, written by and aimed at the medical profession, became increasingly comprehensive. As the development of medical climatology converged with the emergence of the travel industry, medical books became more accessible to the lay person and went beyond the technical and scientific. Bennet's work was said to be a 'discriminating and accurate account of the climate of the Mediterranean shore' which also contained 'sufficient science in the shape of topography, botany, zoology, and geology, with horticultural gleanings and incidents of travels, to make it eminently readable and interesting to a man fond of natural history'.⁴³ By the 1880s it was asserted that 'There is not an English tourist who had not read the book of Dr Bennet'.⁴⁴ The Two Ladies were prompted to try Corsica having read Bennet's *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean*.⁴⁵ Edward Lear included Bennet's 1865 version in his bibliography to *Journal of a Landscape Painter in Corsica*, calling it 'one of the best published accounts of the island [...] particularly simple in all details relating to the healthiness of its climate'.⁴⁶

Early non-medical writers also vaunted the climate. Thomas Forester, for instance, considered that Corsica had 'but two seasons, spring and summer'.⁴⁷ Charles Guérin believed that the German, Austrian and Swiss doctors who came to study the climate had been attracted to Corsica by the work of Ferdinand Gregorovius.⁴⁸ Ribton claimed that Miss Campbell's book had 'awakened quite an interest in those in search of a more equable climate than

⁴¹ James Henry Bennet, *La Corse et la Sardaigne* (Paris: Asselin, 1876), pp.108-09.

⁴² Picard (1872).

⁴³ 'Reviews and Notices of Books', *Lancet*, 8 January 1870.

⁴⁴ Charles Guérin, *Ajaccio, Station d'Hiver*, (Zurich: Orell, 1883), p.47. Guérin was the Director of Meteorology at Ajaccio.

⁴⁵ *A Winter in Corsica*, p. 2.

⁴⁶ Lear, p. 270.

⁴⁷ Forester, p.90.

⁴⁸ Guérin, p.47.

Cannes, Nice, Mentone and other favoured resorts on the Riviera'.⁴⁹ In 1869 the *Standard* reported that 'There is no doubt that in a little while Corsica will become an important island as a health station and that it offers every facility in the way of novel ground for tourists. It is comparatively easy of access and evidently well worth visiting'.⁵⁰

The turning point for the city had come in 1868 when Corsica took a step forward in being part of a global network of travel with the inauguration of the steamer from Nice to Ajaccio. In the 1860s faster rail travel had brought people to the Riviera in significant numbers, but it was the introduction of steam ships that enabled many to contemplate travelling from as far as America and undertaking the additional leg of crossing the Mediterranean to Corsica. Ribton estimated that 'The journey from London to Ajaccio may be made in about the same time as the journey to Mentone'.⁵¹ Ajaccio, he said, was twelve hours from Nice via 'a swift and neatly fitted steamer, with very good cabin accommodation'.⁵²

Early visitors had come by sail. In 1840 Cowen had a tortuous journey from London to Southampton by rail, steam packet to Le Havre and then to Rouen. He caught another packet to St Germain and then rail to Paris. He went by diligence to Lyons and down the Rhône to Tarason. He spent the night on board the packet and then took a further packet from Marseilles to Toulon. In the 1840s steam ships began to be specially designed for passengers and were more comfortable, although the crossing from Marseilles to Ajaccio still took twenty-four hours.⁵³ The voyage itself was considered part of the cure. Sea passages in particular were thought of 'intrinsically healing because of the motion of the boat, including the nausea (purging) and exposure to the sea air, particularly when patients were spitting up blood'.⁵⁴ Ribton's assertion that the voyage would be a 'pleasant excursion, the view of the western coast of

⁴⁹ *Boston Journal*, 24 April 1874.

⁵⁰ *Standard*, 24 November 1869.

⁵¹ Ribton, p. 70.

⁵² Ribton, p. 1.

⁵³ Cowen, p.3

⁵⁴ Helen Bynum, *Spitting Blood: The History of Tuberculosis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 19.

Corsica, from Calvi down to Ajaccio is magnificent and will be enjoyed by all who make the voyage' was not shared and complaints as to the comfort of the steamships continued for many years.⁵⁵ Lear told of sixteen hours of 'long hours of monotonous rolling and shaking'.⁵⁶

A long, expensive and uncomfortable sea voyage home could be so tiring as to undo the beneficial effects of wintering abroad. Traditionally the invalid returned home when the weather became too warm in the south, usually after Easter, or went to a spa resort most often in Germany or Switzerland. Here Corsica had an advantage. Bennet and Ribton identified that it was possible to remain on the island in the summer; the island's mountains provided the potential for summer health resorts. Miss Campbell favoured Guitera which was close to the village of Zicavo and at around 600 hundred metres was 'admirably calculated to be a summer station'.⁵⁷ Ribton and Bennet believed they had found at Vizzavona 'what has been sought after so much for many years amongst winter visitors to the Mediterranean, a perfectly healthy situation for a summer sanatorium' within 'an easy drive through magnificent scenery' which 'will carry him from winter to summer quarters, where next day he will return to his usual avocations and hardly feel that he had travelled at all'.⁵⁸ With an altitude of around 900 metres, Vizzavona was popular as a summer resort of the Ajacciennes.⁵⁹ Ribton expected a projected *pension* to be ready in the summer of 1869. In the meantime he recommended two or three other places, also summer retreats of the Ajacciennes, where English visitors could pass the summer: Bocognano, Bastelica, Guagno and Orezza where 'apartments may be hired in these places, furnished plainly but sufficiently, for a mere nominal price; provisions are easily obtainable, either in the neighbourhood or from Ajaccio by the diligence which passes every day, and game is abundant'.⁶⁰ Guérin added, Ucciani, Tavera, St Lucie de Tallano and Levie, all of which he said are well known to many English families and are on the routes followed by

⁵⁵ Ribton, p.70.

⁵⁶ Lear, p.3.

⁵⁷ Campbell, p.91.

⁵⁸ Ribton, pp. vii-viii; Bennet (1870), p.310.

⁵⁹ Ribton, p. 59.

⁶⁰ Ribton, p.63. The diligence was a large four-wheeled French stage coach that carried passengers and the mail.

the public diligences.⁶¹

There were also the more traditional spas. Corsica was deemed 'rich in mineral waters of all kinds: hot and cold sulphur springs, alkaline ferruginous and gaseous springs [...] Add to these sea-bathing, the splendid beach of Ajaccio, and its perpetual summer, and you have an idea of the medical resources of the country'.⁶² The spas of Guagno, Guitera, Caldaniccia and Vico were all considered accessible from Ajaccio. Further away were the baths of Fium'orba, Puzzichello and Pietrapola and the waters of Orezza, the 'most remarkable mineral spring of Corsica [...] used for chronic diseases of the abdominal organs, nervous disease, enlargements of the liver, bile or kidneys'.⁶³ Bennet expressed reservations that the spa resorts were 'not sufficiently high or cool enough to be chosen as summer retreats by the consumptive'.⁶⁴ However, he believed that the months of May and June might be 'very profitably spent at the Orezza springs' and stated that several of his friends and patients who had done so were 'delighted with their "month in the mountains"'.⁶⁵ Another such establishment was the Bains de Baraci just outside Propriano where 'each year hundreds of country folk crippled with rheumatism, wasting disease or scrofula come and plunge into the baths for several hours'.⁶⁶ The surviving buildings at Baraci give some indication of the fine establishment it must once have been, justifying its description in 1879 as a 'very important watering-place'.⁶⁷

An Antidote to modernism

'Colonies for the consumptive' were established around the shores of the Mediterranean and Atlantic seaboard, but it was the French Riviera, later known as the Côte d'Azur, that became the most popular with invalids and non-invalids.⁶⁸ The mobile elites gathered where they could be sure of familiar world

⁶¹ Guérin, p.82.

⁶² Donné, p.173.

⁶³ Ibid., pp.174-78.

⁶⁴ Bennet (1870), p.310.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.302.

⁶⁶ Guérin, p.79.

⁶⁷ 'Corsica as a Health-Resort', *BMJ*, 15 February 1879.

⁶⁸ Frawley, p.119.

of church, shops and pleasurable activities geared towards the English of their class where they could be certain of being seen in the right crowd. However, popularity led to disadvantages such as overcrowding, particularly with less desirable compatriots and the type of overdevelopment that the elites had sought escape from in England. Even in places like Algiers by the 1880s it was recorded that 'new houses are being built without let up and old houses destroyed'.⁶⁹ In response to the situation in the Riviera coastal towns some elite sojourners sought out more sparsely inhabited areas in the hitherto little inhabited hills, valleys and peninsulas of the Riviera hinterland or further afield, in Corsica.⁷⁰ When the British came to Ajaccio in the mid-1860s, they found little more than a small, sparsely-populated provincial town. It was not visited by 'the herd of travellers' and accommodation was cheap.⁷¹ Corsica's population had expanded significantly during the nineteenth century from 165,000 in 1800 to 280,000 in 1880, but it was widely dispersed and little more than thirteen percent of the population lived in towns.⁷²

The problems of the larger Riviera cities became increasingly visible with the greater numbers of travellers. In 1850 *Fraser's Magazine* recorded that 'the English are to be found in every nook and cranny that contains a fraction of a civilized or uncivilized population'.⁷³ The numbers of British turned places like Cannes, Nice and Menton into 'English dependencies'.⁷⁴ In Nice, for example, there was an Anglican church as early as 1822. Before long, 'everything was English from the sign over the shop door'.⁷⁵ There were British physicians and chemists and shops displaying English wares of every description. Hotels were built with names like *Victoria*, *Grand Bretagne*, *d'Angleterre*, *des Anglais*, mostly catering for the English.⁷⁶ It was similar in other Riviera resorts. Lear wrote in his diary in December 1864 that 'Mentone is assuredly very beautiful, but

⁶⁹ Christopher Ross, *The American Embassy Properties in Algiers: Their Origins and History* (1991), p.8, <https://dz.usembassy.gov/wp-context/uploads/sites/236/2017/04/history> (last accessed 23 October 2018).

⁷⁰ Pemble, p.251.

⁷¹ *Westmorland Gazette*, 28 March 1863.

⁷² *Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962*

⁷³ 'Recent Travellers', *Fraser's Magazine*, July 1850, quoted by Buzard, p.91.

⁷⁴ Thorold, p. 93.

⁷⁵ Pemble, p. 43.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

intolerable and unwholesome from its overcrowded Anglicism'.⁷⁷ Lear was not alone in his views of the English. As early as 1825 Lord Normanby noticed that the English abroad tended to distance themselves from their fellow countrymen: 'An Englishman to be sure does not travel to see other Englishmen,' he wrote, 'but this antipathy that makes one recoil from a countryman requires further explanation. And it is this: we all travel for vanity, for the sake of being and having been in such a place; hence the jealousy against those who share, and consequently lessen the honour.'⁷⁸ Some individuals chose to escape to Corsica, but the British retained their domination on the Riviera making up one in two of the winter visitors until the eve of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870.⁷⁹ This decreased during the Belle Époque to one to three.⁸⁰ Thereafter although still numerous, on the eve of the First World War they were surpassed by the French.⁸¹

In 1870 Ajaccio and Bastia were the only towns with more than 10,000 inhabitants. Ajaccio had shared a similar pattern of growth to the Riviera towns early in the nineteenth century, but as Table 1 illustrates in the second half of the century, growth was significantly less. From 1861 to 1911 when the population of Ajaccio had not even doubled, that of Nice had tripled. Nice would have been unrecognisable as the small fishing village encountered by Smollett. Much expansion of all towns was due to internal migration from the rural areas, the same phenomenon that was taking place in England. However, the sheer increase in numbers would have been obvious to the elites many of whom returned to the same place each winter. At the height of its popularity as a winter health station between 1901-14, the population of the city was still only a quarter of that of Nice, and although appearing to be greater than that of Cannes, or Menton, it was part of a significantly larger commune which included a more extensive rural hinterland.

⁷⁷ Edward Lear, *Diaries 1858-1888*. MS Eng. 797.3 (8). Houghton Library, Harvard University (Cambridge, Mass), <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.HOUGH:9468181> (last accessed 10 April 2018) transcribed by Marco Graziosi from Houghton Library, Harvard University, MS Eng. 797.3.

⁷⁸ J.V.N. Soane, *Fashionable Resort Regions* (Wallingford: CAB, 1993), p.154.

⁷⁹ Colin Dyer, 'Habitants et Hivernants sur la Côte d'Azur: Evolution des Populations, 1801-1992', *Recherches Régionales Côte d'Azur et Contrées Limitrophes*, 37, (2) (1996), 117-137 (p.124).

⁸⁰ The Belle Époque is conventionally dated 1871-1914.

⁸¹ Dyer, pp.124-25.

Table 1 Population and Growth of Riviera Towns and Ajaccio 1861-1911.

	Nice ⁸²	Cannes ⁸³	Hyères ⁸⁴	Menton ⁸⁵	Ajaccio ⁸⁶
1806	19,763	2,804	6,982	3,336	No data
1861	48,273 +144%	7,557 +169.5%	10,368 +48.5%	4,904 +47%	14,089
1866	50,180 +3.9%	9,681 +28%	10,878 +4.9%	5,699 +23.8%	14,558 +3.3%
1876	53,397 +6.4%	14,022 +44.8%	11,889 + 9.3%	No data	17,050 +17.1%
1881	66,279 +24.1%	19,385 +38.2%	No data	c.11,000 +93%	18,005 +5.6%
1891	88,273 +33.2%	19,983 +3.1%	c.18,000 +51.3%	c.9,000 -18.1%	20,197 +12%
1896	93,760 +12%	22,959 +14.9%	No data	No data	20,561 +1.8%
1901	105,109 +12%	30,420 +32.5%	No data	No data	21,779 +1.8%
1911	142,940 +36%	29,659 -2.5%	21,339	c.18,000	19,277 -5.9%
Growth 1861-1911	2.96x	4x	2x	3.7x	1.4x

It was not just absolute numbers but also density. Table 2 shows that when Ajaccio was becoming established as a winter health station, the density per square kilometre was significantly less than all but Hyères (which had a more extensive hinterland). In the city, the population would have been densest in the only urbanised area of the commune (the narrow piece of land joining the Genoese citadel and encompassing the old Genoese town and expanded suburb (see the map at Fig.2). This area was estimated by the British vice-Consul in 1882 to be 7-8,000 thousand souls; some thirty-eight to forty percent

⁸² Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962.

⁸³ Ibid., 1999.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 1962.

of the population of the commune; it would have been significantly smaller in the 1860s.⁸⁷

Table 2 Comparison of Communes by Density.⁸⁸

Commune	Area in square kilometres ⁸⁹	Density 1861 per square kilometre
Ajaccio	82.03	171
Nice	71.02	671
Cannes	19.62	375
Menton	14.05	349
Hyères	132.28	53

As for the size of ‘English’ colony in Ajaccio, information is scant. There were few British visitors until the late 1860s. Prior to this Consuls’ reports mention a number of persons passing through, mostly merchant seamen and individuals from Italy seeking passports or travellers on business such as Benson and Cowen. In 1863 the English were so rare that Brown described how his family ‘created as much attention as the Japanese did at the London exhibition, the people follow us in the streets and crying after us “Angli! Angli!”’.⁹⁰ In 1868 twenty-three ‘English’ were listed for the winter season from a total of fifty-nine foreigners. It was further stated that ‘upwards of 200 visit the island annually’.⁹¹

The earliest data with any detail is for the season 1874-75, taken from the incomplete guest lists of the *Gazette Ajaccienne* (Table 3). However, there is sufficient evidence to show that, as at Cannes (Table 4), the Anglophones were dominant up to the beginning of the twentieth century.⁹² Data was recorded by family and scholars differ as to the multiplier required to calculate individuals. Regardless, the British population stood out as a significant ratio to other sojourners. In Cannes, by the 1860s they comprised somewhere between 1:3 and 1:5 of the population. By that date there were already 300 foreigners at

⁸⁷ Barry, p.83.

⁸⁸ Precise comparisons are not possible since the numbers living in the urban areas of the communes are historically unknown.

⁸⁹ Based on current size of communes. There have been historical variations.

⁹⁰ *Westmorland Gazette* and others 28 March 1863.

⁹¹ PP 1872, [C.497] *Reports Relative to British Consular Establishments*.

⁹² Dyer, p.124.

Menton, mostly French and English.⁹³ In 1861 it is estimated that there was one foreigner for every six Niçois and from that date there was a rapid increase in the number of families.⁹⁴

Table 3 Foreigners in Ajaccio 1874-75⁹⁵

	1 December	15 December	1 January	15 January-1 February ⁹⁶	15 February	1 March	15 March ⁹⁷
Anglophones	53	53	65	68	68	78	78
Total Guests	89	98	105	140	132	147	145
% Anglophones	60%	54%	62%	49%	52%	53%	54%

⁹³ James Henry Bennet, 'A Winter at Mentone, Near Nice, *Lancet*, 7 July 1860.

⁹⁴ Dyer, p.118.

⁹⁵ Numbers have been compiled from the *Gazette Ajaccienne*.

⁹⁶ For this date the paper apologised for its incomplete data on foreigners.

⁹⁷ No comparable data survives for March 1876.

Table 4 Ratio of Foreign families at Cannes 1867-1911 Compared to Population at Table 1.

	1 January 1867		End January 1878		1 March 1892		23 February 1911	
	Families	%	Families	%	Families	%	Families	%
British	350	59	750	49	1,464	45	1,286	29
French	177	30	490	32	1,239	38	2,224	49
American	15	2	50	3			226	5
German	9	2	90	6			223	5
Russian	10	2	20	1			147	3
Others	31	5	137	9	522	17	396	9
Total Families	592		1,537		3,225		4,502	
Total Individuals, based on eight per family ⁹⁸	4,736		12,296		25,800		36,016	
Ratio to population	1:2		1:1.1		>1		>1	
British individuals per family x eight	2,800		6,000		11,712		10,288	
Ratio to population	1:3.5		1:2.4		1:1.7		1:2.89	
Total individuals based on three per family	1,776		4,611		9,675		13,506	
Ratio to population	1:5.4		1:3		1:2.4		1:2.2	
British individuals per family x three	1,050		2,250		4,392		3,858	
Ratio to population	1:9.2		1:6.2		1:4.55		1:7.7	

It was not just a matter of mass but also class. Frawley asserts that invalidism was a kind of identity but it was an identity of the elites. In 1848 the railroads and steamers were blamed for having 'covered all Europe with

⁹⁸ Dyer, p.125.

tourists, all pen in hand all determined not to let a hen roost remain undescribed, all portfolioed'.⁹⁹ The pioneering work of Thomas Cook and the growing tourism market opened the Mediterranean to a different class of person and created its oppositional element in the 'antitourist'.¹⁰⁰ When in 1890, according to *Larousse*, the French Dictionary, 'touriste' became an accepted synonym for 'English' the desire to avoid one's fellow countryman abroad had long been identified.¹⁰¹ The cultivated and professional classes, readers of *Blackwood* and *Cornhill* magazines and other higher class papers, perceived the Cook's tourist as of a lower class who turned up en masse in their favourite places on the Riviera and who were, according to Leslie Stephen (editor of *Cornhill* in 1871), turning areas like the Alps into the 'playground of Europe'.¹⁰² Newcomers to areas favoured by the elites were demonised by being labelled 'tourists' or 'Cockney' hordes.¹⁰³ The tourist with his Baedeker guide became an object of scorn.¹⁰⁴

Ajaccio was popular because it did not receive the 'Cockney' hordes. Joseph Susini, acting vice-Consul in the 1860s, recorded that 'Ajaccio becomes daily a place very much frequented by Her Majesty's subjects who come to visit and spend the winter time here and obliges the vice-Consul to keep an office for business and decent furnishing enabling him to receive persons of high rank and distinction who very often put in to this port with their yots (sic.)'.¹⁰⁵ In 1867 it was observed that the Corsicans were 'especially well inclined to the English visitors [...] who have not yet been sufficiently numerous to destroy the prestige our countrymen certainly enjoy, and which dates from the time when the island for a short time was under the protection of England'.¹⁰⁶ Of the early visitors, Lady Franklin came in 1866, Lady Sophia Dunbar came to paint in 1868, Lady

⁹⁹ 'Modern Tourism', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 64 (394) (August 1848), 185-89.

¹⁰⁰ Frawley, p.117.

¹⁰¹ Jamal and Robinson, p. 66.

¹⁰² Jill Steward, *The Development of Tourist Culture and the Formation of Social and Cultural Identities 1800-1914, with Special Reference to Central Europe*, (Doctoral thesis, University of Northumbria, 2008).

¹⁰³ According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the word 'tourist' made its first appearance in English in the late eighteenth century, and by the middle of the nineteenth century, it had acquired a negative connotation. Now the *Oxford English Dictionary* contains the adjective combinations 'tourist-crammed, - haunted, -mobbed, -ridden, [and] -trodden', Buzzard, p.1.

¹⁰⁴ Buzzard, pp.80-102.

¹⁰⁵ TNA: FO 27/1724, vice-Consul Susini to FO, 24/3/1868.

¹⁰⁶ T. Ansted, 'A Fortnight in Corsica', *Belgravia*, 4 (November 1867), 87-97 (p.87).

Ashtown and the Hon. Miss Tench/Trench, friends of Miss Campbell, came in the same year.¹⁰⁷ The 'Hon. Mrs A.B' toured the island in 1867 and George Brudenell Bruce, son of Lord Bruce, died there in 1868.¹⁰⁸ Aristocrats were few compared to the Riviera resorts. More commonly Corsica received the wealthy rentier class such as Miss Campbell and the acquaintances of Lear. Lear met his friends, the Symonds, on the steamer. Symonds was a poet and literary critic. He stayed for a limited amount of time in Ajaccio, before leaving for Italy, probably deterred by the dreadful weather of April 1868. Symonds' companion in Corsica was William John Courthope (1847-1917), writer and historian of poetry.¹⁰⁹

Ajaccio also mostly avoided the issues resulting from popularity: increased costs, problems associated with overdevelopment and the changing of the atmosphere of a place, 'not for the better'.¹¹⁰ One of the initial attractions of the city was the cheapness of lodging and food. Cannes and Menton had become 'as dear as Nice, which means a little dearer than London or Paris'.¹¹¹ The Two Ladies had heard 'alarming statements' as to the expense of a winter's residence in Nice.¹¹² They were drawn to Ajaccio as a consequence. Ribton was able to find a villa in the city equal to those of Menton, and 'to be let for about half the rent which would be asked for them at the latter place'.¹¹³ It was a similar situation with the hotels. The opening of the Hotel Germania in 1869 was said to have 'solved a problem that one looked in vain to disentangle at Nice and the health stations; elegant and comfortable life at a good price'.¹¹⁴

The Riviera was not only more expensive but the rate of growth made physical changes inevitable. Development was rapid and uncontrolled. In Nice, for example after the annexation by France in 1860, there was a surge of building activity focussed on providing space rather than architectural attraction:

¹⁰⁷ *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 22 June 1866; *Observer*, 7 February and 4 April 1869.

¹⁰⁸ Lear, pp. 42-3.

¹⁰⁹ Beretti (2006), p.33.

¹¹⁰ Walton, p.42.

¹¹¹ Ajaccio', p.505.

¹¹² *A Winter in Corsica*, pp. 1-3.

¹¹³ Ribton, pp.18,69.

¹¹⁴ *Gazette Ajaccienne* quoted by Binet, p.182.

‘too many narrow straight streets [...] continuing relaxation of building height restrictions; insufficient public squares; a diminution of ornamental trees and shrubs and inadequate through routes leading out of the resort’.¹¹⁵ Nice was not alone. Symonds complained that the hotels that had sprung up all over the coast were ‘built for as many consumptive foreigners to live or to die in as can be packed into their formless parallelograms’.¹¹⁶ Development had already, in the view of William Chambers, ruined Menton by 1870 with its coast a ‘tragic witness to the destructive impact of the tourist invasion’.¹¹⁷ Lear, having chosen to build a house in San Remo, in 1871 found his view of the sea and the light for his studio wrecked by the building of a four-storey hotel.¹¹⁸ According to Augustus Hare, the hills around Cannes were ‘covered with hideous villas, built chiefly by Englishmen, whose main object seems to be the effacement of all the national beauties of the place – to sow grass where it will never live, to import from the north shrubs which can never grow, and to cut down all the original woods and flowers’.¹¹⁹ Prosper Mérimée complained that the English had built fifty villas or *châteaux*, ‘each more extraordinary than the next’ and spoke of a street bordered by the most ‘grotesque architectural fantasies that an Englishman could conceive: they have bought all the prettiest places and spoiled them with gothic *châteaux* and baroque cottages’.¹²⁰

Additional houses caused pressure on the sewage systems which made the Riviera towns appear to suffer from the same problems as the industrial towns of England. George Sala described the smells of Nice in the 1860s as ‘manifold, and far from aromatic’.¹²¹ A few years later, according to a letter in *The Times*, there had been no improvement: ‘Nice is an example of how the evils of bad drainage, if not attended, grow. When I first knew Nice, upwards of eight years ago, its odours, though not agreeable, were not particularly noticeable; but when I visited it again last January I found they had become

¹¹⁵ Soane, p.141.

¹¹⁶ Quoted by Ring (2005), p.50.

¹¹⁷ Pemble, p. 169.

¹¹⁸ Vivien Noakes, *Edward Lear, The Life of a Wanderer* (Boston: Houghton, 1969), p. 281.

¹¹⁹ Quoted by Ring (2005), p.50.

¹²⁰ Quoted by Thorold, p. 119.

¹²¹ George Augustus Sala, *A Journey Due South, Travels in Search of Winter Sunshine*, 2nd edn (London: Vizetelly, 1885), p. 80.

almost intolerable.¹²² Increasingly travellers wished to experience the same improved sanitary conditions that they were becoming accustomed to at home. In 1863 the Reverend George highlighted the shocking condition and practices of the European 'cabinet'.¹²³ In Britain, the Sanitary Act of 1866 required all water closets to be connected to urban sewerage systems and by the 1870s it had become a function of the local authorities to provide pure water and effective waste disposal.

Ajaccio was unrecognisable compared to places on the Riviera. The romanticism which rejected industrialisation and set up an idealised view of agricultural societies was thought to be fulfilled by Corsica. The city did experience growth during the Second Empire (1852-70). There was greater activity in the port and better infrastructure, but it remained essentially a pre-industrial society with only two tanning factories and two pasta businesses.¹²⁴ These were situated within the old town which contained the markets, the artisans and merchants quarters, inns, hotels for travellers and small shops, 'mostly of pitiable appearance'.¹²⁵ 'But how rural-now that I have explored most parts of Ajaccio-does this city seem!' wrote Lear and fretted about a time when Corsica might 'become eventually as villa-covered as Mentone or Cannes, Torquay or Norwood'.¹²⁶ Bennet recognised that Corsica was 'new untrodden ground, a country in a state of transition, emerging from the barbarism of the Middle Ages in this the nineteenth century, as the Highlands of Scotland did in the eighteenth'.¹²⁷

What Ajaccio lacked, and this was a significant attraction, were the kinds of amusements, in particular casinos, that turned the Riviera into a 'sunny place for shady people'.¹²⁸ Increasingly individuals travelled for pleasure. The Riviera resorts had responded with a greater number of amusements all of which doctors believed affected the mind as well as the body. The biggest threat was

¹²² Another Wanderer, 'Winter Resorts', *The Times*, 8 June 1868.

¹²³ Buzard, p. 150.

¹²⁴ Pomponi (1992), p.216.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹²⁶ Lear, p, 21.

¹²⁷ Bennet (1870), p.335.

¹²⁸ Somerset Maugham, *Strictly Personal* (New York: Arno Press, 1941), p.156.

the casino. Symonds described it as a 'large house of sin blazing with gas lamps by night, flaming and shining by the shore like pandemonium or the habitation of some romantic witch'.¹²⁹ Bennet refused to recommend invalids to settle in Monaco, and Dr Sparks went further and saw its 'noxious' influence as also affecting Nice, Menton and San Remo both 'in the class of unwelcome visitors which it attracts and in the ruin which it brings on respectable families'.¹³⁰

Conclusion

The establishment of the winter health station in Ajaccio came about when a combination of factors came together in the mid-1860s to give an impetus to development. Global transport networks expanded and the island became easier to get to with faster journeys across the Mediterranean. The developing field of climatotherapy and a growing culture of leisure tourism converged, making the South appealing to both invalids and travellers. The establishment of the English Colony in Ajaccio brought Corsica into the Mediterranean world of the mobile elites. Ajaccio became briefly fashionable although never really 'in fashion'.

By 1868 a 'nascent colony of English people' was established in the city.¹³¹ Leading doctors, like Bennet, had praised the benefits of Ajaccio's climate at a time when a cure for consumption was still years away, and the city seemed like the latest best hope for prolonging life. Writers such as Miss Campbell and Lear provided glowing accounts of the island and its beauties, hoping to attract more visitors. They were helped by the push factor away from the favoured Riviera resorts which were suffering from their popularity with rising costs, overcrowding and the consequences of overdevelopment. The mobile elites began to find the stations filling up with Cook's tourists who changed the nature and tone of sojourner life. It would be misleading to suggest

¹²⁹ Quoted by Maxine Feifer, *Going Places* (London: Macmillan, 1985).

¹³⁰ Quoted by Pemble, p.252.

¹³¹ PP 1872, [C.497]. *Reports Relative to British Consular Establishments*. Twenty-three 'English' are listed for the winter season from a total of fifty-nine foreigners. It was further stated that 'upwards of 200 visit the island annually'.

a large scale exodus from the Riviera, but Ajaccio, by contrast, was seen as a sparsely populated rural idyll with a low cost of living and unvisited by the 'Cockney' hordes.

However, Ajaccio initially lacked basic facilities for foreigners and had little in the way of entertainment. In these circumstances the decision to go to Corsica in the early years of the winter station was a brave one. In 1866 there was optimism: 'Never has Ajaccio been frequented by so many foreigners; we have our English colony which, next year, it is believed will have several families and we can announce an invasion of emigrants from the regions of the north towards the countries of the sun.'¹³² What was required was the development and modernisation of the city to fulfil the expectations of travellers, both invalid and non-invalid. Bennet understood the importance of pioneers of progress and there were a number of British individuals who, enthused by a love of the island, took it upon themselves to turn Ajaccio into the kind of city that would attract and benefit from a greater number of visitors.

¹³² *Journal de la Corse*, 1 May 1866.

Chapter Four

Sojourners: Pioneering 1860-1890

'Many families were attracted there [Ajaccio] last winter [1866-67], but great disappointment endured, malevolent influences and undue pressures gave rise to complaints against the highest authority, and some of the best families left.'¹

Introduction

Consul Smallwood's words had some truth. Enthusiasts like Dr Henry Panmure Ribton had reported that in 1867 the 'work of colonisation had already begun'.² In 1869 it was stated that Ajaccio would soon become an important winter resort.³ This was over optimistic. If Ajaccio was to take its place within the British Mediterranean World, Ribton recognised that there were three conditions needed for the English to come to the city; an English doctor, a clergyman and a Grand Hotel with a French chef and reading room where one could everyday peruse the columns of *The Times*.⁴ Early visitors found a city barely able to respond to their needs and expectations.

This chapter considers how two British pioneers, Major William George Murray (1835-94) and Miss Thomasina Campbell (1804-88), contributed to the development of the city. Both could be seen as 'oddities, slightly exotic' and outsiders and both had a strong attachment to the island.⁵ They experienced challenges common to the British 'pioneers of progress' who carried with them, to an even greater extent than most migrants, their cultural values and expressions of British identity which sometimes helped and sometimes hindered

¹ TNA: FO 27/1774, Consul Smallwood to FO, 30 November 1869.

² Ribton, p.61. Ribton was a Menton colleague of Dr Bennet, and it was probably due to Bennet that Ribton had established himself in Ajaccio by March 1868. J.G Temple recorded his residence in 'Winter Resorts', *The Times*, 8 June 1868.

³ *Standard*, 24 November 1869.

⁴ Laid out in a letter by Ribton and published in *Journal de la Corse*, 15 April 1868.

⁵ Bickers (2010), p.3.

the achievement of their aims in the growing health resorts.⁶ The first part of the chapter examines how the city became better known and was able to capitalise on the reputation of its climate and also its unique asset – Napoleon. Murray made a contribution to the development of tourism in Ajaccio and also agriculture (Chapter Eight). He was a retired Bengal Army officer, and had settled permanently in Corsica by 1873. He lived initially in Ajaccio, then purchased land and built a house on the coast at Portigliolo, some twelve miles south of the city.

The second part of the chapter studies the contribution of Miss Thomasina Campbell. She promoted the island and was a strong influence in developing in Ajaccio the infrastructure necessary to support the mobile elites in their stay of months or weeks in the city. Miss Campbell is often seen as the founder of the winter health station. When she first came to Corsica, probably in the winter of 1867, there were few British visitors, but in her view ‘The beautiful island of Corsica’ was, ‘becoming the fashion’.⁷ She vowed to do all in her power to induce others ‘to visit a country where I experienced so much gratification’.⁸ She shared the belief that the ‘golden shower of economic prosperity’ would result from tourism.⁹ She was a lady of independent means and owned a house in the city where she lived for several months a year over a period of some twenty years.

Putting Ajaccio on the Map

The establishment of the winter station in Ajaccio coincided with the emergence of a thriving market for travel literature. Publications aimed at invalids had an appeal that was wider than fellow sufferers and covered much more than climate.¹⁰ When the third edition of Bennet’s *Winter and Spring on the Shores of the Mediterranean* was reviewed in *The Lancet* in 1865 it was described as ‘a goodly and handsome volume [...] The result is a mass of information of the most valuable kind both to invalids and tourists [...] Bennet’s sketches of

⁶ Bennet (1870), p. 290

⁷ Campbell, p.1.

⁸ Ibid., p,163.

⁹ Ralph Richardson, ‘Corsica, Notes on a Recent Visit’, *Scottish Geographical Magazine* (October 1894), 505-22 (p.519).

¹⁰ Frawley, p.115.

scenery, his description of the population and their employments, are graphic in the extreme'.¹¹ Despite the growing number of medical tracts 'accurate information on the island was difficult to obtain' until the 1860s when an increasing number of non-medical works contributed to making the island better known.¹²

Edward Lear found it difficult to find out about the island before he went. He took with him Valéry's *Voyages en Corse, à L'Île d'Elbe, et en Sardaigne* written in French and published in 1837 which he described as 'a work replete with valuable details'.¹³ Lear gleaned more up-to-date information from his acquaintance with Prosper Mérimée who had visited the island as Inspector of Historic Monuments and who supplied Lear with letters of introduction.¹⁴ Lear also had access to the notes of the Reverend William Hawker (1827-1874) whom he had met in Cannes. Hawker had visited Corsica in 1865, 1866 and again in 1868 and published the accounts of his voyages in *AJ* in 1869.¹⁵ Travellers like Hawker brought back 'Glowing accounts [...] of the magnificence of its Alpine scenery, the beauty of its two principal towns, the resources which it offers to the geologist the sportsman or to the mountain tourist; and above all, of its being perfectly adapted to add one more to the list of winter health stations'.¹⁶ Lear's bibliography gives a good indication of what else was available to the prospective traveller at that time.

Lear's book on Corsica has been given credit for attracting visitors to the island. His work was preceded by Miss Thomasina Campbell's *Southward Ho!*. Miss Campbell had 'roamed the bandit-ridden lonely roads of the interior' in a small carriage accompanied only by her maid and had covered most of the island by the time her book was published in 1868.¹⁷ The book was said to have been 'in great measure the instrument in laying down the foundation of quite a colony of winter residents, mostly from England'.¹⁸ Her book was one of the first devoted to Corsica alone and was one of the first pieces of publicity outside the

¹¹ 'Reviews and Notices of Books', *Lancet*, 14 October 1865.

¹² Campbell, p.1.

¹³ Lear, p. 269.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. viii.

¹⁵ Rev. W.H. Hawker, 'Corsica', *Alpine Journal (AJ)*, 4 (1869), 288-301; 269-82.

¹⁶ Ribton, p.23.

¹⁷ Angus Davidson, *Edward Lear* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1950), p.163.

¹⁸ *Boston Journal*, 24 April 1874.

medical tracts and accounts of bandits or snippets about Napoleon that actively encouraged visitors. With its detailed excursions and information on hotels, *Southward Ho!* was more akin to a guide book including times of the arrival of the mail boats and arrangements for the telegraph. Lear described it as an 'excellent little book [...] with an accuracy derived from personal examination of everything described'.¹⁹

It is difficult to determine how wide a circulation these early books had, and it was the guidebook that became increasingly important as a source of information and as a marker of the status of a destination. It is no coincidence that the date 1868, which is agreed to be the start of the winter station in Ajaccio, coincided with the first Baedeker to include Corsica and with the Murray Handbook that combined Corsica with Sardinia.²⁰ However, it was still limited. Of the fifty-six pages in Murray only twenty-eight are devoted to Corsica. These early guides were influenced by medical knowledge and would invariably include quotations from physicians or descriptions of the therapeutic benefits of the climate. Murray's handbook mentioned Drs Pietra Santa and Bennet but devoted only a page to the suitability of Ajaccio as a winter residence besides making the assertion that Bennet's statements on the town were 'much too favourable'.²¹ Bennet described it as a 'valuable guide' but insisted on the verity of his information.²² Lear referenced the 1868 Murray guide without comment, but Miss Campbell identified things that she said were plainly wrong and criticised the coverage as inadequate.²³

In the 1860s there was a flurry of articles and books about Corsica which suggests that Ajaccio had arrived as a winter destination.²⁴ However, enthusiasm for the country preceded any kind of organisation for tourists that

¹⁹ Lear, p. 270.

²⁰ Baedeker (1868); Murray (1868).

²¹ Murray (1868), p. 13.

²² Bennet (1870), p.337.

²³ Campbell, pp. 3; 5; 79.

²⁴ See *A Winter in Corsica*; Ribton; Murray (1868); Baedeker (1868); Another Wanderer; 'Ajaccio' (1868); James Henry Bennet, 'Corsica', *Gardeners' Chronicle*, 28 June 1868; 'From Ajaccio', *The North Devon Journal*, 8 October 1868; 'Rayleigh dramatic "Thumping Legacy" – farce', *Chelmsford Chronicle*, 11 December 1868; 'Corsica and the Corsicans', *Evening Post*, 17 September 1869; Lear; Hawker; Samuel Cox, *Search for Winter Sunbeams in the Riviera, Corsica, Algiers and Spain* (New York: Appleton, 1870).

could have capitalised on the early visitors and could have made better use of Ajaccio's 'only sight', Napoleon.²⁵ The attraction of Napoleon predated that of the climate. It was English writers who promoted the association of the Emperor with Ajaccio and the other surrounding places associated with him. The artist William Cowen first described and drew some of the sites: the cathedral where he was baptised, the Tour de Capitello just outside Ajaccio, the scene of Napoleon's first military exploit in 1793; the grotto on the Casone overlooking the town where he was supposed to have played as a child; Milelli, the country estate just beyond the city and the house in the city where he was born and raised.²⁶ The house, as the American politician, Samuel Cox pointed out, was 'chief among the souvenirs of the great family'.²⁷ One of the first visitors in 1849 wrote that they 'entered the house with that species of religious veneration, with which one is impressed on the threshold of a temple'.²⁸

'It was the birth there [Ajaccio], on August 15 [1769] of the sixty-ninth year of the last century of the "Man of Destiny" that raised Corsica so high above the level of common events that its geographical position is known to-day to the children even.'²⁹ When the winter health station was beginning, Napoleon was already a literary and romantic phenomenon. Miss Campbell knew that 'Every person coming to Ajaccio will be desirous of seeing the house where Napoleon was born'.³⁰ The association with Napoleon allowed travellers a touch of history and legend that was enhanced by the growing cult of the Emperor which began to be more systematically developed by Napoleon III during the Second Empire (1852-1870).

Visitors to the birthplace made Ajaccio a place of pilgrimage. Ferdinand Gregorovius put it well when he said that 'The memory of Napoleon is indeed the soul of the town'.³¹ Cox, went as far as to say that Ajaccio 'would not be accounted much except for its bay and healthy situation, were it not the

²⁵ Murray (1868), p.21.

²⁶ Cowen.

²⁷ *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, 17 April 1869.

²⁸ 'The Family Mansion of the Bonapartes', *Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance*, 1 January 1849.

²⁹ *Boston Journal*, 15 August 1894.

³⁰ Campbell, p 22.

³¹ Gregorovius, p. 347.

birthplace of the most remarkable man of the past thousand years.’³² To Lear, Napoleon was ‘The most wonderful man of modern times’ and he lost no time in visiting the birthplace on his arrival in Ajaccio.³³ *The Times* declared in 1873 that ‘The spirit of the Great Napoleon is, of course, the *genus loci* of Ajaccio’.³⁴

The image of a fallen hero was particularly attractive to the British. Nicola Watson has demonstrated the ‘newly powerful desire to visit the graves, birthplaces and homes of the dead’.³⁵ Watson’s work is specifically related to literary tourism where writers have usually been more interested in the effect of place upon an individual author’s work, but the reaction to an historical legend was no different.³⁶ In the British press there continued to be a focus, even in provincial newspapers, on anniversaries, elections and special events in Corsica such as the remains of Napoleon’s mother and uncle, Cardinal Fesch, being interred in the new Imperial Chapel in Ajaccio, the erection of the statues of Napoleon and his brothers in the Place Diamant and that of Napoleon III opposite the Bonaparte house.

There was, though, little organised response to benefit from Ajaccio’s unique attraction. Visitors noted that souvenir hunters ‘carried off a considerable quantity of this precious relic [Napoleon’s chair]’.³⁷ It was not until 1877 that the Corsicans set up the first tourist organisation, the *Syndicat d’Initiative* (SI), but even then the city did not begin to promote Napoleon until the early twentieth century (Chapter Nine). This was most likely because of the ambivalence towards the Bonapartes in the city. When Prince Roland Bonaparte visited in 1887 he found the birthplace of the Emperor was leased to an English family.³⁸ ‘C.H.’ visiting Ajaccio in 1898 asserted that Napoleon ‘is almost forgotten in his native land less than a century after his death’.³⁹ Many Corsicans believed that the island was neglected by the ‘greatest and most celebrated of her sons’.⁴⁰ In spite of the reputation of Napoleon, Pascal Paoli was the national hero of

³² *Cincinnati Daily Gazette*, 17 April 1869.

³³ Lear, p. 26.

³⁴ *The Times*, 15 October 1873.

³⁵ Watson, p. 3.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁷ ‘The Family Mansion’, n.p.

³⁸ Binet, p.168.

³⁹ C.H., ‘A Short Trip in Corsica’, *Argosy*, 66 (Jul, 1898), 72-97 (p.78).

⁴⁰ Bowen, p. 558.

Corsica, although the island remained fervently Bonapartist for some time.

Nevertheless, the SI was an important step forward. Major Murray was a founder member. Murray was born in Uttar Pradesh in 1835 when his father was serving in the Indian Army. The family originated from Scotland and feature in *Burke's Landed Gentry*.⁴¹ He joined the Bengal Army in 1852 as a surveyor, achieving the rank of Major in 1875.⁴² In 1860 he married Florence Young, a fellow Indian resident. With the army Murray travelled extensively through India and Afghanistan. He visited some of the most inhospitable places and suffered the consequences. He may have first visited Corsica in 1867 when he is recorded as spending a twenty-month sick leave in Europe.⁴³ He also took a prolonged furlough, again on sick leave in Europe in 1873.⁴⁴ This is when he first appeared in the records as being on the island.⁴⁵

Murray must have made an immediate favourable impression since he was able to buy a property of several hectares and a house at Carusaccia just outside Ajaccio.⁴⁶ The Corsicans had a strong affinity to their soil and Carusaccia was special. It was formerly in the ownership of the first mayor of Ajaccio, Jean-Jérôme Levie, supporter of Napoleon.⁴⁷ During his time at Carusaccia Murray settled into Ajaccio society and became 'a notable personage, familiar to all Ajacciens'.⁴⁸ He made many friends, most notably Pierre Petretto, mayor 1893-6, and another prominent citizen, Dr Frasseto and his son Sylvestre.

It would have been through these friendships that Murray became involved in the SI and other activities to develop the winter station. The SI was set up to 'study the best means to develop the winter health station which has scarcely begun and to enlighten the municipal administration about everything that concerns the station and to give information freely to foreigners before or

⁴¹ Sir Bernard Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Landed Gentry by Sir Bernard Burke*, 6th edn (London: Harrison, 1879), p.1145.

⁴² Lieutenant General H.G. Hart, *The New Annual Army List, Militia List and Indian Civil Service for 1880* (London: Murray, 1880), p.96.

⁴³ BL IOR/L/MIL/10/79.f.70

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* In October 1872 Murray came back from Kashmir with a serious illness and in February 1873 went on leave to Europe for two years.

⁴⁵ *Lancet*, 5 September 1874.

⁴⁶ Lucchini, p.171.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

after their arrival'.⁴⁹ It was a key moment in the development of the winter health station. SIs in other towns, such as Nice, Cannes and Pau had been seen as an impetus for progress.⁵⁰ It is a mark of the esteem in which Murray was held that he was invited to join. The first members were ten of the most important figures in Ajaccio; Murray was the only foreigner.⁵¹ He also helped to direct the Committee of Fêtes, various social circles and other associations. Murray did not stay long at Carusaccia, but he continued to help develop the city and his efforts were 'greatly appreciated'.⁵²

Infrastructure

The SI lasted only a few years, but there were greater difficulties than maximising the interest in Napoleon. In 1877 the city still lacked an Anglican Church, a Grand Hotel and British doctors, and lack of development meant that the city did not have the kind of distractions to be found on the Riviera and elsewhere. Miss Campbell and her friends set out to remedy the deficiencies by injections of capital and a large measure of interference. She was determined to transform Ajaccio into a popular and well-equipped winter health station to rival Nice and Menton.

Thomasina Campbell was born in England but spent much of her life, when not abroad (in Ajaccio or Geneva), in Scotland at Castle Moniak near Inverness. She was a woman of immense curiosity. She inherited a love of archaeology from her mother who excavated sites in Scotland.⁵³ She was an only child, and she probably decided to travel after the death of her mother in 1861. She fell in love with Corsica and spent the winter and spring months there. She collected plants and natural history objects and made numerous drawings of fish that she came across as she explored the island.⁵⁴ Lear liked

⁴⁹ AA: 8M74, Document (1877) from the Mayor setting up *Ajaccio Station d'Hiver Syndicat d'Initiative*.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid. The other members of the SI were: Frasseto and Colonna, retired doctors; Garcain, a pharmacist; Lanzi, the banker; Rocca-Tartarini, book seller and four others. It lasted only a few years and was only revived by Sylvestre Frasseto in the early twentieth century, 'Sylvestre Frasseto (1862-1938)', *Stantari* (August-October 2012), 35-40 (p.36).

⁵² Lucchini, p. 173.

⁵³ Michel Vergé-Franceschi, ed., *Femmes Corse*, (Ajaccio: Piazzola, 2014). p. 174.

⁵⁴ Lear, p.23.

her 'activity of mind' and her 'untiring zeal' which he believed would bring about great changes in Ajaccio.⁵⁵

Many British writers credit Miss Campbell with using her 'considerable influence to found in Corsica an English colony'.⁵⁶ However before her arrival the city, although lacking facilities for sojourners, had undergone significant development. There was a new port, new roads, a town hall and Préfecture and a number of hotels on the periphery of the old town. The Palais Fesch which became a museum and art gallery was built in 1839. 'Cottages' were being built especially for foreigners on the outskirts of the old city. However the cours Napoleon, the main street, had an 'appearance of meanness and dirt', and the rue Fesch contained a 'succession of miserable looking houses, every storey being the dwelling place of squalid, dirty people'.⁵⁷ There was also an 'aspect of untidiness and dirt almost everywhere [...] and the smells in many parts of the town were very offensive at times'.⁵⁸ In addition, there was 'a total want of accommodation' that rendered Ajaccio 'unfit as a residence for strangers, a few cottages are now being built but [...] a good hotel is the first requisite and this does not exist'.⁵⁹ In 1870 Bennet advised 'no one to winter there [Ajaccio] until hotels have been established, and more choice fare is attainable'.⁶⁰

The 'cottages' (which became known later as 'Dr Ribton's cottages') were the creation of Count Félix Baciocchi (1803-1866), Chamberlain to Napoleon III, and one of Ajaccio's most prominent citizens. In 1861 the municipal council decided to extend the cours Grandval to the west of the old city. The cottages were built in this area which became known as the Quartier des Étrangers.⁶¹ Sources of water were captured from 1867 and fountains were built in the new quarter.⁶² To many, Baciocchi is considered the real instigator of the winter resort. It was a small beginning that was checked by his untimely death in

⁵⁵ Lear, pp.150: 23.

⁵⁶ For example, see Barry, p.59.

⁵⁷ *A Winter in Corsica*, p. 104.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports Received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Consuls between 1 July 1863 and 30 June 1864.*

⁶⁰ Bennet (1870), p.290.

⁶¹ Lucchini, p.181.

⁶² Pomponi (1992), p.236.

1866.⁶³ Miss Campbell tried to build on Baciocchi's dream with a firm vision of how the undeveloped spaces in Ajaccio could be brought into more dynamic use, changing wilderness into modern hotels and gardens.

Improving the existing hotels was Miss Campbell's first goal. Ribton's experience of the Hotel de France made him understand why his friends who had stayed there during the preceding winter had been deeply disappointed and warned others not to follow in their footsteps. He devoted three pages to the shortcomings of this hotel and concluded that Ajaccio was 'quite unprovided with the accommodation to which English visitors were accustomed on the mainland'.⁶⁴ 'Truly', he said, 'to pass from one of the hotels of Nice or Mentone to one in Ajaccio as I found them would be to exchange comfort for misery.'⁶⁵ Miss Campbell was credited with turning the establishment into a 'hotel of the first order'.⁶⁶ However, this judgement was the view of Dr Paul Picard, an admirer of Miss Campbell; John Barry gave a different picture when he stayed in the Hotel de France in the 1880s. He described it as 'dark, draughty, dirty, and unsavoury [...] stone pavements to every passage, tiled floors to every apartment, a scant allowance of carpets in the bedroom, and a general air like that of a vault'.⁶⁷

Notwithstanding the success or otherwise in improving the old hotels, Miss Campbell campaigned for luxury hotels in the Quartier des Étrangers to be built to the required standards of foreign winter sojourners. The first new hotel in the city, the Germania, was established on the extension to the cours Grandval in 1869. It was a quality hotel, but Miss Campbell regularly intervened and harried the mayor as to progress for a 'Grand Hotel' for the city.⁶⁸ In her view this great prize was best situated on the flat land at the top of the cours Grandval in an area known as the Casone, near the Grotte Napoleon where Napoleon was supposed to have played as a boy. In May 1875 she proposed to the municipal council the plans of a Mr Barber who had the intention of

⁶³ The obituary of Count Baciocchi was published in several British newspapers.

⁶⁴ Ribton, p.14.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p.27.

⁶⁶ Picard (1872), p.50.

⁶⁷ Barry, p.54.

⁶⁸ Binet, p.150

building a hotel there.⁶⁹ She wrote again to the mayor in October 1876 to say that her architect, Mr Jones, wished to acquire land there, and she harangued the council again a month later.⁷⁰ In 1877 the hotel was still not built and she wrote once more to the mayor saying that things took so long in Ajaccio that investors go away believing that the inhabitants are not interested in the prosperity of their town or their country. She invited the Council to see how the success of the Riviera had been linked to the arrival of foreigners and it could be the same for Ajaccio.⁷¹

Despite frustration as to lack of progress, Miss Campbell persisted. In the early 1880s she appeared to be the prime mover in an elaborate scheme for hotels, villas, gardens, bath houses in the city and villas in the mountains for the summer residences of invalids who could avoid the tiring journey home. By this date there was a severe shortage of decent accommodation for the growing number of sojourners. This was partly because from 1880 Corsica endured threats from Italy aimed at regaining its former possession. A consequence of this was to increase the size of the garrison as senior naval officers and their families took most of the better sort of dwellings.⁷² Miss Campbell's prospectus was eagerly anticipated, but the scheme went nowhere. Bernard Bradshaw (-1906), Miss Campbell's friend and business partner, submitted the next plans through the *Ajaccien Land and Hotel Company* which was incorporated in 1887. This also included plans for the development of the Casone area, but this project, too, was abandoned.⁷³

Miss Campbell and her partners had limited success and continual challenge. Land on the cours Grandval was sold to her in 1883 intended for the building of a hotel. Although it was not developed in her lifetime, it became the luxury Crynos Palace. In 1884 another plan was brought forward for an ice rink and gymnasium 'aimed at bringing Ajaccio up to the standards found at Nice,

⁶⁹ Ibid. 'Barber' is most likely a misreading of Bradshaw.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² PP 1897 [C 8277] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

⁷³ TNA: Board of Trade (BT): BT 31/3871/23952, Company No: 23952: *Ajaccien Land and Hotel Company Ltd*. Its demise was put down to the death of Miss Campbell: PP 1888 [C.5252] *Reports from H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad on Trade and Finance*.

Trouville and Brighton' but this was aborted a year later.⁷⁴ Then in July 1886 Bradshaw made another inquiry to the mayor about the Casone. His project was initially greeted with enthusiasm, and the sale was agreed for the sum of 8,000 francs with certain conditions.⁷⁵ The conditions were that if he left, the land would return to the town and he would lose all he had invested. Bradshaw felt that this was too onerous and, after failed negotiations, he demanded the termination of the contract.⁷⁶ In 1888 Miss Campbell went to Geneva to negotiate a contract for yet another attempt to develop the Casone.⁷⁷ She died suddenly probably frustrated at the lack of progress and wishing she had achieved more.

Miss Campbell certainly helped create better accommodation for visitors, but she was not able to solve the problem of the absence of British doctors. The presence of a doctor, especially one with a reputation for being knowledgeable about consumption and its treatment, was influential in the development of a resort. Dr Alexander Taylor had launched the climatic station at Pau in 1843, the date of the appearance of his work in French entitled *De l'Influence Curative du Climate de Pau*.⁷⁸ For several decades Pau was an 'English town'.⁷⁹ Likewise, it was said that Menton owed 'its present prosperity, and its very being as a health resort to Dr James Henry Bennet'.⁸⁰ Ajaccio had won recognition from a number of doctors for the curative virtues of its climate (Chapter Three), but Bennet already had his patients in Menton in the winter, and he returned to his Grosvenor Street practice in the summer. In 1863 Bennet had written that there would be two or three English doctors at Ajaccio that year, but there is no evidence that this materialised.⁸¹ Ribton could potentially have been to Ajaccio what his colleague Bennet was to Menton. However, he appears to have become disenchanted with Corsica after contracting malaria and he remained in the country only until 1871.⁸² In 1873 it was said that 'an English physician of

⁷⁴ Binet, p.290.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p.152.

⁷⁶ Binet, p.152.

⁷⁷ Lucchini, p.123.

⁷⁸ Alexander Taylor, *Climates for Invalids: Or, a Comparative Enquiry as to the Preventive and Curative Influence of the Climate of Pau* (London: Churchill, 1866).

⁷⁹ Boyer (2008), p.110.

⁸⁰ *BMJ*, 9 February 1884.

⁸¹ *Journal de la Corse*, 24 November 1863.

⁸² TNA: FO 27/1895, Consul Smallwood to FO, 4 May 1871.

high repute, long established at Cannes, has taken up his winter quarters at Ajaccio, with the intention of practising there for the future during the winter and spring months'.⁸³ However, there is no record of this doctor or any other until 1888 when two were based at the Continental Hotel.⁸⁴ Without British medical provision the sickest did not come.

The greatest milestone in the development of the resort was the provision of a Protestant church. The need for a church could be taken that a community was of sufficient size to support one, but it was also necessary to speculate on the future since absence of such a facility was a deterrent. In 1875 the lack of a protestant church in Ajaccio was held to be responsible for an absence of visitors.⁸⁵ A church, though, was not needed to practice religion. The first record of any officiating clergyman at Ajaccio was the Reverend William Cleeve (1802-1871).⁸⁶ At the time of his death in 1871 services were held in the Hotel de France. Miss Campbell's generosity and persistence saw the acquisition of land and the overcoming of complex legal proceedings. It took six years from 1868 to obtain the land, and it was another four years before the church of the Holy Trinity, built at her expense on the cours Grandval in the centre of the area known as the Quartier des Étrangers, was completed.

Such an evolution of development was not unusual. In Algiers, for example, by 1878 there was a group of winter visitors known as the 'English Colony', but there had been a chaplain in the city since 1844 and in 1864 the British worshipped in a vaulted warehouse, but it was noisy and hot.⁸⁷ The chaplain at that time, the Reverend Rogers, pushed hard for a church but his wishes were not granted until the arrival of Consul Robert Lambert Playfair (1828-1899) who collected £300 from the British residents, and in 1868-69 he obtained funds and land and the Anglican Church of the Holy Trinity opened in 1871.⁸⁸ By this time there were 200 residents in the city that provided a critical

⁸³ Correspondence, *The Times*, 18 November 1873.

⁸⁴ Eustace A. Reynolds-Ball, *Mediterranean Winter Resorts: A Complete and Practical Handbook to the Principal Health and Leisure Resorts of the Mediterranean with Special Articles on the Principal Invalid Stations by Resident English Physicians* (London: Upcott Gill, 1888), p.6.

⁸⁵ *Gazette Ajaccienne*, 15 May 1875.

⁸⁶ TNA: FO 27/1960, Consul Smallwood to FO, 7 February 1872.

⁸⁷ Redouane, pp.16-19.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p.19.

mass and demonstrable need. Compared to Miss Campbell's church in Ajaccio, the project in Algiers, took only three years to come to fruition.

The church in Ajaccio was Miss Campbell's greatest legacy. Her presence also survives in the name of the street 'rue Miss Campbell' which lies opposite the church and the survival of her house, the Villa Paons, (later Tour d'Albion), situated just off the cours Grandval. This name lives on in the Hotel d'Albion which borders the cours Grandval on land that would originally have been part of Miss Campbell's property. For a small city her imprint was significant. It is unsurprising that legends grew up which exaggerated her involvement. Matisse, in 1898, referred to the 'foreign quarter established by Miss Campbell [...] who had opened up the town in the 1870s', and that 'she was called "our very own Lord Brougham", the illustrious founder of the winter health station at Cannes'.⁸⁹ Such 'foundation' myths were commonly associated with the image of a new resort which 'describes the magical metamorphosis of a once deserted or unappreciated site into a thriving town, realised by far sighted individuals, a hero-founder'.⁹⁰ Many of the Indian hill stations also claimed a founding father, 'a prominent individual whose foresight and initiative were credited with setting the community on a stable footing'.⁹¹

Other folklore grew up around her. In 1874 it was said that she was the owner of Milelli (the Bonaparte summer home just outside the city).⁹² There is no evidence of this, but she did claim for her church pulpit the fallen oak from Milelli that was supposedly Napoleon's favourite studying place. In 1882 she was regarded as having 'imported most of those ideas which very rapidly modernise the place: an English church, theatre, baccarat clubs, and a museum and private gallery'.⁹³ Only the church was correct. There had been a theatre since 1830, the museum and gallery (Palais Fesch) since 1837 and the small Napoleonic museum in the Hotel de Ville since 1866.⁹⁴ By 1890 her achievements had become even more exaggerated. In making Ajaccio more

⁸⁹ Hilary Spurling, *The Unknown Matisse* (London: Penguin, 1998), pp. 159-61; Eddie Playfair, 'Matisse in Corsica', <https://eddieplayfair.com/2017/07/16matisse-in-corsica/> (last accessed 29 November 2017).

⁹⁰ Alice Garner, *A Shifting Shore* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2005), p.119.

⁹¹ Kennedy, p.106.

⁹² *Boston Journal*, 5 May 1874.

⁹³ 'Scribbles in Corsica', *European Topography* (London: Wyman, 1882), pp.2-43 (p.32).

⁹⁴ Pomponi (1992), p.225.

attractive to her countrymen she had apparently 'made the place habitable by building a range of charming houses in a boulevard [...] she has established an English church and three or four good hotels, provided a constant supply of excellent water, secured a perfect system of drainage, and, as a further, sanitary precaution, planted the eucalyptus abundantly'.⁹⁵

Undeniably Miss Campbell provided an impetus for progress, and the establishment of the winter health station was credited with being the driver for 'considerable embellishment of the town'.⁹⁶ However, the Countess de la Warr visiting in 1880 fancied that the city was 'quite unchanged since the days of Napoleon and very few new houses seem to be built'.⁹⁷ In 1882 Barry noted that the *cours Grandval* was still incomplete.⁹⁸ It may not have been completed but there had been growth. In 1861 there were eleven houses at the lower end of the street; in 1872 there were twenty-one, twenty-five in 1876 and twenty-eight in 1881.⁹⁹ Eventually the extension of the *cours Grandval* and the development of the *Quartier des Étrangers* doubled the surface area of the city.¹⁰⁰ But, there were also a catalogue of failures and what success Miss Campbell had was not without difficulty.

There were a number of reasons for this. Jealousy was one but, far more likely, were the problems associated with her personality and gender. A writer to *Blackwood's Magazine* remarked that 'in almost every country I had visited, I had been preceded by some unprotected female tourist, who had inspired terror and dismay by the sternness of her aspect, her thirst for information, and her invincible determination to engage in impracticable or dangerous enterprises'.¹⁰¹ The writer mocks these women, who sound very much like Miss Campbell, and hinted at his disapproval. This was unsurprising for a time when the world of business and commerce was overwhelmingly male

⁹⁵ Frank Barrett, 'Corsica' in *The Picturesque Mediterranean*, 1 (London: [n.pub], 1889-91), pp.69-87 (p.83).

⁹⁶ Bosc, Edouard, *Guide de l'Étranger et du Touriste à Ajaccio* (Ajaccio: Pompeiani, 1894) quoted by Binet, p.104.

⁹⁷ Countess de la Warr, *An Eastern Cruise in the Edeline* (London: Blackwood, 1883), p.118.

⁹⁸ Barry, p.80.

⁹⁹ AA: 6M259; 281; 293; 306, Population Census for 1861, 1872, 1876 and 1881.

¹⁰⁰ Lucchini, p.71.

¹⁰¹ 'Knight-Errantry in the Nineteenth Century', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 97, 592 (February 1865), 176-91 (p.176).

despite the British Empire having given women opportunities that they could not have at home.¹⁰² Miss Campbell was indomitable in her desire to improve Ajaccio. Her hunger to make improvements created conflict in which 'the ideas of superiority and inferiority are continuously played out' and which ultimately formed obstacles to change.¹⁰³

Women had particular difficulty in effecting change in Corsica. It is unlikely that the Corsicans would have encountered anything like Miss Campbell. There had been few English women visitors, and she was of formidable appearance. She described herself as 'stout' and Lear said she was a 'vast and manlike maiden who roars and raves about Corsica'.¹⁰⁴ With her public and forthright approach and willingness to harangue prominent Corsican citizens and the municipal Council, she was a complete contrast to Corsican women who did not go out alone.¹⁰⁵ In 1893 Barry gave a picture of the activities of the women in Ajaccio which had little changed over the years:

The female world is a world apart. Whilst the Ajaccio men are mostly agnostics, the ladies are mostly religious. Whilst the men live mostly in public, the ladies live chiefly in private and make their appearance on the Square, or in the streets, for a brief space only in the ordinary day [...] when the ladies do come abroad, they are rarely to be seen in the company of gentlemen. Should a lady often be seen with men, she will, as is constantly happening to English women, sooner or later lose her character.¹⁰⁶

Barry observed, in a veiled reference to Miss Campbell, that 'ladies newly arrived from the Continent have from time to time made efforts at reforming a society that is in a state of stagnation but failed to make permanent success. Though inspired only with motives of benevolence, they have found themselves the causes of so much offence that they have been obliged to yield at last to the current'.¹⁰⁷ Miss Campbell was this kind of lady. There was no indication that she was ever prepared to yield, but she certainly caused offence. She belonged to 'that class of slightly eccentric middle-aged Englishwomen of

¹⁰² Gascoigne, p.579.

¹⁰³ Nigel Morgan and Annette Pritchard, *Tourism Promotion and Power* (Chichester: Wiley, 1998), p.15.

¹⁰⁴ Campbell, p.99; Davidson, p.163.

¹⁰⁵ Barry, p.166.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.157-58

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

independent means of which a representative is to be found in all the obscurer Mediterranean ports', but who were not always popular.¹⁰⁸ Criticism reached its height in 1885 when the newspaper, *Eclairneur*, told its readers that 'it is necessary to remove the belief of Miss Campbell that all land bathed by the ocean should become English' and addressed Miss Campbell, herself: 'Mademoiselle, you are not at home here'.¹⁰⁹ It was rumoured that she was the mistress of Napoleon III, that Bradshaw was her nephew and that she was first cousin to Her Majesty the Queen of England who had promised to visit her at Ajaccio.¹¹⁰

The rumours were untrue but Miss Campbell's attitude brought her into difficulties with the British consul and other British residents from the time she arrived. This made it even more difficult for her to effect change. The first trouble came in 1869 when the vice-Consul in Ajaccio, the Corsican Joseph Susini, resigned on account of 'the treatment he has received from British residents [led by Miss Campbell]'.¹¹¹ In 1873 he said that she had written

a thousand lies, calumnies and false reports against me, Consul Smallwood, M. Vauquelin and other respectable English families. It is because of this that several honest families hesitate to come to Corsica having received letters that attest that Miss Campbell is a pest and the disgrace of Ajaccio and all the English who come are intimidated by her and tell us of the loss of esteem and reputation of Corsica.¹¹²

He related that "La Campbell" was in disagreement with a number of British families and accused her of keeping for herself money that had been raised for the church. There is nothing in the Foreign Office records that support these accusations. Susini's evidence needs to be given some weight but cannot be relied upon as the whole truth. She clearly caused some difficulties for him, but he also felt betrayed by the Foreign Office when they turned down his request for a small salary increase after twenty-four years' service, and overlooked him for the post of Consul.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Davidson, p.163.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted by Lucchini, p.49.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ TNA: FO 27/1774, Consul Smallwood to FO, 30 November 1869.

¹¹² TNA: FO 27/1960, Consul Smallwood to FO, 7 February 1872.

¹¹³ Ibid.

The Corsican vice-Consul in Ajaccio was replaced by an Englishman, but Miss Campbell's difficulties continued.¹¹⁴ In a series of reports between February and April 1872 Consul Shortt related that Miss Campbell's 'antecedents have stirred many bitter animosities and complaints'.¹¹⁵ Her latest misdemeanour was to 'assail the character of the English wife of the Paymaster General, M. Conti, who was intent upon legal proceedings against her'; Miss Campbell was persuaded to apologise.¹¹⁶ Shortt also complained about her conduct over the church: 'Four years since she advertised the erection of a Protestant temple dragging the Préfet and the mayor to a selected plot which she usurped for the building, for its consecration by their presence to the indignation of the parishioners and a population abhorring Protestants. But the cornerstone is not yet laid, and she had been dispossessed of the ground.'¹¹⁷ Shortt did not appear to understand the complexities of the purchase. Archival evidence shows that Miss Campbell followed the tortuous legal process to acquire and assure ownership of the land.¹¹⁸ There is other evidence of Miss Campbell's attitude to the church which did suggest that she had an exaggerated sense of proprietorship. In a letter to the Bishop in 1879 she referred to it as 'my church', and she was said to rule her chaplain 'with utmost feudal tyranny'.¹¹⁹ 'If the sermon was too long, a large watch was drawn out of her pocket and held over her head until a conclusion was put to the tiresome discourse, to the amusement of the congregation and the discomfort of the divine London World.'¹²⁰

There was another complaint about her treatment of the Reverend and Mrs Cleeve. According to Consul Shortt, the Cleeves resided in the parsonage which Miss Campbell 'asserts falsely to have built herself and is a wretched abode where the late Reverend Cleeve and his wife, too old to remove, died in

¹¹⁴ Consul Shortt replaced Smallwood as Consul in Bastia: *The Times*, 14 August 1872.

¹¹⁵ TNA: FO 27/1960, Consul Shortt to Foreign Office, 19 March 1872.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ LMA: CLC/318/DGED/006/MS20983/001: Diocese in Europe/Chaplaincy/Correspondence between the offices and registries of the Diocese in Europe, Diocese of Gibraltar and Jurisdiction of North and Central Europe and individual chaplaincies/Ajaccio, Corsica, France (English Church, Ajaccio).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ 'Ajaccio as a Rival of Nice', *San Francisco Daily Evening Bulletin*, 11 February 1882.

filth and misery'.¹²¹ Shortt attempted to help the Cleeves but they were 'too much afraid of Miss Campbell to have much to do with us or anyone else'.¹²² Consul Smallwood added to the charges against Miss Campbell by accusing her of attempting to remove the seals of the Cleeves' will before the legatee was known which awakened his suspicion as he knew of 'an interested motive in a long lease and a mortgage in which the late Mr Cleeve was concerned'.¹²³ Shortt went as far as to compare her to 'the historical fact of the Corsican King Theodore who died in a London jail' and advised the Foreign Office 'not to be surprised that Queen Thomasina as she is styled by her partisans, should be fooled by Corsicans' greed for English gold'.¹²⁴ In 1882 it was said that 'She rejoices in the name of the "Queen of Corsica", and extracts homage from all travellers who come across her path, even from so distinguished a visitor as His Royal Highness Prince Leopold'.¹²⁵ This may not have been a derogatory term. The Scottish Lady Arthur in early twentieth century Algiers was also referred to as '*la reine de la colonie britannique*'.¹²⁶ Lady Arthur hosted King Edward VII and Princess Alexandra on their visit in 1905 and the Princess Battenberg in 1909.¹²⁷ In recognition of her contribution to Algiers a new suburb was named after her.¹²⁸

Miss Campbell had her defenders, and her achievements gained her supporters. Dr Picard, resident in Ajaccio, was an early admirer: 'Miss Campbell has created an English colony in Ajaccio [...] She has helped new arrivals avoid the fuss and irritations inherent in the start of a station. She introduces them into Ajaccio society and calls on all who seek health and pleasure to come to Corsica. She has contributed to improving the service and comforts of the hotels.'¹²⁹ Her actions were supported by the Foreign Office which noted that she was 'considered the chief person in the place and is

¹²¹ Both died at Ajaccio in 1871 within days of each other: TNA: FO 27/1960, Consul Shortt to FO, 19 March 1872.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid. Theodore was in a debtors' prison for some time, but he did not die in jail.

¹²⁵ 'Ajaccio as a Rival of Nice'.

¹²⁶ Redouane, p.27.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Picard (1872), p.50.

generally called upon as such by all English yachtsmen and tourists'.¹³⁰ Smallwood was judged 'an extremely injudicious consul' and Lord Granville saw 'nothing in the facts of the case to warrant the very serious and disgusting charge made against Miss Campbell'; Smallwood was sent to the Azores.¹³¹ In 1887 the journal *Avenir* paid homage to 'the woman of heart and intelligence who was committed to the creation of the winter health station'.¹³² Even in the United States she was known as the 'Famed benefactress and protectress of Corsica'.¹³³ The populace called her 'Aunt Thomasina'.¹³⁴

Miss Campbell's attitude, though, also caused conflict with some of the Corsicans. This was potentially more damaging for the future of the city. She was clear about what she thought of the lack of progress: 'As with the Moor's Head, the bandage must still cover the eyes of many of the proprietors in this neglected country, or they would surely be roused to a knowledge of all they are losing by their lethargy'.¹³⁵ However, she misjudged the most important obstruction. The issue was not idleness or lethargy but the deep attachment of the Corsicans to their roots, family and native land. The French legal system, which shared property between all children, resulted in fragmentation and the division of land into small plots. This was the reason for the late start to the winter station when it took the municipal council considerable time to acquire ownership of land on the cours Grandval.¹³⁶ Frustrations happened and difficulties occurred when developers came up against this love for the native soil, 'the poor patch of ground bequeathed to him and descending from generation to generation' that was 'intense and all absorbing. The sale of land was extremely rare and regarded with intense disfavour'.¹³⁷

The opposition to land sales was not only to the British and it was long

¹³⁰ TNA: FO 27/1960, File note of Lord Glanville, 26 March 1872.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² *Avenir*, 16 January 1887.

¹³³ 'Notes on Corsica – No.3', *Boston Evening Journal*, 5 May. 1874.

¹³⁴ Lucchini, p.49.

¹³⁵ Campbell, p.16. Paoli made the *testa mora* the flag and arms of independent Corsica and raised the blindfold that covered the eyes as a symbol of the awakening of the Corsican people. It is still regarded as highly symbolic of the Corsican nation.

¹³⁶ *Journal de la Corse*, 4 February 1862.

¹³⁷ Isac Chiva, 'Social Organisation, Tradition, Economy and Customary Law in Corsica: Outline of a Plan of Analysis' in *Mediterranean Countrymen: Essays in the Social Anthropology of the Mediterranean*, ed. by Julian Pitt Rivers, trans. by G.E. Williams, *Études 1 Recherches Méditerranéennes* (Chicago: Mouton, 1963), pp.98-112 (p.106).

lasting. However, land was sold to the German, Gerhard Dietz, to build the Hotel Germania.¹³⁸ It is possible that attitudes changed or were hardened by the Franco-Prussian War. Dietz was forced to change the name of the Germania to the Hotel Continental. It was only a couple of years after the war that Miss Campbell's admirer, Picard, offered to construct a Grand Hotel if he could be given part of the land on the Casone. He was refused. Picard was a continental Frenchman and spoke fluent English and German. According to an unpublished manuscript of the prominent Ajaccien citizen and author, Louis Campi, Picard 'was motivated by gain and alienated the Ajaccien elite and left Ajaccio'.¹³⁹ In August 1912 it was the turn of the *Compagnie des Stations Hivernales Corse* to try to obtain from the council, the concession for the construction of a casino, a Palace Hotel and a few villas on the large tract of land adjoining the Quartier des Étrangers; this ambitious project, as others before, went nowhere.¹⁴⁰

Miss Campbell's friends, business partners and successors, Bradshaw and William Strasser-Ensté (1851-1928) came in for particular approbation. Bradshaw had arrived in Ajaccio towards the end of the 1870s and Strasser-Ensté in 1882. The Corsicans believed all three to be sojourners and not settlers like Murray. This, and the Corsican possessiveness over their land, caused major difficulties. Bradshaw became more active in the city in the 1880s when he bought Carusaccia, but it was his proposed purchase of the land on the Casone that triggered most animosity.¹⁴¹ The Casone was always a site of contention. The proposed sale to Bradshaw was deplored: 'Both from the point of view patriotic and the point of view of local interest, it is a bad affair.'¹⁴² It was acquisition of Carusaccia that triggered discontent against Strasser-Ensté. He had probably bought, or was gifted, the estate by Bradshaw on his marriage in 1892 to the Englishwoman, Constance Eveline Homfray.¹⁴³ However there was a dispute about the legality which came to tribunal when the vitriol against him increased. It was a marked contrast to the earlier disposal to Murray.

A clue to the animosity lay in the accusation by the Corsicans that

¹³⁸ Lucchini, p.1.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.41.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p.64.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p.50.

¹⁴² Quoted from *Eclaireur* by Lucchini, pp.51-52.

¹⁴³ *Morning Post*, 8 October 1892.

Bradshaw and Strasser-Ensté were homosexuals. Bradshaw was accused of 'clinking his glass with the workers in order that they pardon his looks at the Martinique foreman' at the hot air balloon factory at Capazza.¹⁴⁴ After Miss Campbell's death, the Strasser-Enstés moved into the Tour Albion with Bradshaw. This was played out at the tribunal: 'You are living with an old Englishman, M. Bradshaw, who is neither your parent nor your compatriot [...] a communal life under the same roof and for all, you were the same person [...] we cannot, in order to please, Strasser-Ensté adopt the customs of Oscar Wilde [...] These habits of the ancient Athenians are not for us.'¹⁴⁵

Strasser-Ensté was also disliked because he was thought to be German: 'And you, who are you? German? You are naturalised French, and you are a Jew; Catholic, Protestant? You were lastly Catholic and you have become Protestant so that you can go to the Anglican Church.'¹⁴⁶ Unsurprisingly Strasser-Ensté later had problems with the building of the Crynos Palace hotel. Bradshaw had inherited the land for the Crynos Palace on the death of Miss Campbell and ceded the asset to Strasser-Ensté who built and opened the hotel in 1896. His managers had daily battles against 'those who through envy run them down'.¹⁴⁷ It clearly became too difficult, for in 1897 the hotel was in the ownership of the German, Emil Exner.¹⁴⁸

There were other issues that went beyond the ability of the British pioneers to manage and that limited their success. Ajaccio was unfortunate in trying to establish a winter health station at a time when the political situation in Europe was unstable and the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 made French territory the object of hostilities. While the war did not physically find its way into Corsica the events were not conducive to developing tourism. Bennet declared 'The war of 1870 was a disaster for Corsica and stopped her commercial expansion.'¹⁴⁹ The young health station was particularly impacted by the withdrawal of the Germans. The competition made the most of the French difficulties and 'used the opportunity of a safe asylum to further develop and

¹⁴⁴ Lucchini, p.50.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ AA: IM127, October 1909.

¹⁴⁸ *Cook's Tourists' Handbook: Egypt the Nile and Desert* (London: Thomas Cook, 1897).

¹⁴⁹ Lucchini, p.182.

promote the health resorts of San Remo, Bordighera and Nervi', and Madeira, which had fallen out of fashion, 'also profited from a renewed influx of winter visitors'.¹⁵⁰

The war was followed by unrest in Corsica in 1871. News of the Third Republic (1870-1914) was a blow to Bonapartist Ajaccio. The majority of councillors refused to collaborate with the new government and the theatre was closed as a sign of mourning.¹⁵¹ The new Préfet was greeted with 'strong marks of disapprobation' including the population throwing the arms of the mobilised National Guard into the sea with shouts of 'Vive L'Empereur, Vice L'Imperatrice'.¹⁵² It is not surprising that in the years following politics played its part in delaying progress in the winter station. Campi, who criticised Picard, was the brother-in-law of Emmanuel Arène, Republican politician and *Eclaireur*, which caused Miss Campbell so many difficulties, was a Republican newspaper.

Conclusion

British pioneers were a key element in the development of Ajaccio. The contributions of Murray and Miss Campbell made a lasting mark on the island. They encountered political, social and economic challenges in their drive to effect change. Success was also dependent upon the readiness of the host community to work with incomers. Murray seemed to have fitted easily into Corsican society, was looked upon fondly and made strong friendships. The attitude to Miss Campbell was ambiguous. She exhibited more of the characteristics seen as typical in settlers and colonists - a strong sense of superiority, enhanced by contact both with local communities and migrants from elsewhere, and a moral mission to spread civilising values.¹⁵³ She split opinion which led to a number of confrontations with both the Corsican and the British communities, and her association with Bradshaw and Strasser-Ensté left a question mark against her reputation.

Miss Campbell loved Corsica, ardently promoted the island and carried

¹⁵⁰ 'Corsica as a Health-Resort'.

¹⁵¹ Pomponi (1992), p.277.

¹⁵² TNA: FO 27/1895, Consul Smallwood to FO, 25 January 1871.

¹⁵³ Magee and Thompson, pp.80-106, illustrate this by reference to the British in Latin America.

on developing the infrastructure necessary for a health station that had been started by the Corsican, Count Baciocchi. She had the determination and the will to overcome the difficulties. She drove improvement in the existing hotels and the establishment of new ones, but her greatest success was the establishment of the Protestant Church. Without Miss Campbell Ajaccio was unlikely to have had this critical facility which contributed to the growing English winter sojourner colony in the city. Ajaccio was also fortunate in being the birthplace of Napoleon which attracted numbers of visitors. It is curious, though, that his role as a tourism icon, the Corsican part of his life and his impact on the island has been little discussed.

However, Miss Campbell's Ajaccio was only a partial success story. The city had some of the appurtenances enjoyed in similar longer-established places in the British Mediterranean world, but there was no 'golden shower' of tourism. At the time of her death in 1888, despite her efforts, there was no Grand Hotel in the city and nowhere near the facilities available to those wintering on the Riviera. Other schemes, particularly the prize of developing on the Casone, came to very little. Part of the difficulty lay in the character of Miss Campbell. She was clearly a memorable woman and legends grew up about her achievements. She wanted Corsica to progress, but rather than work with the Corsicans, she harangued them. She was an example of the English who, as identified by Matthew Arnold, 'had the militant Saxon desire to improve everything but themselves off the face of the earth'.¹⁵⁴ In trying to mould the city into her view of a successful health station Miss Campbell was forceful and had the tenacity, although not always the goodwill, to make change happen. She had to take on not only the male British establishment but also the Corsican male-dominated culture.

The major problem that Miss Campbell encountered, which was also met with by other foreigners was the clash of cultures resulting from misunderstanding the Corsican attitude to land ownership. The Corsicans had so strong an attachment to their soil that it circumscribed attempts to improve the economy. Proposed purchases of land strengthened the nascent

¹⁵⁴ Quoted in Young (2008), p.174.

nationalism that was beginning to take hold from the end of the nineteenth century. Although this should not have too strong an emphasis, the Corsicans had always had a sense of identity 'where through every change of fickle fortune, the fearless and hardy mountain folk remained free and sheltered in their strongholds and transmitted their characteristics to the race which peoples Corsica today. This culture was never forgotten in the years of invasion and colonisation'.¹⁵⁵ There had been struggles over French rule since 1768 and disputes over land tenure reinforced the beliefs of those who wished to avoid any form of foreign influence. Such wrangles slowed the speed of progress. The hopes and desires of Miss Campbell and the enthusiasm of other individuals were insufficient, and by some they were reviled.

In considering the negative comments, it is impossible to discount the jealousy and disdain Miss Campbell may have ignited due to her wealth and high profile, unexpected of a woman. She was said to be known to 'every Englishman who sets foot in Ajaccio'.¹⁵⁶ She was the victim of local politics. *Eclairneur* in discrediting her also attacked the Bonaparte regime with whom she was associated. This is not to say that she did not commit the misdemeanours that she was accused of. She was clearly autocratic in her manner, and her passion for Corsica and apparent conviction that she had the answers drove her to ride roughshod over differences of opinion.

Nonetheless, Miss Campbell had the last word. She is commemorated by the naming of a street in Ajaccio: rue Miss Campbell. This was official appreciation of the part played by her in arousing the interest of the outside world in Corsica and for her energy in promoting the development of the city. It is of some note that rue Miss Campbell has remained. Other street names such as the Boulevard des Étrangers have been renamed to honour famous Corsicans. This suggests that, in the eyes of most Corsicans, she was more saint than sinner. The British involvement in the development of Ajaccio has left the city with other remarkable monuments: the Crynos Palace hotel, the Anglican Church and Tour d'Albion. All have survived, albeit with different uses and the Quartier des Étrangers is still so called. Miss Campbell left the church

¹⁵⁵ John Mitchel Chapman, *Corsica: An Island of Rest* (London: Stanford, 1908), p.2.

¹⁵⁶ 'Ajaccio as a Rival of Nice'.

in her will to the town under certain conditions, and the heir to her other estate in Corsica was Bradshaw, who attempted to continue development.¹⁵⁷

The hard work of the pioneers in creating a base for the social and economic infrastructure which enabled the growth of the English colony should not be underestimated. Their work enabled British sojourners to stay for lengthy periods of time in a city that was excitingly different but where, in the church for example, some of the familiarity and comforts of home could be found. Within this environment the sojourners attempted to create a British way of life much as they did in the colonies and other places in the Mediterranean world.

¹⁵⁷ Binet, p.394.

Chapter Five

Sojourners: A Home Away from Home

Introduction

English winter colonies could be identified around the shores of the Mediterranean from the late eighteenth century. In the 1860s Ajaccio became part of this Mediterranean world and part of the 'Empire of Travel' that was at its apogee from the 1880s to the eve of the First World War. The sojourners were multi-ethnic northern Europeans of whom the British were a large component who were linked to other Britons abroad by global networks of class and culture. Thus, as in the colonies of Empire, it was possible to be part of a new society without ceasing to be English. The experience of encountering large numbers of different peoples served to give form to and strengthen the bonds of a common British distinctiveness.¹ 'Englishness or Britishness, although not identical to national identity, was translated 'into a diasporic identity beyond any geographical boundaries'.²

The English Colony in Ajaccio was not an integral part of the British Empire, but in the same way that there are debates about the way people lived and behaved in the formal versus informal empire, so it is with those identifiable communities on the multiple fringes of this expanding British world. The colonists were part of a Mediterranean zone of mobile elites who spent extended periods of time in the same place. The impression was of wealthy travellers who created a 'Little England' everywhere they went rooting their existence in commonly accepted elements of their culture. Englishness was constructed through portable items and a shared culture and values. They shared the same class and status, with its distinct social mores, that formed the basis of the elite British world, whether at home or abroad.

This chapter explores how the common bonds of the British world were constructed and maintained in Ajaccio's winter station over time. It examines

¹ Gascoigne, p.580.

² Eric J. Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p.1.

the issues faced by the mobile elites in trying to settle in an unfamiliar setting. Typically the winter colonies had separate residential areas for the different groups of foreigners, hotels favoured by single nationalities and an appropriate denominational church. In Ajaccio there were a number of factors that animated or constrained the ability to make a home away from home. There were challenges around shared space, maintaining standards of living in respect of material items and the extent to which the routines of daily living were achievable.

The symbolic value of separateness provided the British with reminders of a shared heritage and tradition. Clustering and movement within the familiar gave reassurance to sojourners away from home. Individuals grouped together to counter the uncertainty of living in unfamiliar settings where they were seen by themselves and others as different.³ Demarcated spaces, where a sojourner could expect to join a society with similar cultural ideals, helped form common bonds.⁴ Few were as segregated as the British in the Indian hill stations, but in Cannes, for example, the British were mainly on the west side; to the east were the Russians and each new development had a predominant nationality.⁵ In Ajaccio, sojourners had to share space with other foreigners and the host communities, but by 1878 they did have an Anglican church.

The church is usually understood to be the sign of a strong British presence; a key symbol of Britishness abroad.⁶ Just as there was an Anglican church at the centre of almost every English village, this was replicated in the health resorts and also the Indian hill stations where the church was the 'moral and morphological hub of the community'.⁷ Even in China the British established Anglican churches where they could.⁸ 'It was the possession of a church that really made a collection of British nationals abroad into a colony, and the church aboard flourished.'⁹ By the mid-nineteenth century Anglicanism

³ For a good exposition of this issue see Marco Cinnirella, 'Ethnic and National Stereotypes: A Social Identity Perspective', in *Beyond Pug's Tour: National and Ethnic Stereotyping in Theory and Literary Practice*, ed. by C.C Barfoot (Amsterdam: Atlanta, 1997), pp.37-52.

⁴ Plotz, p.174.

⁵ Kennedy; Boyer (2009), p.127.

⁶ Mullen and Munson, p.103.

⁷ Kennedy, pp.99-100.

⁸ Loong, p.290; Bickers (1999), p.82.

⁹ Simona Pakenham, resident of Dieppe, quoted by Thorold, p.99.

had spread throughout the Empire and beyond.¹⁰ In 1891 there were 150 permanent chaplaincies in Europe and over 250 seasonal chaplains (of which Ajaccio was one) in France and Switzerland alone. This was a contrast to home where by the mid-nineteenth century only twenty percent of the population attended an Anglican church, and in the second half of the nineteenth century traditional religious beliefs were to some extent eroded by new scientific theories and discoveries and technological advances.¹¹ Abroad, the church was more important than a mere marker of religious affiliation; it was both a 'symbol of home and spiritual familiarity'.¹²

In unfamiliar situations, the church was the 'pillar around which the community evolved and defined its identity'.¹³ The symbolic value and role of the church, the British flag, the English language, clubs, sports and activities, acted as a clear symbol of a nation's presence and power, maintained the link with the homeland and provided emotional comfort to those abroad. The encountering of the familiar and the ability to transplant Britishness through items of portable culture was all the more essential abroad. Billig has argued that such 'mundane circumstances [...] were more important to individuals abroad than the commemoration of national celebrations or flag flying'.¹⁴ English clientele were said to have shaped the character of the French Riviera resorts by filling them with the cardinal British institutions-'tea, tubs, sanitary appliances, lawn tennis and churches'.¹⁵ Visitors expected to enjoy the comforts of home food and furnishing. The rising wealth of the late Victorian and early Edwardian periods saw increased demand for household goods and more luxurious items of material and cultural consumption. Items of portable property, as Plotz has identified, that have 'exceptional power [...] not because they are capable of abetting the civilising process [...] instead they embody English culture in its most particularity' and represent the core of being British at

¹⁰ Joseph Hardwick, *An Anglican British World* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), p.viii.

¹¹ J.V. Beckett, *The Aristocracy in England 1660-1914* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p.370.

¹² Lanver, *The British in Egypt*, p.108.

¹³ Gilles Teulié, 'Monarchy, Spirituality and Britishness: The Anglican Diaspora in Grasse 1880-1950', in *Provence and the British Imagination*, eds by Claire Davison and others (Milan: Ledizioni, 2013), pp.158-88 (p. p.146).

¹⁴ Billig, p.6.

¹⁵ Frederick Harrison (1831-1923), English jurist and lawyer. Quoted by Pemble, p.45.

this time.¹⁶ In addition, from the mid-nineteenth century the upper and an increasing number of middle class British homes had greater privacy and with newer luxuries such as gas and electricity. In Ajaccio the 'environmental accommodations' such as housing and amenities as found in the favoured Riviera towns were lacking.¹⁷ In addition, many familiar 'domestic materialities', important when relocation of home is involved, were absent or difficult to obtain in Ajaccio.¹⁸

With the limited security of segregation and material comforts, the ability to follow a British daily routine was imperative to create the 'dynamic process of feeling at home'.¹⁹ It was 'primarily through routines that time is felt, lived and secured' and that a familiar British identity could be enjoyed.²⁰ There were clubs, newspapers and leisure activities that were experienced as part of the quotidian, but in Ajaccio they were circumscribed and shared. Only in the practice of certain British sports was there any real form of demarcation.

Local Space

Segregation could be achieved through demarcated space or places within an area such as hotels and the church. Ajaccio could not provide a distinct area for its British community such as they may have been familiar with from elsewhere, not only on the Riviera. Alexandria, for example, by the 1830s had already expanded towards the east into an area that became the most desirable part of town and contained the established foreign community and consulates and around it were ranged the luxurious Hotel Europe, the Anglican Church and many fashionable cafes.²¹ In Algiers, by the mid-1860s, the area of Mustapha Supérieur had become popular with the British and the Americans and by the 1870s the hotels were filled with English to the exclusion of other nationalities so much so that it was said 'Algiers is being gradually taken possession of by

¹⁶ Plotz, p.20.

¹⁷ Linda Young, *Middle-Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.2.

¹⁸ Edensor, p.114.

¹⁹ Simona Butnaru, 'The Relationships between Travels, Migration and National Identity' in *Globalization and National Identity: Studies on the Strategies of Intercultural Dialogue*, Conference Paper coord. by Iulian Boldea (2012), pp.117-128, <http://www.upm.ro/gidni3/GIDNI-03/Pse/Pse%2003%2012.pdf>, (last accessed 20 June 2017).

²⁰ Edensor, p.96.

²¹ Michael J. Reimer, 'Colonial Bridgehead: Social and Spatial Change in Alexandria, 1850-1882', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 20, (4) (November 1988), 531-53 (p.536).

the English'.²² This did not happen in Ajaccio. The small size of the city and lack of critical mass of the English colony meant that there was little opportunity for separation. At its peak on the eve of the First World War, the winter station welcomed no more than 1,000 visitors across the season. In contrast, by 1865 Algiers was welcoming 1,500 British visitors alone each year.²³ Nevertheless, there was an element of separation and clustering. Growing numbers of visitors to Ajaccio predominantly occupied the area that became known as the Quartier des Étrangers. It was set apart from the old city, but it was always a shared space between foreigners and the elite Corsicans and continental French.

The development of the Quartier des Étrangers extended along the cours Grandval to the north and west of the existing city and was marked in 1865 by the erection of the 'cottages', the first accommodation specifically built for foreigners (Chapter Four). It was not, though, an exclusive sojourner community. Within this area spacious houses on large plots were built for the Corsican elite; some occupied and some let. Chateau Conti, for instance, was 'an elegant private mansion, with a terrace and garden, thoroughly Italian in style'.²⁴ For the foreigners, there were new hotels and residences occupied by the consulates. The 1881 census gives a snap shot of the occupation of the cours Grandval at this time. Out of the twenty-eight dwellings, nine were occupied almost solely by foreigners and they were clustered together between houses numbered ten to twenty-two on the census, most likely situated around the church and the hotels.²⁵ Only number fifteen was occupied totally by the British and this was the home of the British consul and his family. More typical was number twelve which had twenty-five inhabitants: eleven 'English', five Germans, four Swiss, three Danish and two Dutch rentiers and their servants. The largest groups were the British, Germans and Austrians. They were joined by varying but significantly smaller number of Russians, Americans, Dutch, Spanish and Italians; the latter two groups more likely to be servants. Thus, in Ajaccio, as Mackenzie and Dalziel have shown in their study of the Scots in South Africa, where there were few nationals they were more likely to assimilate

²² L.G. Seguin [Lisbeth Gooch Strahan], *Walks in Algiers* (London: Daldy, 1878), p.14 quoted by Perkins, p.222.

²³ Ross (1991), p.8.

²⁴ Sala, p.138.

²⁵ Data for the hotels is not included in the census, and the 1881 census does not name the properties.

to their surroundings, but if an opportunity to form a separate, although not totally select community arose, they generally did so.²⁶

The Quartier des Étrangers was situated within the countryside in an elevated but sheltered area on the outskirts of the existing city. It was the typical situation of the winter health resorts elsewhere. The semi-rural setting of Mustapha Supérieur, for example, was a draw to winter residents with its southern exposure, splendid views of the city and bay, and proximity to numerous paths in the wooded hillsides.²⁷ Like Mustapha Supérieur, the foreign quarter in Ajaccio was demarcated from, and a complete physical contrast to, the narrow streets and multi-storeyed 'great ware-houses' typical of the older part of the city.²⁸

The Quartier des Étrangers was not only separate and different to the old city, but some of its buildings were reminiscent of home and were a contrast of style. The Anglican Church, which occupied a prime site on the cours Grandval, had a typically 'English' steeple and 'a bright roof of English tiles'.²⁹ It was a markedly different to the majority of churches in Corsica which, by the mid-nineteenth century, were of simple construction with a Baroque front attached to an older style nave. The so-called two-storeyed 'cottages' were described as being in the 'English-style'.³⁰ They looked nothing like the archetypal English cottage, but by using that name it was a symbol of continuity long seen as representative of home.³¹ For the same reason the bungalows in the Indian hill stations were also called cottages, suggesting the 'quaint abodes of rural England'.³² The Tour d'Albion, the granite house that Miss Campbell built for herself, was purported to be evocative of the Scottish manorial home.³³ In 1908 Miss Campbell's house was occupied by her heir, Bernard Bradshaw, who was 'the friend of any stranger who will seek him out; take your glasses and you will

²⁶ John M. Mackenzie with Nigel R. Dalziel, *The Scots in South Africa* (Manchester 2007), p.16.

²⁷ Perkins, p.221.

²⁸ Lear, p.7.

²⁹ Barry, p.59.

³⁰ Michel Lorenzi de Bradi, *La Corse Inconnue* (Paris: Payot, 1928), p.67.

³¹ U.C.Knoepfmacher and G.B. Tennyson, *Nature and the Victorian Imagination* (London: University of California Press, 1977), p.41.

³² Kennedy, p.101.

³³ *Westmorland Gazette*, 28 March 1863; Bradi, p.67, also described the 'cottages' as being in the 'English-style'.

see the Union Jack slowly rising on his flagstaff; surely a welcome sight for visitors to an unfamiliar city'.³⁴ The Union flag demarcated a peculiarly British area in a space that was always shared with others.

By 1869 the Quartier des Étrangers was the choice location for the majority of sojourners and its development and residential mix was reflected in the hotels. In 1875 the *Gazette Ajaccienne* recorded the guests at the recently opened Hotel Germania as 'French, Germans, Russians, Poles, Italians, Austrians, and Spanish'.³⁵ Ten years later, society was still mixed with 'the milord's Anglais and the miladies, the charming English "meeses," the Russian princes and princesses, the high, well-born Teutons, the "first families" of the United States of America, the distinguished guests from Scandinavia and the Low Countries'.³⁶ Not all would have been residents. Visitors staying in *pensions* and apartments like the 'cottages' frequently took their meals in local hotels, which provided an important space for socialising among a like class of person.

As the station expanded there was more differentiation and hierarchy in the hotels. Some of the newer hotels sought and attracted particular clientele as they did on the Riviera. Nowhere was this more evident than at Nice with hotel names like Victoria, Grande Bretagne, d'Angleterre and des Anglais.³⁷ Hotels were symbolic of the British not just in their names. The luxurious Mena House Hotel, for instance, situated near the Pyramids, fulfilled the nostalgia for the homeland with its country-house atmosphere, English breakfasts and great log fires.³⁸ There was no such equivalent in Ajaccio, but the hotels embodied the Mediterranean winter way of life. Barry described the Germania as one of two hotels 'suitable for English visitors'.³⁹ In the same hotel Forde noted there 'a nucleus' of resident English, where every winter a 'little English band of visitors, from twenty to forty in number, gathers'.⁴⁰ A publicity leaflet of 1882 shows the

³⁴ Chapman (1908), p.51.

³⁵ *Gazette Ajaccienne*, 15 April 1875.

³⁶ Sala, p.138.

³⁷ Pemble, p.43.

³⁸ Lanver, *The British in Egypt*, p.99.

³⁹ Barry, p.54. The name was changed when relationships with Germany deteriorated at the time of the Franco-Prussian War (1870-2). The other hotel was the de France situated in the old city.

⁴⁰ Forde, p.196.

Schweizerhof, built by the Swiss, Dr Müller, aimed at Swiss nationals.⁴¹ In 1886 the Baedeker guide mentioned three hotels on the cours Grandval: the Suisse (Schweizerhof) the Continental (Germania) and the Bellevue which was 'frequented by the English'.⁴² In 1901 the Cynos Palace, the Hotel des Étrangers and the Hotel et Pension Villa Miot all advertised that 'English' was spoken, and in 1904 the Hotel-Strasbourg/Villa Miot, with a German proprietor, advertised "German" cooking'.⁴³

Once the Grand Hotel Continental d'Ajaccio opened in 1896 it became the most favoured hotel of the British. It was also the most expensive and sought after, reflecting a hierarchy of price and, hence, class. Another luxury hotel, the Cynos Palace was also popular with British travellers.⁴⁴ Both hotels accepted Cook's coupons and the Grand also took Gaze's.⁴⁵ The Grand always had a mixed clientele but with only one hundred rooms space was at a premium. In 1904 it seems to have been almost full. A Louise Milne is recorded as staying in both the Grand and Des Étrangers in April 1904 and it could be speculated that she moved onto the Grand when a room became available. Table 5 is a snapshot of the occupation by nationality of the main hotels in 1904 when the winter station was at its apogee. The data is not complete for the Hotel Suisse, but in 1905 Jean Lorrain found it not just occupied by the Swiss but full of Germans and 'Anglo-Saxons'.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Lucchini, p. 142. The Schweizerhof changed its name to Suisse following the Franco-Prussian war.

⁴² Karl Baedeker, *Italy, Handbook for Travellers: First Part, Northern Italy, Including Leghorn, Florence, Ravenna, the Island of Corsica, and Routes through France, Switzerland, and Austria* (London: Dulau, 1879), p.467.

⁴³ *Journal des Étrangers (JDE)*, November 1901; *JDE*, April 1904.

⁴⁴ Reynolds-Ball (1896), p.469.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Jean de Lorrain, *Heures de Corse* (Paris: Sansot, 1905). p.34.

Table 5 Sojourners and Hotel Residence in April 1904.⁴⁷

Hotel	English	Swiss	German	Others	Total
Grand Hotel ⁴⁸	53	6	15	22	96
Suisse	5	0	0	0	23
Des Étrangers	6	0	0	9	15
Villa Miot	0	0	0	6	6
Hotel de France	0	0	0	19	19

As Table 5 shows the hotels in the old town, such as the Hotel de France, were not put out of business by the new hotels, but they were patronised chiefly by the Corsicans and the continental French. Barry noted that in the Hotel de France, the fifty to sixty guests at dinner were almost exclusively male: ‘A considerable contingent was furnished by the military and the Commandant of Gendarmes. The greater part of the remaining guests were boarders, being either functionaries [...] who preferred dining in society to dining in solitude.’⁴⁹

Separation of a different sort was also a problem in private accommodation. Unlike houses at home where the hall or lobby had become a ‘normative’ expectation, the Corsicans rarely segregated rooms by use. The newly-built ‘cottages’ on the cours Grandval failed to meet expected standards. As Lear described: ‘You enter their *salle-à-manger* straight from the road, a system which-all the world being seated at breakfast-is destructive to the peace of the delicate-minded intruder.’⁵⁰ By the 1920s, in many places, guests were still faced with ‘several rooms connecting with one another, but only one will have access to the stairway or hall. So it means that the other rooms are passage ways. A somewhat embarrassing state of affairs!’⁵¹

There was one space, though, where separation could be almost guaranteed – the Anglican Church. The church was not just a symbol of home and spiritual familiarity, but it was an important social anchor and functioned as a meeting place where it was possible to discover information about living in the

⁴⁷ Information derived from the *JDE* and other hotel registers of April 1904.

⁴⁸ Family size is estimated.

⁴⁹ Barry, p.54.

⁵⁰ Lear, p.28.

⁵¹ Dugmore, p.28.

city and opportunities for amusement. In many places both inside and outside the Empire wherever a protestant community established itself, a church was built.⁵² Protestant churches were a visible symbol of 'expatriate solidarity' in places like Latin America (and Corsica) where there were overwhelming catholic societies.⁵³ In Buenos Aires, the church helped a small community to hold 'themselves together in an alien environment'.⁵⁴ In the early days at Ajaccio there was no provision. The Two Ladies attended Christmas Eve midnight mass at the catholic Cathedral.⁵⁵ By 1875 Protestant services were held in a room in the Hotel de France but this was hardly ideal. According to an English witness 'the room did not inconvenience but it lacked air, light and conditions for a meeting place, it was fatiguing for invalids who were forced to climb high in the hotel, the air was so polluted that twenty or so people who assembled there were afflicted with sickness'.⁵⁶ It was a similar situation in Algiers when the first Protestant church service was held in the winter 1856-7 in a room in the Hotel Régence.⁵⁷

However, there was a Holy Trinity church in Algiers in 1870.⁵⁸ A church of the same name, large enough to hold two hundred people, did not open in Ajaccio until 1878.⁵⁹ The programme as laid out for the season 1890-91 was fairly typical: Holy Communion on the first Sunday of each month after the 1030 service, on every other Sunday at 0800. On Christmas Day and Easter Sunday there were two celebrations of communion: at 0800 and after the 1030 service. There was Morning and Evening prayers every Sunday, and on saints and Holy Days, celebration of communion at 0830. Services in the week were on Wednesdays and Fridays with prayer and litany to begin on the first Wednesday in Advent and special services at Lent. Choir practice was held after services on Fridays. The services began at local time, which was twenty-seven minutes faster than Paris time. There was no bell, and unless otherwise stated, the

⁵² See the church records held at the LMA.

⁵³ John Darwin, 'Orphans of Empire', in Bickers (2010), pp. 329-39 (p.340).

⁵⁴ Quote from the nineteenth-century diary of Scottish *émigrée*, Jane Robson, in Mackenzie and Dalziel, p. 16.

⁵⁵ *A Winter in Corsica*, p. 164.

⁵⁶ *Gazette Ajaccienne*, 1 April 1875.

⁵⁷ Redouane, p.19.

⁵⁸ Ross (1991), p.9.

⁵⁹ 1875 a letter to the Mayor stressed the need for an Anglican church in order to attract more visitors, quoted by Binet, pp. 155-56.

offertories were for the stipend of the Chaplain.⁶⁰ The church continued to be strongly supported. In 1904 Mr and Mrs Massey-Spencer donated a 'very handsome brass Eagle lectern', the Seymour-Kings presented a 'very fine harmonium' and Mr Edwin Freshfield donated a 'Credence Table'.⁶¹ Services were held twice daily from November to April until the late 1920s.⁶² Thence there were strenuous efforts on behalf of the remaining sojourners to ensure that services, albeit less regularly, were maintained until the 1930s.

Transplanting Britishness

Local space was important, but there were also other objects and characteristic fragments of Englishness that were considered vital to 'interactive human [British] culture'.⁶³ Individuals needed to be surrounded by things that made them feel comfortable in their environment, and find 'personal identity in group affiliation' to live better in 'both physical and emotional aspects'.⁶⁴ This was clearly important in a place like Ajaccio where most people would have been strangers both within and without the English colony.

Fixtures and Fitting

By the time the city had the ambition to become a winter health station; the 'familiar scene' at home would have reflected the growing emphasis on domesticity and privacy and increased expenditure on furniture, textiles and table wares. The ability to maintain cultural practices and standards of living was a challenge in Ajaccio. Home-like provisions were often taken for granted until found missing, and Corsican accommodation was years behind the Riviera in such items.

In 1867 the shipping agent at Marseilles considered that 'none but those restless English people, who live in a miserable island themselves and have nothing to eat there would think of going so far [Corsica] to be so

⁶⁰ Lucchini, p.117.

⁶¹ *JDE*, April 1904.

⁶² Lucchini, p.119.

⁶³ Plotz, p.173; Young, *Middle Class Cultures in the Nineteenth Century*, p.2.

⁶⁴ Young (2003), p.4.

uncomfortable'.⁶⁵ By the 1840s hotels in Nice were provided with carpets, fireplaces, and a multitude of other matters essential to the civilized life of England.⁶⁶ *The Lancet* warned its readers in 1874 not to expect in Corsica the 'same amount of luxury or facilities as they will find at Nice, Cannes, Menton, or the other better-known health resorts [...] he will find that the decorations and furniture of his sitting-room will consist of bare walls and a floor, a table without a cloth, and four or five rush bottomed chairs'.⁶⁷ The Two Ladies found the salon of their apartment had 'no clean tablecloth or homelike preparation for breakfast', and they had to buy a table around which they sat 'every evening [...] feeling really homelike and happy, although so far away from all familiar scenes and friends'.⁶⁸

For most visitors the lack of material items deemed necessary for their standard of living was a cause of significant frustration. Dr Henry Panmure Ribton in attempting to prepare prospective visitors for Ajaccio advised them to rent unfurnished rooms and hire furniture having experienced conditions at the Hotel Europa where he told the proprietor that English guests expected 'carpets on the floor and paper on the walls'.⁶⁹ Wallpaper had become increasingly popular in the nineteenth century and became almost the norm in middle-class homes, and piled or tapestry carpets were the fashion from the 1850s.⁷⁰ Household inventories showed baths becoming increasingly common in middle class households, and towel stands had become part of the standard bedroom equipment, which as well as a bed included a wardrobe and a chest of drawers.⁷¹ Dr James Henry Bennet recognised that there was plenty to complain about, but believed a 'general feeling of dissatisfaction' such as experienced in the early days at Menton was 'usual in a young colony'.⁷²

The first real improvement was the opening of the Hotel Germania which

⁶⁵ 'Trip to Corsica in 1867', *Englishwomen's Domestic Magazine*, 1 January 1873.

⁶⁶ Mullen and Munson, p.227.

⁶⁷ *Lancet*, 5 September 1874.

⁶⁸ *A Winter in Corsica* pp. 56; 80.

⁶⁹ Ribton, p. 22.

⁷⁰ Hoppen, p.336. This has also been identified in the demand for 'more splendid manifestations of Spa life' also seen during this period – see David Charles Doughty, 'Changing Patterns of Spa Culture in Britain and Central Europe, from the Final Decades of the Nineteenth Century' (Doctoral thesis, University of Kingston, 2000).

⁷¹ Young (2003), p.98.

⁷² Bennet (1870), p.289.

was described by Sala as ‘an edifice of considerable size [...] with lofty and airy apartments, and is throughout scrupulously neat and clean. In the *salle-à-manger* from eighty to a hundred guests might dine. The drawing-room on the ground floor is a superb saloon, luxuriously furnished, with a pianoforte and a large bookcase containing a small but carefully-selected library of French, German, and English literature’.⁷³ What the Germania provided, though, was not enough. In 1875 a writer to the Mayor set out the needs of the city: ‘a hotel of the first order [and] more villas to rent’.⁷⁴ The older hotels, most notably, the Londres, de France and Europa were under the ‘sentence of ample purification and renovation’ but they still could not meet the English ideas of comfort which continued to increase with the significant improvement in living standards in the late Victorian period.⁷⁵

Despite the Germania and some improvements to the old hotels, Ajaccio was never able to compete with the twenty-two luxury hotels that existed in Nice by the second half of the century. A hotel to rival that city’s Negresco, the Winter Palace at Menton, the Carlton, Hyde Park or the Ritz in Paris was a long time coming. The Grand Hotel, two years in the building, did not open its doors until 1896. Set in the centre of a large park, it had luxurious salons, a huge dining hall and a reception area decorated with columns and *trompe l’oeil*. It was exactly what was required and provided ‘every modern comfort’ and especially, ‘perfect sanitation arrangements on the English system’.⁷⁶ Also favoured by the British was the Swiss system, as found by the end of the century in the Hotel Suisse, which meant it was equipped with stoves, tiles, heated corridors, wooden floors and the possibility to take baths.⁷⁷ It had taken the best part of forty years for the city to begin to meet expectations with the Grand and Suisse, but other hotels never managed to attain the required standards. Elsewhere, even the smaller resorts such as Algiers were better provided. In Mustapha Supérieur ‘the invalid could find all those domestic conveniences of diet and accommodation so essential to welfare’.⁷⁸

⁷³ Sala, p. 186.

⁷⁴ Quoted by Binet, pp. 155-56.

⁷⁵ Campbell, p.17.

⁷⁶ *JDE*, November 1901.

⁷⁷ Binet, p.182.

⁷⁸ William Sharp, ‘The New Winter-Land’, *Nineteenth Century* (January 1894), 99-114 (p.101).

What was critical to English comfort was the provision of appropriate hygienic arrangements, and if they were absent in the hotels, the alternative was to rent private apartments. In Ajaccio in 1873 it was said that there were 'several excellent villas' which could be rented for the season 'beautifully situated on the outskirts of the town, standing high, and overlooking the sea; and, having been designed for the use of English visitors, they have all the civilized appliances which are indispensable, according to English ideas of comfort'.⁷⁹ This report appeared over-optimistic for in 1894 Mary Blakeney deplored the 'total absence of hygienic arrangements in the flats and apartments, absence of closets, and frequently no water supply in the houses'.⁸⁰ And, despite the improvements made and the opening of the Grand Hotel Continental d' Ajaccio, Margaret d'Este, on leaving Corsica in 1905, wrote that 'We feel grateful for things that we formerly accepted without question – hot water, the changing of knife and fork at each course, the blacking of shoes, the return of one's linen both starched and ironed'.⁸¹ It was the small things that made the visitor comfortable and feel at home.

Portable Property

'Those who know the English colonies abroad know that we carry with us our pride, pills, prejudices, Harvey-sauces, cayenne-peppers, and other wares, making a little Britain wherever we settle down.'⁸²

The material world was an important element of Britishness and gentility. Sustaining the associated cultural practices in Ajaccio required a supply of goods to meet the demand either through purchase or importation. The power of such portable items, according to Edensor, lies not in their meaning but in the fact that they were widely understood and shared.⁸³ They have been described by Billig as 'a flag hanging unnoticed on the public building'.⁸⁴ However, many of the essential items that represented Britishness at its most basic level were lacking or hard to obtain. Food was a particular case in point. It was a key

⁷⁹ 'Corsica: The New Winter Resort for Europeans', *Commercial Advertiser*, 29 October 1873.

⁸⁰ Mary Ann Blakeney, *Souvenirs of Travel in and Around the Mediterranean, 1893-4* (Ramsgate: [n.pub], 1895), p.438.

⁸¹ Margaret d'Este, *Through Corsica with a Camera* (London: Putnam, 1905), p.62.

⁸² William Makepeace Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, quoted by Thorold, p. 60.

⁸³ Edensor, p.116.

⁸⁴ Billig, p. 8.

element in defining national identity that provided a familiar reference point that could 'deflect a sense of disorientation' when abroad.⁸⁵

The availability of the type of food preferred by the British represented partly 'a preference for the familiar, partly a residue of earlier eating habits, and partly a desire to sustain cultural and historical bonds'.⁸⁶ By the mid-nineteenth century the traveller might reasonably have expected to find British provisions in most places abroad that were well-visited. Hotels in the Alps, for instance, provided English mustard and afternoon tea for their clients.⁸⁷ British food was available in the Dominions, but obtaining the English staples of 'beef, potatoes, tea and milk and butter in Corsica was a frequent source of vexation'.⁸⁸ The situation was recognised by the Corsicans: 'We are obliged to say that the foodstuffs found in our market are not equal to those of the Continent or even Bastia [...] Butter is almost completely absent. Foreigners used to comfortable and high living will not be able to find anything other than haricot beans that are last year's'.⁸⁹ It was understandable that in the early days of the station that a small seasonal community would not have been sufficiently large or stable to justify importing commodities. The first visitors to the cottages tried having provisions and meals delivered from the hotels. However, the Ajacciens regarded the Quartier des Étrangers as separate from the city and located in the countryside (although it was only five to ten minutes away on foot) to the extent that they would rarely deliver there.⁹⁰

There are few items of material culture more characteristic of the British than tea and obtaining both quantity and quality was a challenge. Tea reflected both the class and attitudes of British sojourners. It was a 'semiotic and somatic phenomenon'.⁹¹ It was semiotic in that it fostered a sense of group and the maintenance of social bonds for 'a specifically English middle-class, and

⁸⁵ Edensor, p.116.

⁸⁶ Magee and Thompson, p.154.

⁸⁷ Jim Ring, *How the English Made the Alps* (Bury St Edmunds: Bury St Edmunds Press, 2001), p.53.

⁸⁸ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.74.

⁸⁹ *Aigle*, March 1879 quoted by Lucchini, p. 16.

⁹⁰ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.72.

⁹¹ Paul Young, 'Review of Julie E. Fromer, *A Necessary Luxury: Tea in Victorian England*, (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2008)', *Victorian Studies*, 52, 1 (Autumn, 2009), 150-52 (p.151).

domesticated vision of a united and prosperous nation'.⁹² Tea was not only a drink to be consumed individually or within the family, it was also a social occasion taken around five p.m. 'in the best Palm Court tradition'.⁹³ As in India, the rounds of teas and picnics served to assure their participants that they shared a common social identity.⁹⁴ It was somatic in that it engendered nostalgia as 'a pleasantly old-fashioned leftover from an earlier epoch in English history' since it had become identified as a light meal from the early nineteenth century.⁹⁵ Sala, in the later nineteenth-century, lamented the 'diminishing tea-gardens' in England but found in Ajaccio that 'the "five o'clock" tea flourished exceedingly'.⁹⁶ Such was its impact that even today, taking tea in Corsica is referred to by the Corsicans as 'The Five O' Clock'. Despite Sala's experience, tea was little used in Corsica and when made was 'excessively weak, merely water [...] very frequently the dried petals of the orange flower are used instead of tea-leaves' which were 'very insipid and unpalatable'.⁹⁷ The Two Ladies took tea every day and they attempted to show their Corsican landlady what an 'English tea-table' looked like.⁹⁸ On trying Corsican tea, their 'minds reverted to the comfortable, cheerful appearance of an English tea-table, even in a country inn, where a clean table-cloth would be spread and sweet bread and butter at least provided'.⁹⁹

The Two Ladies made sure of their supply of tea by bringing with them several pounds since relying on the local shops for provisions was 'a stumbling block', and 'tea was charged exorbitantly'.¹⁰⁰ Given the light weight of tea it might be expected that there would have been no difficulty in carrying such a portable item. However, those going abroad faced considerable difficulties with French customs. The need for passports was abolished in 1860, but travellers still had to endure local taxes which were particularly heavy on food and drink, including tea.¹⁰¹ The import of certain items was restricted to protect native

⁹² Young (2009), p151.

⁹³ The Palm Court Hotel in Marylebone is famed as the birthplace of afternoon tea.

⁹⁴ Kennedy, p. 8.

⁹⁵ Young (2009).

⁹⁶ Sala, p.40.

⁹⁷ *A Winter in Corsica*, pp.168-69.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.168.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.72: 74.

¹⁰¹ Mullen and Munson, p.165.

industries, tax revenues or state monopolies, and French customs' officers sought articles of contraband such as tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, snuff, tea, spirits of any kind, matches and new clothes but also clocks, embroidery and gloves.¹⁰² These were clearly desirable items for a stay abroad and were certainly difficult to obtain in Corsica.

With the problems of supply many sojourners chose to eat in the hotels and restaurants. Even this was a far from ideal experience in the early days of the station. Foreigners were warned that 'Goat's flesh stuffed with chestnuts may not be palatable to many civilised visitors'.¹⁰³ On offer in 1875, the goat's flesh seemed an improvement on Ribton's 'oleaginous' soup, thrushes' meat and small eggs and Lear's experience of 'an astonishingly nasty compound of eggs, parsley, sugar and garlic'.¹⁰⁴ It was acknowledged that 'One of the things that keep foreigners from our town is the inferiority of the restaurants compared to the winter stations of the continent'.¹⁰⁵ However, little was done. Barry in 1882 continued to assert that the food was bad.¹⁰⁶ There were, though, some Corsican delicacies that were met with almost universal approval. *The Lancet* in 1877 praised the *brocciu* describing it as 'a kind of cream cheese, made from goat's milk [...] is exceedingly good and must be of considerable nutritive value' and 'the Corsican blackbird, which for flavour can hardly be exceeded'.¹⁰⁷

Many writers complimented the *terrines de Merles* (blackbird pâté) and *liqueur de Myrte*, and it was possible to eat well. As the nineteenth century progressed Britons liked to eat 'a large breakfast of eggs and meats and for the more active, a rump steak and mutton chops'.¹⁰⁸ Lear's breakfast at St Lucie de Tallano illustrates this point well. He began with 'bread and butter of the first quality', went onto 'eels and trout', through a course of 'stews and ragouts, to plain roast fowl and mutton, and ending in creams and *brocciu*; all these with

¹⁰² Mullen and Munson, p.163; Roy Elston, *Cook's Travellers Handbook to the Riviéras of France and Italy: Including Rhone Valley, Basses and Maritime Alps and Corsica* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, 1927), p.41.

¹⁰³ *Daily Inter-Ocean*, 28 May 1875.

¹⁰⁴ Ribton, p. 26; Lear, p.136.

¹⁰⁵ *Aigle*, March 1879 quoted by Lucchini, p. 16.

¹⁰⁶ Barry, p.87.

¹⁰⁷ 'Corsica', *Lancet*.

¹⁰⁸ Mullen and Munson, p.259.

many kinds of vegetables and fruits, were simply excellent'.¹⁰⁹ It was accompanied by six different glasses for wine consumed at nine o'clock in the morning. Lear was clearly treated as an honoured guest, but as Bennet pointed out, the dinners required and exacted 'every day at the hotels and *pensions* are to them [the locals] festive dinners, which they never dream of unless to welcome friends for a marriage or a baptism. To provide this high standard of food to many hundred strangers the country had to be ransacked for a hundred miles around'.¹¹⁰

Until the opening of the larger, foreign-owned hotels there was a need to modify diet to Corsican customs. Christmas is a good example of how the sojourners adapted to local traditions whilst attempting to maintain their own. A friend of the Two Ladies had brought with him a plum pudding and was looking forward to enjoying 'our national Christmas fare'.¹¹¹ It is interesting to learn that the imagery associated with Christmas was firmly set and carried abroad, although the now standard visual representation of Christmas did not exist much before the 1840s.¹¹² Two Ladies found 'there was certainly a good deal of novelty in our mode of passing Christmas time in Ajaccio'.¹¹³ On Christmas Eve they went to mass at the cathedral and dined with their landlady: 'At a quarter to two o'clock, a.m., we sat down to soup, beef, stewed duck, a large fine fish - cold and not cut into - fricasseed fowl, roast partridge, spinach, and merles. Afterwards we had *crème à la vanille*, with various elegant cakes and dried fruits, and *café noir*'.¹¹⁴ On Christmas Day they went for a walk and made calls on acquaintances and learned that for the Corsicans it was New Year's Day that was special, when 'presents are then made by everybody to everybody, and visits of congratulation, or merely of ceremony, received and expected'.¹¹⁵ There were no family gatherings as in England and Germany. This was put down to 'the non-existence of true domestic life which must strike all English taking up a

¹⁰⁹ Lear, p.103.

¹¹⁰ Quoted by Ring (2005), p.32.

¹¹¹ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.61.

¹¹² Hilary Raats, 'Visualising the Victorian Christmas: Evolving Iconography and Symbolism in the Wake of Nineteenth-Century Commercialism', *Journal of the General Brock University Undergraduates* (2017), 48-52 (p.52).

¹¹³ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.163.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.165.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.167.

temporary residence in France'.¹¹⁶ The Two Ladies did not forget the customs of home. In the absence of plum-pudding or mince-pies, they 'had tolerably good beef, for a wonder, and lamb, *merles* and new potatoes'.¹¹⁷ They also tried to decorate their apartment in the British fashion adapted to what they could find: 'Although we had neither holly nor mistletoe, we found good substitutes for them in the elegant-leaved lentiscus, the tree heath and sweetly perfumed myrtle; while round the mirror, and a picture of the Virgin on the opposite wall, we twined garlands of the graceful sarsaparilla.'¹¹⁸ Such was the sojourner influence that it was not too many years before there were 'giant' Christmas trees in the hotels in the town.¹¹⁹

The Quotidian

'As there is no casino or other distraction it is necessary that the hotel that is chosen for the winter residence possesses a dining room, gardens for morning walks [...] and for rainy days a library [...] and a smoking room that occupies the hours of men.'¹²⁰

The British were determined to continue their daily routines when abroad and inhabit in manner the world they had left behind. Familiar practices enabled newcomers to find a network of organisations and activities to combat boredom and isolation and deepen a sense of belonging. A typical winter sojourner might take a leisurely English breakfast accompanied by the English papers followed by the morning stroll, a visit to the club and/or a mid-morning boat trip. Lunch was taken at home or a picnic. Then a short siesta would be followed by calls, another expedition, or perhaps tennis, and then tea. In the evenings the hotel would be the centre of the social life or a trip to the theatre, opera or attending a ball.¹²¹ In Ajaccio it was not possible, as seemed to be the case in Argentina, to have the 'most unbending adherence to their own habits, and most carefully avoid whatever would alter their manners and customs', and adaptations had to

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p.169.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., p.168.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p.167.

¹¹⁹ 'In the time of Ajaccio and the English', *Piazza Magazine*, 138 (November 2011).

¹²⁰ Guérin, p. 41.

¹²¹ Edmund Swinglehurst, *The Romantic Journey: The Story of Thomas Cook and Victorian Travel* (London: Pica, 1974), p.142.

be made to what was on offer.¹²²

One of the most important links with the homeland, and an essential activity, was reading the daily newspaper. Newspapers are credited with helping to 'bind settlers located in different colonial sites into a broader collective imagination based on the idea of a transglobal British settler identity'.¹²³ They provided a sense of place in an alien world and an anchor to new arrivals by combatting isolation. Reading news of home was important, but British papers were not easy to obtain in the early days. By 1885 Sala found the reading-room of the Continental hotel well supplied with fairly recent issues of *Galignani*, some German-Swiss papers, and the *Petit Marseillais*, and on 25 October 'a copious subscription to the chief journals of England and the cities of the Continent is to begin'.¹²⁴ It wasn't until 1904 that it was possible to buy the *Standard*, *Daily Graphic*, *Daily Mirror* and *New York Herald* (Paris edition) at the *Agence du Diamant* situated in the cours Grandval where other English foreign newspapers could also be ordered.¹²⁵

French/Corsican newspapers were always available: the *Journal de la Corse* and *Aigle* and from the mid-1870s, the *Gazette Ajaccienne*, *Journal de la Colonie Étrangère* and *Ajaccio Revue - Journal de la Station d'Hiver*. These were followed by *Ajaccio Station d'Hiver – Journal des Étrangers (JDE)* (1901–1904) which became the *Journal des Étrangers d'Ajaccio et du Tourisme en Corse* (1904-1906). These journals aimed to inform the whole winter foreign community of everything they needed for their stay. The latter two had sections in French, English and German and were not only concerned with the island but also contained significant sections on world news which had mainly a British perspective and content.

It would have been common practice for the British male elites to read the newspapers in their clubs. Clubs exemplified 'British culture and imperial

¹²² David Rock, 'The British of Argentina' quoting William MacCann, *Two Thousand Miles Ride through the Argentine Provinces* (London, 1853) in Bickers (2010), pp.18-44 (p.30).

¹²³ Simon J. Potter, 'Webs, Networks, and System: Globalization and the Mass Media in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire', *Journal of British Studies*, 46 (July 2007), 621-46 (p.626).

¹²⁴ Sala, p.138.

¹²⁵ *JDE*, 21 April 1904.

proress [...] and served as symbols of a common culture, mannerism and conduct and enabled its members to replicate the life their members enjoyed in their Pall Mall or St James clubs'.¹²⁶ They were an important aspect of the British Empire and were established in nearly every major colonial centre. They provided a space for individuals to associate with each other and, thus, create a social network.¹²⁷ The British community in Ajaccio was not large enough to have its own clubs unlike, places outside the Empire where there was sufficient critical mass, in Italy for example.¹²⁸ In the Mediterranean zone there were English clubs in Egypt and Algiers.¹²⁹ Furthermore, there is no evidence that the British, or any other element of the foreign community, influenced the formation or running of any of the Ajaccien clubs.¹³⁰ The foremost club in Ajaccio was the *Cercle des Palmiers*, to which nearly all visitors belonged and which united 'high society' of the host and foreign communities.¹³¹ The gentlemen in the party of Two Ladies joined this club which was 'well supplied with the French papers (and later other papers, both local and national), a variety of periodicals, an excellent large atlas and some good maps [...] a billiard room-with another room for cards and other games'.¹³² The club continued to welcome foreigners and by the end of the nineteenth-century visitors could also join a Literary Circle, a Sports Circle and the *Cercle Buonaparte*.

As well as clubs, sport was important. Sojourners began to come to Corsica at the moment when 'a spectacular sports explosion took place in Britain'.¹³³ Leisure time came to be 'branded with connotations of national identity'.¹³⁴ British sports such as tennis, polo, cricket, golf or rugby were often pursued by the elites overseas with exclusive clubs. At Buenos Aires for example, there was a Cricket and Rugby Club in 1864 and a Rowing Club by

¹²⁶ Lanver, p.93; Plotz, p.48.

¹²⁷ Benjamin B. Cohen, *In the Club* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), p.5.

¹²⁸ Alessandro Bartoli, *The British Colonies in the Italian Riviera in '800 and '900* (Savona: Risparmio di Savona, 2008), pp.10-13.

¹²⁹ James Whidden, 'Expatriates in Cosmopolitan Egypt: 1864-1956' in Bickers (2010), pp.45-73 (p.48); Redouane, p.24.

¹³⁰ Cohen, p.7.

¹³¹ Pomponi (1992), p.307.

¹³² *A Winter in Corsica*, p.215.

¹³³ Keith A.Sandiford, *Cricket and the Victorians* (Aldershot: Scholar Press, 1994), p.34.

¹³⁴ Stephen Counce and others, eds., *Relocating Britishness* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p.19.

1870; with the exception of cricket all these sports spread into local society.¹³⁵ There was no tradition of such sports in Corsica until the twentieth century. Cricket, according to Barry, was deemed 'madness'.¹³⁶ In Ajaccio, with the exception of tennis, facilities were lacking for most of the period of the study and the range and quality of sports provision never matched that of the Riviera or elsewhere. Golf, for instance, which along with the church was a sign of a strong English presence, was not established in Corsica until 1930. This was very late compared to elsewhere. It had been introduced to Pau in 1841, preceded by tennis and hunting in 1826 and followed by horse racing and archery in 1856.¹³⁷

The deficiencies in sporting provision were identified early in the history of the station. In 1877 the prospectus for the formation of the British-owned *Ajaccian Land and Hotel Company* made clear what was expected. It aimed to: 'To carry on the business of a racecourse company in all its branches [...] and for the drilling or reviewing of troops, and for any other kind of athletic sports, and for playing thereon games of cricket, bowls, golf, curling, lawn tennis, polo, or any other kind of amusement, recreation, sport or entertainment.'¹³⁸

This project was never realised. Rugby had to wait until the twentieth century when the English fleet came to Ajaccio and played on the place de Diamant. There are logical explanations for the paucity of team sports. The foreign community was not large enough to persuade the municipal authorities to commit scarce capital resources on facilities that would only be in use for a few months of the year. There were few permanent foreign residents (especially in Ajaccio) and fewer of a younger age (particularly males) as were found among the administrators in the colonial outposts. Climate was another reason for the lack of cricket - the playing season was April to September when most of the winter sojourners had left the island. Although the continental French played cricket, it was not something that appealed to the Corsicans, most of whom if they had the leisure, did not have the wealth to indulge it. Most villages were small and located in the mountains, and flat land on the coast was always at a

¹³⁵ Rock, p.33.

¹³⁶ Barry, p.155.

¹³⁷ Boyer (2009), p.131.

¹³⁸ TNA: BT 31/3871/23952, *Ajaccian Land and Hotel Company*.

premium.

If sporting facilities were lacking, the sojourners took advantage of the mild winter climate and made outings which required no special provision. Visitors were in the habit of 'strolling down every morning to the town', and around Ajaccio there were walks with 'scenery of the finest kind'.¹³⁹ Ribton noted 'several beautiful drives in the vicinity of the town, which may be enjoyed to a distance of two or three miles on a level'.¹⁴⁰ One of these drives, the road to the Iles Sanguinaires, was a favourite promenade of the visitors. It was the first walk taken by the majority of new arrivals and in 1905 it was described by Jean de Lorrain as a 'promenade des Anglais'.¹⁴¹ In the 1880s the English custom of walking was recognised with the designation of a favoured area above the city as the *Bois des Anglais*.¹⁴² In addition to walking, boating could be enjoyed almost every day and there were organised fishing parties and picnics.¹⁴³

Excursions also allowed the sojourners, particularly ladies, to indulge in the long-established practices of the genteel classes: sketching and collecting. The visitor was easily distinguished by their equipment. The Two Ladies with their binoculars, sketch books and pencils were looked upon with 'much curiosity' and they also 'wandered along the shore in search of shells'.¹⁴⁴ In 1873 it was said that 'every visitor who stays even a few weeks there [Ajaccio] becomes by what appears an inevitable destiny, if not a conchologist, at least a shell collector. All the shores in the neighbourhood are thickly strewn with a great variety of shells of such exquisite beauty as to form, colour and delicacy of texture'.¹⁴⁵ The best collection was undoubtedly that of Miss Campbell who 'had for years devoted herself to the task of collecting, chiefly by means of dredging apparatus every possible variety' resulting in a collection that 'would rejoice the heart of a conchologist'.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁹ d'Este, p.21; Barry, p.179.

¹⁴⁰ Ribton, p.66.

¹⁴¹ Lorrain, p.33.

¹⁴² Binet, p.188. The *Bois des Anglais* is still known by this name.

¹⁴³ Ribton, p.66.

¹⁴⁴ *A Winter in Corsica*, pp.132, 155.

¹⁴⁵ *The Times*, 25 October 1873.

¹⁴⁶ Cecil F. Parr, 'Random Recollections of Corsica', *National Review*, 14, 84 (February 1880), 811-25 (p.825). Miss Campbell's collection was bequeathed to the city.

Conclusion

The mobile elites were constrained in their ability to create an 'expatriate bubble' in Ajaccio.¹⁴⁷ The sense of Britishness that was exhibited by segregated societies that were surrounded by familiar artefacts, values and behaviours (symbols of portability) was limited. The major constraints were the small size and seasonality of the community and the lack of development of the facilities in the island. These forced sojourners to modify expectations and adapt to the limitations and differences of life in the city.

In Ajaccio it was impossible to live a totally segregated life. The Quartier des Étrangers, with its new hotels and standing apart from the old town, made it easier for the British to bond with each other and preserve their cultural identity. However, it was always a space shared with other members of the sojourner and elite host communities. In the centre of this area was the Anglican Church which opened its doors in 1878. Where segregation was impossible, the cultural bond represented by the church, as a symbol of community and religious leadership, was even more important. As one of the cornerstones of British life, it was only here that the British could be guaranteed to be in a majority and be more conscious of themselves as distinctly British. It was a key element in helping sojourners 'to preserve what they regarded as British cultural identities and practices'.¹⁴⁸

The pre-industrial world of Corsica could never provide the standards of living the elites were accustomed to. The lack of the trappings of modernism was one of the great attractions of the island but its very backwardness militated against the British being able to maintain their cultural identities and practices. Basic favoured foodstuffs and items of 'portable property' were lacking. There was an absence, or restriction provision, of the key items associated with Britishness: tea, milk, butter and *cabinets Anglais*. There were improvements as the colony grew in size. From the 1880s sojourners could find a world that was still attractively strange but also had more familiar elements. It was possible to buy underwear in the *façon Anglaise*; there was some gas lighting and *cabinets*

¹⁴⁷ Bernard Porter, "'Bureau and Barrack": Early Victorian Attitudes Towards the Continent', *Victorian Studies*, 27 (1984), 407-33 (p.410).

¹⁴⁸ Bridge and Fedorowich, *The British World*, p.19.

Anglais were encountered more frequently. Nevertheless, the ability to procure items of material culture to satisfy the demands of the sojourners was restricted by French import and export regulations and lack of any real tradition of commerce among the Corsicans.

With restrictions on material culture, maintaining the quotidian had a heightened significance. Daily activities such as afternoon tea, newspapers, clubs, excursions and sport, although not of the same quantity or quality as could be experienced on the Riviera, could be found in Ajaccio. By following similar routines to those at home, the sojourners not only had an antidote to an unfamiliar place but also enabled newcomers to find an environment with familiar behaviours and an identifiable Britishness.

The British were seen to have a 'transportable set of values which could be transplanted, translated and recreated anywhere on the globe, embodying the institutions and social values of Anglo-Saxon culture: language, literature, law, liberty, justice, order, morality and Protestant Anglican religion'.¹⁴⁹ 'Englishness' in an expanded British world, as evidenced in this chapter, was largely achieved through material culture and the rhythm of the daily life of individuals. However, a 'collective identity' or shared understanding was important to compensate for the cultural difficulties encountered when the English colony mixed with the host and other communities on a social level.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ See Young (2008) and Kumar.

¹⁵⁰ Chiara Bottici & Benoît Challand, *Imagining Europe: Myth, Memory and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p.45.

Chapter Six

Sojourners: A Construct of Communities

'Englishmen in all parts of the world still remembered that they were of one blood and one religion, that they had one history and one language and literature.'¹

Introduction

The British in Ajaccio were far from being an exclusive sojourner community. They were among a group of Anglophone mobile elites who resided and socialised with other nationalities and the host communities of Corsicans and continental French. This chapter examines British collective identity in the unfamiliar setting of Corsica. It reviews the stereotyping of the Corsicans whose social and cultural differences might be expected to strengthen British identity. The chapter also examines how the similarities between communities mitigated alienation and, to some extent, dissolved the social boundaries.

For John Seeley (1834-1895) migration went to the core of British identity, and although James Froude (1818-1894) and Charles Dilke (1843-1911) wrote in different ways about diaspora, they both observed the group solidarity of the English abroad.² The British world of migration, culture and identity lay at the heart of many postcolonial accounts of empire. Recent imperial historians and postcolonial scholars have advocated a 'cultural glue' which held together this British world consisting not only of sentiment and shared institutional values but a plethora of networks.³ In considering communities abroad, the work of social psychologists, such as Tajfel, Turner and others, on social identity theory is beginning to be applied by historians and complements the historical focus on nations and nationality.⁴

Social identity theory suggests that the oppositional impact of cultural

¹ Sir John R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan, 1883), p. 86.

² Seeley; James Anthony Froude, *Oceana* (London: Longmans, Green, 1886); Sir Charles Dilke, *Greater Britain: A Record of Travel in English-Speaking Countries during 1866 and 1867*, 2 vols (London: Macmillan, 1868).

³ In particular see Bridge and Fedorowich (2003a); Lester (2001), p.130; Magee and Thompson.

⁴ Tajfel.

distinctions strengthens the common bond. Corsicans were portrayed as backward, lazy and primitive, tropes that were applied homogeneously to the islanders across the period of the study. These characteristics became a widely held stereotype, or set of beliefs about the members of a society or social groups that are associated with influencing attitudes and behaviours of a particular social category or persons, in this case sojourners and settlers, towards people they have never met.⁵ These set of characteristics used to describe the islanders pertained to southern Europeans more generally, although there were Corsican inflections.⁶ Ideas about national identity were reinforced by nineteenth-century beliefs in respect of a wide range of 'actions and expressions – phrenology, physiognomy, intelligence, morals and behaviour, customs and traditions and even the landscape'.⁷ There were commonly held beliefs about national characteristics; for example, that the Dutch were 'mean', the Germans 'lack a sense of humour' and the British were 'stand-offish'.⁸ However absurd this may seem its 'effects are real and never completely fictional'.⁹ The Anglophone world held a strong belief in the unique qualities of the Anglo-Saxon race and in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon institutions that was widespread by the mid-nineteenth century.¹⁰ These qualities went to the heart of what it meant to be a sojourner. Even where authors put forward more neutral or positive viewpoints about the Corsicans, such as Miss Campbell and Edward Lear, their writings were permeated with paternalism. Literature and tourism imagery constructed and repeated the stereotypes which reinforced the dominant paradigm of the Corsicans as the 'other'. There is a strong link between stereotypes and identity which is generally accepted as strengthened by a heightened awareness of difference that kept peoples apart.

Corsicans, as a group, were perceived as the 'other' not just by the British community but also the continental French. There were differences of

⁵ Cinnirella, pp.37-39.

⁶ Edensor, p.8; Cinnirella, pp.37-39.

⁷ Pieter François, 'A Little Britain on the Continent: British Perceptions of Belgium 1830-1870' (Doctoral thesis, University of Pisa, 2010), Cliohres.net, pp.82-84.

⁸ J. Leerssen, *Images – Information – National Identity and National Stereotypes* (2013) <http://cf.hum.uva.nl/images/info/leer.html>, (last accessed 26 June 2018).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Hall (2002), p.368.

religion, language, dress and race, key attributes that fostered a sense of what constituted civilisation in the eyes of northern Europeans.¹¹ There were also cultural distinctions of class and values seen in attitudes to leisure. Leisure was one of the defining qualities of gentility and was not regarded as idleness.¹² The differences created a common sojourner bond and a 'generalised sense of European superiority' which depicted the world as an 'essentially British sphere of action' that considered most non-British as inferior races or some form of 'other'.¹³ Race was a 'widespread aspect of discourse about empire and population' and more usually referenced to the 'other' of Asia or the African sub-continent.¹⁴ The example of a similar attitude to the Corsicans supports Marjorie Morgan's assertion that the 'other' on the continent should receive as much attention as has been given to the Imperial 'other' since the European 'other' was more likely to be encountered by Victorians and Edwardians travellers.¹⁵

In the circumstances of Corsica, it might be expected that a 'common identity' would arise out of a 'common predicament', and the differences would keep the communities apart.¹⁶ Within a shared British culture there was an understanding about the rules and conventions by which social life was governed. This was especially important abroad when local knowledge about the status of individuals and the ways things were done were lacking. As in the colonies of Empire, the British Mediterranean world reproduced the same kind of social hierarchies that existed at home.¹⁷ The host communities' upper classes were limited in number and practised unfamiliar etiquettes that added anxiety for the sojourners. However, there was no sense that the British did or could keep their distance from the Corsicans in the way that Bickers has shown, for instance, that the British did with the Chinese.¹⁸ From the earliest days of the station in Ajaccio, mingling with other groups, including the continental French,

¹¹ Gascoigne, p.587.

¹² P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism 1688-2000* (Harlow: Routledge, 2001), p.294.

¹³ See Bridge and Fedorowich, (2003a), pp.3, 5 and John M. Mackenzie, *European Empires and the People* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp.4: 58.

¹⁴ Kathrin Levitan, 'Sprung from Ourselves: British Interpretations of Mid-Nineteenth century Racial Demographics' in *Empire, Migration and Identity in the British World* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2017), pp.60-81 (p.60), eds by Kent Fedorowich and Andrew S. Thompson.

¹⁵ Morgan.

¹⁶ Bickers (1999), p.67.

¹⁷ Farr and Guégan, II, p.3.

¹⁸ Bickers (1999), p.67.

was unavoidable. However, there were points of commonality and affinity between Britons and Corsicans, particularly at an individual level, that fostered the good relations that seemed to exist over the period of the study and balanced the predominantly negative homogeneous images. The two island peoples had a common interest in liberty and independence and enjoyed socialising, hunting, shooting and fishing which encouraged the development of friendship. In addition, for much of the period, there was also a common enemy – the continental French.

The Corsican Stereotype

‘As is the country, so is the people. There is so much of the rude and primitive about them, that it is difficult to remember that their country is one of the most anciently inhabited portions of Europe.’¹⁹

Corsica was part of the culturally distinct southern Mediterranean region where visitor accounts and official reports, as Benedict Anderson has observed, resulted in the portrayal of the ‘imagined’ community of the island as an example of the ‘other’.²⁰ Places on the margin were seen as being left behind and, as northern European nations became more sophisticated, the contrast with southern Europeans became more marked. The convergence of contemporary observations suggested a common perspective with a widespread conventional wisdom of Corsican backwardness and laziness; a stock stereotype that categorised all communities in the island. The British mostly accepted and repeated the generalisation, but there were some individuals who engaged more closely with the Corsicans and who recorded observations that ran counter to the accepted views.

From the early nineteenth century the Corsicans were depicted as at a

¹⁹ ‘Review of *Corsica in its Picturesque*’, p.444.

²⁰ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1994). Other examples can be found in Pratt; Graham Mowl and Michael Barke, ‘Changing Visitor Perceptions of Malaga (Spain) and its Development as a Winter Health Resort in the Nineteenth Century’, *Studies in Travel Writing*, 18, (3) (2014), 233-48 and Stephania Arcara, *Constructing the South: Sicily, Southern Italy and the Mediterranean in British Culture, 1773-1926* (Doctoral thesis, University of Warwick 1998), p.122, <http://ethos.bl.uk/OrderDetails.do?uin=uk.bl.ethos.267047>

lower stage of development, 'in a state of nature', 'three hundred years behind the age', 'not civilised' or 'primitive'.²¹ Civilisation was seen as an achievement of certain 'races' and the words 'race and nation' were often used interchangeably.²² In 1855 the Corsicans were referred to as a 'new and half-reclaimed race'.²³ With the scientific influence of Darwin in the second half of the nineteenth century racial dissimilarity was emphasised. With it went the alleged racial inferiority of subject peoples being defined by hierarchy of physical type, or 'ladder of civilisation'.²⁴ The growing British Empire enhanced awareness of difference, and descriptions of the south were set in context of 'race, national character [...] the ideas of progress and its imperial implication'.²⁵ In 1888 an explanation of the 'darkness of the native complexion' was considered to be that the 'Corsicans, though speaking an Aryan tongue, are not regarded as an Aryan race, nor yet as a partially Aryan race; but are considered from the approximation of the shape of their skulls to that of the skulls of the ancient Egyptians'.²⁶ Barry was in no doubt that the Ajacciens were 'un-European', and his book echoed numerous other works that portrayed the islanders as backward and barbarous, uncivilised and lazy or having an overtly Orientalist way.²⁷

It was easy to accept the received stereotypes because this was the way of the British in most places. In Egypt, for example, the Egyptians were dismissed as being 'brutish, insensitive and mentally deficient'.²⁸ In Argentina, British visitors considered anything native as 'corrupt and inferior'.²⁹ 'European peasantry came to appear only somewhat less primitive than the inhabitants of the Amazon'.³⁰ Corsicans were likened to the Irish whose lethargy contrasted with the perceived 'northern virtues of hard work, abstemiousness and skills in trade and manufacture'.³¹ When it came to manual labour, the islanders were said to be 'too indolent to do more than is absolutely necessary to keep body

²¹ Benson, p.22; *Westmorland Gazette*, 28 March 1863; Campbell, p.259; Archer, p.49.

²² Young (2008), pp. 42-48.

²³ 'Review of *Corsica in its Picturesque*', pp.444-45;

²⁴ Darwin's *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859; Mandler (2006), pp.72-77.

²⁵ Said, p.3.

²⁶ *Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Times*, 27 August 1888.

²⁷ Barry, p.85-86.

²⁸ Anthony Sattin, *Lifting the Veil* (London: Tauris Parke, 1988), p.269.

²⁹ Rock, p.52.

³⁰ Pratt, p.35.

³¹ Walton, p.183.

and soul together'.³² Even Lear, whose views on the Corsicans were more favourable than most, declared that they were 'slow and lazy and quiet generally'.³³ Bennet described how he was told that 'the peasantry, [and] all proprietors, led the same "farniente" life of easy enjoyment'.³⁴ This was put down to the cultivation of the chestnut and olive which took little time and provided enough to live on and pay debts. 'Why should he work, says the peasant, when his future is thus secure?'³⁵ Consul Drummond reported that 'The smallest proprietor of the soil be it only an acre or two of vineyard, disdains to labour with his hands and hugs with pride his title of proprietor and sense of ownership'.³⁶ He reinforced this a year later: 'The Corsican is above doing manual work [...] 10-12,000 Italians come every year to the island, and by them all the tillage is done.'³⁷ Italian labour was relied upon until the First World War. Thousands of seasonal migrants arrived between October and April mostly engaged in manual labour in agriculture and later in public works.³⁸

Particular reasons or excuses were put forward for Corsican indolence. Consul Holmes pointed out that 'owing to the absence of roads and railways, or rapid and well-organised communications with France and other Mediterranean ports, and doubtless also owing to lack of capital and ignorance of the best methods and of the best crops and fruits to raise, Corsican landowners could not even if they tried, develop their land or profitably dispose of their produce'.³⁹ Others believed that 'A false pride deters most islanders from doing manual labour', which they considered degrading.⁴⁰ The history of continual invasion was also seen as a deterrent to agriculture. Holmes acknowledged that the Corsicans were averse to manual labour but thought that they were 'not so indolent as they are so often accused of being, they almost always preferred to emigrate and to seek to enter the army, navy, police or other Government employ with a pension at the end, rather than stay at home and endeavour to

³² Mrs Edward Robson Whitwell, *Through Corsica with a Paint Brush* (Darlington: William Dresser, 1908), p.6.

³³ Lady Stracey, ed., *Later Letters of Edward Lear* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1911), p.104.

³⁴ Bennet (1870), p.268.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

³⁷ PP 1877 [C.1855]. *Commercial. No 24 (1877). (Trade Reports). Reports from Her Majesty's Consuls on the Manufactures, Commerce, &c., of the Consular Districts.*

³⁸ Wilson, p.12.

³⁹ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁴⁰ *Galveston Weekly News*, 9 September 1880.

improve their farms or holdings'.⁴¹ It was often observed that 'Those Corsicans who chose to make a career abroad made model soldiers and most hard working public servants'.⁴² Not everyone agreed. Sala saw such work as the 'sole objective of obtaining some post where there will be very little to do'.⁴³ Some writers noticed the difference between city and country: 'Although the charge of idleness may be against a crowd of loungers in Ajaccio and its neighbourhood, it cannot be said to hold good with the unsophisticated inhabitants of the mountains. Idleness is rare there.'⁴⁴ In the countryside, hard work went alongside primitiveness on account of the lack of mechanisation of agriculture.

The one area where the Corsicans were seen to apply themselves was to violence which was put down to their primitive nature. From the mid-eighteenth century the islanders had been seen as possessing the virtues of bravery, love of freedom and simplicity of manners and hospitality which had been popularised by Boswell. For many years these Corsican qualities were admired as characteristic of a 'vigorous and primitive race' but there was also 'a fearful tendency to overmastering fits of anger and hate'.⁴⁵ 'Constant warfare' had made the Corsicans as 'essentially warlike-as thoroughly so as the Highland clans or the Austrian Borderers'.⁴⁶ Their 'passions' and 'ruggedness' of character were also accounted for by belonging to a 'peculiarly wild and beautiful rock, forest-covered land' described as 'wild as the interior of Africa'.⁴⁷ One of the first references to this 'national landscape ideology' appeared in 1868 when it was said that 'The whole Corsican character, with its stern love of justice, its furious revengefulness and wild passion for freedom, seems to be illustrated by the peculiar element of grandeur and desolation in this landscape'.⁴⁸ The portrayal of primeval forests and jagged mountains by nineteenth-century artists such as Edward Compton and Lear reinforced the imagery of the extremes of the Corsican character (savagery, heroism, pride

⁴¹ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁴² For example, *Sioux City Journal*, 9 July 1896.

⁴³ Sala, pp. 132-33.

⁴⁴ 'Mountain Life in Corsica', *Standard*, 23 October 1872.

⁴⁵ Baedeker (1868), 403-14 (p.403); 'Review of *Corsica in its Picturesque*', p.449.

⁴⁶ 'Review of *Corsica in its Picturesque*', p.447.

⁴⁷ Guy Rothery, 'Corsica and the Corsicans', *Time* (8 August 1890), 833-42 (p.845); Baedeker (1868), p. 403; *Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 13 February 1895 and others.

⁴⁸ 'Ajaccio' (1868), p.500.

and superstition) that had come about through adversity inherited from a 'mythical class of forebears, the peasants, yeoman or pioneers who battled against, tamed and were nurtured by these natural realms'.⁴⁹

The islanders came together when fighting their oppressors, but it was the vendetta that was the strongest driver of the image of the Corsicans.⁵⁰ In the absence of face to face encounters with Corsicans, and continued references to the 'problem of Corsica', the stereotypical view was based upon media representations. This 'imagining' of the Corsican nation began in the early nineteenth century through the fictionalised accounts of Prosper Mérimée's *Mateo Falcone* (1829) and *Colomba* (1840) and Alexandre Dumas' *Corsican Brothers* (1844). The latter was a continual presence on the stage and later in film up to the second half of the twentieth century. British fiction continued the theme and demonstrated the longevity of the premise with Edward William Davies', *Paul Pendril, or Sport and Adventure in Corsica* published in 1866 and Henry Seton Merriman's *Isle of Unrest*, published in 1900.⁵¹ The fictional accounts resulted in oft repeated characterisations. The opinion of the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1868 was typical: 'Corsica is still behind the other provinces of France. The people are idle, haughty, umbrageous, fiery, quarrelsome, fond of gipsy life, and retentive through generations of old feuds and prejudices to an almost inconceivable degree.'⁵² Charles Maine believed that 'most Frenchmen and a good many other people, get their knowledge of Corsica from *Colomba*'.⁵³ 'The levelling and equalising effects of advancing civilisation' did not alter the Corsican's 'revengeful ferocity', warned the Baedeker guide in every edition from 1868 to 1902.⁵⁴ That guide books were not updated was not unusual but also reflects the lasting views of the Corsican character.

The depictions of the Corsican character by Anglophone authors were shared by the continental French. They regarded the Corsicans as backward

⁴⁹ Edensor, p.40.

⁵⁰ David Evans, 'Creating the Island Imaginary: Corsican Poetry in French (1870-1960), *Modern and Contemporary France*, 18, (1) (February 2010), 67-91 (p.72).

⁵¹ Edward William Davies, *Paul Pendril, or Sport and Adventure in Corsica* (London: Bentley, 1866); Henry Seton Merriman *The Isle of Unrest* (London: T. Nelson, 1900).

⁵² 'Ajaccio' (1868), pp.497-98.

⁵³ Charles Sumner Maine, 'The Extraordinary Condition of Corsica', *Murray's Magazine*, 3 (March 1888), 385-97 (p.385).

⁵⁴ Baedeker (1868), p. 403.

compatriots and rarely visited the island. Dr Paul Picard noted that the continental French did not come to the island 'undoubtedly due to prejudice against the character of the Corsicans', and few settled in the island.⁵⁵ Even the officials had issues. Robert Benson noted that 'to be stationed even in the best of quarters in Corte is considered by the French regiments a sort of exile'.⁵⁶ The British saw that the continental French felt themselves to be 'strangers in the island' and regarded their period of service as a 'cheerless banishment to the "isle of goats"'.⁵⁷ Consul Smallwood told the Foreign Office that the new Préfet in 1871 was greeted with disfavour: 'As a journalist his often avowed dislike of Corsicans has rendered his appointment here distasteful'.⁵⁸ It is no surprise that between 1870 and 1885 there were fourteen Préfets sent to Corsica. The Préfet of 1897 likened the Corsican to the mouflon, a 'noble beast-somewhat dangerous [...] an animal that you can never tame'.⁵⁹ According to Edwards in 1900, 'The journalists of Paris write of the Corsicans as "savages"'.⁶⁰ The citizens of metropolitan France looked down on the inhabitants of the most rural parts of France: 'You don't need to go to America to see "savages" mused a Parisian as he strolled through the Burgundian countryside of the 1840s'.⁶¹ The Corsicans were considered as reflecting the prevailing belief that some areas and groups of people in France were uncivilized, i.e. unintegrated into French civilisation: 'poor, backward, ignorant, savage, barbarous, wild, living like beasts with their beasts'.⁶²

It was not surprising, therefore, to find tension between the Corsicans and the continental French. In Bastia, the British vice-Consul observed that there was: 'little social intercourse here between the French residents and the native families. The military officers scarcely take the trouble to conceal their contempt and dislike with which they regard the Corsicans, while their wives look upon the inhabitants with aversion. They consider them as belonging to an

⁵⁵ Picard (1872), p.26.

⁵⁶ Benson, p.16.

⁵⁷ Edward Howell-ap-Howell, *The Birthplace and Childhood of Napoleon* (New York: Scribners, 1896), p.5.

⁵⁸ TNA: FO 27/1895, Consul Smallwood to FO, 25 January 1871.

⁵⁹ Rothery, p.89.

⁶⁰ Charles Edwards, 'The Corsican at Home', *Macmillan's Magazine*, 82 (1 May 1900), 367-74 (p.370).

⁶¹ Eugene Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernisation of Rural France 1870-1914* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977), pp. 3-5.

⁶² Ibid.

inferior race'.⁶³

The attitude of the continental French was reciprocated by the Corsicans. 'At many of the festive entertainments, Corsican belles are wont to chatter in their native patois [...] Need I explain that this charming manoeuvre is a delicate hint that they wish not to hold intercourse with their visitors from the opposite shores of the Mediterranean.'⁶⁴ Michael Broers noted that the French were also arrogant towards the Italians and that the 'contempt in which they held the Dutch and Spanish was well known', thus making Said's thesis on the 'other', albeit controversial in its original concept, a 'ready application to French attitudes'.⁶⁵ Whilst relationships between the continental French and the Corsicans were complicated by politics (the island remained fervently Bonapartist for many years, particularly in Ajaccio), Corsica can be added to Broer's list.⁶⁶ Despite being part of the French state, Corsica retained a 'strong autonomous culture and language', and had a growing sense of patriotism and burgeoning nationalism.⁶⁷ Even where the Corsicans mixed with the continental French in the colonies, they were perceived as being 'distinctly different'; as agents of the French state, the Corsicans were disproportionately represented in the colonies and many colonial French regarded them as 'intruders'.⁶⁸

Few attempted to 'lift the veil' of the national stereotype, but their works often contained a judgement or interpretation of the Corsicans which offered inflections to the more generalised tropes about the inhabitants of the Mediterranean world.⁶⁹ This was usually expressed as surprise when they encountered traits and contradictory attitudes that ran counter to their preconceptions.⁷⁰ Lear, for example, recorded meeting the ladies of the Giacomoni family at St Lucie de Tallano: 'though they have never been out of their native island, [they] are well educated, and full of information about their

⁶³ Hugh Robson, 'Life in Corsica', *Sunderland Daily Echo and Shipping Gazette*, 9 June 1883.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Michael Broers, 'Cultural Imperialism in a European Context? Political Culture and Cultural Politics in Napoleonic Italy', *Past and Present*, 170 (February 2001), 152-80, (p.178).

⁶⁶ *Daily Express*, 1 December 1900 noted a growing movement for separation from France.

⁶⁷ Donald Reid, 'Colonizer and Colonized in the Corsican Political Imagination', *Radical History Review*, 90 (Fall, 2004), 116-18.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ Gregorovius was widely quoted.

⁷⁰ Sattin, p.2, found the same between the British and the Egyptians.

own country, as well as of interest regarding others.'⁷¹ He was even more impressed at Belgodère where he encountered the Malaspinas who were 'quite *au fait* regarding all European intelligence [...] Of their own island they are acquainted with the minutest details of both present and past condition'.⁷² The Corsicans were not inward looking. They were aware of world events. It was possible to read in the *Journal de la Corse* news of the Indian massacre, the monetary crisis in America in 1857, the political crisis in England in 1858, details of the American Civil War, the question of the Ionian Islands and even find reference to the *Evening Standard and Morning Post*.⁷³

Views of the Corsicans are well documented, but there is no evidence in any of the sources as to what the British thought of the other sojourner communities. A number of explanations are possible. The British may have taken for granted their superior position that no reference to others was needed. Similarly there are only a few hints in the records to suggest how the Corsicans saw the British other than the early days when they believed them to be spies.⁷⁴ However, stereotypical views were expressed. The *Journal de la Corse* described British politicians as 'proud and arrogant', the 'Sons of Albion' as the 'most industrious and entrepreneurial and most adventurous and eccentric'.⁷⁵ However, the term 'Our English Colony' hints of a sort of possessiveness and familiarity.⁷⁶ Few British writers comment on how the Corsicans saw them. This reflects their Anglo-centric point of view but also the sometimes superior and patronising attitude taken. The 'Two Ladies' were the worst offenders. They described the custom of 'wailing' at a funeral as 'of great annoyance at times and some English friends of ours had been exceedingly disturbed the previous winter by the noise in the house they occupied, on the death of the owner who lived on the first floor'.⁷⁷

Despite such attitudes in 1880 W. Miller noticed 'that foreigners, especially Englishmen, are held in great esteem and almost idolized'. The

⁷¹ Lear, p.103.

⁷² Ibid., p.231.

⁷³ *Journal de la Corse*, 1857-1862.

⁷⁴ William Cowen and Edward Lear were accused of spying.

⁷⁵ *Journal de la Corse*, 18 May and 15 September 1857, 8 May 1860.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 1 May 1866.

⁷⁷ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.186.

Corsicans appeared to be more kindly disposed to the sojourners in general than they were to the continental French. Among the sojourners, the British seemed to be most favoured. *The Times* was able to say in 1873 that 'No nation is more popular here [...] They still remember Pascal Paoli, while the grave at Chislehurst is for them a very tender and pathetic tie to England'.⁷⁸ Furthermore, the names rue Miss Campbell, *Bois des Anglais* and *Cascade des Anglais* remain in use. There was the occasional disagreement. A ball organised by the English colony in 1891 resulted in friction because it was held during Easter week which went against the sentiments of the Catholic population.⁷⁹ There are hints of Corsican tension with the Germans from the time of the Franco-Prussian war which resulted in changes to the names of the hotels Germania and Schweizerhof, and in the early twentieth century there was a political attempt by the Corsicans to get closer to the Russians. There was also some anti-British feeling during the Boer War but this was not considered generally held.⁸⁰ An American author asserted that some of the British 'attempt to patronise the Corsican peasant [...] we are better liked than the English'.⁸¹ It is unlikely that the majority of the population differentiated between the two nations. However there may have been some truth in this assertion for Chapman warned visitors not to 'adopt the usual air of supercilious superiority of the British tourist', and Dugmore had to caution that one should 'request' and 'never order things or people in this country'.⁸² This does not specifically refer to the British, and newspapers like the *Daily Mail* and other authors continued to assert British popularity.⁸³

There is some evidence of a change of attitude by the Corsicans after the First World War. By the 1920s society was changing. The longer stay winter sojourner was giving way to the shorter-stay holiday maker. 'An air of rich vulgarity and indecent opulence was beginning to permeate society', and it was the era of the Bright Young Things, gossip columns, night clubs, cocktails, shorter skirts and dancing.⁸⁴ With the growth in visitors from the 1880s it is

⁷⁸ *The Times*, 15 October 1873. The grave at Chislehurst was that of Napoleon III.

⁷⁹ Pomponi (1992), p.305.

⁸⁰ Chapman (1908), p. 48.

⁸¹ Hawthorne, p.7.

⁸² Chapman (1908), p.6; Dugmore, p.27.

⁸³ *Daily Mail*, 21 September 1927; Dugmore, p.54.

⁸⁴ F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge and

unlikely that there was such a personal relationship with the Corsicans that visitors like Lear and Miss Campbell had enjoyed through their letters of introduction. Sheer numbers would have made it impossible for the Préfet to meet all arrivals as he had done in the earlier days of the winter station, and many visitors spent their time touring the island. The relationship changed to one of proprietor and customer. In 1926 a number of businesses 'complained that the tourists who come to us are unsavoury and are astonished that this beautiful country does not receive visitors more extravagant'.⁸⁵ One of the tests of united communities is how close these relationships were. According to Dr Picard 'long lasting friendships have come about between the islanders and foreigners'.⁸⁶ Prime examples were Colonel Hagart and Major Murray (Chapter Four). Antoine Piccioni (1808-1880) was also a good friend to the British (Chapter Eight). In addition to working closely with Arthur Southwell, Piccioni was helpful to Dr Bennet, Miss Campbell and Edward Lear during their stays in Corsica.⁸⁷ However, the key test of a truly integrated society - intermarriage between sojourners and their hosts – was rare, there being only a handful of such unions in Corsica.⁸⁸ Most likely, this was because, as Douglas Freshfield (1845-1934) noted, the islanders were said to talk of '*les dames anglaises*' as if they were a class apart.⁸⁹ English women were certainly different to Corsican women and there were other differences and preferences that kept the communities separate and, reinforced indirectly the stereotypical images of both peoples.

A World Apart

'Customs, habits, modes of life, ideas on all subjects' were 'different from those

Paul, 1971), p.107; Cannadine, p.352.

⁸⁵ *LCT*, 1926.

⁸⁶ Quoted by Lucchini, p.35.

⁸⁷ Jean-Pierre Campocasso, *Corse Industrielle (1830-1960)* (Ajaccio: Musée de la Corse, 2005), p.8.

⁸⁸ Pemble, p.262. Examples of marriage were: Alice Ann Forbes to the Marquis Adolphe Pianelli, *The Times*, 2 May 1882; John Cecil Berger, youngest son of the late Capel Berrow Berger of Lower Clapton, Middlesex to Catherine, eldest daughter of the late Joseph Emmanuelli of Calvi, *Hastings and St Leonard's Gazette*, 14 April 1894; Margery Isabel Wilson to Jean Marinacce Cavallacce of Oletta, *The Times*, 10 August 1899; Mary Margaret Dakin to Pierre Guelfucci of Corte, 23 March 1879, *Ancestry Census data*; Maud Evelyn Routley to Antoine Philippe Auguste Orega, *The Times*, 27 April 1912.

⁸⁹ Douglas Freshfield, 'Review of Gertrude Forde, *A Lady's Tour in Corsica* (London, 1880)', *Academy* (11 December 1888), 418.

which prevail in our higher English civilisation.⁹⁰

In unfamiliar cultures and surrounded by strangers, the British abroad were anxious about maintaining social status, mixing with the right people, upholding the codes and behaviours of the elite classes and avoiding social faux pas when confronted with different values and social practices. In Corsica this anxiety would have been more acute than in other places where segregation of living and socialising was possible. In the island there were visible differences of religion, language and dress, and the situation was made more complex by the nuances between the two host communities.

Spatial partition reinforced social separation. Mixing with the host community was something that was not expected. The British were renowned, generally, as being aloof and reserved from foreigners and anyone who was not their own class. Henry Addison (1821-1887) assured his readers contemplating an expatriate existence that the British 'had no desire to become part of [host community] society'.⁹¹ As Frederic Harrison observed foreign communities abroad could live in identifiable groups but isolated from each other: 'Germans, Frenchmen, English, Russians or Italians take their pleasure sadly in foreign parts, and in strict national lines. There are English, German and French resorts, English, German and French hotels in the same place, English, German and French tables in the same room.'⁹² In Algiers, the Anglo-American winter community flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries but always remained apart from the city.⁹³ In Corsica, mixing with other foreigners was unavoidable.

In these circumstances, the right social etiquette was a deep concern. Elaborate codes governed the nineteenth-century elite world from forms of introduction, seating and eating at dinner parties and the customs of calling. Its purpose was to ensure the right people met each other. Dinner parties were an essential mark of British culture which affirmed identity (class) abroad. In Corsica the sojourners found an important difference in respect of the

⁹⁰ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.237.

⁹¹ Quoted by François, p.69.

⁹² Frederic Harrison quoted by Billig, p.260.

⁹³ Ross (1991), p.8.

customary rounds of dining at the houses of peers. In the early twentieth century the Strasser-Enstés (English wife) entertained once a week as did the Dundas' (British Consul) who also organised bridge parties.⁹⁴ Addison believed that 'reciprocal sociability with foreigners would be impossible', and that it was not possible to be 'intimate as the habits are so different'.⁹⁵ Barry warned prospective visitors not to expect to be asked to dinner at 'private houses'.⁹⁶ He recalled that a friend informed him that in 'the ten years he had been in the place, though he had asked either to dinner or to breakfast almost every member of their large acquaintance, yet he had very rarely been asked in return'.⁹⁷ His view was that such entertainments were 'not in vogue'.⁹⁸ There was some confusion with the renowned hospitality of the islanders. It was often directly encountered and became as much a legend as the other widely held perceptions of the Corsicans. However it was not the reciprocal dinner party but the sharing of food and drink with strangers. This kindness and generosity was 'precisely because strangers they really are'.⁹⁹

Dining out could be a fraught experience. Dr Henry Panmure Ribton had been dismayed to find that the Europa lacked the expected 'waiters with white cravats and napkins on their arms to hand round dishes to the guests'.¹⁰⁰ Instead the custom was to lay all the dishes on the table which guests had to scramble for.¹⁰¹ This mode of serving food was no longer fashionable at home. By the 1870s it had become widespread to have dishes that emerged in turn to be distributed by servants, but it is unlikely that this happened in Corsica until the building of the new hotels in the Quartier des Étrangers in the later nineteenth century.

If there were few opportunities for private entertaining, there was a familiar round of soirées, but even these were different. At one such event given by the Préfet, 'Between the dances, light refreshments were handed round, such as oranges, syrups, ices, small cakes, and crystallized fruits, cups of

⁹⁴ *Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Times*, 27 August 1888.

⁹⁵ Quoted by François, p.69.

⁹⁶ Barry, p.65.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.158-59.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.160.

⁹⁹ Carrington, *Granite Island* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), p.65.

¹⁰⁰ Ribton, p. 25.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

chocolate and what seemed to be rather peculiar in an evening party, excellent tapioca-milk and clear *consommé*. There were also pretty little baskets made of orange peel and filled with jelly. Very little wine was taken.¹⁰² However, it was a

charming event. Everything was conducted in a simpler style than in England, and the refreshments were in better taste than the expensive, elaborate suppers to which people sit down with us on similar occasions. Surely in the conducting of social intercourse, and especially of evening parties, we might venture to put aside some of our national prejudices with regard to hospitality, or what is considered such, and begin to adopt the more easy and unsophisticated, yet equally elegant, customs of continental nations.¹⁰³

Anxiety was exacerbated by the perceived Corsican lack of and disregard for class. Many writers repeated the assertion, popularised by Gregorovius, that 'Perhaps there is nowhere in the world with such democratic uniformity of life as in this island, where differences of rank are scarcely perceptible'.¹⁰⁴ As late as 1927 Dugmore insisted that class distinctions scarcely existed in Corsica.¹⁰⁵ Wilson has challenged this perception as 'more apparent than real', but the critical point is that, compared to the elites at home or in continental France, there was no comparable dominant group of notables with large landed estates. Wilson identified strict limits to egalitarianism although some regions were more democratic than others.¹⁰⁶ In the central Niolo region wages were almost unknown, houses were about equal size and most people were listed in censuses as being of the same socio-professional status. In other areas where disparities in wealth were obvious (Balagne), patronage, familiarity and an egalitarian ideology of honour masked a situation of social inequality.¹⁰⁷

Nevertheless there was a top stratum of Corsican society. There were a small number of families who comprised the Corsican elite identified by the use of the term *sgio* or *signore* or by the title 'Don' and the possession of grand

¹⁰² *A Winter in Corsica*, p.184.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p.186.

¹⁰⁴ Gregorovius, p.269.

¹⁰⁵ Dugmore, p.28.

¹⁰⁶ Wilson, p.11.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

houses, family chapels and tombs.¹⁰⁸ The right to vote and stand for election, to hold licences to carry firearms, jury service and appointment to mayor were restricted to the same narrow circle of families.¹⁰⁹ In addition, most Corsican upper class families were poor compared to the British or continental French elites.¹¹⁰ Wilson found that in 1839, only five persons in the whole island reached the property qualification to stand for election to the Chamber of Deputies.¹¹¹ This immediately put the Corsicans at a disadvantage when for the mobile elites segregation by 'income, status, appearance, physical health, speech, education [...] was the symbolic mark of class society at its highest point of development'.¹¹² Later, when the sojourner group came to include the professional, financial and industrial bourgeoisie of Victorian Britain, there was no such equivalent in Corsica which made it difficult for visitors to find a social group that they could identify with.

Behaviour and customs could also be unexpected. In Britain events like the theatre and opera were usually enjoyed with social equals. In Ajaccio these occasions were attended by all. There was also greater familiarity. The Two Ladies described how the daughter of the laundress would come into their room without knocking with an insolent air which must have contributed to their opinion that 'There is considerable freedom of manner amongst these people, which is perhaps not unbecoming in them but which would scarcely be tolerated in England'.¹¹³ Later an Exeter clergyman set this out in more detail: 'The Corsican peasant' asks first 'as to your age, next as to your financial situation, thirdly as to whether you like Corsica, and lastly if you do, why you do not live there.'¹¹⁴ Miss Campbell warned Lear that master and servant usually had to dine together, and John Chapman identified that no Corsican would stand apart from 'any Englishman or other stranger' and that he was 'only too eager to approach them'.¹¹⁵ This attitude, while surprising, seems to have been

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p.13.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p.12.

¹¹⁰ Peter Savigear, 'Some Reflections on Corsican Secret Societies in the Early Nineteenth Century,' *International Review of Social History*, 19, 1 (April 1974), 100-14 (p. 107).

¹¹¹ Wilson, p.11.

¹¹² Perkin, p.27.

¹¹³ *A Winter in Corsica*, pp. 205; 239.

¹¹⁴ 'Exeter Clergyman in the Home of the Brigands', *Western Times*, 13 June 1921.

¹¹⁵ Lear, p.33; John Mitchel Chapman, 'The Conservative Corsican', *Sunday Times*, 15 November 1925.

accepted mostly with equanimity.

The different attitudes to leisure, religion, language, dress and social status created a cultural gap between the sojourners and their host communities. In Egypt, for example Lord Cromer highlighted the differences, 'What does the Levantine, Frenchman, or Italian, care for horse-races, polo, cricket, golf and all the other quasi-institutions which the English officer establishes where he goes?'¹¹⁶ For the British, sport and leisure was 'something to occupy the mind and the superfluous energies of the body' and was 'half the battle' in combating disease.¹¹⁷ For such purposes a first-class hotel with 'tennis-lawn' was recommended.¹¹⁸ Competitive sport was introduced to Corsica from the 1860s by foreigners, particularly the British.¹¹⁹ Sport has been seen as creating 'shared beliefs and attitudes between rulers and ruled while at the same time enhancing the social distance between them'.¹²⁰ While there is no question of Corsica being ruled by the British, the differing attitudes to sport played by the elites, particularly tennis and golf, kept the communities apart, at least initially. In Ajaccio, a tennis court could be found at the *Ariadne*, a dependence of the Grand Hotel located by the sea, and this was a favourite haunt of visitors. Tennis in England had become popular with the upper classes. By 1900 there were about 300 clubs attached to the Lawn Tennis Association, with a threefold increase over Edwardian years, and by 1914 there were around 1,000 clubs and many smart hotels and clubs were equipped with courts.¹²¹ Tennis abroad remained largely a social event; a venue to organise bridge parties, dances, picnics and concerts with no reference to it including the host communities. However, at some point the Corsicans took up the sport and the first Corsican tennis tournament took place in 1910.¹²²

By far the most common activity of the British was the daily excursion.

¹¹⁶ Evelyn Baring, Earl of Cromer quoted by Lanver, p.54.

¹¹⁷ Robert Hope Ascott Moncrieff, *Where to Go Abroad: A Guide to the Watering Places and Health Resorts of Europe, The Mediterranean, etc.* (London: Black, 1893), p.xvii.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ *Les Sports en Corse: Miroir d'un Société* (Ajaccio: Albiana, 2012), p.4.

¹²⁰ Brian Stoddart, 'Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire', *Comparative Studies in Social History*, 30, (4) (October 1988), 649-73 (pp.651-52).

¹²¹ Stoddart, p.657; Richard Holt, *Sport and the British: A Modern History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp.126-27.

¹²² *Les Sports en Corse*, p.8.

From the earliest days the Corsicans were amazed at the desire to walk for pleasure and they found the practice of climbing mountains astonishing.¹²³ The visit of an English group, who came in 1865 for a week's excursion through the island including the ascent of Monte Rotondo, was 'still spoken of in the town as something wonderful', especially as the party included ladies and a girl of twelve years old.¹²⁴ Barry observed that 'The English taste for mountain travelling is put down by the peasants to interested motives, such as searching for treasures or working as spies whilst it is generally regarded by the more educated and charitable as an amusing symptom of the national lunacy'.¹²⁵ Little had changed by 1908 when the mountaineer T.G. Ousten (1869-1911) found the Corsicans were 'apt to regard walking as a sign of mental instability'.¹²⁶

Walking was an opportunity for exercise while admiring the renowned Corsican landscape. Shepherds were often employed as guides in the mountainous regions, but 'the modern appreciation of natural scenery, which is firmly established amongst the races of the North, has but slightly penetrated into the conservative South, and has hardly reached an island such as Corsica'.¹²⁷ 'To ninety-nine out of a hundred of the Corsican people a love of scenery for the sake of scenery is a thing utterly beyond comprehension.'¹²⁸ Barry illustrated his point by telling an anecdote whereby the benches placed by the city along the road to the Iles Sanguinaires had their backs to the bay: 'That any lounge would look at the view has never occurred to the Councillors of Ajaccio.'¹²⁹ The use of the word 'lounge' in respect of the sojourners is interesting and mirrors the descriptions of the Corsicans. Only Williams seems to have noticed the irony:

The Ajaccien is lazy. But whom among us has the right to cast the first stone of criticism. The visiting Britisher uses gun and dog as thin veils for vagabondage. The modern Miss Nevills who swarm Ajaccio in winter dab away at sketches which may or may not ever decorate a wall but which serve as an excuse for sitting in the sun and drinking in the beauty of the

¹²³ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.85.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.86.

¹²⁵ Barry, p.181-84.

¹²⁶ T.G. Ousten, 'Nineteen Days in Corsica', *AJ*, 24 (February-November 1908), 645-60 (p.659).

¹²⁷ Barry, p.181.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.184.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

place.¹³⁰

Corsicans seemed to have plenty of leisure, but sojourners were at a loss to explain what they did with it: 'Of all this leisure the outcome is nothing.'¹³¹ The Two Ladies could not understand how their landlady could live without any form of occupation: 'Once or twice a week we spent an hour or so with Madame in the evening. We never saw her doing anything such as reading, sewing, or knitting; and we wondered how anyone could bear to live in this way.'¹³² For the Corsicans, 'cards and billiards, dice and dominoes, are the chief among the recognised forms of pastime' and 'no out-of-door sports are in fashion.'¹³³ Barry was clear that Corsican boys were different to English boys: 'They have no relish for sports and games (except hunting, shooting and fishing) but, knowing that their careers depend on their schooling, take to their lessons with singular zest.'¹³⁴ Doing nothing was particularly noticeable in Ajaccio where it was observed that: 'The two chief meals with their necessary solemnities, together occupy about six hours [...] The evening is spent at the card table or in talk. The rest of the day is variously passed: in lounging, in sleeping, or in playing whist.'¹³⁵ Men were seen everywhere: 'Crowds of youths, not apparently above the rank of artisans, are to be seen sitting on the place, basking in the sun at all hours; and the streets are full of men of all ranks [...] doing nothing but talk, talk, talk.'¹³⁶

The much commented upon laziness was an example of the attitude towards time, work, order and productivity. Corsicans were seen much like the indigenous peoples of Africa or Australia, 'alternative cultures whose perceived irregularity threatened the colonisers' dominant notions of order'.¹³⁷ By contrast Englishness was seen as exhibiting a set of values: 'pluck, honesty, hard work' as well as 'punctuality and experience in the wider world'.¹³⁸ Punctuality was held in great esteem by the British who found the Corsican approach to time a

¹³⁰ Williams (1923), p. 235.

¹³¹ *Evening Telegraph and Star and Sheffield Daily Times*, 27 August 1888.

¹³² *A Winter in Corsica*, p.146.

¹³³ Barry, p.155.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.147.

¹³⁵ *Evening Telegraph and Star and Sheffield Daily Times*, 27 August 1888.

¹³⁶ 'Trip to Corsica in 1867'.

¹³⁷ Nanni, p.3.

¹³⁸ Young (2008), p.206; Walton, p.183; O'Reilly, p.163.

significant frustration.¹³⁹ Margaret d'Este, for example, discovered that in trying to hire a carriage 'you might almost suppose that the men were on strike [...] The same repose marks the boatmen on the quay; not a guide, beggar, or tout pesters you with attention or petitions'.¹⁴⁰ D'Este contrasted the situation in Corsica with that of Naples where 'you would be surrounded by an excited group, shouting and thrusting bunches of fingers under your nose'.¹⁴¹ The situation had little changed by 1938 when Miss Garrard advised that those who intended to 'spend a holiday in Corsica must be prepared to forget time, for the Corsicans had absolutely no idea at all what the hand of the clock meant. You might order a carriage for nine and consider yourself lucky if it turns up at eleven-thirty'.¹⁴² The Corsican writer, Joseph Chiari, explained that 'One never asks the time in Corsica. Time for the village was told by the sun or the smoke from the railway engines. The Anglo-Saxon notion that time is money is meaningless in a place where the primary aim of life is not to make money, but to make time in order to slip out of time'.¹⁴³

Slipping out of time was seen to be part of the widespread view that 'indulgent over-abundance' of Catholic feasts and saints' days encouraged idleness and laziness.¹⁴⁴ Religion was a major source of cultural separation. The Two Ladies drew the conclusion that 'in some measure, their [the Corsicans] failings arise from the unenlightened and superstitious form in which Roman Catholicism exists amongst them'.¹⁴⁵ Corsican traditions and superstitions were prominent in the literature. A late nineteenth-century contributor to the *Bismarck Daily Tribune* found 'a comparatively modern and genteel civilisation' in the towns but when penetrating the heart of the country 'he becomes haunted by the memories of old traditions- the legends of the Evil Eye, of the devil and supernatural phantoms'.¹⁴⁶ Gregorovius was the first to write in English of the *streghe*, and the practice of telling the future in the shoulder blade of a sheep, and of the processions of the dead.¹⁴⁷ These and

¹³⁹ Walton, p.48.

¹⁴⁰ d'Este, p.12.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² *Daily Mail (Hull)*, 25 March 1938.

¹⁴³ Joseph Chiari, *Corsica; Columbus's Isle* (London: Barrie and Rockliff, 1960), pp.106-08.

¹⁴⁴ Nanni, p.47.

¹⁴⁵ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.242.

¹⁴⁶ 'The Island of Napoleon', *Bismarck Daily Tribune*, 14 June 1891.

¹⁴⁷ Gregorovius, p.187. A *streghe* was a vampire who loved to suck the blood of infants.

other legends were repeated by later writers. Chapman, for example in 1908, gave a detailed description of superstitions that were still shared by both the dwellers of Bonifacio and the mountain villagers: 'Zicavo is right in the centre of ancient Corsica [...] and full of interest for those who would study the old customs and curious superstitions. You must never go out in the autumn evening mists, because the evil spirits called *Gramante* are in them. You must be careful of the *acciacatori* and the *stregghi* [...] The *spirido* is another [...].'¹⁴⁸

Irrational beliefs encouraged the view that Protestantism was superior to Catholicism. 'Protestant nations were free, independent, tolerant and prosperous, friendly, thriving on commerce and constitutional liberties' which contrasted with Catholic nations which 'were sunk in despotism, dogma and poverty, the prey of power-hungry monarchs and superstitions'.¹⁴⁹ Few visitors openly expressed anti-Catholic views. The Two Ladies were the only authors to put their opinions in writing: 'Far be it from us to throw ridicule upon sacred things, or to seem to despise what others hold as good and holy, but we could not help looking upon many of the Roman Catholic ceremonies as childish and unmeaning.'¹⁵⁰

In addition to religion, few things were more indicative of nationality and place in society than appearance. It was an important element of the elite's identity, particularly for the women. From the mid-nineteenth century stylish dress was a 'sign of social status and moral worth'.¹⁵¹ Even the most adventurous of the female nineteenth-century explorers maintained 'strict codes of European dress through their travels'.¹⁵² Leslie Stephen was convinced 'that everyone is a barbarian who does not wear clothes of our pattern' and this belief was 'common to all mankind'.¹⁵³ British women's attire with its corsets, bustles, bonnets and petticoats and the men with their suits and bowler hats were a marked contrast to the islanders. And, for example, when the Two Ladies went out walking they changed into appropriate clothes which were considered

¹⁴⁸ Chapman (1908), pp.113-45.

¹⁴⁹ Kumar, p. 164.

¹⁵⁰ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.186.

¹⁵¹ Magee and Thompson, p.160.

¹⁵² Dea Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad: Victorian Lady Explorers* (Stroud: Haynes, 2004), p.152.

¹⁵³ S.O.A. Ullman, ed., *Men, Books and Mountains: Essays by Leslie Stephen* (London: Hogarth, 1956), p.148.

'shabby' by their landlady who was surprised at seeing them in 'neat attire' with their 'hair dressed in the morning'.¹⁵⁴ This was the opposite to the foreign ladies who unless they were 'expressly dressed for *receiving*, their in-door costume has not that neat and finished appearance, universal among all classes of women in England [...] too often any arrangement of the hair, as well as any refreshing use of cold water, is postponed until noon, when the toilet for the day is made'.¹⁵⁵

Language was another important difference. It was said to be the 'very essence of what distinguishes one people from another [...] and the most obvious definer of the lines which separate groups' and divided 'real human beings from the barbarians who cannot talk a genuine language'.¹⁵⁶ For many observers Corsican fell into the latter category being 'nothing else than a dialect of Italy' which was perceived as the language of 'ploughmen and shepherds' and was considered 'curious' when heard from 'polished ladies and gentleman'.¹⁵⁷ Most Corsicans maintained their language and culture long after Corsica was incorporated into France.¹⁵⁸ A survey of 1864 revealed that more than ninety percent of the population did not speak French.¹⁵⁹ This would have been more pronounced in the countryside than the two main cities, but as late as 1898 'C.H' asserted that his party had difficulty getting to his hotel in Ajaccio 'because nobody speaks French. It is all Corsican now'.¹⁶⁰

The Italianate traits were not surprising given the historical associations with that country. Up to the late 1880s the Baedeker guides continued to include Corsica within their Italian handbooks. Lear was delighted to find that 'everyone talks an Italian which is easy to understand' and which he spoke more fluently than French.¹⁶¹ Lear's language skills were apparently unusual for George Gaskell remarked in his book on Algeria, published in 1875, that 'as no people visit foreign countries as much as the English, to none is a knowledge of

¹⁵⁴ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.139.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.174.

¹⁵⁶ Hobsbawm (1991), p.51.

¹⁵⁷ *Evening Telegraph and Star and Sheffield Daily Times*, 27 August 1888.

¹⁵⁸ Robert Aldrich, 'France's Colonial Island: Corsica and the Empire', *French History & Civilization*, 3 (2009), 112-125 (p.113).

¹⁵⁹ Candea, p.121.

¹⁶⁰ For example see C.H., p.76.

¹⁶¹ Lear, p.112.

languages so necessary [...] Yet how few of the English we meet abroad can speak even the one-almost-universal tongue-French'.¹⁶² Various travellers' accounts continue to assert that in Corsica the language was 'Italian', and only the officials spoke French.¹⁶³ It was only after the introduction of free, compulsory school across France in 1882 that writers mention the increasing ability of the Corsicans to speak French alongside the native dialect.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Corsica continued to be a well-established language in the first quarter of the twentieth century.¹⁶⁵ It was not until 1925 that nearly all were said to 'speak French fluently'.¹⁶⁶ English, though, remained a problem. In the early days of the winter there was nobody in the place, except the vice-Consul, Joseph Susini, that understood English.¹⁶⁷ Change over time appeared to be slight; in the 1908 edition of the Reynolds-Ball guide the author recorded that 'in the principal hotels and shops of Ajaccio English is understood [only] to some extent'.¹⁶⁸ Language difficulties were common, but could be overcome if there were sufficiently similar cultural interests.

Common Ground

Differences between the communities, exacerbated by the lack of segregation, could have made life for the English Colony uncomfortable. However, there were sufficient familiarities and areas of common ground with the host communities, particularly with the Corsicans, to mitigate this. There was affinity with the Corsicans based on the solidarity of two island peoples. By the time of the establishment of the winter health station, there was a long-standing interest and sympathy for Corsica's past. The Corsicans were admired for having the doggedness of another island race and there was regard for their 'firm resolve not to yield to authority against the dictates of conscience'.¹⁶⁹ The Corsicans and the British came together willingly to share their passion for hunting,

¹⁶² George Gaskell, *Algeria As It Is* (London: Smith, Elder, 1875), p.95.

¹⁶³ For example, see 'Notes on Corsica - No.1', *Boston Evening Journal*, 24 April 1874; *Galveston Weekly News*, 9 September 1880; Douglas Freshfield, 'Midsummer in Corsica', *AJ*, 10 (1882), 194-219 (p.215); *Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Times*, 27 August 1888; Richardson.

¹⁶⁴ 'C.H.', p.76.

¹⁶⁵ Candea, p.154.

¹⁶⁶ Leigh Colam, 'Corsica as a Touring Ground', *Country Life*, 20 June 1925.

¹⁶⁷ TNA: FO 27/1724, vice-Consul Susini to FO, 24 March 1868.

¹⁶⁸ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.572.

¹⁶⁹ Bennet, (1870), p.271.

shooting and fishing. There was also a common enemy in the French. This was more a political than a social reality but nonetheless increased the empathy towards the islanders, and relationships with the British across the period were good.

There seemed to be little problem in accepting a social life that meant mingling with other communities. Size was an influence on how far mixing went. In the early days of the winter station in Algiers, the foreign community of Prussians, Poles, Russians and predominantly the British was large enough to form a social group that required little contact with the French or Algerians.¹⁷⁰ In Ajaccio the collective circle was so small that it had to include the continental French officials and elite Corsicans, if there was to be a social life. From the earliest days in Ajaccio there was said to be a 'nucleus of very good society'.¹⁷¹ There were soirées at the Préfecture and the Mairie which the Two Ladies enjoyed, as did Lear and Miss Campbell, which were said to have given 'an agreeable spirit to society'.¹⁷² Similar events were held by other high ranked Corsicans such as Count Baciocchi, Etienne Conti, Receiver of Finances; Viscount Sebastiani and businessmen like the Lanzis. The consuls also welcomed visitors in their residences.¹⁷³ Visiting yachts offered hospitality and calls were paid and received as at home.¹⁷⁴ Further opportunities for socialising were provided by visiting naval vessels, such as the French fleet, which entertained both the Ajaccio elite and the foreign visitors.

The hotels were the principal meeting places for socialising. In 1896 when the Grand Hotel in Ajaccio opened its doors, it became the prime meeting place for the foreign community, although it was also used for social events by the personalities of the city. As well as balls, an Italian orchestra played every day in the season and a concert was held twice a week at the pavilion at Ariadne.¹⁷⁵ There is little evidence that the British mingled with the locals by frequenting the cafés that began to spring up on the cours Napoleon, but café culture was not symbolically important to the British. As the winter station

¹⁷⁰ Redouane, p.18.

¹⁷¹ Bennet (1870), p.291.

¹⁷² Campbell, p.260; *A Winter in Corsica*, p.167.

¹⁷³ Pomponi (1992), p.243; Binet, p.186.

¹⁷⁴ There are some good examples in *A Winter in Corsica*.

¹⁷⁵ Binet, p.185.

expanded it is possible that mixing with the local inhabitants decreased. By the early twentieth century balls were being organised by the foreign colony themselves but numbers always remained too small for these events to be British only.¹⁷⁶ Something similar can be seen in Egypt. In the 1880s and 90s British and Egyptians socialised on an equal footing, but with Cromer's expansion of the official British community, they grew increasingly aloof by the turn of the century.¹⁷⁷

As well as the formal social events, the British and Corsican men shared sporting passions. Fox-hunting, which originated in Britain, was a symbol of British culture that was popular abroad, even though in places like Egypt the hounds died from the heat.¹⁷⁸ In Corsica chasing the fox was 'utterly unknown', but hunting and shooting of birds, boar, wild pigs, mouflon and deer, along with fishing, were long-established forms of amusement.¹⁷⁹ As early as 1844, Cowen noted that 'Corsica is considered one of the finest sporting countries in Europe'.¹⁸⁰ In 1923 the island was said to be a place where 'Sportsmen can shoot, without let or hindrance, quail, wild boar, red partridges, pheasants and water fowl'.¹⁸¹ In 1929, Edward Doubleday gave a talk on his tour of Corsica and described one drive of shooting 550 pigs.¹⁸² Few went as far as Sir Warden Chilcott MP who purchased a property in the north of the island and imported his own hunt: 'He has an English huntsman and pack of fifty dogs, and in strict regulation pink he and his guests have had much success. The party is mounted for the chase and they are the first mounted boar chasers in the history of Corsica'.¹⁸³ How different this was to the English hunt 'when in place of the smartness and the well-trained packs of one's ideal "meet" you have the most brigand-looking assemblage of native sportsmen, armed with formidable firearms and slung about with cartridges, powder-flasks, gourds of wine and capacious bags of food'.¹⁸⁴

¹⁷⁶ Pomponi (1992), p.305.

¹⁷⁷ Lanver, *The British in Egypt*, p.51.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p.98.

¹⁷⁹ Barry, p.155; *Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Times*, 27 August 1888. The mouflon is a wild sheep.

¹⁸⁰ Cowen, p. 175.

¹⁸¹ *Daily Mail*, 24 April 1923.

¹⁸² *Essex Chronicle*, 18 October 1929.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 12 January 1903.

The British shared another bond with the Corsicans – a common enemy in the French. Relationships between the French and the British had been troublesome and flared up intermittently for many years. Some of the most critical incidents took place at the time the winter health station was reaching maturity when there was a growing Corsican separatist movement. In 1881 there was hostility over Tunisia and in 1898, the clash at Fashoda.¹⁸⁵ The British public were well aware of the issues with the French as they were extensively debated in the press. In Algiers, for example, from 1879 anti-British sentiments were stirred up by the French newspapers which attacked ‘perfidious Albion’, criticised the missionaries and accused visitors, such as the Bishop of Argyll, of spying.¹⁸⁶ However, it did not prevent the sojourners visiting Algiers, the French Riviera or Corsica, and there appeared to be cordial relationships with the continental French in the island.

It is more probable that knowledge of the British history with the French created sympathy for the continual complaints by the Corsicans that the French government did little to alleviate poverty and support development. Howell’s view was typical of a number of writers: ‘The French [...] with all their resources of civilisation achieved no more for the island than a few improvements. Francisation of the island took place rigorously from about 1870 with the introduction of compulsory primary schools in every village and Francophone secondary schools in every town.’¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the Corsicans and the French remained ‘separated by a deep gulf of nationality, innermost nature, and sentiments’.¹⁸⁸ Corsica appeared to be ‘more and more a colony’ of the French State, but the Corsicans believed that they received less favourable treatment.¹⁸⁹ Others refuted this claim and felt that ‘the islanders have been treated most generously’.¹⁹⁰ For example, in 1892 it was noted that Corsica was ‘a department that cost the French government dearly since the Corsicans were only taxed at twenty francs per head compared to the rest of France at

¹⁸⁵ *Daily Express*, 25 November 1900.

¹⁸⁶ Redouane, p.25.

¹⁸⁷ Helena Drysdale, *Mother Tongues: Travels Through Tribal Europe* (London: Picador, 2001), p.248.

¹⁸⁸ Howell-ap-Howell, pp.5-6.

¹⁸⁹ Aldrich, and Connell, pp 281-98; Aldrich, pp.114-5.

¹⁹⁰ *Galveston Weekly News*, 9 September 1880.

seventy-five francs per head'.¹⁹¹ Richardson claimed in 1893 that 'The French have proved excellent masters of the island. They have covered it with as fine a system of roads as any in Europe'.¹⁹² George Goschen reinforced Richardson's view in 1899: 'The roads are perfect and in many places a triumph of engineering. They are broad, smooth, and have no dust [...] They have cost a fabulous sum, but are kept in beautiful order'.¹⁹³ It is difficult to explain the conflicting views. However, most of the differences occur towards the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century and it is most likely that the opinions reflected the political views of their authors. Anglo-French relations were more stable after the *Entente Cordiale* in 1904 when the two countries were drawn together by a mutual antipathy towards the Germans.

Conclusion

Typical scenes of bandits, bread and boar are still produced on tourist postcards as key images of the island. These are modern representations of the stereotypical image of the Corsicans that was held throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The predominant and sustained rhetoric of a backward and savage nation was hard to dispel. Images of the islanders were governed by the language of barbarism and had much in common with peoples the British found elsewhere in the Empire, particularly Africa and Asia. The Corsicans were seen as the primary 'other': exotic, backward, uncivilised, and at times dangerous.¹⁹⁴ This was usually applied homogeneously, but there were more positive descriptions of encounters with Corsicans, particularly in Ajaccien society, and there was some acknowledgement of the differences between urban and rural and class that did not conform to the stereotype.

The holding of stereotypes helped simplify a challenging environment and not only contributed to the formation of group identity and belonging but also reinforced the British opinion of their own industriousness and superiority. In Ajaccio some strong friendships were made between the British and the Corsicans but with inter-marriages small in number, real integration cannot be

¹⁹¹ Basil Thomson, 'Society in Corsica', *National Review*, 19, (111) (May 1892), 349-360 (p.356).

¹⁹² Richardson, p.517.

¹⁹³ George J. Goschen, 'A Driving Tour in Corsica', *Badminton Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*, 8, 43 (February 1899), 155-66 (p.157).

¹⁹⁴ Said.

argued. However, good relationships existed between the British and the Corsicans across the period of the study giving rise to the paradox whereby the largely homogenous stereotype of the islanders was ignored on a face to face basis. There were sufficient points of commonality between Britons and Corsicans to add complexity and blur the edges of the tenets of social identity theory which sees differences driving communities apart.

The extent to which seeing the Corsicans as the 'Other' acted as an oppositional element that bound communities together is arguable. There were palpable differences between the communities. The British had a sense of collective identity evident in notions of civilisation, in particular race and class. Distinct customs and practices marked them apart and unfamiliar social behaviours challenged the British notion of status and propriety which ensured a gulf remained between the groups which made it easier for the British to keep a sense of separateness. The general impression is that the British were viewed more positively by the Corsicans than the other communities, notably the continental French and Germans, and although differentiated by religion, appearance and language, there was no sense that the British did or could keep their distance from the Corsicans.

The desire for a social life overcame any reservations, and in Ajaccio the British socialised happily with the Corsican elite, and even activities such as tennis were played by the islanders within a few years. Sojourners were few in number, and facilities for amusement were limited particularly in the early days of the winter station. Socialising was helped by the historically rooted affinities between the two peoples which have been underplayed in the literature. The islanders were seen as sharing virtues with the British such as the love of liberty, pride and bravery. The focus on these attributes dated back to the eighteenth century and never totally disappeared. The more positive opinions came from those travellers who either spent a great deal of time in the island or who made several return visits. Miss Campbell's *Southward Ho!* is usually considered the most pro-Corsican account in respect of the inhabitants and Chapman's *Corsica an Island of Rest* is a later example. Writers identified a number of attributes which suggested differing reasons (or excuses) for observed negative Corsican traits.

By the late nineteenth century 'English people as a whole' believed they were 'not just peculiar but privileged, blessed by its inheritance and its mission in the world'.¹⁹⁵ This attitude resulted in significant clashes of culture. Nowhere is this more manifest than in the British attempt to invest in the economic development of the island. The backward and idle image of the Corsican was believed to be the reason for their lack of prowess in agriculture and industry. However, this meant that the island was considered to have unfulfilled potential which led to attempts to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the unexploited natural resources and underdeveloped commerce.

¹⁹⁵ Kumar, p.207.

Chapter Seven

Settlers: Trade and Industry

Introduction

By the late nineteenth century, there was increasing interest in Corsica as a trading partner and for its natural resources. The world economy was growing and entrepreneurs and investors from Britain's expanding commercial and industrial classes sought opportunities for trade beyond the empire in unexplored lands that were sparsely populated, rich in natural resources but lacking capital and labour. 'Few doubted the advantages of peripheral regions', and a few settlers decided upon Corsica.¹ The island was in a state of 'economic autarky' but had cheap land and was 'tempting to enterprise; its position commanding the entire Mediterranean between France, Italy and Africa is magnificent; the climate is fine; the land fruitful, mineral treasures abound'.² The Mediterranean already had trading networks within Britain's sphere of influence, and the visitor to this area was reminded of Britain's economic as well as military might with the flag flying over Gibraltar and the 'appurtenances of trade and empire in Malta, Cyprus and Egypt'.³

This chapter considers some of the ways in which British entrepreneurs contributed to the incorporation, albeit on a small scale and with varied success, of Corsica into the global economic network through the introduction of people, ideas, technology and values.⁴ In the absence of wealthy Corsican capitalists and lack of state support, foreign capital and know-how was desperately needed. The chapter is constructed through case-studies of two individuals who were representative of a British world that explored the commercial potential of places outside formal British control and who tried to turn Corsican promise into reality. It considers their contribution, the challenges they faced and their impact.

¹ Jeremy Adelman, *Frontier Development: Land, labour, and Capital on the Wheatlands of Argentina and Canada 1890-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p.2.

² Chiva, p.99; 'Review of *Journal of a Landscape Painter in Corsica* (London: Bush, 1870) by Edward Lear', *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* (12 November 1870), 634.

³ Pemble, p.269.

⁴ Adelman (1994), p.2.

The view was expressed about Corsica as early as 1795 that 'If the country was in a state of cultivation and the people in a state of civilisation, it would be Elysium'.⁵ In the early nineteenth century there was thought to have been little promise 'of the employ of British capital in Corsican trade'.⁶ However, by the mid-nineteenth century, 'there were few societies in which British influence in one form or another was incapable of infiltrating' both for financial gain and to inculcate more backward nations with Britishness: 'liberal, industrialised, progressive and clean'.⁷ It was believed that 'Elysium' in the island could be obtained with a British work ethic, introduction of modern methods of production such as enclosures and fences, and the use of technology.⁸

Opportunities for trade with the island arose when products such as cédrat and gallic acid began to increase production from the second half of the nineteenth century.⁹ Economic growth in Europe accelerated from the mid-nineteenth century characterised by new forms of global connection: an expansion of banking activities, the growth of world trade and international capital flows, construction of railways and the advance of industrialisation.¹⁰ At the same time liberalisation of British company law and a series of changes in banking and technology boosted the dynamism of the City of London which enabled more capital to be raised for overseas investments.¹¹ The availability of capital was increased by the upper classes when finding their agricultural incomes falling sharply after 1878, began to invest in stock exchange securities and the new financial instruments, such as joint stock companies with limited liability.¹²

⁵ Elliot and Minto, p.294.

⁶ TNA: FO 27/636, Consul Palmedo to FO, 12 January 1841.

⁷ Richard Evans. 'The Victorians: Empire and Race', *Gresham College Lecture*, 11 April 2011.

⁸ E.M. Lynch, 'Labour and Capital for Corsica', *Gentleman's Magazine* (November 1897), 464-72 (p.465).

⁹ The cédrat was a large, thick-skinned bitter lemon suitable for candying. Gallic acid is a type of phenolic acid. The sources use the terms gallic acid and tannin interchangeably.

¹⁰ Youssef Cassis and Philip L. Cottrell, *Private Banking in Europe: Rise, Retreat and Resurgence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p.113.

¹¹ Philip L. Cottrell, 'London's First Big Bang? Institutional Change in the City, 1855-83', in *The World of Private Banking* by Philip L. Cottrell and Youssef Cassis (Farnham: Taylor and Francis, 2016), pp.69-72.

¹² Robert Gildea, *Barricades and Borders: Europe 1800-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp.297-301.

The period from 1870-1914, seen as the 'City of London's Golden Age', was also the time of peak economic activity in Corsica. During this period Major William George Murray (1835-1894) and Arthur Castell Southwell, (1857-1910) settled in Corsica and took advantage of the promise of the island. Murray, a retired Bengal Service Corps officer, was permanently resident by 1873. He was not a settler in the conventional sense of going to a place where one's own society was already replicated as in the colonies, although when he first arrived and established himself at Carusaccia on the outskirts of Ajaccio, he would have felt part of the British winter world. In purchasing undeveloped land twelve miles from the city on the coast at Portigliolo Murray made a contribution to the development of agriculture in the island. His activity matched the pattern of better studied settler societies elsewhere that were also sparsely populated with an abundance of cheap or free fertile land.

Southwell was a grammar school boy who worked in the family business. He first came to Corsica in 1877 to sort out the company's problems with the *cédrait* contract (Chapter Eight) and was resident in Corsica from 1882. He was less like the traditional immigrant and can be seen as representing that, as yet, poorly studied class of 'career' migrants.¹³ He settled in Bastia, the commercial centre in the north of the island, where there was a small community of British who were involved in, or employed by a number of businesses. He was appointed vice-Consul and agent for both Lloyds of London and Thomas Cook. He became heavily involved in the mining industry of the island.

From the 1880s there was a significant expansion in investment in mining overseas. From 1875 in Algeria, for instance, mines of copper and silver lead attracted more investments than land.¹⁴ Algeria and Corsica were part of the mining manias that generated investment of £8 million per annum in the 1880s and £20 million each year for much of the 1890s.¹⁵ Between 1880 and 1913 there were over 8,000 companies registered in Britain for exploring and/or

¹³ Fedorowich and Thompson, p.18.

¹⁴ Redouane, p.25.

¹⁵ Phimister, p. 27.

exploiting mines abroad.¹⁶ They were subject to British law, were usually operated by British managers and were traded in British markets. On the eve of the First World War it is estimated that the proportion of overseas assets in British national wealth was thirty percent.¹⁷ Much of this capital was invested in railways, gas and electricity or mining. Investment in minerals was attractive due to the possibility of profits in marginal locations with a minimum of capital outlay.¹⁸ Mining was one of the most speculative forms of investment where large fortunes could be made and lost.¹⁹ Thus, mining enterprises were high risk, especially those abroad. Studies which have examined overseas companies have illustrated the unsuccessful nature of the majority.²⁰ Speculation was partly encouraged by the belief in the added security of Joint Stock companies which became the most typical vehicle for direct British investment abroad.²¹ The risk was heightened by the dealings of unscrupulous promoters.²² This was just one of a number of factors, political, economic, social and cultural in varying degrees that could determine success or prompt failure. Long distance trade was difficult. Costs were high, the markets unpredictable and differences of culture inhibited progress.

Smaller organisations were particularly vulnerable as was the situation in Corsica where there were also local inflections that added to the challenges. In Murray's case, the cédrat was susceptible to poor weather, was impacted by market forces and trade tariffs. Culture was a significant issue, more so for Southwell. Foreign entrepreneurs, as Miss Campbell had found (Chapter Four), were entangled in complicated legal processes and were faced with the almost universal reluctance of Corsicans to part with their land. The Corsican attitude

¹⁶ Harvey and Press (1989), p.64.

¹⁷ Wilkins, p.259.

¹⁸ S.M. Mollan, 'British Failure, Capital Investment and Information: Mining Companies in the Anglo-Sudan, 1900-13', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37, (2) (June 2009), 229-48 (p.229).

¹⁹ Roger Burt, 'The London Mining Exchange 1850-1900', *Business History*, 14, (2) (1972), 124-43 (p.124).

²⁰ See Harvey and Press (1989); Harvey and Press (1990b), pp.98-116; Phimister and Mouat; Timo Särkkä, 'The Lure of Katanga Copper: *Tanganyika Concessions Limited* and the Anatomy of Mining and Mine Exploration 1899-1906', *South African Historical Journal*, 68, 3 (2016), 318-41; Jean-Jacques van Helten, 'Mining, Share Manias and Speculation: British Investment in Overseas Mining, 1880-1913', in *Capitalism in a Mature Economy: Financial institutions, Capital Exports and British Industry, 1870-1939*, eds by Jean-Jacques van Helten and Youssef Cassis (Aldershot, 1990).

²¹ Wilkins, p.261.

²² Harvey and Press (1989), p.67.

to labour meant that most workers were seasonally employed Italians who returned home in the summer when working was dangerous due to malaria. In addition, the mines were in areas far from the limited transport links.

Major William George Murray

'We received a man of distinction, an Englishman [...] This was a former major of the Indian Army. Major Murray, a charming and gay companion who has received the right of the city among us and is today more Corsican than the Corsicans.'²³

Murray's time in Corsica was marked not only by his contribution to the tourism industry in Ajaccio (Chapter Four) but also to agriculture by the creation of a large plantation near the city at Portigliolo. There seem to be a number of reasons that attracted him to the island. In India he suffered a prolonged period of ill-health and it is possible that he spent some time in Corsica when on sick leave attracted by the vaunted health giving properties of Ajaccio.²⁴

From 1873 Murray was no longer on active service; he went onto half pay in 1876 and was placed on the retired list in 1882.²⁵ Being ill and facing retirement, he needed to increase his income. When Murray came to Corsica he was married with two children to support.²⁶ Many emigrants to India had the intention of returning home having benefited from the rewards that country had to offer. The fall in the value of the rupee in the 1870s and 80s made pensions and salaries unattractive.²⁷ Murray's father was a second son and died in 1842, thus there was no inheritance to return to.²⁸ His future appeared to lie in agriculture. However, England was suffering from the 'Great Depression' and Murray would have needed another source of income even if he had been able to purchase or rent land at home.²⁹

²³ Written by the Corsican politician Emmanuel Arène and quoted by Lucchini, p.171.

²⁴ Murray was on sick leave in 1867 and 1873 and also in March 1875 when he obtained permission to extend his leave by another six months (BL IOR/L/MIL/10/79.f.70).

²⁵ Hart, p.96; *The London Gazette*, 1 July 1882. Although not retired until 1882, Murray was not on active service after 1873.

²⁶ Census data listed Florence Murray and the children as always being at the family home in Lairthwaite, Keswick.

²⁷ Cannadine, p.423.

²⁸ *Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce*, 20 July 1842.

²⁹ Perkin, pp.66-67.

A significant attraction of Corsica for Murray was cheap and plentiful land. Many retired Indian civil servants and military men turned to the colonies and dominions when the British Isles ceased to provide them with adequate financial support.³⁰ However, opportunities in agriculture had become scarcer by the later nineteenth century.³¹ In Corsica there had been encouraging reports of the island from other Britons. In 1863 it was said that 'If you have any active industrious family that can speak French, with a capital of £200, they could make a certain fortune in four to five years'.³² The *Two Ladies* observed that 'With such an area and such a climate as Corsica possesses [...] much more might be produced than at present; but capital, enterprise, and above all industry, are required to render the country what it might easily become'.³³ Dr Herbert Panmure Ribton forecast that 'a small outlay meets with an abundant return', and Miss Campbell had assured her readers that 'land could be found to repay the purchaser'.³⁴ In 1868 the 'very best land either in Ajaccio for building or in the country for agricultural purposes would not cost more than fifteen pounds an acre'.³⁵ It is difficult to find a comparison for the cost of land in England where most land was held by the top tiers of society or the state. Alternatives could have included other places in the Mediterranean zone such as Algiers where the British, after the crushing of the uprisings of 1871, bought large expanses of land, mainly for vineyards but also olives and alfalfa.³⁶

In Algiers one British woman developed an ostrich farm and there were opportunities in Corsica for specialist products.³⁷ It is not known if growing the *cédrat* was Murray's intention when he arrived in Corsica, but he began to look for suitable land.³⁸ By the 1860s this fruit was the key commodity that defined Corsica, and the island was one of Europe's main suppliers.³⁹ Carusaccia did

³⁰ Cannadine, p.429.

³¹ Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p.37.

³² *Westmorland Gazette*, 28 March 1863.

³³ *A Winter in Corsica*, p.118.

³⁴ Ribton, p.64; Campbell, p.13.

³⁵ *The Times*, 8 June 1868.

³⁶ Redouane, pp.25-29.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.26.

³⁸ According to the Corsican politician Emmanuel Arène and quoted by Lucchini, p.171.

³⁹ Campocasso (2005), p.8.

not meet his needs and by 1874 Murray had bought the property at Portigliolo.⁴⁰ He was probably attracted by the potential profits. Each cédrat tree was capable of producing one hundred francs worth of fruit, and recent prices had rendered the industry highly remunerative.⁴¹ There was great optimism as to its future. Consul Shortt anticipated 'every probability of an increased export trade in wine and cédrat, a large extent of land being currently planted'.⁴²

By 1875 Murray had planted 7,000 trees; it was the largest plantation in the island.⁴³ He also grew melons, pineapples, tea, coffee and pepper.⁴⁴ He was successful firstly because he defied Ribton's observation that the 'cultivation of olives, oranges and lemons [...] would not much suit an Englishman's taste'.⁴⁵ Then, there were other sources of misinformation that he also wisely ignored. According to Miss Campbell, whom he would have known in Ajaccio, the cédrat was among fruits which 'thrive marvellously; and, if planted, would grow while you are sleeping [...] such is the fertility in general of the soil of Corsica, that I believe if you planted a broomstick it would grow'.⁴⁶ 1896 the *Sioux City Journal* proclaimed: 'Almost anything will grow in this strong, neglected soil [...] What the French call *énergie de la végétation* is here so great that the branches of lemon and citron trees newly cut and driven into the ground in August will be, three years later, almost in full bearing'.⁴⁷

Such overinflated claims about productivity did potential settlers no favours. Cultivation was not a simple matter. The *Lancet* was correct in stating that the soil was productive but only 'if properly cultivated'.⁴⁸ The cédrat needed to be planted with care and nurtured, since it was susceptible to drought, wind and cold weather.⁴⁹ At this time the British idea of improving the landscape was through the construction of cultivated fields and hedges. Ribton asserted that

⁴⁰ 'Corsica', *Lancet*, 5 September 1874; In 1876 the *Journal of the RGS*, 46 (1876), lxxviii, listed his address as Lairthwaite, Keswick, Cumberland and Portigliolo, Ajaccio.

⁴¹ PP 1876 [C.1555] *Commercial. No. 15 (1876). (Trade Reports.) Reports from Her Majesty's Consuls on the Manufactures, Commerce, &c., of their Consular Districts.*

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Lancet*, 5 September 1874.

⁴⁵ Ribton, p.65.

⁴⁶ Campbell, pp.15; 129.

⁴⁷ *Sioux City Journal*, 9 July 1896.

⁴⁸ *Lancet*, 5. September 1874.

⁴⁹ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports from, Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

Corsica was perhaps 'the only country in the Mediterranean where an Englishman may carry on farming in the genuine English style'.⁵⁰ This may have suited England but not Corsica. Enclosures went against the principles of property ownership and where fences were erected the custom of free pasturage continued for many years whereby the shepherds drove their flocks to the lowlands in the winter breaking fences and destroying young crops.⁵¹ Murray developed his plantation following the native cultivation of the land. He adapted the age-old Corsican methods of terracing but also used his expertise as a surveyor to work with the contours of the land to lay out an extensive irrigation system and identify where to plant trees for windbreaks.⁵² What he created was a 'delicious oasis'.⁵³

Corsica suited Murray's temperament. He would have found it hard to feel at home in the UK. He had spent most of his life in India, only returning to the UK for his schooling and army training.⁵⁴ In Corsica he would have found an outlet for his many interests and sense of adventure. In his time in India he wrote papers on iron and bats; he was an excellent sketcher, was interested in archaeology and was a good photographer being employed to record an army trip to Kashmir. He maintained his photographic interest when in Corsica exhibiting photographs of the island in *The Journal of the Photographic Society*.⁵⁵ He was elected to the Royal Geographical Society in 1860, and continued to satisfy his curiosity about the natural world by experimenting at Portigliolo with thermostatic incubators for hatching eggs, the results of which were published in 1884.⁵⁶

There was a particular hope that Murray's example would be followed by other retired officers of the Indian Army, but this was not realised.⁵⁷ Miss Campbell had predicted that 'If a few set the example, others will speedily

⁵⁰ Ribton, p.64.

⁵¹ 'Ajaccio' (1868), p.498.

⁵² Seen by the author in 2015.

⁵³ Guérin, p.4.

⁵⁴ In August 1845 Murray entered Cheltenham College and was there in 1851, *Cheltenham College Register August 1845*, https://archive.org/stream/b28037674/b28037674_djvu.txt; BL: IOR/L/MIL/9/228/248-55. His initial army training was at the East India Company's Military Seminary at Addiscombe Place passing out in 1855: *Morning Post*, 11 June 1855.

⁵⁵ *Journal of the Photographic Society*, 2 October 1886.

⁵⁶ *Journal of the RGS*, 30 (1860), p.38; *Queenslander*, 6 September 1884.

⁵⁷ PP 1876 [C.1555] Commercial.

follow, and I venture to predict that no one will ever regret it'.⁵⁸ Only Colonel James Macaul Hagart CB (1815-1894) of the Seventh Hussars followed Murray from India. It is probable that the two Scottish families knew each other since a Hagart had married into the Murray clan.⁵⁹ Hagart seems to have arrived in Ajaccio shortly after Murray. In 1876 he purchased an estate, Barbicaja, in the city where he built a house and laid out grounds of twenty-seven hectares. Like Murray, Hagart played a part in promoting the winter health station.⁶⁰ Unlike Murray, Hagart only spent the spring, autumn and winter in Corsica.⁶¹ As Murray had done, Hagart made friends in the island, naming one of them, M. Gignous, President of the Society of the Winter Health Station, his executor.⁶² A few days after his death in 1894, the newspaper *Aigle* rendered homage to him: 'This sincere friend of Ajaccio and Corsica, owner for eighteen years of Barbicaja, where he had made reservoirs and doubled the size of land under cultivation. Under his direction and large sums of money, it became splendid.'⁶³

Despite continuing reports highlighting the promise of the island, the potential remained unfulfilled, and in 1896 there was 'still room for whole colonies of settlers'.⁶⁴ Agriculture in Corsica was a difficult and risky investment. As revealed in the Consuls' reports, there were many challenges. Murray had chosen a particular niche product that lacked global demand. Contrast this to Egypt which by the 1860s had become increasingly integrated into the global economy as a key cotton producer resulting in the arrival of a growing number of British financiers, bankers and businessmen that added to the size of the British community.⁶⁵ There were other issues in Corsica. The intractable problem of malaria was little understood and had no effective treatment. Dr James Henry Bennet had noted 'fevers of the most deadly character', to which two British consuls succumbed.⁶⁶ There were severe consequences for agriculture. In summer, malaria attacked the regions that were most fertile – the

⁵⁸ Campbell, p.16.

⁵⁹ Burke, p.1145.

⁶⁰ Richardson, p.511; Lucchini, p.162.

⁶¹ The electoral rolls for 1883, 1885 and 1890 show that Hagart had a property in Surrey but his place of abode was noted as Barbicaja, Corsica (*Ancestry: Surrey, England, Electoral Registers, 1823-1962*).

⁶² Lucchini, p.162.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ *Sioux City Journal*, 9 July 1896.

⁶⁵ Lanver, p.9.

⁶⁶ *The Times*, 15/1/1883 and 10 January 1885 records the deaths of Consuls Shorrt and Jervis.

lower lying coastal areas (such as Portigliolo). In 1863 the British consul warned of the dangers, and in 1867 Professor Ansted went as far as to predict that the 'fever-breeding lagoons will ultimately render the island uninhabitable'.⁶⁷ Miss Campbell thought the danger to be greatly exaggerated, but she was wrong.⁶⁸ The agricultural penitentiary at Chivari, for example, not far from Major Murray's estate, was devastated by malaria; in August 1863 out of 300 hundred convicts, 125 were in hospital with fever.⁶⁹ Murray must have known of the dangers of malaria, but it may not have been relevant as it is likely that he had already picked up the disease in India. It may, though, explain why Hagart returned to England during the summer.⁷⁰

The issue of insecurity was also a continuous problem. Murray came to Corsica just as violence was on the rise again after the 1852 prohibition of the carrying of firearms was lifted. There was hope that an influx of colonists might weaken the clan spirit, but colonists were more likely to be deterred from settling in a country where property was so insecure. This was not an issue for the sojourners because most owned nothing of substance. However, it was believed that 'Colonists could not remain a week in the country. How could they expect that their vested rights be respected when, owing to the quasi communal system, encouraged by the clan spirit, even the land titles of the natives are in continual dispute'.⁷¹

'C.H', in 1898, cited the 'difficulties of communication, and the indolence of the people' as factors that discouraged him, and no doubt others, from investing in Corsica.⁷² Such comments betrayed a lack of understanding of Corsican society. Corsicans traditionally did not work for others; most of the labouring was done by Italian seasonal immigrants. However, ninety-four percent of all holdings in Corsica were very small paying less than twenty francs

⁶⁷ TNA: FO27/1504, Consul Colnaghi, 'Report on the Island of Corsica' to FO, 22 July 1863; *Westmorland Gazette*, 16 November 1867.

⁶⁸ Campbell, p.12.

⁶⁹ TNA: FO 27/1504, Consul Colnaghi, 'Report on the Island of Corsica' to FO, 22 July 1863.

⁷⁰ Bennet (1870), pp. 305-32, concluded that any part of Corsica was 'safe as a residence, either for invalids or tourists, from the end of October to the end of the first week of May.'

⁷¹ Thomson, p.360.

⁷² 'C.H', p.84.

in tax.⁷³ These landowners were conservative seeming 'content to go on ploughing, reaping and threshing in precisely the same way as did their forefathers. It was essentially a village and family-based closed society living a mostly self-sufficient existence'.⁷⁴ It was also a society that held tenaciously to its land where pastoralism was the mainstay of living but seldom provided wealth.⁷⁵

Ribton asserted that, 'were a young man, practically acquainted with working of land and about to emigrate with a little capital, to direct his steps to Corsica instead of New Zealand he would meet with a welcome in the island and would be afforded every encouragement'.⁷⁶ However, this was not generally the case. Where foreigners did obtain land there were 'a thousand ingenious little ways by which he [the Corsican] can put a spoke in a neighbour's wheel'.⁷⁷ Lynch cited the experiences of a foreign proprietor who acquired land at Campo-di-Loro, just outside Ajaccio. His aim was to meet the needs of foreign visitors for cows' milk and butter by creating a dairy business. He employed a Swiss farmer to run the operation for him. However, when he was asked 'would you feel happy if the man's hay barns were burnt, if his house was pulled down about his ears, if he lost his life', he withdrew believing the threats to be serious.⁷⁸ Another foreigner bought a forest but was not allowed to cut down the trees, 'the natives made it too hot for him'.⁷⁹

Murray and Hagart had no problem with the Corsican culture. They were exceptions. They were successful not just due to aptitude but also due to the relationships they had with the Corsicans. Murray did not hold the view that 'uncultivated land bespoke uncivilised nations' and there was no sense that he incurred the dislike of his neighbours, a general occurrence experienced by

⁷³ Corsica was one of only four French departments where there had been no increase in the taxable value of land between 1851-1879: Peter McPhee, *A Social History of France 1789-1914*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), pp. 148: 209.

⁷⁴ Petru Ciavatti, 'Esquisse de la Vie en Corse, Il y a Cents Ans', *Report of a Conference held at Cervione 12 July 1971*, <https://aDecemhernet/parutions/esquisse-de-la-vie-en-Corse-il-y-a-cent-ans.html>, (last accessed 4 Sept. 2017).

⁷⁵ Aldrich, p.113.

⁷⁶ Ribton, p.65.

⁷⁷ Lynch, p.467.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Whitwell, p.65.

improving landlords in backward countries.⁸⁰ Murray had a big personality and was large man with red hair who exuded an air of being upstanding.⁸¹ He clearly loved living in Corsica. Without the responsibility of his family, Murray enjoyed socialising being 'forgiven for his love of the local eau-de-vie'.⁸² He made many friends in the island. Just before his death in 1894 he wrote a series of nine small books entitled '*Petits Entretiens avec Mes Amis Corses*'.⁸³ His closest friends were M. Dominique Bonifati, a landed proprietor resident in Ajaccio and M. François Campiglia formerly agent to the *Compagnie Insulaire de Navigation*, vice-Consul for Sweden and Denmark. Murray chose to be buried in Corsica and these individuals were the executors of his will.⁸⁴ It was not just the prominent Corsicans who liked him. At his funeral 'the Church of England service [...] was listened to with great respect by some sixty to seventy peasants and the small party of intimate friends. All the details were carried out with the greatest respect and good feeling by the peasantry to whom Major Murray had for years been a benefactor'.⁸⁵

Arthur Castell Southwell

'Corsica offers a wide field near home to the speculative; its mines, its marble quarries, its forests and its vineyards are, no doubt, capable of being worked with advantage.'⁸⁶

Southwell was a significant investor or had an interest of some kind in the larger Corsican mines at Luri, Pietrabla, Argentella, Frangone (Olmata), Cardo, Vezzani and Lozari. The promise of minerals had been identified as early as 1794 when it was reported that 'There are in Corsica a great many mines of lead, copper, iron and silver. Near to St Florent is a very rich silver mine [...] The Corsican iron is remarkably good [...] There are also mines of alum and

⁸⁰ 'An Account of Corsica: The Journal of a Tour to that Island', *Edinburgh Review*, 185 (1 April 1897), 465-85 (p.483).

⁸¹ Emmanuel Arène, quoted by Lucchini, p.171.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Translated as short discussions with my friends.

⁸⁴ TNA: FO 27/3241, Consul Drummond 'Minute of Proceedings on the Decease of Major W. J. Murray, late Bengal Staff Corps of Portiglio, Bay of Ajaccio', to FO, 24 May 1894.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Bennet (1870), p.308.

saltpetre'.⁸⁷ In 1851 the discovery of a silver mine in Corsica was widely reported.⁸⁸ This was at Argentella, a mine that had been known in Roman times and had recently been re-opened.⁸⁹ This mine was just one of the treasures in the soils of Corsica.

It was inevitable that these minerals would attract interest, and many of these mines were, at one time or another, worked with British capital. Britons were involved in eleven of the thirty-one mines cited in Gauthier's comprehensive study of the Corsican mining industry.⁹⁰ To obtain concessions and work the mines, a number of joint stock companies were established between 1864 and 1927. It was indicative of the model that best characterised investment in overseas mining from 1870-1914 whereby, as Harvey and Press have shown in Nigeria, enterprises were initiated locally and responded to by the city.⁹¹ Reports from individuals like Ribton were enticing. He noted 'valuable copper mines in the interior of the country in good working order, which only require the expenditure of a little more capital to prove extremely profitable'.⁹² Such reports were misleading. Mining in Corsica had many challenges, and Southwell's ventures reflected the difficulties of operating in the island. The main issues were managerial and technological weaknesses, lack of capital and ongoing costs, transportation, the problem of obtaining information and an inability to withstand fluctuations in the market. These aspects were common to many mining collapses, but there were Corsican inflections particularly in relation to the workforce and geology. All mines with a British interest working from the mid-nineteenth century, before Southwell's arrival in 1877, operated at a deficit.⁹³ Despite the losses, investment in Corsican mines continued to be forthcoming, although later enterprises fared little better.

It was a failure of management that first drew Southwell into Corsican mining. Consul Shortt had warned in 1876 that 'Nothing but very skilful

⁸⁷ *Weekly Entertainer*, 1 September 1794.

⁸⁸ PP 1867 [Cd.3761] *Commercial Reports Received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Consuls, During the Year 1866*.

⁸⁹ Gauthier, p.80.

⁹⁰ Gauthier.

⁹¹ Harvey and Press (1990a), p.113.

⁹² Ribton, p.4.

⁹³ Gauthier, p.293.

management can render these mines paying businesses'.⁹⁴ Many of the European managers had no background in mining, and they did not speak the language of the labourers, either Corsican or Italian.⁹⁵ In 1887, as vice-Consul, Southwell was tasked with investigating the murder at Argentella of the British mine captain, Colonel Richard Roden (1832-1887).⁹⁶ Argentella was a prominent mine which, despite significant investment, had failed to make a profit.⁹⁷ From 1869-1886 the owner had spent 'millions of francs' building an 'ultra-modern factory [...] and a dam to keep the motors going' but with no profits, he was ruined by the expenditure, and all work had ceased.⁹⁸ British involvement had begun in 1886 when *Argentella Mining Company Limited*, based in London, was incorporated. The company bought the factory and concession of the mine and restarted the copper works.⁹⁹ It was considered to be the 'first case in which important mining work has been done in Corsica'.¹⁰⁰

Roden arrived in January 1887. He appeared to have managed the Argentella works in a manner associated with a 'specifically Imperial Culture'.¹⁰¹ When he took over there were five English supervisors for the 250 workers, but all work had ceased.¹⁰² Roden sought to make economies by stopping certain works and discharging sixty labourers. According to Southwell's report 'there was increasing discontent [...] caused by the treatment they received from Colonel Roden'.¹⁰³ Southwell found that Roden believed the men were incapable, and he spoke and acted roughly with them. He created the same kind of racial tension that was experienced elsewhere when problems arose with the imposition of foreign management and skilled workers over indigenous employees.¹⁰⁴ The English staff warned Roden that if the men were not treated

⁹⁴ PP 1877 [C.1855] *Commercial*.

⁹⁵ Jim Silver, 'The Failure of European Mining Companies in the Nineteenth-Century Gold Coast', *Journal of African History*, 22, (4) (1981), 511-29 (p.519).

⁹⁶ TNA: FO 27/2868, vice-Consul Southwell, 'Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden', to Consul Graves, 11 March 1887. Roden was a director of *Argentella Mining Company*. He was sent to bring the mine back into financial control: *Pontypool Free Press*, 11 March 1887.

⁹⁷ Gauthier, p.85.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.349.

⁹⁹ TNA: BT 31/4795/31748, *Argentella Mines Limited*.

¹⁰⁰ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹⁰¹ Magee and Thompson, p.15.

¹⁰² Gauthier, p.86.

¹⁰³ TNA: FO 27/2868, vice-Consul Southwell, 'Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden' to Consul Graves, 11 March 1887.

¹⁰⁴ Harvey and Press (1990b), p. 5, illustrate the point with events in Spain and Mexico where violence often flared up among the work force which fed the growth of nationalistic sentiment.

with greater respect difficulties might arise from the excitableness of the class they had to deal with.¹⁰⁵ There were rumours of a strike. Roden was in continuous dispute with the foreman, Monsieur Pain, who was a continental Frenchman, married to a Corsican. Pain, considered one of the best workers, shot Roden on 5 April. Southwell's concern was for the remaining British workers. He believed that Pain's action was known to the workmen beforehand, that they approved of the act believing that the deed, under the Corsican code, was a just one; 'A Corsican never murders to rob but he murders to avenge what he may consider an insult and generally with premeditation.'¹⁰⁶

Argentella had a high turnover of managers. It was not easy to recruit and retain talented people in Corsica even in the largest mines. A.M.L. Tonkin (1858-1940) was appointed in 1890.¹⁰⁷ Tonkin had been the manager of an iron works in South Wales for many years, but Southwell considered that he had little 'practical experience in any of the branches of work he endeavoured to direct' (copper and silver-lead).¹⁰⁸ Southwell had warned the company that they should not send out another director inexperienced in the treatment of Corsicans and Italians and not speaking their languages, otherwise, 'the bad feeling that present exists will increase and further disturbances must be feared'.¹⁰⁹ His words went unheeded. It would have come as little surprise to Southwell that another British manager, John Broad Roberts, was murdered at Argentella in 1893, and on his death all the 'English fled the mine' and it was abandoned.¹¹⁰ Little is known about Broad Roberts although he appeared to be a Cornish miner, unlikely to speak French or Italian and certainly not Corsican.

In 1889 Southwell began to invest in mining. He set up a London-based company, *Wiens-Novelli*, to exploit the antimony mine at Luri on Cap Corse. It seemed a curious decision considering the knowledge he had of the industry, but he was probably influenced by the other British-owned operations on Cap Corse: Meria and Ersu. These mines enjoyed some periods of prosperity, and in

¹⁰⁵ TNA: FO 27/2868, 'Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden'.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ *Financial Times*, 16 October 1890.

¹⁰⁸ *Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, 10 Jun 1864; TNA: FO 27/2868, 'Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden'.

¹⁰⁹ TNA: FO 27/2868, 'Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden'.

¹¹⁰ Gauthier, p.86.

1889 Meria was being worked with 'success as a private concern under English management, and with the latest appliances.'¹¹¹ Luri, though, was known to be a geologically difficult mine to work requiring depths of 200 meters. The mine was flooded during the inactivity prior to purchase by *Wiens-Novelli*, and it suffered from periodic inundations throughout its existence.¹¹² The *Economist* was of the view that the geology should have been known by the experts upon whose recommendations properties are acquired.¹¹³ Southwell must have known of Luri's challenges, yet he and others were still prepared to invest. Just how much is not known, but it must have been considerable for the immediate task was to drain the mine, line the galleries with stone and put in new structural frames above the mine shafts.¹¹⁴ Funds were also provided to begin a new level (five), followed by level six in 1891 and level seven in 1892.¹¹⁵ Level five was abandoned before the end of 1889 probably due to more flooding. Continued losses forced *Wiens-Novelli* to renounce the concession in 1897.¹¹⁶ Mining had undergone a technical revolution in the 1880s and 90s that introduced a variety of industrial processes and engineering techniques that could have been used at Luri.¹¹⁷ However, it is likely that Southwell had run out of capital by this date, and he had already turned his attention elsewhere to attempt to recoup losses.

The 1890s were a difficult period for Southwell. There was a lapse in the cédrat trade which would have impacted on his maritime agency (Chapter Eight), and there were no profits from the Luri mine. He tried twice to purchase the concession of the copper mine at Vezzani but after two years of negotiation and disputes with the landowner he failed.¹¹⁸ There was a cost to failure. What Southwell lost through his pursuit of Vezzani is unknown, but in a similar venture with a similar result, Charles Galland (1816-1844), spent 300,000 francs in failing to gain the concession at Pietralba between 1876-1878.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ PP 1888 (414) *Return of Companies Ordered to be Wound-up under Companies Acts, Compulsorily or Under Supervision of Court, December 1886*; PP 1889 [C.5618-131] *Foreign Office. Annual Series. No. 578. Diplomatic and Consular Reports on Trade and Finance. France.*

¹¹² Gauthier, p.365.

¹¹³ 'Mining Speculation', *Economist*, 10 January 1901.

¹¹⁴ Gauthier, p.365.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 11 February 1881.

¹¹⁷ Mollan, p.238.

¹¹⁸ Gauthier, p.45. Southwell's attempts were in 1895-7 and 1902-04.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.219.

Southwell must have been financially stretched in 1893 when he looked to copper to diversify his investments and made the extraordinary and disastrous decision to purchase the newly reconstructed *Argentella Mining Limited*.

Company purchases and reconstructions were a way of injecting capital, generating funds for new exploration or solving existing problems. This was often, but not always, indicative of financial difficulties. Argentella was typical. When in the late 1880s copper prices were once again rising, the mine was still not making a profit.¹²⁰ By 1890 it had 'exhausted its working capital' and it was impossible to raise further capital by issuing new shares, and so the company was reconstructed in 1890 to raise new funds.¹²¹ There was a promise of no further call on capital and there were optimistic reports from the mine captain.¹²² The shareholders requested weekly reports from the company. However in 1892 letters to the *Financial Times* revealed that reports had ceased and the Annual General Meeting (AGM) was long overdue.¹²³ In October 1892 the AGM was eventually held and a resolution passed to wind-up the company.¹²⁴ Southwell's reconstructed company fared no better.

Labour was a significant constraint. The well-known Corsican antipathy to manual work meant that until the First World War most of the miners were foreigners, predominantly from Tuscany, and comprised as much as eighty percent of the workforce. There is very little data, but in 1878 there were fifty-six workers at the Meria mine of which forty were Italians. This was probably typical.¹²⁵ Southwell's reports shows that he was well aware of the dependence 'in a great manner upon Italian labourers, who though they work well and cheaply, only come over during the winter and spring and will not remain for the summer months'.¹²⁶ This clearly had an impact on productivity, but the summer was a particular problem; there was an 'unhealthy season of two months'.¹²⁷ The issue was malaria which was known to be 'deadly' on the eastern plains but also affected other low-lying coastal areas and Argentella was adjacent to the

¹²⁰ PP 1889 [C.5618-131] *Foreign Office*.

¹²¹ *Financial Times*, 30 June 1890.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 25 April, 18 June, 23 June, 17 July 1891.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 25 April, 25 May, 28 May, 16 June 1892. The AGM should have been held in March.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 6 October 1892.

¹²⁵ Gauthier, p.354.

¹²⁶ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹²⁷ *Financial Times*, 16 October 1890.

coast.¹²⁸

Transport was another consideration. Consul Smallwood recognised early on that ‘no great development of trade could be expected until the rich natural products of the island are fully opened out and the cost of inland transport considerably reduced’.¹²⁹ The mines were in inaccessible places and it did not help that the limited railway network, a significant contributory factor in economic transformation, was not complete until near the end of the nineteenth century. In other countries on the European periphery, railway building started relatively early. In Greece, for instance, the first line was completed in 1867; in Romania in 1866.¹³⁰

Another key reason for the failure of mining, as Mollan has pointed out in Sudan, was ‘deficient information on which initial investment decisions were based, specifically an erroneous belief in the wealth of mineral deposits and incomplete understanding of the ease with which existing deposits might be extracted’.¹³¹ Many mines failed in the late nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century when company prospectuses, based on reports from so-called experts, failed to acknowledge reality and nominal or projected returns were made to look too attractive.¹³² In addition, London-based directors (such as Roden) typically exercised financial control over the mines leaving other matters in the hands of the mine manager until they gave up hope of any profits.¹³³ This was not the case with Southwell. He was resident in Corsica and was ‘well acquainted with its mining industry’.¹³⁴ He was probably persuaded to invest in Argentella by the report of Tonkin who believed that the Argentella reef would be ‘very rich in silver-lead ore at no great depth beneath the surface at very little

¹²⁸ TNA: FO 27/1504, Consul Colnaghi, ‘Report on the Island of Corsica’ to FO, 22 July 1863; *Westmorland Gazette*, 16 November 1867.

¹²⁹ PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports*.

¹³⁰ Iván T. Berend and György Ránki, *The European Periphery and Industrialisation 1780-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp.92-101.

¹³¹ Mollan, pp. 230-31.

¹³² Wilkins, p.271. In 1926 A.E. Davis believed that ‘a company prospectus was a product of fiction not fact’, quoted in Ranald C. Michie, *Guilty Money: The City of London in Victorian and Edwardian Culture 1815-1914* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), p.7.

¹³³ Harvey and Press (1989), p.69.

¹³⁴ PP 1902 [Cd. 786-88] *No. 2784 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France. Report for the Year 1901 on the Trade of Corsica*.

expense'.¹³⁵ This proved not to be the case. As Phimister and Mouat have shown, it was common for glowing accounts to be written by mining engineers for the kind of deposits in which they had no expertise.¹³⁶

In addition to misplaced optimism, there was the problem of obtaining accurate and timely information. Newspapers carried advertisements offering opportunities to invest and also winding-up notices. For example the *Manchester Guardian and Lancashire General Advertiser*, in 1874, published the proposal by the *Olmata Copper Company of Corsica Limited* to obtain concessions and then in 1880 recorded the company's winding up.¹³⁷ The Joint Stock Companies Act of 1856 did not require companies to disclose financial information to shareholders although the London Stock Exchange did require balance sheets to be circulated.¹³⁸ When information was not forthcoming it was difficult for investors to do anything other than write letters to *The Times* and *Financial Times*. In the later nineteenth century there were reports in the increasing number of more specialist journals, such as the *Financial and Mining News* founded in 1884.¹³⁹ Such publications were thought to be independent of speculative forces although this was not always the case.¹⁴⁰ From 1886 the Board of Trade began to publish a regular journal, but even in 1895 it was described as having little use and did not diminish the importance of the consuls' reports from overseas.¹⁴¹

Consular reports contained more detailed information but they were at least a year out of date by the time they were published, and in the case of Corsica, from 1884 most of the information on minerals was compiled by Southwell. These reports were particularly encouraging to mining. In 1886 there were said to be 'several promising copper mines in the interior'.¹⁴² In

¹³⁵ *Financial Times*, 30 June 1890

¹³⁶ Phimister and Mouat, p.22.

¹³⁷ *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 7 December 1874; 2 June 1880.

¹³⁸ P. Chassaigne and others, eds, *Anglo-French Relations 1898-1998: from Fashoda to Jospin* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p.12.

¹³⁹ Magee and Thompson, pp.185-93.

¹⁴⁰ See Phimister and Mouat, p.24.

¹⁴¹ D.C.M. Platt, *Finance, Trade, and Politics in British Foreign Policy 1815-1914* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p.112.

¹⁴² PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial. No. 10 (1886). (Trade Reports.) Reports from Her Majesty's Consuls on the Manufactures, Commerce, &c., of their Consular Districts.*

1887, Consul Graves reported that Corsica was 'rich in minerals'.¹⁴³ In 1899 the Consul held out 'some hope of improvement' in exports and 'there may be some opening later for British mining machinery'.¹⁴⁴ Southwell's report of 1900 stated that 'A very important lode is now being worked of arsenical pyrites or mispickel [Lozari] [...] As the works are proceeding in depth the ore is becoming rich in copper with silver'.¹⁴⁵ What the report failed to say was that in 1899, Southwell gained the concession of this mine and entered into a twenty year contract.¹⁴⁶

Southwell clearly had a vested interest, and although triangulation of the evidence from others sources suggests that there was no intention to deliberately mislead, there did seem to be an element of optimism bias. The Lozari mine was a case in point. The 1901 report was encouraging: 'Antimony, copper and arsenic ores continue to be produced, but more capital is still required to develop the mineral resources'.¹⁴⁷ This report, though, contained an error quoting tonnage extracted in thousands of tons when it should have been kilos. So, the report of 25,000 tons from Lozari was wrong it was only twenty-five tons.¹⁴⁸ Work stopped from 1901-6. Gauthier's view that little work was carried out due to lack of funds, was probably correct.¹⁴⁹ Southwell's 1908 report admitted that the mine was not worked in 1907 but 'is now being developed, and will shortly be producing copper and arsenical ores'.¹⁵⁰ By 1909 it was said to be producing ores fairly rich in silver, but only sample parcels were shipped.¹⁵¹ Even in 1909, when there was clear evidence of failure, it was still stated that 'minerals abound'.¹⁵² The promise was never delivered. Reality came in 1910 when the consular report (not produced by Southwell due to his death) made no mention of the Lozari mine merely recording 'a great depression among all Corsican mines'.¹⁵³ The evidence suggests that the mine only ever operated at a level sufficient to retain the contract while awaiting

¹⁴³ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

¹⁴⁴ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad on Trade and Finance.*

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Gauthier, p.258.

¹⁴⁷ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports, Serial no. 2542 to 2695 (Trade, Navigation, Shipping: Annual and Miscellaneous Series (Foreign Countries)).*

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Gauthier, p.261.

¹⁵⁰ PP 1908 [Cd.3727-64] No. 3981 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France.*

¹⁵¹ PP 1909 [Cd.4446-60] No. 4236 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France.*

¹⁵² PP 1910 (Cd.4962-136) No. 4524 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France.*

¹⁵³ Ibid.

better times ahead.

For Southwell, as well as personal knowledge, information came from business networks. Such contacts could be an important source of data for investors.¹⁵⁴ This was particularly important where government support was limited, as in Corsica.¹⁵⁵ Southwell would have known fellow Bastia residents, James Glencairn Cunningham (1842-before 1917) and Galland both of whom were resident in Bastia and active in Corsican mines before Southwell's arrival in the island. These men were probably the 'English adventurers' cited by Consul Smallwood who 'unite with Corsicans to entrap English capitalists to sink their wealth in this sterile and unprofitable island'.¹⁵⁶ Smallwood's words went unheard. The period 1872-1878 was one of the most intensive periods of British activity in the Corsican mines in respect to antimony and followed by strong interest in copper from 1878-1900.

Successive consuls' reports identified the abundance of minerals but the mines were not worked for lack of capital.¹⁵⁷ This was attributed to lack of interest from the French government and the attitude of the Corsicans who were considered 'not enterprising in their own country and do not at present recognise the necessity of encouraging the continental and foreign capital and labour to develop the undoubted resources of the island'.¹⁵⁸ This was not strictly true. It is likely that the Corsicans understood the difficulties of mining in their country. The most profitable and long lasting mine in the island, Vezzani, was worked with Corsican capital. It was managed from 1897 until at least 1926 (with a gap during the First World War) by the Briton, Richard Penberthy Roberts. Roberts was an engineer who was well-thought of by his fellow mining engineers who recognised his professional qualities and also his safety record.¹⁵⁹

Most foreign investment in Corsican mines came from the British, perhaps as high as seventy-five percent. As early as 1879 it was acknowledged

¹⁵⁴ Magee and Thompson, p.205.

¹⁵⁵ Mollan describes a similar situation in the Sudan.

¹⁵⁶ PP 1872 [C.497] *Reports Relative to British Consular Establishments*.

¹⁵⁷ PP 1867 [Cd.3761] *Commercial Reports*.

¹⁵⁸ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹⁵⁹ Gauthier, p.45.

that the mines had 'already attracted much capital which has been spent without much result except for the antimony mines of Cap Corse which in themselves is not great.'¹⁶⁰ A large proportion of the capital went back out of the country. Foreign equipment was needed to support, for example, substantial engineering works, as at Argentella where the building of railways, reservoirs, power plants, offices and sheds required significant investment before full-scale mining could begin. However, scale was an issue. The size of the mines and the companies that operated them were all small. In these circumstances the chances of making a profit were scant. Elsewhere overseas mining was gradually being undertaken by large firms; the only ones capable of raising sufficient capital to develop the infrastructures.¹⁶¹

Profits depended upon the quality of the ore, market price and competition. The market fluctuated significantly and many mines ceased working or closed altogether when prices fell. Antimony, for example, increased when the price of copper fell towards the end of the 1870s, but dropped again at the moment of Southwell's investment in Luri. Tumbling prices meant an inability to cover expenses which had been the immediate cause of the cessation of work prior to Southwell's purchase.¹⁶² From 1889 the number of tons extracted at Luri increased, but much of it was of inferior quality that sold at a lower price or not at all; in 1895 out of twenty thousand tons extracted, only 471 tons was sold.¹⁶³ By this time the mine was suffering from competition. Japan had entered the market in 1896 followed by China in 1902. These ores undersold all European antimony.¹⁶⁴ The Chinese competition was serious causing according to Southwell, 'so great a falling price that Corsican mines have been forced to close down'.¹⁶⁵ This was an exaggeration. Only Southwell's Luri closed at that time.¹⁶⁶ Other mines continued to be worked, albeit on a small scale, until able to benefit from another rise in the price of antimony in 1906. However, another drop in 1908 meant that they were barely able to

¹⁶⁰ Quoted by Gauthier, pp.185-86.

¹⁶¹ Harvey and Press (1990b), p.4.

¹⁶² Gauthier, p.364.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p.365.

¹⁶⁴ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports of H.M Diplomatic and Consular Officers*; PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁶⁵ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁶⁶ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

survive the First World War.¹⁶⁷ It was rare for more than four mines to be working in any one year and most of the workings were abandoned at the end of the nineteenth century or early twentieth century on financial grounds.¹⁶⁸

Economically the mines provided little benefit but did provide periodic employment. There was work for miners (although many were from abroad) and other kinds of workers as well as women.¹⁶⁹ Although records are incomplete, the British antimony mines of Cap Corse were the most successful; they employed the largest number of people for the longest period (Table 6). Southwell's mine at Luri appeared to be the largest consistent employer. In respect of copper, Gauthier considers that, except for periodic employment, there was no economic benefit.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ PP 1909 [Cd.4446-60] No. 4236 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France.*

¹⁶⁸ Gauthier, p.293.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.159. Women were employed as sorters and were not allowed to go down the mines.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p.238.

Table 6 Workers in British-Owned Mines¹⁷¹

	Luri 1888-1903	Meria 1858-1903	Ersa 1878-1884	Argentella 1886-1906	Lozari 1899-1912	Olmata 1878-1905
	Antimony	Antimony	Antimony	Copper	Copper	Copper
1872						
1878		56 ¹⁷²	8 ¹⁷³			
1880			c.50 ¹⁷⁴			
1883			24 ¹⁷⁵			35 ¹⁷⁶
1885						
1886				250 ¹⁷⁷		
1887				200 ¹⁷⁸		
1889	150+ ¹⁷⁹					
1890	115 ¹⁸⁰					
1891	155 ¹⁸¹					
1893	172 ¹⁸²					
1897						
1898	30 ¹⁸³					
1899	30 ¹⁸⁴					
1906					9 ¹⁸⁵	
1907					7 ¹⁸⁶	
1908					23 ¹⁸⁷	
1909					19 ¹⁸⁸	
1910					3 ¹⁸⁹	
1911					11 ¹⁹⁰	

The ventures into Corsica mining were a case of ‘Hope Deferred maketh the Heart sick’.¹⁹¹ It was the lure of future profit, the hope of finding a rich vein

¹⁷¹ Data is incomplete for all years and there is no data for Lama, Ghisoni, Linguizzetta or Cardo. It is not always possible to separate miners from other workers.

¹⁷² Gauthier, p.354.

¹⁷³ Ibid., p.352.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p.37,

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p.190.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p.86.

¹⁷⁸ TNA: FO 27/2868, ‘Report on the Murder of Colonel Roden’. Roden discharged sixty labourers.

¹⁷⁹ Gauthier, p.365.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Ibid.

¹⁸³ Ibid. The mine effectively ceased production in 1897.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p.260. No production

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. Work restarted.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ ‘Mining Speculation’.

and profiting from the market price that was always held out for Corsica. Gauthier estimates that total losses in the Corsican mines from 1850-1918 amounted to several dozens of millions of francs sometimes with catastrophic results for investors.¹⁹² The cause of Southwell's death is unknown but at only fifty-two it would not have been a surprise to find that his financial difficulties impacted upon his early demise. The years 1894-1896 were difficult for Southwell evidenced by repeated requests for leave for 'urgent private affairs'.¹⁹³ When in 1894 *Wiens and Novelli* suspended payments, Southwell anticipated problems in meeting his 'business engagements' and temporarily stepped down from the consulate.¹⁹⁴ Luri was never profitable and the concession was sold in 1903 after five years of inactivity.¹⁹⁵ In the meantime the sites had to be maintained. The investment in Argentella compounded Southwell's problems. This mine continued to make losses alongside demands for further capital. Work ceased in 1900, and the wooden buildings burned down in 1902 causing a drop in value.¹⁹⁶ It was eventually sold in 1906 for 17,000 francs, about £850; the capital value in 1886 had been £238,000.¹⁹⁷

Southwell's continued investment in loss-making mines appeared extraordinary. As the vice-Consul and resident of the island, he knew the localities and lack of knowledge was no excuse. According to his daughter, Edith, he was a man 'who never took part in any game of hazard, allowed himself the luxury of taking a risk in the silver mines. It was a sport to him'.¹⁹⁸ Edith also recorded that to her father Corsica appeared to be a 'veritable geological museum' and with his background in chemistry, his ventures in the mines allowed him to 'take up the scientific studies of his youth that he had abandoned with regret [...] He always had a passion for mechanics in all its forms, the complex installation needed for the mines was for him a veritable joy'.¹⁹⁹ The lack of profit was not. Most likely Southwell sought investment as a

¹⁹² Gauthier, p.51

¹⁹³ FO 27/3191, Drummond to FO 16 November 1884; TNA: FO 27/3283, FO to Consul Drummond, 26 February 1896 approval of extension of leave for Southwell.

¹⁹⁴ TNA: FO 27/3191, Vice-Consul Southwell to Consul Drummond, 15 November 1894.

¹⁹⁵ PP 1904 [Cd.1766] No.3246. *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁹⁶ Gauthier, p.82; BT 31/4795/31748, Company No: 31748; *Argentella Mines Ltd*.

¹⁹⁷ *Gauthier*, p.86; PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹⁹⁸ Edith Southwell-Colucci, *Arthur Castell-Southwell, Un Pionnier Anglais en Corse* (Borgo: Mediterranea, 2000).p.34.

¹⁹⁹ Southwell-Colucci, p.35.

way out of his financial difficulties. The losses impacted on Southwell's pride and reputation as well as his pocket; when he died his personal wealth amounted to only £1,034 15s. 5d.²⁰⁰

Southwell was not the only investor who suffered from the Corsican mines. The British Consul, John Shortt's investments (Lama and Olmeta mines) were disastrous and must have contributed to his ongoing financial straits and even his early death in 1883. Shortt had been appointed Consul in 1872; Foreign Office records show him making a number of requests for salary increases and transfers to better paid posts.²⁰¹ He was suspended from his post in 1880 due to his inability to perform his consular duties and his habit of borrowing money from visitors and not being able to repay.²⁰² In 1880 when both the Lama and Olmeta mining companies went into voluntary liquidation, an enquiry into Shortt's conduct found that he was 'hopelessly apathetic and miserably poor'.²⁰³

Conclusion

Corsica had a small share in the 'immense' flow of capital overseas from 1880-1914, which coincided with the early 1880s intense period of imperial expansion.²⁰⁴ Murray and Southwell's capital contributions to agriculture and mining, although limited, set Corsica in the short-term on the road towards modernisation. However, much of the economic value generated went to foreigners and progress was halted by the First World War. As settlers Murray and Southwell had more in common with the activities of the colonial world than they did with the sojourners in Ajaccio. Both men committed themselves to their adopted country and chose to be buried on Corsican soil.

Murray was the more successful. His cédrat plantation flourished although much of the capital and profit would have gone abroad in the purchase

²⁰⁰ Ancestry: *England and Wales National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administration), 1855-1966*.

²⁰¹ TNA: FO 27/2136, FO to Shortt, 27 January 1875 request for salary increase refused: TNA: FO 27/2331, FO to Shortt, 25 November 1878 no grounds for salary increase.

²⁰² TNA: FO 27/2516, FO to Shortt, 5 January 1881. Shortt was accused of bringing the office into disrepute.

²⁰³ TNA: BT 31/2050/8977, *Lama Company*; BT 31/2050/8976, *Olmeta Copper Company*; FO 27/2587, File note 'Report on Conduct of Shortt', 5 March 1882.

²⁰⁴ Richard Price, *British Society 1680-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p.304; Thompson (2005), p.31.

of equipment or payment of wages. Wages were low. At the end of the nineteenth century, the payment for a day's work in Corsica equated to the value of ten litres of grain; in continental France it was worth between thirty and fifty litres.²⁰⁵ Unlike in Argentina and Canada where 'empty grasslands' were converted into 'bread baskets', the island's potential remained largely unfulfilled. Murray's achievement in agriculture was a one-off. Few followed in his footsteps and Corsica remained a land of promise: an island of 'great natural resources [...] neglected forests of timber [...] acres of untilled vineyard [...] miles of unplanted olive land [that] might make it one of the richest departments of France'.²⁰⁶ Unlike elsewhere, New Zealand for example, there was never any deliberate seeking out of potential migrants, and too few individuals made investments to have any real impact on the economy. Large capital sums were needed in order to modernise.²⁰⁷ Murray is thought to have invested between 50-70,000 francs in his plantation, and Hagart purchased Barbicaja for 90,000 francs.²⁰⁸ There is no other recorded attempt to establish an agricultural enterprise until 1907 when there were two large properties in existence, supported by British capital, outside Bastia.²⁰⁹

Nothing is known of the fate of these establishments. Two centuries of reports confirmed that there had been little progress. Each report detailed the same causes: 'poor infrastructure [railways, shipping], hydrographic imbalances, over-fragmentation of land ownership, small size, and the supposed indolence of the population'.²¹⁰ The consuls blamed the independent character of the people who operated across the country as a 'small market where all the stallholders agree together not to sell below a certain price. The laws of supply and demand are nullified, as the people are not commercially ambitious, and with their natural indolence prefer not to produce than to lower prices'.²¹¹ In addition there were repeated concerns about electoral fraud,

²⁰⁵ Chiva, p.99.

²⁰⁶ Thomson, p.360.

²⁰⁷ In 1852 in New Zealand, the Ortago Provincial Council invested £20,000 and in 1858 sent an agent on a recruiting drive to Britain, obtaining some 4,000 migrants: Marjory Harper and Stephen Constantine, *Migration and Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p.285.

²⁰⁸ Lucchini, p.162.

²⁰⁹ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] No. 4524 Annual Series. *Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

²¹⁰ Candea, p.50.

²¹¹ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

vendetta, bandits and corrupt administration which contributed to the malaise.²¹²

With so many challenges, Murray's success with the cédrat was remarkable; he could not have prospered with any other crop. From 1866 Corsica experienced an agricultural depression due to increased produce coming in from the continent and natural disasters befalling the island's crops.²¹³ The area under cereal cultivation fell. The vines were hit by phylloxera in the 1860s and were struck again in the 1880s, and while they were replanting competition grew from Africa and Italy. Ink disease struck the chestnuts.²¹⁴ By contrast, during Murray's time at Portigliolo the cultivation of the cédrat was largely profitable. 1885 was likely to have been the pinnacle of his success when the crop (over the whole island) was very large and placed at high prices.²¹⁵ The impact, though, was short-lived. The fruit had always been subject to significant variations in price. After Murray's death in 1894 decline set in. The severe winters of 1894/5 and 1895/6 resulted in the destruction of the crops in whole districts.²¹⁶

In 1895 the price of cédrat dropped sharply, and there was rising competition in the early twentieth century from countries such as Greece and Italy.²¹⁷ By the end of the nineteenth century agriculture was in crisis, and the factors which deterred investment appeared overwhelming. Corsica remained a traditional society, lacking capital, and with little monetary system. Integration into the French commercial, political and social domains was slow.²¹⁸ From the 1890s (the height of Corsica's population until recent years) there was a rural exodus, significant population decline and land was abandoned on a huge scale.²¹⁹ In 1902 only 105,000 hectares of cereals were planted; there had been twice as many in the mid-nineteenth century.²²⁰ In 1909 Whitwell was witness

²¹² Candea, p.50.

²¹³ Pomponi (1992), p.219.

²¹⁴ Wilson, p.9. The chestnuts provided flour and were essential to the tanning industry.

²¹⁵ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial*.

²¹⁶ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

²¹⁷ Francis Pomponi, 'Crise de Structure Économique et Crise de Conscience en Corse (Fin XIXe-Début XXe)', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 2, (1) (Nice, 1977) 75-114.

²¹⁸ Robert J. Blackwood, 'The Gallicisation of Corsica: The Imposition of the French language from 1768 to 1945,' *Language Policy*, 3 (2004), 133-52 (p.137).

²¹⁹ Thomson, p. 81.

²²⁰ Robert Colonna d'Istria, *La Corse au XXe Siècle: Histoire des Heurs et Malheurs d'une Province Française* (Paris: France-Empire, 1997) p.51.

to diminishing cultivation as she passed 'vineyard after vineyard with terraces broken down and overrun'.²²¹ The interior emptied as Corsicans took the opportunity to pursue careers elsewhere.²²² One Corsican saying was characteristic: 'The island exports functionaries and imports the retired [...] the young go to the continent and the old go to the cemetery.'²²³

Murray operated in the island when from 1860-80 the Corsican economy was at its relatively most dynamic. The population increased, and there was some modernisation. Murray benefited from the period which saw the greatest profitability for the *cédrat* crop. He had sufficient capital to invest in his property and the skills to get the best out of the land. Mostly, though, it was down to the way he fitted in with Corsican society. His fellow countrymen would probably have said that he went 'native'. The contribution of Murray was more than a just legacy of memory. Murray was commemorated by the Corsicans with a granite stone topped with a large cross overlooking the gulf of Ajaccio which is still known today as "the rock of the English". The structure of Murray's plantation survived although most has returned to *maquis*.

Like Murray, Southwell 'loved his adopted island as much as the island of his birth'.²²⁴ He was an important, but not successful, investor in the mines, although the mines attracted significant levels of foreign capital. The spectacular remains of the workings at Argentella, one of Southwell's investments, and the boarded off sites of other mines bear witness to enterprises that promised so much but delivered so little. Mining in Corsica was an industry born on the 'hard work of men and the hopes of others'.²²⁵ There was 'no lack of land of the richest kind to do the work of pit-banks and clanking machinery in this great task of regeneration', but there were a number of reasons why mining was such a failure.²²⁶

In Corsica, as elsewhere, investors imbued with mining mania wanted to believe in the prospect of riches. Optimistic consuls' reports, many of which

²²¹ Whitwell, p.65.

²²² d'Istria, p.110.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Southwell-Colucci, p.7.

²²⁵ Gauthier, p.344.

²²⁶ Edwards, p.374.

were compiled by Southwell and positive company prospectuses encouraged investment. Contrary indications were ignored or forgotten. In the island there were particular legal, cultural and practical issues that made profitable undertakings unlikely. There were wrangles over rights to land, difficulties in understanding the culture and language of the, mostly Italian, workers. The foreign workers were seasonal, returning home in the summer months. British managers did not understand the Corsican character and, in most cases, had little knowledge of the geology or type of mining being undertaken. They underestimated extraction and transport difficulties of working in a country as undeveloped as Corsica and overestimated the quality and quantity of the ores. The difficulties were compounded by companies not being strong enough to withstand fluctuating market prices and other events. On the eve of the First World War, despite all the promises, none of the mines in Corsica were working.²²⁷ Between the wars, the industrial sector was hit hard by the Depression from the 1920s which exposed all its fragilities. Within a few years the last mining sites were abandoned.

For Southwell, his investments were a personal disaster. The name Southwell lives on with only the title of a prehistoric cave at Vizzavona named after his daughter, Edith. His weakness was the pursuit of the historical mythology of riches which was just that; there was no 'golden harvest that might have been their own' in Corsica.²²⁸ However, he deserves to be remembered not for his failings in the mining industry but for his role in commerce. Corsica's appearance in the global economy, in respect of mining, was brief, but Southwell's commercial activities played a part in stimulating other industries that required facilities and services in order to enable the distribution of goods. In 1885, Southwell set up a maritime agency for this purpose which encouraged the development of businesses and the port of Bastia.

²²⁷ PP 1914-16 [Cd.7620-67] No. 5287 Annual Series. *Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

²²⁸ Lynch, p.471.

Chapter Eight

Settlers: Commerce

Introduction

In 1877, at the age of 20, Arthur Southwell was given the opportunity to prove his worth by being sent to Corsica to re-organise the cédrat contract for the family business, Castell-Brown confectioners of London. He was an entrepreneur who settled in the island's commercial centre, Bastia, from 1882. He was representative of the British colonial enterprise that encouraged mass migration.¹ Between 1815 and 1930 it is estimated that some 13.5 million Britons settled in Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Canada and the United States.² It was part of an exodus of around fifty million Europeans, 'pivotal to the first wave of modern globalisation' between the 1850s and 1914.³ The British overseas were 'interwoven into the fabric of the imperial experience' seen in the better researched communities such as Kenya, South Africa, Argentina or China.⁴ They were worlds of 'individual and investment opportunities for men (usually) of ambition in places where newcomers were generally welcomed'.⁵ These men were involved in a complex series of interactions between commercial activity and the enablers of trade and industry. This is an area which generally falls outside the major categories of research, although there has been some recent interest in the growth of ports, for example. Not all Britons went to places connected with the British Empire. A fragment of the flow found a home within the Mediterranean British world outside the formal boundaries of empire.

This chapter considers Southwell's commercial activities in Corsica from his initial involvement in the cédrat business, the setting up of his maritime agency and his role in the expansion of the port and the city of Bastia. The world market for cédrat was, in the second half of the nineteenth century,

¹ Harper and Constantine, p.3.

² Fedorowich and Thompson, p.6

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bickers (2010), pp. 2-3.

⁵ Ibid., p.7.

dominated by Greece and Corsica with the fruit from the latter considered the best. The fruit was one of the principal exports of the island throughout the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Until 1902 it was the most important export to Britain. Southwell settled in the island at a time when there was a developing sense of 'global Britishness' with decades of export-led expansion. There was, though, little trade with Corsica owing, largely, to the absence of direct transport.⁶ Southwell arranged the first direct shipping from London and later established a maritime agency which not only facilitated his own ventures but enabled the growth of Corsica's most important industries: cédrat, gallic acid and Orezza water. The success of the agency and the industries was interdependent.

This review of Southwell's contribution covers the challenges he faced and the impact of his lifetime in the island. It offers an insight into the ways in which 'settler projects' operated outside the formal and informal influence of Empire. These projects often had a substantial economic impact. Overseas enabling activity was exemplified by railways but also banks and import firms.⁷ Such schemes attracted a diversity of settlers: entrepreneurs, engineers, bankers, teachers, managers and workers, many of whom were only in short-term residence. As David Rock has demonstrated in Argentina, settlers had little attachment to the country of their employ, influenced politics in a limited way through their relationships with the upper class, made little cultural impact, and were not easily absorbed by the foreign community.⁸ James Whidden suggests something similar for Cairo and Alexandria, although the situation in Egypt was complicated by the greater size of the European communities and the British Army of Occupation after 1917.⁹

The Cédrat Business

Like many entrepreneurs of the second half of the nineteenth century, Southwell learned his skills in the family business. The company, Castell-Brown, used Corsican cédrat in the production of mince pies and its famous plum puddings.

⁶ Fedorowich and Thompson, p. 16; Bickers (2010), pp.18-19.

⁷ See for example, Rock, pp.18-44.

⁸ Rock, p.29.

⁹ Whidden, pp.45-73.

Arthur's father, Charles, married a Brown daughter and attained a high position in the company until setting up on his own in 1885. In 1877 when Southwell went to sort out the problems with the contract, cédrat was exported in brine to Italy where Leghorn was the principal centre of the candying industry. Italy had an advantage over Corsica through the rebate received on the importation of sugar.¹⁰

Southwell had an important influence in the development of the cédrat industry. His first contribution was to reorganise the shipping of the produce. He worked with Antoine Piccioni, one of the largest property owners in the island, mayor of Bastia 1856-1870 and a friend of Arthur's father. They resolved to cut out the Leghorn middle-man. In 1880 Southwell's chartered ship, the *Mintha*, was the first British steamship to load in a Corsican port and link directly with London. This put an end to the Italian monopoly of trading fruits at Leghorn and boosted exports by lowering costs to market. By the time Southwell set up his permanent office in Bastia in 1882 he had gained 'an intimate and extended knowledge of the citron trade'.¹¹

Improved transport links stimulated the development of the industry. Greater profits could be made from candying the fruit in the island particularly when the French government agreed to the demand of the Corsican manufacturers for a similar arrangement to Italy in respect of sugar.¹² By 1885 two large preserving factories were working at Bastia, and it was anticipated that 'the whole of this important manufacture will probably be carried on in the island in future'.¹³ Importantly, the new factories were established by Corsicans.¹⁴ Table 7 shows the success of the factories with production doubling between 1864 and 1885 albeit small in comparison to the continued export in brine. Southwell continued to be responsible for the cédrat contract for the family business and supported candied production on the island by building

¹⁰ PP 1890-91 [C.6206] *Reports from H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad on Subjects of Commercial and General Interest.*

¹¹ PP 1890-91 [C.6206] *Reports from H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.*

¹² Campocasso (2005), p.8.

¹³ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial.*

¹⁴ Vincent Camulgie created *La Confiserie de Cédrat de la Corse* and *Gregorj et Cie* formed to group together the producers of Cap Corse: PP 1890-91 [C.6206] *Reports from H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.*

a small factory for making jams at Ponte Nuovo.¹⁵ Jams and preserved fruits also showed an increased export of nearly 4,000 cwt, although how much is due to Southwell's manufacture is unknown.¹⁶

Table 7 Bastia Cédrat Trade

Date	Candied tons	% Change	Brine tons	% Change
1858 ¹⁷ Total			477	
1859			657	
1860			359	
1861			552	
1862			568	
1864 ¹⁸ Foreign	211		1,298	
1885 ¹⁹ Foreign	422	+100	1,823	+41
1886 ²⁰ Foreign	435	+3	1,692	-7.2
1886 ²¹ Total			1,742	
1887-1888	No data ²²			
1897 ²³ Foreign	315	-28	No data	
1898 ²⁴ Total	363	+15	No data	
1899 ²⁵ Foreign	81		2,155	
1899 ²⁶ Total	223	-39	2,236	+22
1900 ²⁷ Total	220	-1	No data	
1901 ²⁸ Total	465	+111	No data	
1902 ²⁹ UK	1		951	
1909 ³⁰ UK			8	
1911 ³¹ UK			2.5	
1912 ³² UK			150	
1913 ³³ UK			89	
1914 ³⁴ UK			151	

¹⁵ Southwell-Colucci, p.14.

¹⁶ PP 1888 [C.5252] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹⁷ PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports*. Data for 1858-1862.

¹⁸ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial*. There were no exports to France.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² 1897-98 were years of turmoil in the consulate in Ajaccio when Foreign Office records from Corsica were scant: TNA: FO 27/3346.

²³ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

²⁸ PP 1902 [Cd. 786-88] *No. 2784 Annual Series*.

²⁹ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual series of Trade Reports*.

³⁰ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] *No. 4524 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

³¹ PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] *No. 4906 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France*.

³² PP 1913 [Cd. 6665-69] *No. 5111 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France*.

³³ PP 1914 [Cd. 7048-104] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports. France*.

³⁴ PP 1914-16 [Cd.7620-67] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

Southwell had benefited from an increase in production of the cédrat. A series of good harvests and excellent prices had been an incentive to expand the industry. By 1885, the cédrat trade 'after some years of stagnation and over-production has much improved. The 1885 crop was very large, but has all been placed at high prices'.³⁵ However, the crop was vulnerable. An exceptional harvest was anticipated for 1886 but the severe winter of 1885/6 saw the destruction of many plants and there were poor harvests for the next two years.³⁶ The arrangement over the sugar, which had been sought to protect the Corsican cultivator by establishing the factories 'in bond', meant that only Corsican cédrat could be used. With a closed market the growers began to demand 'excessive' prices from the manufacturers in Bastia. Southwell was powerless to influence them. His opinion was that the Corsican grower had a grasping nature and was short-sighted when an opportunity for large profit occurred.³⁷ In 1888 England, Germany and Italy which, up to this date, were the largest customers, took barely a quarter of the crop when they could buy the fruit at half the price elsewhere.³⁸

From 1894 the trade in cédrat suffered relapses from a number of factors. The winters of 1894-1896 destroyed the crops of whole districts.³⁹ By 1899 superior quality cédrat was once more being grown in large quantities, but it was now cheaper to export again in brine resulting in a drop in exports of candied fruits (Table 7). The Bastia factories ran into difficulty; one relocated to Leghorn and the other closed.⁴⁰ Although there had always been competition from Greece, new markets, particularly the United States and Belgium, had steadily been increasing production and improving the quality of their fruit.⁴¹ In 1900-02 *Mattei et Cie*, the main producer of cédrat at this time, manufactured 500-1,000 tons of candied fruit a year, but the company soon faced difficulties through restrictive trade practices.⁴² The German market was lost by the

³⁵ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial*.

³⁶ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] and PP 1888 [C.5252] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

³⁷ PP 1890-91 [C.6206] *Reports from H.M. Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports of H.M Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

⁴⁰ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

⁴¹ PP 1897 [C.8277] *Reports of H.M Diplomatic and Consular Officers*; PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

⁴² Campocasso (2005), p.9.

imposition of a heavy duty on preserved cédrat and the removal of duty on cédrat in brine; it was the same in the United States and Holland.⁴³ In 1902 half the cédrat shipped in brine went to the United Kingdom but this was to change suddenly.⁴⁴ From 1904 very little of the fruit was taken by the United Kingdom because it could be obtained at much lower prices from Antwerp.⁴⁵

The Maritime Agency

The exceptional cédrat harvest of 1885 may have been the incentive for Southwell to establish his maritime agency. It was in the interests of Castell-Brown to have a more efficient export arrangement for their cédrat contract and Southwell could see opportunities in the growing export market for the fruit. In 1885 he arranged for the steamers of the *General Steam Navigation Company* of London to call at Bastia every fortnight to facilitate the 'considerable trade' that was 'springing up with England'.⁴⁶ The maritime agency came into being and was coincident with Southwell's father breaking away from Castell-Brown and setting up his own wholesale and export manufacturing confectioners, *Chas. Southwell & Co. Ltd.*, in Bermondsey.⁴⁷ Opportunities lay beyond the cédrat. Aware, perhaps, of the unpredictability of the crop, Southwell diversified his interests into gallic acid and Orezza water.

During his honeymoon in 1882 Southwell had visited the mineral water factory at Orezza and that of gallic acid at Folelli.⁴⁸ The honeymoon visit to Folelli resulted in an arrangement with a new company, the *Société Anonyme de Champlan*, for the export of gallic acid which went mostly to England.⁴⁹ It seemed like a profitable liaison and was likely to have become the core of his export business and sustained the maritime agency when the cédrat crop failed. By 1895 production of gallic acid had doubled and even in 1896 when the total

⁴³ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352. *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.*

⁴⁴ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁴⁵ PP 1905 [Cd.2236] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁴⁶ The *General Steam Navigation Company* (GSN) was an operator of coastal, short-sea and ferry services in the United Kingdom, the near-Continent, the Mediterranean, and excursion steamers on the Thames, https://www.gracesguide.co.uk/General_Steam_Navigation_Co (last accessed 19 March 2018); PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial.*

⁴⁷ *Who's Who in Business* (1914) www.gracesguide.co.uk (last accessed 19 March 2018).

⁴⁸ Southwell-Colucci, p.22.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.23.

volume of exports remained fairly stationary, that of gallic acid increased.⁵⁰ When the export of cédrat began to fall permanently from 1902, gallic acid became Corsica's principal product. The greater part of the extract was shipped to the United Kingdom making it the island's largest trading partner.⁵¹ Gallic acid prospered reaching its peak in 1906-1907 and was the greatest export by value at this time (Table 8). Southwell had done much to stimulate demand, but the industry did little to develop and from 1907 exports fell. The chestnuts, from which the product was derived, became diseased and, large plantations were destroyed.⁵² Added to this, there was a crisis in the industry that Southwell was powerless to prevent. Industrial action forced the closure of two of the factories for four months.⁵³ This crippled the trade and forced buyers to find supplies in other countries. New and growing competition from Italy filled the gap.⁵⁴ Another strike in 1912 of several weeks halted all movement in the ports.⁵⁵

Table 8 Exports of Gallic Acid

Date	Total Tons	Liverpool/ London % Total	Hamburg % total	Antwerp % Total	Odessa % Total	Other % total
1902 ⁵⁶	5,985	45	32	23	-	-
1903 ⁵⁷	10,200 ⁵⁸	47	38	15	-	-
1905 ⁵⁹	15,500 ⁶⁰	42	39	19	-	-
1906 ⁶¹	25,000 ⁶²	41	22	10	-	-
1907 ⁶³	18,275	37	27	9	6	21
1908 ⁶⁴	17,459	48	28	8	4	12
1909 ⁶⁵	18,435	40	31	15	7	7
1912 ⁶⁶	16,856	70	17	9	-	4
1913 ⁶⁷	20,879	53	17	7	-	23

⁵⁰ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁵¹ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual series of Trade Reports*.

⁵² Southwell-Colucci, p.22. In 1890 there were some 60,000 hectares of chestnuts under cultivation; by 1910 this had declined to some 33,000: Pomponi (1977), p.77.

⁵³ PP 1908 [Cd.3727-64] *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ PP 1909 [Cd. 4446-60] *No. 4236 Annual Series*.

⁵⁶ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁵⁷ PP 1904 [Cd.1766] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁵⁸ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*. Estimate, actual total 11,934 tons.

⁵⁹ PP 1905 [Cd. 2236] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁶⁰ Estimate, actual total 19,591 tons: PP1908 [Cd.3277.64] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁶¹ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

⁶² Estimate, actual total 22,032 tons: PP1908 [Cd.3277.64] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁶³ PP 1908 [Cd.3727-64] *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

⁶⁴ PP 1909 [Cd.4446-60] *No. 4236 Annual Series*.

⁶⁵ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] *No. 4524 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

⁶⁶ PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] *No. 4906 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

⁶⁷ PP 1914-16 [Cd.7620-67] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

Southwell was also involved in the export of Orezza water. This water was a strong chalybeate or ferruginous acidulated mineral water, popular in Europe. It was known in the United Kingdom by the 1870s when attention was drawn to its benefits by the *Lancet* which called it 'refreshing to the taste' and forecast that it 'will in all probability become popular'.⁶⁸ The water was renowned in the French colonies as a valuable tonic, particularly in the treatment of malaria. Table 9 shows that in 1884 thirty-two percent of the produce went abroad. Exports increased up to 1897. Southwell's involvement was not clear but most likely he saw it as an opportunity for the new maritime agency. In 1899, Orezza was exported to the United Kingdom and the British colonies.⁶⁹ However, it is unlikely to have been a very profitable enterprise for the Corsicans. Mineral water had been exploited since 1856, but the owner of the concession at Orezza had to supply water in all parts of Corsica at a nominal price to bring it within the reach of all classes.⁷⁰ This could not have left much for export. As the table shows it appears that the impetus given by direct shipping did not last more than ten years. Exports remained mostly static until declining from the early twentieth century. The reason for the decline is not documented but it is likely to be due to the lack of investment in modernisation and competition from its owners, Vichy Company.

⁶⁸ *Lancet*, 15 May 1875.

⁶⁹ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

Table 9 Exports of Mineral Water

Date	Tons	% total produce
1865 ⁷¹	13	
1866 ⁷²	1	
1868 ⁷³	3	
1869 ⁷⁴	3	
1874 ⁷⁵	4	
1875 ⁷⁶	15	
1884 ⁷⁷	623	32
1884 ⁷⁸	1923	
1885 ⁷⁹	156	10
1885 ⁸⁰	1516	
1886 ⁸¹	1195	
1897 ⁸²	507	
1898 ⁸³	225	
1899 ⁸⁴	283	
1900 ⁸⁵	281	
1901 ⁸⁶	568	
1902 ⁸⁷	279	
1903 ⁸⁸	209	
1904 ⁸⁹	109	
1905 ⁹⁰	159	
1906 ⁹¹	132	
1907 ⁹²	129	
1908 ⁹³	70	
1909 ⁹⁴	88	

⁷¹ PP 1867-68 [3953-I-VIII] *Commercial Reports received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Consuls in 1867.*

⁷² PP 1867 [Cd.3761] *Commercial Reports.*

⁷³ PP 1871 [C.343] *Commercial Reports received at the Foreign Office from Her Majesty's Consuls in 1869-70.*

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ PP 1876 [C.1555] *Commercial.*

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial.*

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

⁸² PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.*

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁸⁶ PP 1902 [Cd. 786-88] No. 2784 *Annual Series.*

⁸⁷ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁸⁸ PP 1905 [Cd.2236] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ PP 1908 [Cd.3727.64] No. 3981 *Annual Series.*

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² PP 1909 [Cd. 4446-60] No.4236 No. 4236 *Annual Series.*

⁹³ Ibid.

The economic impact of Southwell's maritime agency is difficult to quantify. Most of the profits from the gallic acid industry went to foreign (or continental French) owned companies.⁹⁵ The greatest problem for the Corsicans was the lack of capital. The tannin/gallic acid industry provides a good example when, from 1882 the factories came into the hands of the continental French and other foreigners.⁹⁶ The continental French-owned *Champlan Company* took over the Corsican-owned factory at Pruno in 1892 with capital of 100,000 francs and in 1896 large works were built for manufacturing.⁹⁷ In 1902 three large factories were working with another under construction.⁹⁸ By 1906 the company had capital of 800,000 francs.⁹⁹ The First World War caused a fall in demand.¹⁰⁰ The *Champlan* factory at Pruno closed but re-opened after the war when the company continued to inject significant sums of capital up to the 1920s.¹⁰¹ In 1924 a tannin extract factory was established at Ponte Leccia by the Briton, William Blott, who used it in the family leather factory in Beverley which produced helmets for the British army and riding hats.¹⁰² It was not only tannin.¹⁰³ Capital equipment could not be provided in the island and had to be purchased abroad. In addition, expenditure on salaries, pensions and infrastructure in the island found its way back to France through the purchase of commodities and know-how not available in the island.

⁹⁴ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] No. 4524 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

⁹⁵ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁹⁶ PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] No. 4906 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

⁹⁷ PP 1897 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

⁹⁸ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

⁹⁹ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) No. 3981 *Annual Series*; PP 1911 [Cd. 5465-86] No. 4693 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*; PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] No. 4906 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

¹⁰⁰ S. Oradani, 'Quand l'Angleterre Revient sur la Terre des Tannins', *Corse Matin*, 1 June 2013.

¹⁰¹ PP 1911 [Cd. 5465-86] No. 4693 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*; PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] No. 4906 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

¹⁰² Oradani.

¹⁰³ The *Corsican and Mediterranean Gas Company* was set up mostly with British capital and British management: PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports*; A briarwood factory was established by a United States firm in 1911: PP 1912-13 [Cd.6005-79] No. 4906 *Annual Series*; M. Chauton, a continental Frenchman, owned the largest forestry business in the island: Bennet (1870), p.300; Orezza Water was leased and run by the *Vichy Company* of France: *Lancet*, 15 May 1875. By 1900 a cheese factory was established at Calvi by a continental Frenchman: PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.* In 1910 a French syndicate opened arsenic mines at Matra and Ile Rouse: PP 1911 [Cd. 5465-86] No. 4693 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

The factories provided significant employment, although it is not known for how many Corsicans. On the eve of the First World War there were about 400 employees in the tannin factories and thousands were employed in the forests between 1850 and 1914.¹⁰⁴ The complementary forestry industry had a downside. In 1906 the *Bastia Journal* described the establishment of the gallic acid factories as an 'immense wrong' in that they were responsible for destroying thousands of acres of trees which had been planted by their ancestors.¹⁰⁵ Sale of the chestnut trees resulted in deforestation on a significant scale and a destruction of the economic equilibrium whereby the chestnut had traditionally provided food and fuel for the islanders.

Southwell had little success in stimulating imports, a sign of a thriving economy. It would have been ideal for Southwell's ships to bring in goods from abroad and load with Corsican produce for the return trip. Growth, though, was restricted by the size of the Corsican market and limited purchasing power of the islanders which was not compensated for by the numbers of settlers, sojourners or tourists. The poverty of the economy meant that there was minimal scope for anything but the cheapest goods.¹⁰⁶ There was little demand for machinery, tools and equipment. Where there was, such as in 1899, Bastia harbour was dredged by British machinery.¹⁰⁷

Other factors restricted imports. From the 1880s the French reintroduced customs tariffs that ensured imports from the United Kingdom remained restricted. The tariffs effectively limited British imports to coal for the railways and gas works in Ajaccio and Bastia.¹⁰⁸ Coal constituted the only significant British import across the period and even here attempts were made to keep it out of the market with the purchase of cheaper French and Belgian coals in 1888. These were of poorer quality, and dissatisfaction led to English coal being imported again. The rigour with which the customs laws were enforced restricted trade to French ports which meant that the 1860 treaty between Britain and France had negligible effect. Trade between French ports was only

¹⁰⁴ Campocasso (2005), p.4.

¹⁰⁵ Quoted by Pomponi (1977), p.79.

¹⁰⁶ PP 1903 [Cd. 1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁰⁷ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

¹⁰⁸ PP 1903 [Cd1766] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

allowed in French vessels. Many foreign vessels would have been 'willing to do this trade direct between Bastia and northern France (rather than via Marseilles) at reasonable rates' but were 'not allowed and no French lines offered to do it'.¹⁰⁹ British firms, though, did not help themselves since they provided catalogues only in English and imperial measures, but there needed to be a large profit to make it worthwhile paying customs duties and the extra freight.¹¹⁰

The consuls' reports were repetitive in stating the volume of imports varied but little from year to year.¹¹¹ In 1888 there were 'few signs of any increase in the direct trade with the United Kingdom'.¹¹² A year later, imports were 'scarcely worth mentioning being confined to an insignificant quantity of fancy biscuits and tinned goods, a little more than sufficient to supply the limited demands of a few tourists during the season'.¹¹³ In 1901 it was reported that general trade varied little and external trade was mostly with France.¹¹⁴ Even in 1905 which was probably near the height of trade with the United Kingdom trade was on 'a very limited scale' with few 'certain or very promising openings for British goods at this time'.¹¹⁵ In 1906 two commercial travellers had visited the island and secured some orders.¹¹⁶ They were the exception but sufficient for Southwell to write that the 'volume of business continues to increase'.¹¹⁷

Southwell's reports on the trade of Bastia had a strong element of optimism bias and probably self-promotion that masked the real state of affairs. In the year of the foundation of the maritime agency Southwell claimed that 'British manufactures are much appreciated here and their products can now be imported direct with the advantage over the products of the manufacturing districts of the north of France, which have to pay railway transport to Marseilles. Duties on foreign manufactures are only about half of those charged on the French continent'.¹¹⁸ A year later he asserted that 'considerable trade

¹⁰⁹ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] No. 4524 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.*

¹¹⁰ PP 1905 [Cd.2236] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

¹¹¹ For example, PP 1897 [C. 8277] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

¹¹² PP 1888 [C.5252] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers.*

¹¹³ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from HM Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad.*

¹¹⁴ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

¹¹⁵ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

¹¹⁶ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) No. 3981 *Annual Series.*

¹¹⁷ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports.*

¹¹⁸ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial.*

was being done in Bastia with British manufacturers, owing to the establishment of direct communication with England.¹¹⁹ In 1887 he reported many inquiries for further information and several businesses that had resulted, 'which promises to increase'.¹²⁰ There is no evidence of these enterprises. Any exaggeration was unlikely to be detected since the consul rarely travelled to Bastia after 1874 as the Crown would not normally pay expenses for the trip. Nonetheless, the growing exports were sufficient to put pressure on the size and facilities of the port.

The Port and City

Southwell's most important, and yet indirect, contribution was to the development of the port and surrounding city area. According to Edith Southwell, when he came to the island in 1877 he found 'empty ports and business with the outside world scarcely in existence'.¹²¹ When he died in 1910 it was, wrote Edith, 'with the full accomplishment of his dreams', and 'Bastia had become a port counted among the most important in the Mediterranean'.¹²²

Edith's statements are difficult to substantiate and appear to run contrary to fact. When Southwell first arrived in Bastia the city was already the island's most important port and commercial centre around which most of the island's industry was centred. According to near contemporaries, he would have found the 'most populous, and commercial town in Corsica' where there was 'more enterprise and activity shown by its inhabitants than by those of any other part of the island'.¹²³ It had a population of some 10,000, was lit by gas and had large smelting works for the iron ore brought from Elba and Spain which furnished pig iron and steel rails for export.¹²⁴ During the Second Empire there had been new public works and improvements made; many streets were paved with marble and substantial and handsome buildings erected.¹²⁵ It was hardly 'empty'.

¹¹⁹ PP 1887 [C.4915] [C.4923] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

¹²⁰ *Ibid*.

¹²¹ Southwell-Colucci, p.5.

¹²² *Ibid*.

¹²³ Bennett (1870), p.269.

¹²⁴ 'Notes on Corsica – No 1'.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*.

Southwell's own assessment that up to 1885 the 'commerce of the island of Corsica [...] had been hardly worthy of attention' is convenient in that it coincides with the date of the establishment of his maritime agency.¹²⁶ However, the increase in shipping in volume and tonnage (Table 10) following the establishment of the agency indicates that there was an element of reality in his statement. In 1893 Southwell claimed that 'The entire foreign business has been created by me in Bastia [...] and my requirements for quay space are often a severe tax on the Captain of the Port. Only recently notice was called in the local papers to the large number of steamers I was bringing to the port and the ease and rapidity of my operations'.¹²⁷ This was an exaggeration. There had been a demand for coal from the gasworks for some time before Southwell's arrival.

Coal had provided an incentive for growth in Algiers with the establishment of the Anglo-Algerian Coaling Company.¹²⁸ In both Algiers and Corsica, the British provided a stimulus to growth and over a similar period. From 1885 in Bastia a variety of regular shipping services linked the city to all the markets where Corsican produce could be sold: London, Liverpool, Hamburg, Antwerp, the Black Sea and Manchester.¹²⁹ Table 10 demonstrates a significant increase in shipping from the date of the establishment of Southwell's Maritime Agency but the growth, unlike elsewhere, was not significantly in British ships. In Algiers, for example, there were four boats in 1885 and more than 2,273 in 1907 of which the majority were British.¹³⁰ Tonnage, which was arguably more important, also expanded considerably, but reflected the fall in output from tannin resulting from that industry's difficulties from 1907. The British proportion was still small but more significant coinciding with the period of increased imports of tannin from the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

¹²⁶ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial*.

¹²⁷ TNA: FO 27/3140, FO to Consul Drummond, 6 March 1893.

¹²⁸ Redouane, p.26.

¹²⁹ Southwell-Colucci, p.19; PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] No.4524 *Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹³⁰ Redouane, p.26.

Table 10 Bastia Shipping

	Numbers			Tonnage		
	British	Total	% British	British	Total	% British
1858 ¹³¹	1			198		
1859 ¹³²	2			513		
1860 ¹³³	2			528		
1862 ¹³⁴	2			327		
1885 ¹³⁵	8	865	0.9	5,284	194,351	2.7
1896 ¹³⁶	6	813	0.7	6,568	224,530	2.7
1899 ¹³⁷	18	620	3	19,132	279,823	6.8
1900 ¹³⁸	25	560	4	22,983	265,144	8.7
1901 ¹³⁹	36					
1902 ¹⁴⁰	44	574	8	42,100	382,841	11
1903 ¹⁴¹	36	623	6	36,724	339,117 ¹⁴²	11
1904 ¹⁴³	40	749	5	39,874	402,663	10
1905 ¹⁴⁴	43	802	5	34,174	427,637	8
1906 ¹⁴⁵	77					
1907 ¹⁴⁶	24	721	3	21,837	337,551	6
1908 ¹⁴⁷	34	712	5	33,166	342,576	10
1909 ¹⁴⁸	36	752	5	32,117	358,505	9
1910 ¹⁴⁹	39	780	5	38,332	350,241	11
1911 ¹⁵⁰	26	787	3	26,313	357,274	7
1912 ¹⁵¹	30	781	4	32,331	455,694	7
1913 ¹⁵²	25	851	3	27,494	475,721	6
1914 ¹⁵³	20	215	9	21,514	116,295	18

¹³¹ PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports*.

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*

¹³⁵ PP 1886 [C.4737] *Commercial*.

¹³⁶ PP 1897 [C. 8277] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers*.

¹³⁷ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

¹³⁸ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹³⁹ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ PP 1904 [Cd.1766] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁴² Impacted by strikes at Marseilles.

¹⁴³ PP 1905 [Cd.2236] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁴⁴ PP 1906 [Cd. 2682] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁴⁵ According to Southwell-Colucci, p.19.

¹⁴⁶ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

¹⁴⁷ PP 1908 [Cd. 3727-64] *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

¹⁴⁸ PP 1910 [Cd.4962-136] *No. 4524 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁴⁹ PP 1912-13 [Cd. 6005-79] *No. 4906 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ PP 1913 [Cd. 6665-69] *No. 5111 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*. In this year there was a strike lasting several weeks.

¹⁵² PP 1914 [Cd. 7048-104] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁵³ PP 1914-16 [Cd. 7620-67] *No. 5457 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

There is no doubt that the increase in shipping put pressure on the facilities of the port. The port was a restraint on trade; it was small, difficult to enter and could only support limited tonnage.¹⁵⁴ The facilities could not compete with the other larger Mediterranean ports.¹⁵⁵ A new port was begun in 1862, and in 1864 Bastia had half the island's trade and the consul believed that this was set to increase.¹⁵⁶ Work progressed slowly and in 1870 the harbour was still 'so narrowed by the jetty that in bad weather the entrance is very difficult'.¹⁵⁷ The new port was not finished until 1880. Further work continued until the close of the century, by which time the port had been connected (via a tunnel) to the railway system which was opened in 1888. A new road and land reclamation made possible the urban development of the area of low-lying land between the new port and the railway line. This was another enabler of the expansion of the town.

Southwell had identified the inadequacy of the new port with the need for additional works to give 800 feet of new quays with a minimum depth of twenty feet of water alongside, and a longer breakwater to give more protection from the winds.¹⁵⁸ He recognised that it was necessary to enlarge the facilities to provide for an increased number, and greater size, of ships if trade (and his maritime agency and later tourism) was to develop further.¹⁵⁹ Just as Miss Campbell lobbied the council in Ajaccio, Southwell petitioned the Chamber of Commerce, municipal authorities and local newspapers using his positions as Lloyds Agent and vice-Consul to demand an enlargement of the port.¹⁶⁰ However, notwithstanding Southwell's views of his importance or the influence he felt he could bring to bear through the consulate and Lloyds, he was not able to get the port works extended or completed with more speed.

In 1902 he urged for greater improvements than were being

¹⁵⁴ John Murray, *A Handbook to the Mediterranean: Its Cities, Coasts and Island for the Use of General Travellers and Yachtsmen*, 3rd edn (London: Murray, 1890), p.444.

¹⁵⁵ Aldrich and Connell, pp. 281-298.

¹⁵⁶ PP 1864 [3393] *Commercial Reports*.

¹⁵⁷ Bennett (1870), pp. 261-62.

¹⁵⁸ PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*; PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports of Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

¹⁵⁹ PP 1900 [Cd.1] [Cd.352] *Reports from Her Majesty's Diplomatic and Consular Officers Abroad*.

¹⁶⁰ Southwell-Colucci, p.19; PP 1904 [Cd 1766] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

considered.¹⁶¹ He pointed out the 'great inconvenience' caused by lack of berths for the increasing numbers of steamers and space for handling their cargo; the new quays were only sufficient for the mail steamers.¹⁶² In 1904 when the first tourist cruise came to Bastia the port was still not deep enough for the ship to dock and the *Libeccio* prevented the tourists from landing.¹⁶³ Southwell warned that if commercial steamers have to wait at a dangerous anchorage, owners will not send them.¹⁶⁴ He became incensed that the heavy tax levied on passengers to provide for port improvement had been raised for years with little work done.¹⁶⁵ Then approval was given for another 200 yards of deep water quays, and he hoped that at the same time a jetty would be built to protect the quay because until that was done, the trade would be hampered by the want of safe berths.¹⁶⁶ Southwell's warnings were not born out by reality. As Table 10 shows, shipping and tonnage continued to increase reaching a peak in 1905-1906. In 1907 Southwell was still holding out the prospect of the quay being ready in 'a few months' but the other work was still to begin.¹⁶⁷ The works were still not finished by the time of his death in 1910.¹⁶⁸ The extension to the St Nicolas jetty and deepening of the dock was completed in 1912, thus opening the port to greater numbers of tourists.¹⁶⁹ It was not until 1913 that the new quay was ready and some sheds erected to protect the goods.¹⁷⁰ Table 10 shows the works from 1910 giving rise to another peak in numbers and tonnage. Just as progress was being made, the outbreak of war in August 1914 brought work to a standstill.¹⁷¹

The consul acknowledged a certain amount of trade with foreign countries that boasted direct sea communication with London and that for this, 'Bastia is indebted to an Englishman', but it was not all down to Southwell.¹⁷² Recent scholarship on the Bastiais Corsican elites suggests that they also had

¹⁶¹ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ Southwell-Colucci, p.38. The *Libeccio* is a westerly/south-westerly wind.

¹⁶⁴ PP 1903 [Cd.1386] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁶⁵ PP 1904 [Cd.1766] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ PP 1908 [Cd. 3727-64] *No. 3981 Annual Series*.

¹⁶⁸ PP 1909 [Cd. 4446-60] *No. 4236 Annual Series*.

¹⁶⁹ PP 1913 [Cd. 6665-69] *No. 5111 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁷⁰ PP 1914 [Cd. 7048-104] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁷¹ PP 1914-16 [Cd. 7620-67] *No. 5287 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports*.

¹⁷² PP 1901 [Cd.429] *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

a significant contribution.¹⁷³ Campocasso notes the contribution of the Orenga and Mattei families, new Corsican business elites, to the development of the houses, streets, telegraph, factories, railway and the beginnings of industrialisation in the city.¹⁷⁴ Etienne-Louis Orenga was one of the investors in the Corsican company, *Vincent Camulgie et Compagnie* founded in 1876 for the production and sale of the cédrat.¹⁷⁵ These families were also involved in politics as representatives of the Republicans. Yet, despite their high profile, there is little mention of them or their activities in Southwell's consuls' reports.

The growth in shipping and the activities of Southwell, Orenga and Mattei would have had an economic impact on the immediate area of the port and the adjacent urban areas. Bastia became one of the principal points of entry to the island and the population increased from 20,765 in 1886, just after the start of Southwell's maritime agency, to 39,412 in 1911 (Table 11).¹⁷⁶ How much can be ascribed to the growth of the port is unclear since it was also a time of general migration from the countryside. In Corsica, as elsewhere, Alexandria for instance, there was significant population growth from 1820-1882 owing to substantial international and internal migration.¹⁷⁷ Bastia never had the advantages that accrued to Alexandria and Algiers with the opening of the Suez Canal, but there was growth.¹⁷⁸ Traditional labour intensive and unskilled workforce activities were added to with enterprises such as cargo handling, insurance and wholesaling which provided more skilled employment such as in *Louis-Napoléon Mattei et Compagnie* which employed some 300 people after its establishment in 1895.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³ Pierre-Jean Campocasso, 'Deux Notables Bastiais de la fin du XIXe Siècle ; Entre Pouvoir Économique et Influence Politique : Etienne-Louis Orenga (1818-1892) et Louis-Napoléon Mattei (1849-1907)', *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 92 (2016) 21-36.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p30.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p24.

¹⁷⁶ Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962

¹⁷⁷ Reimer, p.531.

¹⁷⁸ Thompson (1971b), *Corsica*, p.112.

¹⁷⁹ Campocasso (2016), p. 27.

Table 11 Population Growth in Bastia 1876-1911.¹⁸⁰

Date	Number	% Change
1876	17,850	
1881	20,100	+ 12.6
1886	20,765	+ 3.3
1891	23,397	+ 12.7
1896	22,552	-3.6
1901	25,425	+ 12.7
1906	27,338	+ 7.5
1911	39,412	+ 44.2

Despite Edith Southwell's view of her father's achievements, like Miss Campbell, Southwell must have been frustrated with progress and disappointed in what he was able to achieve. His approach to his 'adopted' country seemed to be of the imperial mind-set which caused difficulties in relationships. He clearly loved Corsica but also enjoyed being an important man in a small community with the kind of status he would not have achieved in England. With the relocation of the consulate to Ajaccio in 1874, the role of vice-Consul in Bastia, albeit honorary, would have assumed greater importance.¹⁸¹ His activities, though, were not without difficulty. Corsicans were 'known to be somewhat jealous of anyone starting in business in their country'.¹⁸² Southwell was said to be conscious of not arousing the wrath of the local authorities many of whom he perceived as 'jealous' of his success.¹⁸³ However, with his various enterprises, being the vice-Consul and agent of Lloyds and Thomas Cook, as well as the owner of a Humber, the second private automobile on the island and the first in Bastia, Southwell would have been the envy of most, host communities and the small settler colony in Bastia alike.¹⁸⁴ This seemed to have been the case.

Consul Dundas was critical of Southwell claiming that 'He is not on very good terms with the English in and around Bastia. He has quarrelled with most

¹⁸⁰ Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962

¹⁸¹ TNA: FO 27/2136, File note 17 May 1874.

¹⁸² Dugmore, p.54.

¹⁸³ TNA: FO 27/3140, vice-Consul Southwood to Consul Drummond, 24 March 1893.

¹⁸⁴ Southwell-Colucci, p.42.

at some time or another [...] He views all Englishmen with suspicion and likely to be dangerous and standing in his way for business [...] It is perhaps the very nature on his part for the more Englishmen congregating in Bastia for business the worse for him.¹⁸⁵ Settler societies were recognisable forms of social network that usually helped new arrivals.¹⁸⁶ Southwell had his way smoothed into Corsica by personal connections. His father had met Piccioni in Leghorn in 1872 and they became friends. Piccioni welcomed Arthur to Corsica and 'treated him like a son' and would have smoothed Southwell's way into doing business in the island.¹⁸⁷ Despite his good fortune, there is little to suggest that Southwell went out of his way to help others, and there were indications that he could be difficult.

Southwell's character is illustrated in 1893 by the dispute with George Anderson, landowner and the British manager of the gas works. The problem arose over the discharge of one of Anderson's vessels. Anderson alleged Southwell used his position as vice-Consul to obtain preferential treatment in the port [...] and as he [Southwell] was always away on business, he could not properly undertake his role of vice-Consul. The dispute was eventually resolved in Southwell's favour but with a Foreign Office file note: 'The impression I get is that Anderson is a cantankerous person and that Southwell, as the firm's capital man in place, does not like being ordered about and does not go out of his way to help him.'¹⁸⁸ A different picture was given by his daughter who asserted that his Italian and Corsican workers adored him and followed him from one enterprise to another and that to be the 'daughter of Sutuvelle' is an honourable title in many of the smaller houses of the island.¹⁸⁹

Conclusion

As a man of energy and initiative, Southwell found an outlet for his entrepreneurial spirit as a settler in Corsica. He was part of the mass migration of the 'long' nineteenth century. This was a way of life for many individuals in this period, but Southwell is a rare example of this occurring outside the bounds

¹⁸⁵ TNA: FO 369/216, Consul Dundas to FO, 19 December 1909.

¹⁸⁶ Magee and Thompson, p.85.

¹⁸⁷ Southwell-Colucci, p.12.

¹⁸⁸ TNA: FO 27/3140, File note, 7 September 1893.

¹⁸⁹ Southwell-Colucci, p.41.

of formal or informal empire.¹⁹⁰ Unlike many settlers, he had a genuine attachment to his adopted country, emotionally and financially. He did not get involved with politics but attempted to influence the municipality.

When Southwell first came to Bastia in 1877 he probably did not envisage that he would stay, but he was captivated by the island and settled there permanently after his marriage in 1882 and chose to be buried there. He did keep up his London links and returned to England periodically to sort out his financial situation. In this sense he may be considered as a transnational - identifying with more than one country at the same time.¹⁹¹ His maturing as an individual and a business man coincided with a relatively vibrant period in Corsica's commercial history. His contribution was a small step on the way to Corsica participating in the emerging global market.

Southwell's commercial activities had an impact over a number of years, largely through the creation of the maritime agency that opened up new markets for Corsican products, ended the monopoly of Italy in the trading of fruits and boosted the importance of Bastia as a commercial centre. He provided the means for Corsican produce to get to the market quicker and cheaper. Exports of cédrats, gallic acid and Orezza water increased markedly. His liaison with the *Société Anonyme de Champlan* gave a major boost to the tannin industry. As a result, factories were built providing employment for significant numbers. Shipping grew in volume and tonnage more or less continuously from 1885 to the First World War. This gave an imperative to expand the port and, with lobbying by Southwell and no doubt others, facilities in the port improved, albeit slowly.

The maritime agency was also personally important to Southwell. It provided a more stable income which, in the absence of private means, was much needed. Orezza water was at its peak 1884-86 and the cédrat 1885-1901 (except for 1899). It would have been the export of these products that provided the finance for him to invest in the mines. When the losses from mining mounted in the 1890s he incurred financial problems until gallic acid came on

¹⁹⁰ Fedorowich and Thompson, p. 7

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

stream from 1903. This product remained vibrant until his death in 1910.

Southwell's success though was partial. Although not entirely accurate, the view of Corsica expressed in 1922 was held by many: 'Factories are unknown. There is but little commerce of any description, the inhabitants usually having to leave their homes when young to earn a living on the mainland, returning to Corsica later if successful.'¹⁹² Southwell's main focus was exports and he could not overcome the conditions, largely outside his control, which were unfavourable to growth of the import market. French trade practices mostly restricted imports and the markets were always fragile; most enterprises were not strong enough to survive the First World War. Southwell's influence in driving the expansion of the port was circumscribed. Nevertheless, the population of Bastia increased, but in the island as a whole, the half century before the Second World War saw a forty percent decrease.¹⁹³ What was remarkable though, given the basic state of the economy of the island, is that investment and growth occurred at all. Without Southwell's projects it would surely have been much less.

As an individual, Southwell operated within the 'fabric of imperial experience'.¹⁹⁴ He clearly enjoyed the status of being vice-Consul and agent for Lloyds and Thomas Cook, but his attitude of superiority, like that of Miss Campbell, caused him to quarrel with fellow Britons. Southwell and Campbell shared a love of the island, but in contrast to Miss Campbell who had private means, Southwell's focus was driven by the need to earn his living. Other than the testament of his daughter, there is little evidence as to how the Corsicans or the continental French viewed him. His name has been forgotten in the city; there is no rue Arthur Southwell. Southwell is buried in the cemetery of L'Île Rousse a few kilometres from Lozari which his daughter said was his favourite mine.¹⁹⁵ His grave is marked by a headstone in the form of a Celtic cross; originally it stood on open ground. There is a surviving myth that Southwell left his interest in the Lozari mine to the Gambini family and in gratitude they looked after his monument and named their first born son Arthur in his honour. This

¹⁹² *Baltimore Gazette and Daily Advertiser*, 17 September 1922.

¹⁹³ Campocasso (2005), p.13.

¹⁹⁴ Bickers (2010), p.2.

¹⁹⁵ Southwell-Colucci, p.44.

cannot have happened because on death the rights to the concession reverted to the original owner. However, there was an Arthur Gambini working in L'Île Rousse in 2013 and Southwell's grave has been relocated inside the Gambini tomb, but even the guardians of the cemetery were unaware of its existence.¹⁹⁶

Southwell's contribution to change in Corsica went beyond trade, industry and commerce. In 1904, he was named the representative of Thomas Cook. At this date organised tours of the island were rare and each tourist who arrived presented themselves invariably to the Consul in Ajaccio and the vice-Consul in Bastia.¹⁹⁷ In February 1904 the first tourist cruise came to Bastia organised by the Berlin agency of *Carl Stanger* with 350 tourists from the ship *Kaiserin Maria-Theresa*.¹⁹⁸ This was the first indication of a shift away from the traditional sojourner-based tourism economy situated in Ajaccio towards the type of visitor who could be described as the more modern tourist.

¹⁹⁶ Told to the author on a visit to the island in 2013.

¹⁹⁷ Southwell-Colucci, p.36.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.37.

Chapter Nine

Tourists: Transition 1880-1920

Introduction

1880-1920 was the apogee of the winter health station. The Riviera had become much more than a destination for invalids. It was 'the centre of the fashionable world' and 'as much a part of the English social calendar as Ascot, Goodwood, the Derby and Cowes'.¹ Corsica was part of this phenomenon. Ajaccio grew more rapidly from 1880 reaching the peak of popularity before the First World War. 1880-1920 was a period characterised by the dominance of the winter sojourner but it was also a period of transition towards the visitor who had more of the characteristics of the modern tourist. This chapter considers what stayed the same in Corsica and what changed over the period.

The winter resort in Ajaccio remained the main focus for visitors to the island. Individuals suffering from various degrees of tuberculosis were still 'ordered south' by their doctors. Science had given a value to the habit of the winter seasonal migration much as it had done for the summer migration to the spa towns in Britain and Europe and the hill stations in India. There was a continued belief in the health-giving properties of the climate and the winter sojourn abroad was sustained. The Indian hill stations, for example, continued to be popular long after they succumbed to the epidemic diseases that they were once considered immune from.² However, health resorts had never just been for the sick, and invalids began to be outnumbered by pleasure seekers. By 1884 the Riviera was said to becoming 'a resort of the weary seeking repose, of the lovers of sunshine, of winter holiday makers [...] the healthy are learning from the experience of the sick; and the invalid population is already in the minority'.³ The justification for a winter sojourn was further entrenched when doctors sought to address older people more broadly on their health care.⁴ Articles were aimed at, 'The elderly man who at home perhaps gets an attack of bronchitis in the autumn and is confined to the house in spring can on

¹ Ring (2005), p. 70.

² Kennedy, p.30.

³ Special Correspondent.

⁴ Jackson, p.345.

the Riviera spend a fair part of his day in the sunshine.⁵ Ajaccio attracted more of the pleasure-seeking visitors. The city still remained attractive for those seeking an escape from the Riviera and to visit the sights connected with Napoleon's birth. Nevertheless, the city was still challenged in its ability to fulfil the needs and expectations of its visitors.

The most significant changes were around the composition of the visitors, the season and length of time of visit. It was in many senses an evolution. There had always been few of the sickest individuals in Ajaccio, but with a greater understanding of the nature of and treatment of tuberculosis, the disease lost its romanticism and sufferers began to be isolated in sanatoria. The traditional mobile elite rentier, such as Miss Campbell, was added to by the expanding profession and middle classes who spent their growing wealth on material goods and leisure, particularly travel.⁶ Writers, men of science and university teachers, for example, used their vacations to pursue their leisure interests in many parts of the globe. This marked a point of transition away from the world of the English colonist focussed on Ajaccio to Corsica being seen as a country-wide destination.

Corsica was still a gap of the map in the eyes of the professional-class traveller-discoverers who visited the island in pursuit of their particular leisure interest or intellectual endeavours. The island was still regarded as an *Ultima Thule* which appealed to the British spirit of exploration fuelled by tales from the expanding Empire and, for example, polar exploration. It was the explorer who was instrumental in naming and mapping regions of the globe which had received little attention.⁷ The last quarter of the nineteenth century had seen an expansion in the universities and cultural institutions and interest in natural science.⁸ Egyptology and archaeology were growing disciplines, and by 1900 the Natural History, the Victoria and Albert and the Science Museums all began to assume their modern form and the British Museum and National Gallery were

⁵ 'The Riviera', *BMJ*, 28 January 1899.

⁶ See Peter Borsay, 'Room with a View: Visualising the Seaside, c. 1750-1914', *Trans. of the Royal Historical Society*, 23 (2013), 175-201 (p.175) and Soane, p.10.

⁷ Pratt, p.198.

⁸ Cannadine, p.578.

extended.⁹ From 1880 there was an increase of professional and leisure associations.¹⁰ In 1857 the Alpine Club was formed and British climbers dominated in the Alps not only inventing the sport of mountaineering but also 'adopting the discourse of discovery from the Royal Geographical Society and explorers in the Arctic and Africa'.¹¹ Many of its members were professional men, graduates of Oxbridge.¹²

The traveller-discoverers mostly used Ajaccio as a point of arrival and departure and as a base to explore the interior. From the late nineteenth century, cruise liners brought in 'numerous personalities from the political and scientific worlds, alpinists, botanists, naturalists, geologists, palaeontologists, ornithologists, archaeologists and writers'.¹³ The visiting professionals and the elite sojourners also sought out isolated areas of the interior with the aim of encountering one of Corsica's renowned bandits who were an attraction until the 1920s. Faster travel had made shorter, vacation visits easier, and within the island the completion of the island's railway system made some areas of the interior more accessible.¹⁴ Then, in the early twentieth century, the introduction of motorised transport and new roads facilitated even greater access to the more remote regions of the island.

The new type of visitors came in pursuit of a particular niche interest. They were the equivalent of what today is called 'special interest tourism'.¹⁵ Many recorded their experiences. The Victorians enjoyed reading about exotic

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Thompson, (1971b), *Corsica*, p.20.

¹¹ Hansen (1996), p.49.

¹² Peter Hansen, 'Albert Smith, the Alpine Club and the Invention of Mountaineering in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Journal of British Studies*, 24 (1995), 300-24. The mountaineers were largely profession men and visitors to Corsica included: in 1862, 1866 and 1868, the Rev. William Hawker, entomologist and botanical collector, one of the original members of the British Ornithologists' Union and a fellow of the Zoological Society; in 1882, 1883 and 1902, Francis Fox Tuckett (1834-1914), who worked in the family leather business; in 1877, 1880, 1894 and 1902, Freshfield, a lawyer and member of the RGS; in 1883, the artist Edward Theodore Compton (1849-1921); in 1908, Ousten, a surgeon; in 1915, Victor Gatty (1865-1922), managing director of family bleach and dye works; in 1924, 1929 and 1931, R.G.L Irving (1877-1969), schoolmaster; in 1927, F.S. Smythe (1900-49), electrical engineer, author and practitioner of photography and botany; in 1929 and 1931, John D. Hills (1895-1975), head-teacher and former army officer.

¹³ Southwell-Colucci, p.37.

¹⁴ By the 1920s a car reached 200 mph, trains could travel more than 100 mph: Swinglehurst, p.169.

¹⁵ Sheela Agarwal, Graham Busby, Rong Huang, eds, *Special Interest Tourism: Concepts, Contexts and Cases* (Wallingford: CABI, 2018), p.1.

locations and Corsica fell into this category.¹⁶ Depictions of the island set the expectations of the place as a *terra incognita*. It was not that Corsica was really unknown but that those searching for a real experience believed it to be so. The island was written about and sketched, but for all these 'unveilings, the mystery of Corsica somehow remains intact'.¹⁷ There was the potential to sell works of an exotic island, discover new species and bag first ascents. Traveller-discoverers were a catalyst for the development of tourism; their two most favoured areas, Vizzavona and the Niolo, benefitted significantly from their presence.

Continuity

Attracted by the benign climate most sojourners still arrived between November and March, followed the same pursuits as their predecessors and attached the same importance to the symbols and items of material culture that united parts of the British World. Visitors were encouraged by the development, albeit slowly, of the city; Napoleon began to be promoted more as a tourist attraction and the push away from the Riviera was continued.

When Ajaccio reached the peak of its popularity, most historians credit 1,000 foreign visitors to the city. The Britons were largely the mobile elites, members of society that the *Queen* called the 'upper 10,000'.¹⁸ Among this group in 1913-1914 there were about '1,500 peers and baronets and another 1,700 non-hereditary knights. They overlapped with the 4,843 persons with incomes of more than £10,000 and perhaps 2,000 other members of the elite who 'could confidently claim to belong to the highest group in English society'.¹⁹

For the purposes of this thesis, the claim of a thousand has been tested with a variety of available sources. In 1905 the Corsican doctor, Paul Pompéani, published a tract showing figures for 1902-03 of 2,120.²⁰ This

¹⁶ Alison Byerly, *Are We There Yet? Virtual Travel and Victorian Realism* ([n.p.]: University of Michigan Press, 2012), p.11.

¹⁷ Candea, p.43.

¹⁸ Perkin, p.62; *The Queen Newspaper Book of Travel* (1910), p.363.

¹⁹ Perkin, p.62.

²⁰ Dr Paul Pompéani, *Ajaccio, Station d'Hiver* (Paris: Cour d'Appel, 1905), n.p. Pompéani does not identify his sources or the date of the data collection.

number appears to be exaggerated; no other historian has repeated it. Pompéani's total for 1903-04 of 760 (Table 12) is more realistic.²¹ He recorded a good mix of nationalities with the Anglophones and Germans predominating.

Table 12 Pompéani's Figures for Foreign Nationals at Ajaccio Winter 1903-04.

Nationality	Numbers	Percent
'English' and Irish	166	21.8
American	41	5.4
German	190	25
Scandinavian	14	1.9
Swiss	109	14
Austrian	120	15.8
French	40	5.3
Italian	15	2
Russian	17	2.5
Spanish	8	1
Other	40	5.3
Total	760	100

It is possible to triangulate Pompéani's numbers with other numerical and narrative data from this period. The *Macmillan Guide* of 1906 put the total British visitors coming to Ajaccio each winter at 2-300.²² Macmillan's sources are not known but it would seem a reasonable estimate considering Pompéani's figures and the Anglophone visitors of others years set out in Table 13 which has been compiled for the purpose of this thesis from the hotel registers and other sources (the figures should be considered the minimum on account of missing years and incomplete data). The estimate numbers are supported by the work of Francis Beretti who identified 300 Anglophones in the hotel registers of January to mid May 1914.²³ The season 1913-14, though, may not have been typical since the Consul declared that there were an 'unexpectedly large number of tourists in March, April and May', possibly taking the opportunity to

²¹ Ibid.

²² *Guide to the Western Mediterranean* (London: Macmillan, 1906), p.213.

²³ Beretti (1961), p.80. Although the figures are compiled from the same sources, the differences result from difficulties identifying nationality due to illegibility, or different interpretations put on the numbers where 'family' or 'suite' are mentioned.

holiday before the onset of war.²⁴ However, it does seem to follow the trend for a gradual increase set in previous years. There are other alternatives that support the growth in numbers in the first decade of the twentieth century. Imports to Corsica of items such as biscuits and cakes, coffee, jams, syrups and bonbons, tea and woollen fabrics began to increase; 1906, for example, saw an increase in imports of 779lbs of biscuits more than double that of the previous year.²⁵ These were goods that were likely to be consumed by the visitor, so the significant increase may be due to the greater number of sojourners.

Table 13 Estimated Anglophone Visitors to Ajaccio

Season	Number of individuals
1901-2	118
1902-3	240
1903-4	245
1913-14	275

Another proxy for the popularity of a resort may be judged by the coverage in the guidebooks. Guide books that included Corsica were more numerous from the 1880s. A comparison of Ajaccio with a couple of the smaller competitor resorts is set out at Table 14. This gives a less conclusive picture. In 1902-1903 Ajaccio was given similar coverage to Cannes and in Menton, and there was a considerable leap in information as all resorts became more popular by 1908. The *Blue Guide* of 1926 has much reduced data for all three resorts probably reflecting the diminishing interest in winter resorts generally by that time. This data mirrors the general popularity of the winter health resorts, but Cannes and Menton were always more frequented than Ajaccio.

²⁴ PP 1914-16. [Cd.7620.67] No. 5457 Annual Series. Diplomatic and Consular Reports.

²⁵ PP 1907 (Cd 3283) Annual Series of Trade Reports; PP 1908 (Cd 3727-64) No. 3981 Annual Series.

Table 14 Guide Book Pages: Comparison of Ajaccio with Cannes and Menton.

Number of pages	Ajaccio	Cannes	Menton
Baedeker 1902 ²⁶	3	3	4
Reynold's Ball 1908 ²⁷	13	17	16
Blue Guide 1926 ²⁸	2	5	5

Evidence of growth is also seen in the increasing numbers of hotels and other accommodations. By 1892 Ajaccio was said to be 'growing' in favour.²⁹ There were a selection of hotels and villas including the 'splendid' new Continental.³⁰ By 1902 the Continental had become part of The Grand Hotel overlooking 'beautiful gardens where giant olives, oranges, lemons, palms and cactus stretch far behind the hotel, sloping up the sides of Monte Salario [...] whence we see, lying directly beneath, the Orientally white city of Ajaccio'.³¹ The greater number and better quality of the hotels appeared to attract a number of visitors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century who returned for several seasons.³² Among this number was the Pretymans: Captain E.G.Pretyman (1860-1931) and Lady Beatrice Pretyman (1870-1952) who visited Ajaccio four times between 1898 and 1928, staying in the Grand Hotel.³³ A menu of the Grand Hotel of January 1895 boasted: ox-tail soup, oysters from Ostend, sea bass, chateaubriand, partridge, asparagus, Strasbourg goose, Russian salad, ice cream with pineapple cream, various

²⁶ Karl Baedeker, *Southern France, Including Corsica: Handbook for Travellers*, 4th edn (London, Dulau, 1902).

²⁷ Reynolds-Ball (1908).

²⁸ Findlay Muirhead and Marcel Monmarché, eds, *The Blue Guide: Southern France* (London: Macmillan, 1926).

²⁹ *Manchester Guardian*, 23 December 1892.

³⁰ Richardson, p.521.

³¹ R.W.W. Cryan, 'Ajaccio', *Westminster Review*, 157, (4) (April 1902), 452-56 (p.452). The 1927 *Cook's Handbook*, p.308, lists the Grand, des Étrangers, Solferino, de France but there were many others to choose from.

³² Return visitors included: Baroness Burdett-Coutts, Sir Hugh and Lady Seymour King, The Massey and Stewart families, Misses Sparrow, Ferguson, Neale and Forbes and Mr Edwin Freshfield and suite, Sir Patrick Keith Murray, Lord Percy MP, Earl Cranborne, Colonel and Mrs Tyack, Mr Francis Tuckett, Mr and Mrs Ollerenshaw (notable Manchester family), HRH Saxe Meininge, Prince and Princess Wittengenstein, Sir William Eden Bart, Dr Lytton Forbes, Lady Lushington, Captain and Mrs Ronald Greville, Captain Tyron, Sir Henry and Lady King, Colonel Hitchens, Reverend and Mrs Latham and Captain Wakes Wakes. (All data is from the hotel registers).

³³ *Yorkshire Telegraph and Standard*, 11 January 1898; *Sunday Times*, 22 February 1899; *Daily Mail*, 13 March 1915; *Yorkshire Telegraph and Standard*, 18 February 1928.

gateaux and other desserts with the finest French wines.³⁴ Immediately after the First World War, when the sojourners returned in the winter and the Grand Hotel reopened, Ajaccio embraced the 'Roaring Twenties' and the life of luxury continued much as before.³⁵ The last owner of the hotel recounted the atmosphere of those years of 'paste and sequins' when 'servants in white gloves attended to the clients and their wives who came with their private secretaries and maids. Dinners were served in the Salle de Fêtes, marvellously decorated where a jazz orchestra played on the balcony'.³⁶

The Grand Hotel was, though, the exception. Disappointment with, and complaints about, provisions continued in contrast to what was available elsewhere. The Riviera had always been better supplied. By the 1880s in Menton there was a British pharmacy and many other shops which carried English names, run by Englishmen.³⁷ Even in Algiers the British could shop at Dunlops for groceries, meat and spirits (they were also an estate agency); Bankhardt, Pitt and Scott or Burke for removals; Cook's or Gaze for excursions, Cook's or Monk Jackson for the bank.³⁸ By 1903 *Octave Jejeune* confections baked English bread; the accessories of *Leon Schweitzer* clothing store extended to English umbrellas; *Ledoux Frères* sold English and American cigarettes; *Reudy Frères* photography studio stocked English-sized plates, films and papers and there was an English pharmacy.³⁹

The Corsicans recognised the British attachment to shopping baptising the main shops in Ajaccio, situated in the narrow streets next to the covered market, '*l scioppi*' - a small example of the Anglicisation of material culture.⁴⁰ Even so, the experience of shopping in the city was disappointing. In 1883 Sala noted that there were, 'well-stocked book and stationery warehouses excepted, the merest hovels devoted to the sale of second-hand clothes, old rags and bones; pots and pans, and ships' chandlery, to say nothing of an inordinate

³⁴ Lucchini, p.90.

³⁵ *St Albans Daily Messenger*, 5 February 1919.

³⁶ Quoted by Lucchini, p.91.

³⁷ Teulié, p. 148.

³⁸ Ross (1991), p.24

³⁹ Perkins, p.231.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.32.

number of low *buvettes* and dram-shops'.⁴¹ In 1890 the city was still 'very poorly provided with shops' for a town of 20,000 inhabitants.⁴²

There was some indication that things were better in 1898 when Adams could say that 'A visit to Ajaccio would not be complete without going to the market-place and observing [...] luscious strawberries, bright red cherries, such peas, potatoes, onions, and radishes'.⁴³ However, even when Ajaccio was at the height of its popularity, the *JDE* still had to advise hoteliers that they should stock jams, milk and butter for foreign clients.⁴⁴ In 1902 the city was still not 'an ideal shopping-place; fashions are some moons behind Paris, yet in the numerous if poorly stocked shops enough may be found to administer to life's necessities if not to its elegancies'.⁴⁵ By 1905 the range of shops in Ajaccio had improved from the 'poor' two or three draper's shops and some 'shoes and boots' to 'dealers in antiquities, curios, china, weapons, and jewels [...] fruit and flower shops with their hampers of richly coloured sea-urchins and immense Pinna shells'.⁴⁶ Corsican specialties could be found such as 'a liqueur made from myrtle berries, and *pâté de Merle*, a preparation of blackbirds not unlike *pâté de fois gras*'.⁴⁷ A shop in the market specialised in the sale of underpants and flannel shirts in the '*façon Anglaise*' and the confectionary shop of Madame Millie was highly popular with the foreign colony.⁴⁸ In 1908 there was a bookseller and stationer, a shop selling bicycles and motor cars, a department store, a boot maker, a hairdresser, an outfitter, a gunsmith and a photographer.⁴⁹

Progress remained slow. Nearly sixty years after the beginning of the station Dugmore found the main shopping street, the *cours Napoleon* 'scarcely imposing, for the shops are small and seem to be chiefly devoted to the sale of souvenirs of Napoleon'.⁵⁰ There was some milk but it was 'asses' milk, 'the

⁴¹ Sala, p.108. A *buvette* is a bar.

⁴² Parr, p.814.

⁴³ Charles Adams, 'A Jaunt into Corsica', *Century*, 48, (5) (September 1894), 747-59 (p.757).

⁴⁴ *JDE*, 1st edn. April 1904.

⁴⁵ 'Ajaccio' (1902), p.454.

⁴⁶ d'Este, p.21.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.23.

⁴⁸ Pomponi (1992), p.305.

⁴⁹ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.573.

⁵⁰ Dugmore, p.50.

flavour and odour of which does not commend itself to English taste', and those who desired tea were advised to supply themselves with the amount they needed and that 'luxuries as butter' were not to be expected.⁵¹ Ajaccio remained a small, provincial and predominantly rural city.

Notwithstanding some development and lack of provisions, rurality remained an attraction. The island provided an antidote to modernism, and even in 1922 it was looking back 'on Corsica from the confetti-strewn Corso in Nice [...] a simple, unspoiled, paradoxical paradise [...] so comfortless, yet so compelling in its character'.⁵² The need to escape modernisation was even stronger than it had been in the 1860s. In 1882 James Anthony Froude (1818-94) described London as 'miles upon miles of squalid lanes [...] the dirty street in front, the dirty yard behind, the fetid smell from the ill-made sewers'.⁵³ By the end of the nineteenth century eighty percent of the population of England were urban dwellers with the sun and sky feared obscured by 'pestilential storm-clouds'.⁵⁴ The growth of the cities causing what was believed to be degeneration of body, and spirit and the mobile elites increasingly yearned for a 'nostalgic idealizing tradition which would henceforth represent England as lost, departed, an absent centre ineluctably vanished into the past'.⁵⁵

The traditional escape had been to the Riviera. However, the desire for bucolism was challenged by the growing popularity of the Riviera resorts. Until the 1880s Menton, for example, was seen as a genteel resort, primarily for invalids. By the time Queen Victoria visited in 1882 it was said to have several brothels.⁵⁶ Cannes became known as having the 'most promiscuous society in Europe'.⁵⁷ George Sala was a supporter of the tourist, but he noted that

'the general aspect and tone of society in Nice have been appreciably changed, and not for the better. It is not pleasant to hear an expression which is very current at present, "the scum of Monte Carlo," or to be told that not only the purlieu of that sumptuous and nefarious establishment,

⁵¹ *Daily Mail* (Hull), 21 September 1927; Dugmore, p. 26.

⁵² Williams (1923), p. 223.

⁵³ Froude, p. 8.

⁵⁴ John Ruskin, quoted by Herbert Sussman in *A Companion to Victorian Literature & Culture* ed. Herbert F. Tucker (Oxford: Blackwell 2007), p.251.

⁵⁵ Young (2008), p.221.

⁵⁶ Ring (2005), p.60.

⁵⁷ Pemble, pp.45-46.

but the railway station and cafes of Nice, are infested by downright thieves, “loafing around” in the hope of being able to steal something from the unwary’.⁵⁸

By contrast, Sala was delighted with Ajaccio: ‘the most enchanting “winter city” that I have ever visited.’ He called it ‘the Queen of the Mediterranean [...] The drives and promenades are numerous and picturesque [...] it is just such another Earthly Paradise as Monte Carlo, only unlike the lovely plateau on which the “Principino” of Monaco has suffered the proprietor of a common gaming-house to spread a detestable *tapis vert*, the Paradise was not an Inferno for a next door neighbour’.⁵⁹

The Riviera could not claim an attraction like Napoleon whose popularity as a tourist icon continued to grow. By the late nineteenth century, the sites associated with the Emperor, in and around Ajaccio, featured in all travelogues and guidebooks, and tourists like Sala set out for Corsica with a ‘definitive object mind’ which was ‘to go to Ajaccio to see the house in which Napoleon the Great was born’.⁶⁰ In the early twentieth century the image of Napoleon was more actively used to develop tourism. Visits to the birthplace became organised. By 1905 there was a register of visitors that recorded the signatures of Edward VII and the Queen who visited in April of that year.⁶¹ The book was still there in 1913 when René Bazin saw their signatures and noted that there were more English and German visitors than French.⁶² By this time Napoleon had become to Ajaccio, what Shakespeare is to Stratford-on-Avon.⁶³ The cult of place associated with Napoleon reached its height with the centenary of his death on 5 May 1921 when the first stone was laid for a memorial on the Casone, near the site known as ‘Napoleon’s grotto’.⁶⁴

Despite the growing numbers of pleasure seeking visitors, Ajaccio continued to have a role as a winter health station. Evidence of the presence of invalids comes from Lorrain who, in 1905, wrote that the Grand Hotel was like a

⁵⁸ Sala, pp. 56-57.

⁵⁹ Sala, p.167

⁶⁰ Ibid., p.iv.

⁶¹ Binet, p.185

⁶² Ibid., p.168.

⁶³ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p. 470

⁶⁴ *Manchester Guardian*, 6 May 1921 and others.

hospital 'full of Germans and Anglo-Saxons' who were clearly there for their health since the 'corridors flowed with creosote and the rooms embalmed in phenol'.⁶⁵ How true this picture was is open to question. Lorrain earned his living as a satirical journalist and was prone to exaggeration, and there is no other record of such a description. A British newspaper in 1919 described Ajaccio as a 'winter resort for people suffering from weak lungs'.⁶⁶ Nevertheless, there are no records of books, articles or memoirs in relation to Ajaccio from individuals specifically aimed at the sick as could be found for other health resorts.⁶⁷ It was likely that the long sea passage from Marseilles or even Nice was still 'a bar to most invalids', and the shorter sea passage from Leghorn entailed a 'long and troublesome' drive from Bastia to Ajaccio.⁶⁸ Even with the various improvements made to travel it was 'hardly suited to a consumptive spirit'.⁶⁹ In addition, by the time the winter station reached its apogee in the early twentieth century, there were fewer consumptive individuals; mortality and morbidity from tuberculosis in Britain was declining, particularly among the richer classes.⁷⁰

The city was always more suited to the type of health seeker like James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) who stayed in the city in 1901 from mid-January to the end of April. Whistler was advised by his doctor that he did not have a serious illness but was overworked and should go to Ajaccio for rest.⁷¹ The Conrads may also be considered representative of the type of invalids who came to Ajaccio at this time. For them, the climate, likened to that of 'oranges and roses at Christmas', was the attraction.⁷² Joseph Conrad (1857-1924), with his wife Jessie (also in poor health), spent three months in the city in early 1921 when working on his novel about Napoleon. He believed that 'It will no doubt be very good for Jessie. I can't shake off my depression. Perhaps I will be able to

⁶⁵ Quoted in Binet, p.178.

⁶⁶ *St Albans Daily Messenger*, 5 February 1919.

⁶⁷ Frawley gives many examples.

⁶⁸ Donn , p.23.

⁶⁹ 'Scribbles in Corsica', p.28.

⁷⁰ Bynum, pp.xix: In 1882 Robert Koch recorded one in seven dying of tuberculosis. Even in England and Wales when the worst of the epidemic was over, from 1851 to 1910 there were some four million deaths ascribed to tuberculosis.

⁷¹ Margaret F. MacDonald, Patricia de Montfort and Nigel Thorp, eds, *The Correspondence of James McNeill Whistler, 1855-1903* ([Glasgow]: Centre for Whistler Studies, University of Glasgow, 2004-), <http://www.whistler.arts.gla.ac.uk/correspondence> (last accessed 6 January 2018).

⁷² Williams (1923), p. 229.

do some work in Corsica'.⁷³

Winter remained the preferred season for visits up to the mid-1920s. In 1922, for example, going abroad meant 15 October to 15 May when 'agents were expected to have disposed of at least two-thirds of the habitants on his books at least six months before "next season"'.⁷⁴ The majority arrived between November and the end of March and departed before Easter; it was a 'universal exodus so general'.⁷⁵ The evidence from the hotel registers suggests that few remained in Ajaccio for the whole of the winter season. It is possible that more rented villas for an extended period, as Miss Campbell did before her new house was ready, but documentary evidence for this type of accommodation is rare. One example were the Shaw-Stewarts family who in 1921 spent almost the whole winter in the city, having purchased one of the 'cottages' on the cours Grandval and were recorded as returning to London for the 'season'.⁷⁶ The reduction in guidebook pages devoted to the traditional winter resorts (Table 14) reflects the changes occurring by the mid-1920s.

Change

In 1912 Ajaccio was formally designated a *station climatique* which meant the city could benefit from a tourist tax, thus recognising a role wider than that of the invalid.⁷⁷ Towards the end of the nineteenth century facilities in Ajaccio had improved, somewhat, for invalids, but there were changes in medical practice that impacted upon the city's ability to receive consumptives. However, from the turn of the twentieth century there began to be an important change in the composition of the visitors which had implications for the length and season of stay. The new style of visitor spent time travelling the island and tourism facilities developed in the interior shifting the focus from the sedentary sojourner to the mobile tourist.

⁷³ Quoted by Laurence Davies, ed., *The Selected Letters of Joseph Conrad* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p.431. Conrad was working on his novel about Napoleon at the time of his visit to Ajaccio: 'Mr Conrad's Studies in Corsica', *Daily Mail*, 16 April 1921.

⁷⁴ 'Wintering Abroad', *BMJ*, 28 October 1922.

⁷⁵ M. Hornsby, ed., *The Queen Newspaper Book of Travel* (London: Cox, 1910), p.363.

⁷⁶ *The Times*, 16 May 1921. The season was the English sporting summer season and events in London.

⁷⁷ Binet, p.156. This is often misunderstood and writers have used this to illustrate the slow development of the city, but it was a specific legal definition.

For invalids, the earlier problem (Chapter Four) of lack of British doctors appeared to have been overcome. With the growth of the station and, particularly with the opening of the Grand Hotel in 1894, there would have been sufficient potential patients to make it worthwhile for a doctor to establish themselves in the island. Dr George Trotter (1860-1946) appears to have been resident by 1891 when his daughter was born in Ajaccio.⁷⁸ In 1893 the Trotters were living in Bocognano, some thirty miles from Ajaccio, moving back into the city after the death of their son in the July of that year.⁷⁹ In 1894, though there was a setback; the French authorities passed a law forbidding English and German doctors to practise on French soil. The Corsicans were said to be 'aghast at such high-handed proceedings' which they believed would 'do a great deal to ruin Ajaccio as a health resort'.⁸⁰ One Corsican doctor apparently did his utmost to save his foreign colleagues, Drs Trotter and Schmidt, 'from this senseless decree of practical banishment'.⁸¹ However, the *Bosc Guide* was clear that there was no English doctor in Ajaccio in 1894; the Trotters had returned to England.⁸²

Ball's guide of 1896 again refers to Dr Trotter being in Ajaccio, but it is most likely that the guide was out of date. Trotter's third daughter was born in Camberley in 1896.⁸³ In 1900 Trotter was a civilian surgeon in the South African Field Force when his address was given as Staindrop, Durham and Ajaccio.⁸⁴ He is recorded in the *JDE* as spending some months in Ajaccio in 1901 and 1902, but by 1906 he seems to have permanently returned to Britain when he was sworn in as a new magistrate.⁸⁵ In 1901 and 1902 there was a French Dr Petit who spoke English, but his presence was only advertised in March and April of these years.⁸⁶ The *Queen* stated that there was an English doctor in Ajaccio in the winter season of 1910 and 1913, but the description of

⁷⁸ Ancestry: 1911 *England Census*.

⁷⁹ Richard Spiers Standen, 'Among the Butterflies in Corsica', *Entomologist*, (1893), 236-239 (p.239).

⁸⁰ 'Foreign Physicians in Corsica', *New York Tribune*, 23 January 1894.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Bosc, p.40; *Morning Post*, 29 August 1894.

⁸³ Reynolds-Ball, (1896), p.474. Ancestry: 1911 *England Census*.

⁸⁴ *Epsom College Register* (1905), p.103: *Find My Past: Britain, School and University Registration Books*, (last accessed 26 July 2018).

⁸⁵ *Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail*, 3 April 1906.

⁸⁶ *JDE*, April 1901; *JDE*, March 1902.

the city remained the same from edition to edition, so it may well also be out of date.⁸⁷

The absence of a British doctor would have kept away the most seriously ill. However, by the late nineteenth century changes in medical practice made it even less likely that invalids would go to Corsica. 'Sufferers from bronchitis, asthma, and heart-disease, neurasthenics, and old people flocked to the warmth and sunshine of the south. Then came the doctrine of the communicability of tubercule.'⁸⁸ Treatment for tuberculosis had relied primarily on environmental, aetiological and therapeutic models, in which climate was the most important, but advances in medicine changed the way the disease was treated and how health stations operated and were perceived.⁸⁹ The most significant development was Robert Koch's (1843-1910) isolation of the tuberculosis bacillus in 1882. This did not cause immediate change since effective drugs were not developed until the twentieth century, but the turning point came in 1889 with the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act. Once tuberculosis became communicable many consumptives went to new isolated sanatoria.⁹⁰ The new treatment was still derived from climate as the best hope for consumptives. Ajaccio was well-suited to open-air therapy but the sanatorium proposed in 1881 and again in 1895 was never built.⁹¹ The mayor of Ajaccio expressed concerns that these establishments would 'constitute a standing danger to the population of Ajaccio'.⁹²

The mayor of Ajaccio's response to the sanatorium reflected the shift in the social attitudes to tuberculosis. Consumption from being an allure of delicate dying became something that was associated with poverty and dangerous diseases. In addition, the requirement to provide 'lying-out', the costs and trouble of boiling and bleaching bedding and disinfecting floor coverings and furnishing made providing for invalids more costly. Some hotel and apartment

⁸⁷ Hornsby, (1910), p.176; M. Hornsby (ed.) *The Queen Newspaper Book of Travel* (London: Cox, 1913), p.205.

⁸⁸ Samways.

⁸⁹ Alison Bashford, *Imperial Hygiene: A Critical History of Colonialism, Nationalism and Public Health* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p.63.

⁹⁰ Flurin Condrau and Michael Worboys, eds, *Tuberculosis Then and Now: Perspectives on the History of an Infectious Disease* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), p.87.

⁹¹ Lucchini, p.44.

⁹² 'Paris', From Our Own Correspondent, *BMJ*, 30 March 1895.

owners took an anti-tourist stance against those who were visibly invalids. In 1903 the *BMJ* reported that ‘there has been an increasing reluctance on the part of the hotel keepers of the Riviera health resorts to receive tuberculous patients’.⁹³ A circular issued by the Menton hotel keepers in that year stated that for the future no tuberculous cases would be received in hotels.⁹⁴ Hoteliers were also frank in stating that the fashionable crowd pays far better than the invalid.⁹⁵

The change in attitude probably had limited impact on Corsica. Health stations did not close because therapy remained based on sunshine, fresh air, climate, diet and exercise, all of which could incorporate bacteriology.⁹⁶ In 1888 it was recognised that ‘The majority of people who go to a health-resort are not really in want of health’.⁹⁷ Increasingly most visitors went to the resorts around the Mediterranean coasts for pleasure in a benign winter climate. Some places, such as Archacon, had a struggle over identity – whether it was a refuge for invalids or a holiday resort.⁹⁸ Ajaccio had probably always received more visitors seeking pleasure than health. Even in the early days ‘a small number of foreigners, possessed with curiosity as much as a care for their health, came to Ajaccio’.⁹⁹ Dr Alphonse Guérin’s *Ajaccio Station d’Hiver* recognised that the city was also ‘for those of seeking health and pleasure who will be drawn to the resources that the towns and principal localities of the island possess in the island’.¹⁰⁰ By 1896 Ajaccio was described as being ‘well suited to invalids of a not too serious character, who do not require very much supervision’.¹⁰¹ In 1908 it was recognised that the city had ‘long been held in repute as a pleasant and fairly cheap winter residence, though as an invalid resort it has rather hung fire’.¹⁰² Nonetheless until the early twentieth century, in all the resorts, invalids or pleasure seekers were the mobile elite: the upper and upper middle rentier classes.

⁹³ Samways.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Bashford, p.65.

⁹⁷ Charles Edward’s Temple Bar essay of 1888 quoted by Frawley, p.115.

⁹⁸ Garner, p.195.

⁹⁹ *Gazette Ajaccienne*, 1 April 1875.

¹⁰⁰ Guérin, p.82.

¹⁰¹ ‘Notes on Health Resorts’, *BMJ*, 24 October 1896.

¹⁰² Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.561.

Change became marked from the beginning of the twentieth century when there was a decline in the numbers of the traditional sojourners. The mobile elites were joined, and in some cases, replaced by the "fifth estate": upper echelons of the civil service, judges, vice-chancellors, newspaper editors, accountants, architects, physicians, surgeons and engineers', and then artists, writers and actors, who joined in the practice of wintering abroad.¹⁰³ Beretti's analysis of the occupations of the hotel guests in Ajaccio from 1912-1918 supports this. Of the fifty British clients at the major hotels from September to December 1912 most were rentiers, 'for the most part people of independent means'.¹⁰⁴ By 1914 the rentier class made up not more than one sixth of the total. Beretti identified a variety of professions: officers: a captain, three colonels, one of who was from Bengal, and an admiral; a doctor, a professor, two Oxford students, two artists, and an inspector of railways.¹⁰⁵ The Pretymans were typical of the composition of visitors to the city in these years. Lady Beatrice was the old elite; the daughter of the fourth Earl of Bradford. Her husband represented the professional classes having been a regular army officer and a Member of Parliament. They were joined by the new plutocracy. Among these types of visitors were Edward Cecil Guinness (1847-1927), first Earl of Iveagh, one of the 'brewery' peers, who arrived in February 1902 to be followed a month later by Sir Thomas Lipton (1848-1931), self-made tycoon.¹⁰⁶ Both men and their parties arrived by yacht and stayed in the Grand Hotel; their visits were brief.

Shorter periods of stay became more common although they were still in the winter months. The 'fifth' estate and the plutocracy had commitments that would have made it impossible to stay as long as the old elite whose income came largely from rents. Where arrival and departure or stay is mentioned in the records, it seemed to be for a matter of weeks rather than months although the recording of such information cannot be deemed reliable due to incomplete records and the restriction of self-notification. Arrivals tended to be noticed more than departures. In Ajaccio, from the early years of the twentieth century, there

¹⁰³ Perkin, p. 258. See Cain and Hopkins, p.115, for a useful analysis of the changes in non-landed fortunes 1860-1919.

¹⁰⁴ Beretti (1961), p.79.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 80.

¹⁰⁶ *Sunday Times*, 23 February 1902; *JDE*, March 1902.

were more arrivals in January, February and March than any other month. The Pretymans' visited in these months, probably for a month on each occasion. Shorter stays were part of a trend also seen on the Riviera. It was very expensive to keep the large hotels open for the whole of that time and around 1900 the 'High' season became shorter and was eventually reduced to January and February.¹⁰⁷

Departure was usually driven by the date of Easter. In 1904 Margaret d'Este found that in the first week of April (Easter Monday was 4 April) 'no passengers and no goods have been landed at Ajaccio. The English church is closed, the chaplain has departed and some twenty guests alone stay on'.¹⁰⁸ What provides evidence of this change more than anything was the downgrading of the Consulate in Ajaccio to that of vice-Consul in 1911. The Foreign Office may have done this to punish Consul Dundas who was regarded as a 'notorious *mauvais coucher*'.¹⁰⁹ However, it coincided with a change in the composition of the winter visitor from the predominance of the longer-stay sojourner to the shorter-term visitor who would have been less likely to be in need of the consular services, either in finding accommodation or sorting out difficulties.

As well as shorter stays, there was a trend to stop at Corsica on an itinerary that included time spent elsewhere. The Pretymans' on their last visit in 1928 combined the trip with time spent in the South of France.¹¹⁰ This practice became more common as journey times reduced when air transport began. From 1922 Corsica was linked to the mainland by air. Regular flights went from Antibes enabling tourists staying on the Côte d'Azur to spend a few days in Corsica. These flights carried few passengers and could only have been afforded by the rich. Colonel and Mrs Jeffreys were returning to Ajaccio by plane in 1923 having spent a few days in Nice when they were killed in Corsica's first air crash.¹¹¹ What is clear, though, is that most trips were still in the winter months.

¹⁰⁷ Soane, p.93.

¹⁰⁸ d'Este, p.35. The hotel registers list thirty-nine guests in Ajaccio on 1 April.

¹⁰⁹ TNA: FO 369/378, File note, 1 June 1912. *Mauvais coucher* is British French and probably translates as a bad liar.

¹¹⁰ *The Times*, 18 February 1928.

¹¹¹ *Manchester Guardian*, 13. Jan 1923. Four Britons died in the crash.

Eventually the season began to extend toward the summer, although there is no clear watershed. The *JDE* listed forty-three guests staying at all the main Ajaccio hotels in the 'summer' of 1903¹¹² These are unlikely to have been the hottest months of July and August, but most likely May when the Reverend William Armistead spent a month seeking 'rest' along with his companions: Colonel, Mrs and Miss Kennedy.¹¹³ In 1904, there were thirty-nine visitors noted in the hotel registers as having arrived in Ajaccio in April with no records of arrivals in May. Ten years later there were sixty-eight visitors first recorded as being in the city in April. It is possible that this was because Easter Monday was not until 13 April in that year, but there are also three visitors recorded in May and one in June.¹¹⁴ These are the first hints of late spring and summer arrivals. By 1906 the *Macmillan Guide* recommended Corsica as a place to visit at any time of year but still few chose to go in the summer.¹¹⁵

In 1918 Beretti identified a small but evident summer clientele which he signposted as the end of the epoch which was hastened by the First World War.¹¹⁶ Beretti also identified in 1916 a number of visitors in June and September and a lower mean age of visitor than 1912.¹¹⁷ However, the war years of 1916 and 1918 cannot be seen as typical. The reduction in age may be accounted for by the numbers of volunteer individuals working with either the Serbian Relief Fund (SRF) or the Scottish Women's Hospital (SWH), many of whom stayed in the hotels for differing periods of time. There were a few tourists. The hotel registers show that the Pretymans came in March 1915; Victor Gatty and Dansey, mountaineers, came in May of that year.¹¹⁸ In 1916 there were twelve foreign arrivals at the hotels from June to September and out of this number, one was a resident of the island, and seven can be identified as members of the SRF. They found food shortages and general unrest; for example the restaurant owned by Charles Hass was sacked because he was believed to be German. The Grand Hotel was requisitioned for convalescents; a

¹¹² *JDE*, October 1903.

¹¹³ *Manchester Guardian*, 1 May 1903.

¹¹⁴ Data gathered by the author from all sources for the purpose of this thesis.

¹¹⁵ *Guide to the Western Mediterranean*, p.213.

¹¹⁶ Beretti (1961), p. 80.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Victor, G. Gatty, 'Corsica in May', *AJ*, 29 (February 1915), 49-55.

wing was used for political refugees and it provided accommodation for members of the SRF and nurses of the SWH.¹¹⁹

Transformation

A more clearly defined trend towards spring and summer visits came with growing numbers of traveller-discoverers, writers and artists who were attracted by the promise of an unknown and exotic island. There was the possibility to sell works, meet bandits, discover new species or make 'first ascents'. Many of the individuals who came to Corsica for these purposes were of the professional classes whose time was limited to their spring and summer vacations. Such active tourism was also not suitable for the winter months. In exploring the interior they helped the island extend its facilities for tourists.

The 'wisdom' that Corsica was unknown and primitive began in the eighteenth century. It was an image that was never overcome and was perpetuated by visitors, particularly writers and artists. The explorer, Elias Burton Holmes declared upon his visit to Corsica in 1895 that 'The world knows almost as little of the romantic land of Corsica as it knew in Boswell's time'.¹²⁰ That the island was deemed to be unknown seems surprising considering the number of books and articles that appeared about Corsica over the time period of this study. However, authors traded on the perception of an island on the borders of European civilisation because it sold books of areas for which guide-books could not be purchased and where there were no Thomas Cook tours (until 1905). This image of Corsica had a significant influence on whether visitors chose to come to the island or go elsewhere.

The works written about the time of the foundation of the winter health station (discussed in Chapter Three) had generated some interest but there was a gap of some ten years before the next series of books on the island were published. If a place was unknown, then it could keep being discovered. In 1880 Corsica was revealed again. The health station was growing in popularity and

¹¹⁹ Pomponi (1992), p.279; Lucchini, p.91.

¹²⁰ Elias Burton Holmes, *The Burton Holmes Travelogues*, 5, 3rd edition (New York: The Travelogue Bureau, 1918), p. 227.

numbers of traveller-discoverers were increasing, so it is likely that authors felt they had a market. The trope of the unknown was continued by Gertrude Forde's, *A Tour in Corsica*. She found it 'strange that the island should be as little known and visited as it is since it was placed within easy reach of the most unambitious tourist'.¹²¹ Other publications of the late nineteenth century continued the theme.¹²² The myth was well-established but the reality may have been different. The existence of a guidebook is a good indication that the island was well enough known to establish a demand and the first guide book in English totally devoted to Corsica was Black's *Itinerary Through Corsica*, published in 1888.¹²³ Significantly Black makes no reference to the unknown nature of the island.

There was another ten year gap until the early twentieth century. When John Mitchel Chapman was considering writing his book on Corsica in 1908, he wondered whether another book was necessary since he found a list of 1,130 books which had already been written on the island.¹²⁴ He decided to proceed because 'Little does the great world trouble itself to know about the island of Corsica'.¹²⁵ Following Chapman, works continued to be published that emphasised the unfamiliarity of the island: Corsica was 'unexplored by anyone from civilisation'; the island was 'singularly isolated and unknown' or 'little more than a name to the majority even of travellers'.¹²⁶ For Margaret d'Este, Corsica was a 'plunge into the unknown'; Mrs Whitwell wandered into 'pastures new', and George Renwick ventured into a country 'as yet virgin to all but a few'.¹²⁷ Deciding the island was unknown was not just an affectation of the foreigner; Corsica was among the French regions that had been most documented yet it

¹²¹ Forde, p.1.

¹²² Barry, p.49, had gone to Corsica because 'Corsican woodlands are known to but few'. According to Caird the history of Corsica had been 'but thinly presented to English readers': 'Review of L. H. Caird, *The History of Corsica* (London: Fisher Unwin, 1899)', *Academy*, 4 March 1899, 267.

¹²³ Charles B. Black, *Itinerary through Corsica by its Rail, Carriage and Forest Roads* (London: Black, 1888).

¹²⁴ Chapman (1908), p.v.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.1.

¹²⁶ 'A Cheap Vacation in Italy', *Springfield Sunday Republican*, 20 June 1909; 'Review of Harold MacGrath, *A Splendid Hazard*', *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, 10 February 1911; Kathleen E. Royds, 'With the Serbians in Corsica', *Contemporary Review*, 1 January 1918.

¹²⁷ d'Este, p.2; 'Review of Mrs E. R. Whitwell, *Through Corsica with a Paint Brush* (Darlington: Dresser, 1908)', *Daily Mail*, 10 October 1908; George Renwick, *Romantic Corsica* (London: Fisher Unwin, 1910), p.15.

remained 'shrouded in mystery'.¹²⁸ However, an important point, and one neglected in the scholarship, is that earlier works had limited circulation or were out of print. Thus, it was not so much that the island was unknown but that previous works were unobtainable or not remembered. This was admitted in a review of d'Este's *Through Corsica with a Camera*, when it was said that Lear's book had been 'forgotten'.¹²⁹ Thus, the island always remained to be rediscovered.

What was known about across the world was the Corsican bandit. The British media was fascinated by the bandits and the land known from the 1850s as the 'Red Death Empire'.¹³⁰ Until the 1920s bandits were portrayed as romantic and honourable with the reputation of never harming a stranger, unlike the brigands from Italy or Sicily. As Wilson identified, 'Corsica was a society in which vengeance was a duty, a sacred obligation. Under its auspices, violence and killing were given positive cultural meanings, and feuding there expressed and reflected the highest values: male courage, female honour, family loyalty and obligations to the dead.'¹³¹ The bandits represented a different side of the romantic concept of liberty and became a desirable object for the tourist gaze.¹³² They were invested with the freedom-loving characteristic of Robin Hood-like figures, 'fugitives from injustice, rather than from justice' despite being 'guilty of cold-blooded murder' of those who had offended their honour and of the authorities who pursued them.¹³³

Meeting a bandit and visiting the places associated with them was an extension of the cult of place that had been associated with Napoleon. From 1850 almost every travel narrative or guide book, history or memoir about Corsica contained a section on bandits and the vendetta. Prosper Mérimée had ignited the imagination with his two works on the vendetta, *Mateo Falcone* (1829) and *Colomba* (1840). Works of Honoré Balzac, Gustave Flaubert,

¹²⁸ Candea, p.44, points to a 1990s government report that started with the idea that Corsica was unknown and needed unveiling. Yet, as early as 1770 Louise XV, had drawn up a survey known as the *plan terrier* and many other reports followed.

¹²⁹ 'Review of Margaret d'Este, *Through Corsica with a Camera* (London: Putnam, 1905)', *Bookman*, December 1905.

¹³⁰ Gregorovius, p. 148.

¹³¹ Wilson, p. 418.

¹³² Hugh Honour, *Romanticism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979), p. 240.

¹³³ Honour, p. 242.

Alexandre Dumas and Guy de Maupassant added to the romantic image.¹³⁴ 'Bloodthirsty looking knives and daggers' on sale were a means of attracting tourists.¹³⁵ By the 1920s the bandits and the sites associated with them had become part of the tourist itinerary. Archer recommended a visit to the 'Grotte des Bandits' at Evisa as 'a pleasant stroll' and the Bellacoscia lair at Penticca as 'well worth a visit'.¹³⁶

Some of the bandits became celebrities, 'Kings of the Bush', who were visited by tourists in their 'Green Palaces'.¹³⁷ One of the earliest accounts came from Raphael Pumpelly (1837-1923), an American of English colonial stock. He came to Corsica in 1857 primarily to study the porphyries, but he also had a longing for adventure. He recorded his findings and exploits in his *Reminiscences* which included meeting with bandits, searching for mouflon and hunting expeditions.¹³⁸ Meeting a bandit became the aim of a number of visitors. Caroline Holland was typical of those who sought out the Bellacoscia brothers who lived near Bocognano. In 1893 she met Antoine Bellacoscia, the most renowned bandit in Corsica whose name, she was told, was 'as famous almost as that of Napoleon Bonaparte'.¹³⁹ In the same year Margaret Fountaine (1862-1940), renowned lepidopterist, met with one of the famous bandits in the company of fellow natural scientists: Mr Jones, Dr Trotter, Colonels Lemann and Yerbury.¹⁴⁰ When Antoine Bellacoscia died (of influenza) in 1907, it was said that 'Corsica had lost its most picturesque character and one of its most profitable assets as an attraction to tourists'.¹⁴¹

Fountaine and others met the bandits at the hotels at Vizzavona. Vizzavona comprised of two hamlets. The upper hamlet was located on the road between Ajaccio and Bastia at the base of Monte d'Oro. The lower hamlet

¹³⁴ Honoré de Balzac, *La Vendetta* (1830); Alphonse Daudet, *Lettres de Mon Moulin* (1869); Alexandre Dumas, *Les Frères Corse* (1844); Guy de Maupassant, *La Patrie de Colomba* (1880) and *Le Monastère de Corbara* (1880).

¹³⁵ W. Miller, 'Napoleon's Island', *Westminster Review*, 150, (6) (Dec 1898), 626-33 (p.630).

¹³⁶ Archer, p. 171.

¹³⁷ *Daily Mail*, 26 June 1935.

¹³⁸ Raphael Pumpelly, *My Reminiscences*, 2 (New York: Holt, 1918), pp.135-45.

¹³⁹ Caroline Holland, 'The Banditti of Corsica', *Contemporary Review* (October 1893), 492-508 (p.496).

¹⁴⁰ W.F. Cater, ed., *Love Among the Butterflies* (London: Collins, 1980), p. 170.

¹⁴¹ Edmund Huret, 'Most Famous of Corsican Bandits Defied Authorities for Forty Years', *State*, 14 April 1907.

was in the forest by the river and railway. Change in the area was driven from the late nineteenth century by an explosion of interest from three distinct groups who represent the transition from sojourner to tourist. The winter mobile elites came to find the bandits and escape the heat of the summer; the natural scientists and the mountaineers came to explore their niche interest. Every group was encouraged by the opening of the section of the railway between Vizzavona and Bocognano in 1889. This completed the line to Ajaccio which meant that it was possible to reach this part of Corsica from the city, a distance of some fifty kilometres, in less than two and a half hours.

The lower hamlet was favoured by the sojourners and natural scientists. 1901 saw the opening, after seven years of construction, of the luxury Grand Hotel de la Forêt.¹⁴² It was the British physician and polymath, Charles Forsyth-Major (1843-1923), who is credited with encouraging the building of the hotel adjacent to the station and close to the river.¹⁴³ It was the first hotel to be lit by electricity (own generator); it had central heating and a reputation for the quality of its comfort, its balls, its sumptuous receptions, tennis court and its ice creams.¹⁴⁴ Here the sojourners led the same kind of life experienced at the Grand Hotel in Ajaccio. They attended balls, soirées, enjoyed an orchestra every weekend and took picnics on promenades to the Cascade des Anglais, played tennis or met bandits.¹⁴⁵ The Corsican elite built a number of villas in the hamlet and joined in the society at the Grand Hotel.¹⁴⁶ Other hotels such as the Beauséjour and the Modern (now I Laricci) began construction in the late nineteenth century and opened in the early years of the twentieth century.¹⁴⁷

The forests, rivers and mountains were a draw for specimen collectors and species spotters. Forsyth-Major spent a number of years pursuing his interests in the Vizzavona area, and like others, he published accounts in specialist journals of his exploits in the interests of advancing knowledge and achieving greater renown. His writings and those of others helped popularise the area which had long been known for its special qualities. Reverend William

¹⁴² Jean-Paul Couvreur and Jérôme Couvreur, *Vizzavona* (Ajaccio: Siciliano, 2000), p.87.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.153.

¹⁴⁴ Binet, p.188.

¹⁴⁵ Couvreur and Couvreur, pp. 87-90.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.157.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

Hawker wrote that 'There is enough at every turn to make a naturalist go wild with delight; for there are, I should think, few places of equal size so richly furnished with interesting species'.¹⁴⁸ George Maw was drawn to Corsica by the crocus. He identified two different species and illustrated them in his book which also contained plates of both Ajaccio and Corte.¹⁴⁹ The men and women who followed Hawker and Maw were 'representative of a class to which scientific natural history owes a debt, and whose life and adventures are often among the most attractive of all records of exploration'.¹⁵⁰ Interest peaked in the years before the First World War when according to Thomas Cook, 'Corsica was a paradise of the ornithologist, the entomologist and the geologist; a garden for the botanist almost beyond his dreams.'¹⁵¹

Another way the British helped make the area known was through their collections. The passion for categorising and collecting had grown throughout the nineteenth century.¹⁵² Forsyth-Major was typical of the natural scientist who took seriously the business of the naturalist-collector which was 'to acquire and bring back to the museums of Europe new or rare instances of animal life'.¹⁵³ He was also the most prolific.¹⁵⁴ He first came to Corsica in 1877 and spent many years studying and collecting in the island. He made numerous prehistoric discoveries in a cave site discovered at Vizzavona in 1911.¹⁵⁵ In 1892 he donated a collection of newts to the British Museum, in 1909 it was rocks; in 1916 and 1917 he made a collection of plants from the Vizzavona forest. He also studied the Corsican language and is known as one of the British 'friends' of Corsica.¹⁵⁶

The scientists succeeded in popularising the island, at least among their fellow enthusiasts. By 1906 Corsica had 'become anything but a *terra incognita* to entomologists' with most Continental collectors having 'visited at some time

¹⁴⁸ Hawker, p.305.

¹⁴⁹ Maw.

¹⁵⁰ 'Pioneer Naturalists', *Spectator*, 1 July 1899.

¹⁵¹ *Cook's Traveller's Gazette*, March 1909.

¹⁵² Thurley, p.80.

¹⁵³ *Country Life*, 20 January 1900.

¹⁵⁴ See E.T. Newton, 'Fossil-Bird remains Collected by Dr Forsyth-Major in Sardinia, Corsica and Greece', *Proc. of the Zoological Society of London* (1921), 229-32.

¹⁵⁵ Couvreux and Couvreux, p.20. His discoveries were made known by Edith Southwell-Colucci and the site is now called *Grotte Southwell*.

¹⁵⁶ Vergé-Franceschi, *La Corse et L'Angleterre*, p.136.

or other the dry hillsides around Ajaccio and the glorious forest of Vizzavona'.¹⁵⁷ The credit for introducing the island to British entomologists was attributed to an accountant, Frederick Charles Lemann (1805-1898).¹⁵⁸ In 1893 Fountaine was in Corsica at the same time as Lemann when entomology had become so popular that she found herself 'completely in the fashion, at least among the male visitors, a row of three or four Englishmen'.¹⁵⁹ The account of her visit made it clear that as well as the serious business of collecting, a vacation was also fun. She described 'Standen, the father of six single daughters but with the spirits of a schoolboy when once out in the fields net in hand'.¹⁶⁰

Some idea of the importance of the contribution of the British natural scientists can be seen through the work of the ornithologists. Francis Jourdain, (1865-1940), was a notable amateur ornithologist and oologist who first visited Corsica in 1908.¹⁶¹ The notes of his visit contain a detailed geological description of the island and a list of the existing literature - up to 1900 of the eleven works recorded, nine were by British explorers.¹⁶² The most famous discovery was by John Whitehead (1860-99). Whitehead was one of the 'pioneer Englishmen' of ornithological exploration.¹⁶³ It was during his 1882-1884 visit that he discovered a new species of nuthatch. It was named *Sitta Whitehead* and is referred to in all current guidebooks.¹⁶⁴ Whitehead also donated to the British Museum examples of sixty species of Corsican birds

¹⁵⁷ Margaret Fountaine, 'A Few notes on Some Corsican Butterflies', *Entomologist*, 45 (1907), 100-03 (p.100).

¹⁵⁸ 'Obituary', *Trans. of the Entomological Society* (1909).

¹⁵⁹ For an account of Fountaine's time in Corsica see Cater. The Fellows of the Entomological Society were: George C. Champion (1859-1917) who wrote 'An Entomological Excursion to Corsica,' *Trans. of the Royal Entomological Society of London*, 42, 1 (March 1894), 225-242 and who presented eighty-four coleoptera from Corsica to the BM; Colonel John W. Yerbury (1847-1927) who presented nine mammals of Corsica to the BM: *Return to an Order of the Honourable the House of Commons, dated 6 April 1894*; Richard Spiers Standen (1835-1917), Albert H. Jones (1840-1924) and the Reverend Thomas Marshall (1827-1905) who settled in Corsica in 1893.

¹⁶⁰ Cater, p.67.

¹⁶¹ Oology is the study of birds' eggs.

¹⁶² Reverend Francis C. R. Jourdain, 'Notes on the Ornithology of Corsica', *Ibis*, 9th series, 5, (18) (April 1911), 189-93 (pp.192-93).

¹⁶³ Whitehead was unusual because he was an amateur who, 'having indulged his natural love of travel and exploration', became a professional collector of bird specimens: 'Obituary', *Country Life*, 20 January 1900, 72-73. Whitehead's mantle was taken up by Colonel William Payne (1871-1955) and Francis Jourdain. Payn visited Corsica in February, March and October 1925 and published his findings: Colonel W.A. Payn, 'Some Notes on the Birds of Corsica', *Ibis*, 69 (1927), 74-81. In the late 1930s Jourdain made another visit.

¹⁶⁴ John Whitehead, 'Ornithological Notes for Corsica', *Ibis*, 27, (1) (May 1885), 24-28.

(skins and eggs).¹⁶⁵

Many of the early mountaineers were also interested in the natural sciences. Francis Fox Tuckett, for example, in his visits to Corsica was interested in the geology. Tuckett observed erosion of rocks on Monte Rotondo in the Vizzavona area, and it was the upper hamlet of Vizzavona, the focus of the first mountaineers, which had access to the most easily reached mountain ranges from Ajaccio. Mountaineers were a significant impetus for the development of the island's facilities for tourists.¹⁶⁶ The first record of British mountain visitors in this area was in 1866 when Hawker and his party made ascents of Montes Rotondo and d'Oro.¹⁶⁷ It was a British first when there were no formal guides, either personal or topographical. It was impractical to return to Ajaccio each night, but at the time of Hawker's visit, facilities for travellers of any type were extremely limited. Those who wished to explore the interior had to be 'content with the rough accommodation and homely fare of the little native inns'.¹⁶⁸ By 1894 the hamlet on the col had expanded to include the Hotel Monte d'Oro, described by Freshfield as 'well kept', but by no means luxurious.¹⁶⁹ The mountaineers did not seek the sojourner life-style. Rather, the col was 'an excellent starting point for hill walks' and a gateway to the high peaks.¹⁷⁰

British mountaineers, like Hawker, were the first climbers to leave accounts of their visits. The mountaineers were a close-knit 'Fellowship of the Rope'.¹⁷¹ Many published books, gave lectures on their experiences, exhibited photographs or set out their findings in *AJ* and an increasing number of scientific and other journals. The early mountaineers admitted that they were as much travellers as climbers, so the accounts of their visits also provided a wealth of information about the geography, ethnology, geology, botany and the

¹⁶⁵ BM 1884-85, (261). *An Account of the Income and Expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds), for the Year Ended 31 March 1885.*

¹⁶⁶ Francis Fox Tuckett, 'Remarkable Examples of Atmospheric Erosion of Rocks in Corsica,' *Geological Magazine*, 1 (January 1914), 12-13.

¹⁶⁷ Hawker.

¹⁶⁸ 'Review of Paul Bourde, *En Corse: l'Esprit de Clan, les Moeurs Politiques – les Vendetta, le Banditisme*, 3rd edn (Paris: Lévy, 1887)'; *Edinburgh Review* (April 1897), 465-86 (p.486).

¹⁶⁹ Douglas Freshfield, 'Corsica Revisited', *AJ*, 17 (1895), 328-31 (p.328).

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁷¹ Gowan Dawson, *Victorian Scientific Naturalism* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p.72.

bandits, as well as practical advice on hotels, mules and food.¹⁷² The writers succeeded in making Corsica's mountains popular. The lure of blank spots on the map of Corsica, with unconquered peaks, became a kind of 'spatial intoxication'.¹⁷³ There were 'almost endless possibilities for first-rate climbing over both known and virgin ground' that were accessible even at times when the high Alps were closed off.¹⁷⁴ One of the most renowned British alpinists, Douglas Freshfield, climbed in Corsica with the mountaineer, Tuckett and Edward Theodore Compton, the latter was an artist and mountaineer and a master of both crafts. Compton's paintings of the Restonica valley, the Ascu and the Incudine, like those of Lear and other painters of the time, showed the fearful aspects of the high mountains, with extravagant peaks, dark ravines and gaping crevasses.¹⁷⁵

The years 1901-1910 were the peak of mountaineering in the island with visits from the cream of climbers from the British world.¹⁷⁶ This apogee was enabled by improvements in rail and road access. By the end of the nineteenth century Corsica was 'better provided than any equally mountainous district of the Continent', but getting around by diligence still took a considerable time and getting to the innermost chain of mountains, the Monte Cinto range, was a significant challenge.¹⁷⁷

When getting around the island became easier, the isolated Niolo valley, ringed with mountains, became a special attraction for climbers: 'When God was building the Alps, he must have had a bit leftover, and have thrown it down in the Mediterranean to make Corsica.'¹⁷⁸ Corsica became known as the 'Switzerland of the Mediterranean' and the Niolo area with Corsica's highest peak, Monte Cinto, became a focus for tourism, not just for alpinists.¹⁷⁹ For the

¹⁷² Douglas Freshfield, *Below the Snowline* (London: Constable, 1923), p.v.

¹⁷³ Robert Stafford, *A Scientist of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.208.

¹⁷⁴ George Ingle Finch, 'The Mountains of Corsica', in *Mountain Craft* by Geoffrey Winthrop Young (New York: Methuen, 1920), pp.517-21 (p.518); George I. and Maxwell Finch, 'New Climbs in Corsica', *Climbers Club Journal*, 3 (1914), 3-13.

¹⁷⁵ Edward Theodore Compton, 'The Artist in Corsica', *Magazine of Art* (1885), 161-67; 200-06.

¹⁷⁶ Including Ousten, Irving, Gatty and the Australian brothers, George and Maxwell Finch, and various members of their parties.

¹⁷⁷ Murray (1890).

¹⁷⁸ Freshfield (1923), p.45 quoting his guide and friend François Devouassoud, (1831-1905).

¹⁷⁹ *Trenton Evening Times*, 7 January 1922.

earlier pioneers, like Tuckett who ascended Cinto in 1883, there was no road going through the valley from west to east to reach the main village of Calacuccia. The only way out to the east was by foot and mule along a narrow tortuous track known as the Scala di Santa Regina which skirted the edge of a ravine. When Ousten came to the valley in 1908 he could travel to Corte by rail and reach the Cinto range by a recently opened road that led into the depths of the island.¹⁸⁰ By 1908 Corsica's 'magnificent mountain scenery' was attracting 'every year a large number'.¹⁸¹ Calacuccia, the small village at the head of the Niolo valley, was transformed. In 1882 Freshfield had found the inns of Calacuccia 'bad and full of insects'.¹⁸² Tuckett had been enticed there 'by the temptation' of Freshfield's articles but found the village could not 'boast of anything very distinguished in the shape of a hostelry'.¹⁸³ However, by 1904 there was a Hotel des Touristes which was described as a 'good inn' in 1908.¹⁸⁴ By the time Ousten came in 1909 there was an inn, stores, telegraph and post offices.¹⁸⁵ It was in the Niolo where, in 1910, George Finch tested his oxygen apparatus that was used in the British expedition to Everest in 1923.¹⁸⁶ Progress, though, was interrupted by the First World War. After the war there were still possibilities of 'both new routes and first ascents' to interest the mountaineers.¹⁸⁷ Many, like Dorothy Pilley, just had 'A hankering after sunshine and new peaks and some general mountaineering in a new range'.¹⁸⁸

The advent of the car and better roads heralded change and the arrival of the tourer. In 1913 PLM organised several motor-car excursions from 1 March to end of May.¹⁸⁹ In the same year the first 'cheap independent excursions' were advertised in 1913, and in 1914 PLM had advertised Easter excursions from London from £4.1s.3d which was considerably cheaper than Cook's 1905 fourteen guineas.¹⁹⁰ Progress was interrupted by the First World

¹⁸⁰ Ousten, p.647.

¹⁸¹ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.565.

¹⁸² Freshfield (1882), p.208.

¹⁸³ Francis Fox Tuckett, 'Round Monte Cinto: With Notes of Some Excursions in the N.W. of Corsica', *AJ*, 10 (1882), 314-32 (p.315).

¹⁸⁴ *JDE*, 1904; Whitwell, p.49.

¹⁸⁵ Ousten, p.647.

¹⁸⁶ Binet, p.132; G.I. Finch, *The Making of a Mountaineer* (London: Arrowsmith, 1924).

¹⁸⁷ Finch (1920), p.520.

¹⁸⁸ Dorothy Pilley, *Climbing Days* (London: Bell 1935), p.168.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Daily Mail*, 30 August 1913; *Daily Mail*, 23 March 1914.

War, but by 1915 it was possible to hire a car in the island for independent travel. Once car hire became easier, independent tours became more popular. By car, Corsica could 'be explored in depth in a few days: one can leave Ajaccio in the morning, lunch at Bonifacio and dine in Bastia'.¹⁹¹

Conclusion

Between 1900-1913 the 'tourist movement surpassed anything of its kind ever known in the history of the human race and the number of Britons who crossed the Channel annually rose from c.659,000 to more than a million' and Corsica began to attract more of this number.¹⁹² The years 1880 to 1920 were ones of transition. Increasingly pleasure-seeking individuals and traveller-discoverers used the city only as a base to explore the interior. There were also tourists who spent only a short time in the city as part of a tour of the island. In Ajaccio, sojourners continued to come to the city during the winter months. They were members of a growing clientele of British elite and upper middle classes seen in the hotels of the Quartier des Étrangers and who, in a very British manner, 'changed for dinner, played bridge, hunted wild boar [...] were entertained by bandits'.¹⁹³ Their way of life defined what it meant to be 'English' abroad. As the facilities of the city developed and a Grand Hotel opened by the end of the century, the clientele broadened. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the rentier class was gradually replaced by the professional classes. Nevertheless, the prime season remained the winter.

The health station continued to receive a number of invalids. A British doctor was resident in the island for a number of years, but the lack of facilities for the new treatment of tuberculosis, meant that Corsica was not an option for the sickest individuals. The island and the city were still largely rural in nature and appealed to those who wished to escape the industrialisation of Britain and the problems caused by over popularity of the Riviera. Gradually visitors began to come outside the winter months, initially in the late spring. Shorter stays were also made popular by an increased speed of transport in getting to the island

¹⁹¹ Editorial, *LCT*, 1925.

¹⁹² Piers Brendon, *Thomas Cook: 150 Years of Popular Tourism* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1991), p. 245 quoting figures taken from *The Travel Trade*, 1958.

¹⁹³ Carrington (1984), p.3.

and Corsica became one stop on a visit to a number of British Mediterranean world destinations.

The trends of shorter stays outside the traditional winter season were exacerbated by the interest of the professionals who visited the island in their vacations – spring and summer. Most were in employment, teachers or university dons for example, and came to Corsica to pursue their niche leisure interests. This group of people were attracted by the prospect of exploring an unknown island in search of new species or ‘first ascents’. Whether the island was as unknown as the writers and artists portrayed, the image was certainly real and, thus, the island could always be rediscovered. The traveller-discoverers were the first visitors to spend extensive amounts of time in the interior and they encouraged the development of tourism facilities, in particular the Vizzavona and Niolo valley areas. The pursuit of intellectual endeavours took the traveller-discoverers across the island. Visitors began to touring the island in greater numbers from the 1920s. These tourers foreshadowed the development of coastal tourism in the years before the Second World War.

Chapter Ten

Tourists: Development 1920-39

Introduction

From the 1920s tourists whose purpose was short-term pleasure began to outnumber the mobile elites as part of a countrywide tourism industry. Up to this point the basic economic model for tourism remained predominantly based on winter sedentary long-stays in Ajaccio. These sojourners were part of a recognisable Mediterranean world, created for and by elites, that was dominated by the culture of class and status. Towards the end of the nineteenth century the sojourners were joined by traveller-discoverers who began the evolution of tourism in the interior. This chapter examines how this paradigm in Corsica was challenged and, although there was some continuity, began to disintegrate under social, economic and cultural changes which, from the 1920s increased in pace. Change was enabled by better transport links, an impulse for more general tourism in different locations, the new fashion for summer sun and a certain democratisation of the tourism base. It coincided with the island becoming safer and a change in image which made it attractive to more visitors. Nonetheless, tourism remained an industry of unfulfilled promise and the transition from winter sojourner to summer short-term holiday-maker was far from complete by the eve of the Second World War.

The winter holiday in a warm climate continued to be popular. In 1927 Ajaccio was still referred to as being 'frequented from October to May', but numbers were declining. The English Colony, though, survived, in small form, until the late 1930s. Corsica still found favour with the mobile elites who, with the expansion of travel, feared that 'the world was losing its distinctive otherness, and the lines of demarcation between Europe and the other were becoming blurred, and modernity in the shape of tourists was threatening to sweep away ancient customs that they had come to seek'.¹ However, the island also had competition. In the years before the First World War the market for elite winter resorts reached saturation. Other places had different things to

¹ Peter Hulme and Tim Youngs, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Travel Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.81-82.

offer, better facilities or were easier to access but also provided the same attractions that brought people to Corsica: the comfort of an English Colony, opportunities arising from the unknown and the persistence of the exotic and romantic appeal of a place that offered something that had gone from the Riviera.

Corsica benefitted from the powerful 'rural nostalgia' overtaking England in the 1920s and 1930s.² The preference of the British wealthier classes for countryside over urban living was accompanied by a 'bourgeois vogue for romantic primitivism', a trend that 'promoted the special virtue of primitive peoples in places considered remote, isolated and unexplored'.³ It found its expression in a culture seen as anti-urban with a strong draw for the rural past, or pastoralism, an old trope in English literary culture.⁴ This was evidenced by a growing number of conservation movements from the early twentieth century. Although there is some debate on how many people were involved and their efficacy, the participants were from the upper and professional classes who sought out places such as Corsica.⁵ There was a similar movement in France with societies formed to conserve the countryside which was represented in art and literature as fragile.⁶

By the 1920s the number of visitors to the island was growing, although owing to the cost of getting there, they were still the wealthier types. However, they were no longer sedentary and spent much of their time exploring the island. They were attracted by the scenic beauty of the countryside, the continued promise of a rural idyll and, in small part, to the beaches. The tourism industry in Corsica responded with a more bucolic image of the countryside represented by gentler landscapes and domestic scenes. This was different to the sublime depictions of earlier works. At the same time, the island became safer with a decreased interest in and the eventual demise of the bandits. The new campaign and a safer environment worked to some extent. Numbers of

² Kumar, pp. 230-231.

³ Fussell, p. 38.

⁴ Kumar, p. 213.

⁵ For details of the debate see Peter Mandler, 'Against "Englishness": English Culture and the Limits to Rural Nostalgia, 1850-1940', *Trans. of the Royal Historical Society*, 7 (1997), 155-75.

⁶ Karen Sayer, 'Continuity in the Land: The French Peasant in English Eyes' in *Mutual (in)Comprehensions: France and Britain in the Long Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Rosemary Mitchell (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), pp.72-79 (p.77).

visitors grew and their composition was well beyond the *Queen's* top 10,000. There was increased democratisation towards the end of the period with the growth in numbers of walkers and campers, and there was the beginning of seaside tourism. Yet the potential of the island remained largely unfulfilled.

Corsica possessed all the scenic qualities that came from the close association of mountain and seas and sunny Mediterranean skies to develop tourism. Yet its story was always one of promise. Shortly after the first cars arrived, it was predicted that the island would have 'a great future as a summer resort' with 'no insurmountable obstacles'.⁷ This proved not to be the case. The industry did not respond well either to the change in the nature of the visitor, their expectations in respect of comfort and hygiene or the new fashion for sea bathing. There was a perceived lack of interest by the Corsican government and capital to invest. In these circumstances foreigners stepped in and profits went out of the island. Then, as things seemed to be improving, the fragile industry was hit by circumstances outside their control: the long-established problem of malaria, wars and strikes.

Continuity of Winter

The clientele of the Grand Hotel in Ajaccio encountered by Dorothy Carrington in 1948 bore the 'stamp of the old-fashioned British expatriate'; 'it was still a world of the elite who would have been immediately recognisable to their forebears.'⁸ The winter health station had reached its apogee in the city before the First World War; there was a brief flourish in the 1920s and then numbers declined. Nevertheless there remained an identifiable English colony in the city and the focus of the tourism industry continued to be on the winter sojourner until the late 1930s.

In 1924, the first edition of *La Corse Touristique (LCT)*, the lobbying organ for tourism, was almost exclusively directed to winter tourism. It restated all the reasons why 'Ajaccio alone possesses all the conditions that enable it to

⁷ *JDE*, 21 April 1904.

⁸ Carrington (1984), p.3.

be the Queen of Climatic Stations'.⁹ In addition to the climatic benefits the city retained its rurality and stayed attractive to those seeking to avoid the worst forms of modernism. Hildegarde Hawthorne showed how rural Ajaccio had remained. It was a place where 'Pigs have been banished from the streets, but a flock of goats may pass through them on its way to the hills, guarded by dog and shepherd. Chickens are kept in every garden and the roosters are vocal in the early morning hours'.¹⁰ Major Radclyffe Dugmore's description of activity at the harbour of Ajaccio in 1927 is evocative of a bygone age: 'Steamers and graceful sailing ships come alongside to load and unload their cargoes. Here too women who live near-by do a certain amount of laundry work, always in cold water and the more energetic members of the community may at times be seen dipping their nets in great smoking cauldrons of tanning solution.'¹¹

Development of the city did continue on a limited basis. There was some expansion towards the sea shore and a number of new hotels were built. However, the city lacked: 'jazz palaces, casinos, any concession to modern demands of amusement' that were demanded by the new pleasure seeking classes.¹² The attraction of Ajaccio was not helped when the theatre burned down in 1925 and was not replaced.¹³ The cinematograph arrived but was still in its infancy; carnival festivities developed but were scant compared to the Riviera.¹⁴ In 1930 a golf course was opened near the city by Britain's 'best professionals', Audrey Boomer and H.C.Jolly.¹⁵ In the same year the long-awaited casino opened, but by this time it was too late.¹⁶ By the 1920s the Côte d'Azur had become an international attraction and one of the most prosperous regions in France: 'More and more colonies of foreigners are installing themselves on the Riviera [...] people are pulled there little by little [...] by luxury, games, and other pleasures.'¹⁷ Hotels had already begun to close in the Quartier des Étrangers and the casino was outshone by the Palais de la Méditerranée at Nice that opened in 1929 fronting on the Promenade des

⁹ *La Corse Touristique (LCT)*, 1924.

¹⁰ Hawthorne, p. 28.

¹¹ Dugmore, pp. 56-77.

¹² *Daily Mail (Hull)*, 21 September 1926

¹³ Lucchini, p.62.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.64.

¹⁵ *Daily Mail*, 21 October 1930.

¹⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 16 October 1930.

¹⁷ *LCT*, 1929.

Anglais with luxury casino, air-conditioning throughout, gambling rooms, dance halls, bars and a pool.¹⁸

The Riviera was Ajaccio's main rival for the winter clientele, but it was not the only competition. Other places, where there could still be found comfort in the familiar elements of a British world, became easier to access and offered similar or better attractions than Corsica. Appendix 1 sets out a comparison of the facilities offered at such resorts by 1908. Only with the provision of a church, does Ajaccio compare to the majority. By 1908 the choice of winter station was considerable. Reynolds Ball described at least sixty-one Mediterranean resorts.¹⁹ He listed 'three if not four Rivièras': The French Riviera from Hyères to Menton; the Italian Riviera from Bordighera to Genoa, the Levantine Riviera from Genoa to Viareggio or Leghorn and the West Riviera from Marseilles to Fréjus. Southern Italy and southern Spain merited separate sections as did North Africa and the Mediterranean Islands. In addition, a few pages were devoted to Austria, the English and Swiss resorts, Jerusalem, Damascus and India. Furthermore, a sojourner could have chosen one of the Atlantic resorts: Biarritz, Pau, Archacon or Madeira. By 1913 wintering abroad had spread to India, and many also went 'to South Africa, India or the West Indies'.²⁰

A growing number of resorts had the comfort of a familiar nucleus of Britons, in particular in places associated with current or former British rule and/or garrisons. Egypt was the most successful, but Malta, Corfu, Gibraltar and Cyprus were also options.²¹ Corfu was beginning to be known as an 'excellent health resort' for those who enjoyed a 'less conventionalised and more interesting country than the Riviera'.²² The Corfiotes were 'not spoilt by professional posing' as at Capri and Sorrento, and the 'traveller could congratulate himself on having left the beaten tourist track'; a few permanent residents formed 'a nucleus of an English colony [...] but from January to April a considerable number of English visitors could be found at the two hotels' in the

¹⁸ Kanigel, p.173.

¹⁹ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.23.

²⁰ Hornsby, (1913), p.423.

²¹ Sattin, p.87.

²² Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.575.

island'.²³ Other places also had English colonies. In Italy San Remo retained the distinct features of Italian life which were lacking in the more popular residential towns.²⁴ It gained in popularity with 'fashionable people', and was 'well represented' with English and foreign 'society' with a considerable permanent resident English colony.²⁵ Madeira had become more attractive with improved accommodation so that by 1908 Reid's Palace Hotel in Funchal was 'practically an open-air sanatorium with four English physicians'.²⁶

For those who wished to avoid the overcrowding of the Riviera, French North Africa became popular. In 1894 William Sharp called it 'The New Winter-Land [...] Of the thousands of Anglo-American health-seekers and pleasure-travellers who annually betake themselves to the Riviera, Italy or Egypt [...] many hundreds are each year choosing rather to go to French Barbary.²⁷ It had become easier to get to. In the 1870s it had taken about a week to reach Algiers from London, by 1908 on the 'luxurious service of the *General Transatlantic Company*, with its magnificent fleet of ocean-liners', Algiers could be reached in less than three days and visitors had a choice of some half a dozen hotels of the 'best rank'.²⁸ Like Ajaccio, the city of Algiers viewed from the sea was 'strikingly picturesque'; there were some 'very beautiful walks and drives in the neighbourhood of the city', and, like Ajaccio, it was 'not a particularly lively place'.²⁹ There was a 'large English colony' at Mustapha, 'socially disposed to their compatriots' but without the 'dissipations and whirl of gaiety at Nice, Cannes or Pau'.³⁰

Other resorts had sought-after attractions not available in Corsica which was known as wanting 'in the manifold charms of classical countries' and bereft of 'the more modern beauties of architecture, the varied forms of tower or castle, mosque, cathedral or monastery'.³¹ Malta, for example, not only had a 'great deal of gaiety and animation [...] cheapness of living' but, in Valetta, had

²³ Ibid., pp.575-76.

²⁴ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.147.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Brian Melland, 'Health Stations', *British Journal of Tuberculosis*, 2, (1) (January 1908), 67-68.

²⁷ Sharp, p.99.

²⁸ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.493.

²⁹ Ibid., p.404.

³⁰ Ibid., pp.407-08.

³¹ Lear, p.ix.

a city that equalled in 'its noble architecture, if it does not even excel any capital in Europe'.³² Sicily, too, was rich in historical associations with remains of 'Greek, Roman, Moorish and Norman architecture'.³³ Its capital, Palermo, was said to have a situation that was 'surpassingly beautiful'.³⁴ Taormina was beginning to attract the attention of a growing class of 'sturdy invalid' and had 'quite an English Colony'.³⁵ Few resorts could compete with the interest generated by Egypt's pyramids and Nile cataracts.³⁶ Egypt had taken up the mantle of being on the frontier of western civilisation. The 'ancient country of the Pharaohs' steadily became 'so decidedly British'; new resorts such as Luxor and Helouan-Les-Bains, only three miles from the Nile, developed and grew in importance each year.³⁷

As other resorts grew in popularity, from the 1920s interest in Ajaccio's unique attraction, Napoleon, which had helped sustain Ajaccio as a tourist destination, began to wane. The Emperor's name began to be associated with the rise of European dictators and his appeal faded. The monument, begun in 1921, was not completed until March 1938 when a large statute, a replica of that of the *Invalides*, was put in place.³⁸ In Corsica the long-awaited inauguration was described as 'one of the most extraordinary events of our epoch - the glorification of the Emperor Napoleon by a Republican Government'.³⁹ The event was given extensive coverage in *The Times* which reported the speech of Monsieur Campinchini, Minister of Marine and a Corsican, that echoed the concerns of the age:

Dictatorship, he said, was born of disorder. But they had to be suspicious of personal power. It was dangerous for the state to depend upon one man. The democratic regime obviously has its weaknesses, but did they count in comparison with the dangers of unchecked personal power? The freedom, peace and the future of a nation were too precious to surrender to the safekeeping of one man, even if he were exceptional.⁴⁰

³² Ibid., p.586.

³³ Ibid., pp.527-28.

³⁴ Ibid., p.528.

³⁵ Ibid., p.548.

³⁶ Hornsby, (1910), p.363.

³⁷ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.487.

³⁸ *Revue de la Corse*, September-October 1938.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ 'Corsica Honours Napoleon', *The Times*, 16 August 1938.

Corsica did not compensate for the declining interest in its main tourist attraction. For most of the period the tourism industry concentrated on Ajaccio and the winter visitor. As late as 1931 the publication, *Ajaccio, Winter Health Station and Centre of Tourism*, was lauded as a success and there was promise of a luxury publication, *Une Semaine à Ajaccio*, with an issue of 100,000 copies in five languages.⁴¹ The belief continued that summer for the elite was based around the interior when the trees were 'full of fruit', the vines 'covered with grapes and the forests with their age-old trees'.⁴² As late as 1934 in an article entitled *Allez en Corse* emphasized that in 'summer you keep to the mountains, winter to the beaches of Calvi, Ajaccio, Bastia and Ile Rousse which rival in their climate, without useless luxury, that of the Côte d'Azur'.⁴³

As the numbers of tourers of the island increased, the size of the sojourner community fell. The most compelling evidence of decline, as it was for the establishment of the winter station, comes from the symbol most indicative of the British world and which supported the existence of an English colony – the church. The *Blue Guide* of 1926 records the Reverend A.J. Wheeler in residence and conducting services from November to 15 April, much as it had been since the opening of the church in 1878.⁴⁴ Reverend Wheeler is the last record of any resident clergy. By 1934, with only six regular communicants, numbers no longer supported a permanent occupant; chaplains came over from Nice for 'Easter and funerals'.⁴⁵ The drop in numbers was also seen in the monetary contributions to the church which made up the chaplain's stipend. The winter season 1927-28 saw twenty-one individuals contributing £1,420 towards the church.⁴⁶ In 1928-29 £1,023 came from twelve individuals with another £50 from the Grand Hotel.⁴⁷ In 1929-30, seven individuals contributed £486 and churchwardens were asked to 'remind visitors how very little the franc still represents in English money'.⁴⁸ Such entreaties were in vain for the last recorded contribution of £460, from only six individuals, came in 1931.⁴⁹

⁴¹ *LCT*, 1931.

⁴² Editorial, *LCT*, 1925.

⁴³ *LCT*, 1934.

⁴⁴ Muirhead, and Monmarché, p.445.

⁴⁵ LMA/ CLC/318/DGED/006/MS20983/001.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Nevertheless the church was stronger in Ajaccio than some of its rival resorts. In Algiers, for instance, the church records indicate that the winter community flourished between 1875 -1884.⁵⁰ From the end of the 1880s the elites were joined by the 'merely well-to-do' who stayed for shorter periods of time and were less willing to financially support the church.⁵¹ A 1931 fund-raising brochure complained that the British community in Algiers was no longer the large and wealthy colony it had once been.⁵² By 1926 the winter sojourners in Algiers had been all but replaced by the tourists who called at the town, sometimes only for a few hours.⁵³

Transition to Summer

From the 1920s there was a step-change in the number of visitors and a broadening of the democratic base. The trend towards shorter spring and then summer holidays that had begun earlier in the century quickened. Interest in Corsica was encouraged by better promotion of the changed image of the island from wildness and savagery to gentleness and domesticity. Getting around the island was facilitated by the expansion of motorised transport. The touring visitors were part of a burgeoning mass tourism market that would eventually have its own identity. It marked a break with the elite Mediterranean world.

The tourism industry needed to attract more visitors and responded to the vogue for rural nostalgia. A new image of a 'golden age set in the near or remote past' was promoted.⁵⁴ And, in marketing the island, the softness of the landscape and the archaism of Corsican society were increasingly portrayed using new visual technology. Postcards had become popular from the late nineteenth century and they sought to capture the contemporary world and the images of traditional life style. Women, in particular, were used to portray work of a traditional nature in picturesque surroundings.⁵⁵ These images were

⁵⁰ Ross (1991), p.7

⁵¹ Ibid., p.8

⁵² Ibid., p.10.

⁵³ Redouane, p.26.

⁵⁴ James Burchardt, *Paradise Lost* (London: Tauris, 2002), p. 26.

⁵⁵ Patrick Young, 'La Vielle France as an Object of Bourgeois Desire: The Touring Club of France and the French Regions, 1890-1918' in *Histories of Leisure*, ed. by Rudy Koshar

reflected in another series of books and articles by British authors who wrote about their experiences in touring the island and included more photographs of scenes of the countryside which were local and domestic in nature.⁵⁶ Major A. Radclyffe Dugmore, for example, presented an Arcadian view of the village of Ocana:

The warm colour of the picturesque houses with their yellow and red roofs, the narrow steep stone-paved (more or less) streets and alleys, the well-placed church, the deep green orange trees laden with fruit, dark grey-green ilex, forests of chestnuts and olive-covered slopes and terraces, the little stream which supplies the village, and beyond all the endless ranges of blue, purple and pinkish mountains.⁵⁷

Similarly, he described the streets of Nonza as 'quaint, irregular, and often good in colour with the inevitable washing hung from every window'.⁵⁸ These images purported to show an island which had left behind the old demons of violence and the vendetta - an image that had been hard to shift.

The perception that Corsica was inhabited by backward and savage people had been deeply embedded in the work of British writers. Each new publication had added to a 'palimpsest process of which each trip in its turn contributes to the layering and sedimentation of powerful imaginative geographies that shape the expectations and experiences of subsequent travellers'.⁵⁹ Prosper Mérimée and Alexandre Dumas, had 'planted romance in a land where to shoot a man in the back without warning was the accepted style'.⁶⁰ An oft repeated trope about the island was that it was 'largely associated with the idea of blood'.⁶¹ This representation of the island continued in the age of radio and film. In 1926 the BBC broadcast Major W. Cross's 'Island of Brigands and the Vendetta'.⁶² Then in 1928 the British Pathé production

(Oxford: Berg, 2002), pp.175-77.

⁵⁶ Ernest Young, *Peeps at Many Land: Corsica* (London: Black, 1909); D. Forster Knight, pseud. 'Snaffle', *The Impossible Island Corsica: its People and its Sport* (London: Witherby 1923); Archer; Hawthorne; René Juta, *Concerning Corsica* (London: Lane Bodley Head, 1926); Dugmore; Harry Wynne, *Corsica: The Isle of Beauty* (Brentford: Brentford Print, 1928).

⁵⁷ Dugmore, p.106.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.228.

⁵⁹ Burdett and Duncan, p. 117.

⁶⁰ Williams (1923), p.300.

⁶¹ Barry, p.49.

⁶² *Daily Mail*, 19 July 1926.

Passion Island was released – ‘a story of a vendetta in modern Corsica’.⁶³

Although the bandits had been attractive to some (Chapter Nine), those involved in promoting the tourism economy believed that banditism was ‘a weeping wound’ that was holding back the development of the country as a vacation destination.⁶⁴ Moncrieff’s view that there was ‘doubt as to the security of life and property’ and that this was ‘the cause of its neglect by foreigners’ was probably correct.⁶⁵ A new image was only possible when the attitude of both the inhabitants and the visitors towards the bandits changed. This began to happen in the 1920s when visiting the bandits became part of organised tourism and, thus, meeting them became less authentic. Dorothy Archer told of one such encounter with Nonce Romanetti, Bellacoscia’s heir to the title of ‘King of the Maquis’. She described how ‘The bandit rose to receive us, and placed chairs for us - all with the manner of a prince! [...] with piercing dark eyes which are never still, and a long dark moustache, dressed in the usual brown corduroy and a large black felt hat, with a heavy watch-chain of gold and several rings, he was a stage bandit to the life!’.⁶⁶

At the same time, the myth of the honourable bandit, that ‘classic example of romanticism’, collapsed.⁶⁷ The newspapers changed their way of reporting. Romanetti was attacked in an article that accused him of exercising tyrannical control, extorting taxes, stealing herds and kidnapping daughters of terrorized fathers: ‘No trace is left in him of the “classic” Corsican bandit [...] Instead of their austerity Romanetti shows a decided taste for a voluptuous life.’⁶⁸ Instead of glorification of the deeds of the bandits there were headlines such as: ‘Island where Murder is an Industry’ and ‘Bandits Seize Woman’.⁶⁹ In 1929 banditry was said to be ‘A Tradition in Decay’.⁷⁰ By the end of 1931, the ‘sorry truth’ about the Corsican bandit was clear: ‘There are no Dick Turpins in Corsica today, and there are no chivalrous Robin Hoods to right the wrongs of the poor and the oppressed. The bandit is purely and simply a blackmailer, and

⁶³ *Devon and Exeter Gazette*, 7 February 1928.

⁶⁴ Editorial, *LCT*, 1931.

⁶⁵ Moncrieff, p.378.

⁶⁶ Archer, p. 162.

⁶⁷ Hulme and Youngs, p.256.

⁶⁸ *Kalamazoo Gazette*, 25 December 1922.

⁶⁹ *Daily Express*, 30 December 1925; *Sunday Times*, 22 July 1928.

⁷⁰ *The Times*, 28 March 1929.

a very clever one at that.’⁷¹

The demise of the bandits was slow but was hastened by the destruction of the belief that they never harmed foreigners. The myth was that they never shot anyone but their own relatives unless, ‘quite by accident, some stranger who happens to be passing between at the time [...] A lady might walk the breadth of the island wearing a diamond tiara in perfect safety’.⁷² This did not reflect the reality. Isolated incidents had occurred in the nineteenth century. In November 1886 when thirty guests were sitting at dinner in the Hotel Bellevue at Ajaccio, five bandits entered the house and, putting a pistol to the head of the proprietor’s wife, demanded 3,000 francs.⁷³ Such incidents increased in the twentieth century with the growth of hotels and thermal establishments in the interior and the greater number of tourists. In 1928 there was an assault on two ‘scantly clad’ young women making a walking tour, the kidnap of a Dutch girl and five persons were robbed on the Col de Verde.⁷⁴ In 1929 Dr Rice, an Englishman living near Ajaccio, was robbed in his home.⁷⁵ And in 1931 Mr Ransom was severely wounded by yet another ‘last’ of the bandits; two hotels were held up at Guagno-Les-Bains; 20,000 francs demanded from the manager of the Grand Hotel in Ajaccio and the Hotel Miramar at Tiuccia was occupied.⁷⁶ Taken over the course of almost a century such incidents appear to be rare, but they were most likely underreported in the interests of protecting the tourism industry. The official records cite increasing banditry, their atrocities and continued belief in the vendetta.⁷⁷

Banditism was not just a deterrent to visitors; there was evidence of interference in economic development. The construction of the railway around Vizzavona was disrupted on two accounts. Initially, the purchase of the required land caused trouble. It was seen that ‘enemy’ land was sold for less than that of ‘friends’ and disputes over this delayed the start. Then, as work began, ‘the bandit who “ruled” that area politely informed the contractors that unless he was

⁷¹ C J Martin, ‘The Sorry Truth about the Corsican Bandits’, *Daily Mail*, 13 November 1931.

⁷² T.S. Hardeman, ‘Our Holiday in Corsica’, *World Wide Magazine*, 29 (1912), 98-99.

⁷³ Maine, p. 396.

⁷⁴ *Sunday Times*, 22 July 1928;

⁷⁵ *The Times*, 29 March 1929.

⁷⁶ L. H. Homer ‘Travellers in Corsica’, *The Times*, 4 February 1931; *Daily Mail*, 26 August 1931; Wilson, p.359.

⁷⁷ AA: IM127, October 1909.

paid a certain sum the work could not proceed.’⁷⁸ Such events led, by the 1930s, to a change of public attitude. Without the protection of the populace, the bandits could be eliminated more easily. In 1931 a French expeditionary force, with tanks, was sent ‘to exterminate the bandits once and for all’.⁷⁹

The image of the bandits was kept alive when it began to be used for tourism with the vogue for visiting literary landscapes. The village of Fozzano had always been popular for its associations with Mérimée’s *Colomba*. Following in this tradition, in the 1920s Roy Elston and Dugmore pointed out the ruins of the Château d’Istria at Sollacaro, the scene of Dumas’ novel of *The Corsican Brothers*, and John Mitchell Chapman identified one scene in the *The Isle of Unrest* as the defile of Lancone: a ‘picturesque passage cut in the side of Monte Pinzale with the river Bevinco roaring in the gorge below’.⁸⁰ Dugmore, Archer and Hawthorne mention Olmeta-di-Tuda, the village that was the background for Merriman’s novel ‘just as he described it’.⁸¹

From the 1920s there was a significant increase in visitors. In 1925 some 10-12,000 tourists came to the island, each spending 1,000 francs.⁸² This was a step change from 1,000 at the apogee of the winter health station and was the watershed in the shift from sojourner and traveller-discoverer to tourist. The participants by their very numbers must have been outside *Queen’s* top 10,000. Marketing changes played a part, but there were other social and cultural factors at work. A pivotal moment was the introduction of motorised transport from the early twentieth century which contributed to the growing numbers of tourists who took tours around the island to the most scenic spots. Tours departed regularly from Calvi and Ile Rousse, enabled by a fast boat which had been laid on in the summer from Nice.⁸³ The first public motor car service in the island was established on a small scale in 1905, but it was limited to three cars that ran regularly between Ajaccio and Sartène. These vehicles were a ‘boon to tourists’ covering the distance of fifty-three miles in six hours compared to the

⁷⁸ Martin.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Elston, p.321; Dugmore, p.84; Chapman (1908), p.365.

⁸¹ Dugmore, p.260; Archer, p.87; Hawthorne, p.212.

⁸² 12,000 is quoted in the editorial of *LCT*, 1925; 10,000 from the statistics in the *Plan de Mise en Valeur de la Corse: Inventaire de 1949*, quoted by Binet, p.282.

⁸³ Binet, p.283.

thirteen hours of the diligence.⁸⁴ Facilities, though, were scant. When cars first appeared in Corsica the only petrol stations were at Ajaccio and Bastia; even by 1910 there were only four. Expansion came in 1911 when Corsica first appeared in the *Michelin* guide.

Significant growth in tourism numbers coincided with the golden age of the car in between the wars. The first tarmac roads were built, the number of garages and petrol stations increased and the first car show rooms opened in the 1930s.⁸⁵ Motor services expanded between other towns and by 1926 were said to be 'always packed'.⁸⁶ They were 'remarkably cheap, the cars are extremely good and the drivers reliable and courteous but when there are parties of two or three or more it is better to take a motor and so be more independent' which meant that it was possible to avoid staying in any place on 'Tour Day'.⁸⁷

The extension of the season and the advent of better and cheaper travel were important factors in increasing numbers and to some extent in changing the tourist base. By the 1920s, Corsica's mountains were popular enough to feature in Joanne and Baedeker guidebooks which contained detailed information regarding accommodation, etc. and 'much useful information on the mountains themselves'.⁸⁸ In 1927 a party of a hundred British men and women camped in the Corsican uplands.⁸⁹ The area had become so frequented in 1931 that J.D. Hills was relieved to arrive there 'ahead of the threatened invasion of the Belgian Alpine Club'.⁹⁰ PLM's declaration in 1923 that there was an 'urgent need for more hotels and small houses' and camp sites reflected visitors of lesser means and provides solid evidence for change.⁹¹ Similarly organised tours for walkers and cyclists were more popular, and in 1935 the Workers Travel Association was organising trips to the island.⁹²

⁸⁴ PP 1907 [Cd.3283] No. 3779 *Annual Series of Trade Reports*.

⁸⁵ Binet, p.289.

⁸⁶ Editorial, *LCT*, May-June 1926.

⁸⁷ Dugmore, p.44.

⁸⁸ Finch (1920), p.520.

⁸⁹ 'Camping in Corsica', *Queen Travel Book* (London: The Field Press, 1928-29), pp.372-73.

⁹⁰ John D. Hills, 'Another April in Corsica', *Climbers Club Journal*, 4 (1930), 131-41 (p.134).

⁹¹ *Daily Mail*, 15 February 1923.

⁹² *The Manchester Guardian*, 13 August 1935.

Numbers were also generated by the new fashion for sea and sun. Up to the First World War the habit of the locals of bathing in the Mediterranean in July and August was regarded as a 'foreign perversity'.⁹³ During that war American service men and nurses bathed in the sea on the Riviera coasts and took in the sun. They set a trend that was to be followed by the fashionable set. The search for sunshine gathered momentum in the inter-war years including in Corsica. It was not immediately obvious that the demand would grow and the island, suffering the aftermath of the war, was slow to respond. This was not surprising. Summer on the Côte d'Azur, which led the way with the provision of new resorts for sun seekers, was not the overnight phenomenon that is sometimes portrayed. In Juan les Pins, for instance, its natural sand beach, the only one in the area, became desirable. But, it was not until 1924 that the town became more popular, and in 1927 the two hundred-room Hotel Provençal was opened.⁹⁴

The turning point came in August 1926 when the hoteliers on the Cote d'Azur met and agreed to remain open during the summer months, although it was said that forty percent of them thought the scheme doomed.⁹⁵ Their pessimism proved to be unfounded, but demand for summer had to be encouraged by a number of marketing tactics.⁹⁶ The sunshine was stressed: 'summer bathing season assured [...] kindly weather, warm seas'.⁹⁷ Reduced hotel tariffs were advertised both in the 1920s and the 1930s and money back was offered if it rained.⁹⁸ By the 1930s the Côte d'Azur was able to compensate for the decline of winter tourism by summer in the Mediterranean, but it was not the same in Corsica.⁹⁹

In Corsica demand had been stimulated by the advertisement of 'Cheap summer excursions' in August 1918, but until the second half of the 1920s few hotels opened in the summer and facilities for sea bathing activities remained

⁹³ Pemble, p.17.

⁹⁴ Mary Blume, *The Côte d'Azur* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), p.90.

⁹⁵ Blume, p.91.

⁹⁶ Boyer (2009), p.153.

⁹⁷ *Daily Mail*, 26 May 1927, advertisement for P&O tours to Morocco, Corsica and Sardinia.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 26 May 1927, 'reduced hotel tariffs'; June, Jul and December 1932, 'Hotel rates greatly reduced'; 28 May 1932, 'Money back when its rains'; 3 June 1932, 'Still further reductions'; 29 May and 5 June 1935, 'Holiday Sunshine at moderate cost'.

⁹⁹ Boyer (2009), p.153.

primitive.¹⁰⁰ In 1927 Dugmore enjoyed the beaches in Ajaccio but 'of places to dress in there are but few, four huts all told'.¹⁰¹ When demand began to pick up the response was by the northern Balagne towns, primarily Calvi and Ile Rousse. The Balagne was on the route taken by the tours and had become more accessible with boats from Nice and the provision of a branch line of the rail network as far as Calvi. In Calvi, the swamps were drained and running water installed. However, when Corsica first appeared in a *Cooks' Handbook* in 1927 these resorts merited only a line each.¹⁰²

Change came in 1928 symbolised by a set of innovative strongly-coloured posters which were used to publicise the island, including *La Plage de Calvi*. It was the first real indication of the seaside tourism playground that this area was to become. It was successful, for in that year the town was said to be 'crowded with visitors'.¹⁰³ It is difficult to know who these visitors were. There are no hotel registers, and where individuals can be identified it is mostly through the social columns of the newspapers, magazines and professional journals, art and photography exhibitions, books and articles written by the individuals. The impression is of the wealthier and professional classes, if not as narrow as the typical winter sojourner. From the 1920s the island had become expensive. In 1927 the *Daily Mail* reported that pre-war prices were no longer obtainable.¹⁰⁴ This was partly because everything in Corsica had to come from the Continent. The island was known to be 'expensive and with prohibitive taxes' which made 'the foreign tourist more and more miserly with their money'.¹⁰⁵ Tourism was not helped by the 'erratic behaviour of the franc' in the later 1920s.¹⁰⁶ 'So long as the tendency of that exchange was, if with temporary fluctuations, more or less continuously to increase the value of both pounds and dollars, everything was joyous. Hotels, restaurants, bars, tearooms shops could all put their prices up in tune with the fall of the franc and-whatever sarcastic things might be said about profiteering - nobody really minded much. But when the pound drops suddenly to 120 francs and threatens to go further, a

¹⁰⁰ *Illustrated London News*, 23 August 1918.

¹⁰¹ Dugmore, p. 60.

¹⁰² Elston, pp.318-19.

¹⁰³ Our Ajaccio Correspondent, 'New Corsica', *The Times*, 28 March 1929; *Daily Mail*, 5 September 1928.

¹⁰⁴ *Daily Mail*, 27 September 1927.

¹⁰⁵ Editorial, *LCT*, 1934.

¹⁰⁶ 'A Letter from the Riviera', *Spectator*, 15 January 1927.

rate of 200 francs per day, becomes prohibitive to all except the rich, and even one of 100 francs plus taxes, is a serious matter.¹⁰⁷

Social change was more marked on the Riviera. In 1929 the Blue Train, an impetus for tourism since its inauguration in 1883, ran every day carrying tourists for the 'ideal summer bathing holiday' to the new summer resorts.¹⁰⁸ In June 1936 the French Parliament gave workers fifteen days of paid holiday per year; they also got reduced train fares and headed south in the summer.¹⁰⁹ It was a life-line that changed the nature of tourism, particularly in the south of France, and ensured the winter focus was gone. Much to the dismay of the mobile elites, the Blue Train added second and third class sleepers.¹¹⁰ Exclusivity, which had been an important factor in the development of the luxury hotel, diminished as social mobility increased and social restraints became less strict. Although the luxury hotels were out of reach for most of the new vacationers, the elites began to go elsewhere. The new clientele patronised the small and mid-range hotels and helped make summer the new high season. It was reported that the summer season of 1939 was the Riviera's best yet.¹¹¹

Increased numbers and the changed nature of the visitor altered the relationship between the Corsicans and the foreigner. The intimate knowledge of fewer visitors clustered in one place (Ajaccio) and the novelty of the scarcity of visitors elsewhere was lost. The tourism industry believed that the interests of the '*collective insulaire*' was 'subordinated to the interests of certain private societies [...] a network designed to relieve the tourist of the maximum amount of money in the minimum amount of time'.¹¹² The tourist came to be seen as 'a potential victim from whom to extort money' and when 'whole energies are devoted to tourism, one of the most sacred and time-honoured laws-that of hospitality-cannot fail to be lost'.¹¹³ There were some hoteliers, for example, who refused to provide hot water without extra payment.¹¹⁴ Some of the auberges 'give their clients the least amount of food so that they do not die of

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ *Daily Mail*, 27 June 1930 and May, June July and December 1932.

¹⁰⁹ Blume, p.119.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ring (2005), p. 134.

¹¹² *LCT*, 1932.

¹¹³ Chiari, p. 108.

¹¹⁴ *JDE*, April 1904.

hunger, the most uncomfortable lodgings in the world and they claim in exchange for all this sums of money that are nowhere near the standard of hospitality that they are offering. The clients of these establishments become rarer year on year'.¹¹⁵

Unfulfilled Promise

'And always for us the dream vanishes before daybreak.'¹¹⁶

Optimism about the future was a continuous theme. In 1923 the island was still regarded only as 'one of the coming resorts of the Mediterranean'.¹¹⁷ In 1930 the Corsicans were convinced that 'The good days were returning; a trip to Corsica at this time of year is the perfect complement to a stay on the Côte d'Azur. This is the cup of champagne at the end of a good meal'.¹¹⁸ They were wrong. After 1928 there was no book published exclusively on Corsica until 1942, reflecting the waning in demand. There were a number of things that prevented 'the golden shower of tourism' happening in Corsica. For much of the period of this study, the tourism industry was fragmented and unable to anticipate changing trends, effectively counter the negatives or lobby government. There was lack of capital for improvement which meant that the standards of accommodation, in particular, failed to meet the expectations of visitors and the island's infrastructure fell into disrepair. The standard of comfort and state of the roads drew repeated criticisms.

The first tourist syndicate had been set up in Ajaccio in 1877 (Chapter Four). It lasted only a few years and it was not resurrected until 1904. In 1905 a tourism conference was held in the city, but maintaining momentum was a struggle. In 1915 the magazine, *Corsica/L'île de Beauté*, ceased publication following dues imposed on printers for the national defence, and after the First World War the action of the *syndicat* was marginal.¹¹⁹ It was only with the demise of the bandits that the tourism industry properly came together in

¹¹⁵ *LCT*, 1929.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1924.

¹¹⁷ K Norman Hillson, 'Corsica: The Island with Three Climates', *Daily Mail Atlantic Edition*, 24 April 1923.

¹¹⁸ *LCT*, 1930.

¹¹⁹ 'Sylvestre Frassetto', 39.

November 1934 with the formation of ESSITAC (*Syndicat d'Initiative et Touristique d'Ajaccio et de la Corse*) which was a joining together of the existing fragmented local syndicates, hotels, tourist and maritime agencies.¹²⁰ A Directorate for Tourism was created in 1935, but by this time it was too late.¹²¹ In these circumstances the failure of Corsica to anticipate the changing nature of the visitor and the new fashion for sea and sun was almost understandable.

By 1931 the great winter holiday was almost over. Devaluation of sterling made travel abroad prohibitively expensive and the elite began to leave the Mediterranean resorts.¹²² However, the tourism industry continued to focus on the elites by supporting an historic model for accommodation that met the needs of this group. This was understandable to some extent. Many tourists chose to bring their own cars which, in addition to the cost of freight, incurred heavy customs charges which suggested that although there may have been greater numbers, they were still likely to be the wealthier individuals. Nevertheless, the 1920s saw a demand for smaller and cheaper accommodation for the growing number of less wealthy tourers. However, it was the higher quality hotels that were built. In 1928 there was a luxury hotel, the Mouflon d'Or, under construction at Zonza. It was built with the intention of drawing tourists to 'the imposing sites around the Col [de Bavella], the 'wondrous trees and precipices-that strange oasis of glory'.¹²³ The extravagant nature of these new buildings indicated that the clientele was still expected to be the wealthy elite. One of the finest was the *Grand Hotel Roches Rouges* at Piana. The hotel was built in 1910 but in the style that was in vogue at the end of the nineteenth century, and a 'sumptuous dining room' was added in 1925.¹²⁴ At Calvi in 1926 Major Maurice Blake, an English entrepreneur, was confident enough to build a new hotel, the Citadel Inn, located in a 'magnificent situation'.¹²⁵ The site was within the former Genoese citadel which was perched on a promontory some way from the beaches. His market was clearly the mobile elites with guests such as Princess Marie Louise and suite who spent

¹²⁰ Binet, p.264.

¹²¹ Ibid., p.340.

¹²² Ring (2005), p.122.

¹²³ *LCT*, 1928; Lear, p.101.

¹²⁴ Binet, p.241.

¹²⁵ *LCT*, 1925. Blake was the son of Sir Henry Blake, Governor of Ceylon and Jamaica.

three weeks there in August; only the season had shifted.¹²⁶

Blake used a well-established refrain to promote his hotel: 'a few weeks in this ancient fortress town [...] free of the blatant blaring vulgarity of the Riviera, in a small but comfortable hotel run by English people on the ramparts of a romantic medieval fortress almost completely surrounded by sea, [where] he will find complete quiet and atmosphere of mental restfulness that was lost to the outside world many generations ago.'¹²⁷ Any mention of Calvi's glorious beaches, summer sun or bathing was absent. Just along the coast, Ile Rousse was developed also with the wealthier tourist in mind. In 1930 the resort is referred to as a 'tourist centre'.¹²⁸ However, the new hotel, the Napoleon Bonaparte, was converted from the former Chateau Piccioni, and clearly aimed at the wealthier guests. It was equipped with 'all modern comforts, bathing beach, tennis and golf (the first course in the island); private suites with baths and phones and was level with the beach'.¹²⁹ First mention of a 'bathing beach' was not until 1932.¹³⁰ Nonetheless, the town remained a small, 'an imitation of a minor resort of the French Riviera'.¹³¹

These hotel/palaces were 'not accessible to certain classes of tourist'; no new establishment was created that gave 'satisfaction to the average tourist looking for a moderate price and honest comfort'.¹³² In 1928 *LCT* recognised that 'these tourists are the most interesting; they keep the seaside hotels going which they have inhabited during their excursions on the Continent [...] They frequent the establishments of the third order, comfortable but not ostentatious, where they find a clean room with running hot and cold water, electricity, decent service for about twenty francs, an honest meal for fifteen francs'.¹³³ By contrast in Corsica:

The hotels, which will be of the third order and which everywhere have the pretensions of palaces; and the others when they do not offer half the

¹²⁶ *Daily Mail*, 1 September 1926.

¹²⁷ *The Times*, 10 August 1927.

¹²⁸ *Daily Mail*, May, June, August and September 1930.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ 'George Lunn Tours', *Daily Mail*, 28 May 1932.

¹³¹ Carrington (1984), p.21.

¹³² *LCT*, 1926.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 1928.

comfort of the establishments of the Continent, demand currently thirty to thirty-five francs for the meal, seventy-five francs per day, board and lodging; the wines are very dear, the service poor [...] The quality of the food and comfort is inferior. In a word, the tourist pays and does not come back and tells his friends not to go to Corsica.¹³⁴

Comfort was a particular issue. In 1925 it was said that 'If the tourist announces he leaves for Corsica, he is looked at with commiseration, if he says he is going back, he is looked upon with stupefaction'.¹³⁵ The search for a rural idyll created a paradox. The tourist could access places on the periphery because of the modernity that created their wealth and the technology that developed better and faster transport networks. In Corsica it was possible to 'avoid the frequented civilized resorts, which cater for tourists and trippers, and instead venture into a country that we fondly imagined had remained in a raw and uncooked state on the less well-beaten track'.¹³⁶ However, 'uncooked' and unspoiled too often meant uncomfortable. Modernity created a desire for the comforts of home that technology and wealth had brought. To the English this meant more efficient heating, better lighting, improved sanitation, thick carpets and more luxurious furniture. Outside it was better pavements, roads, lighting, drains and sewers.¹³⁷ Lack of such facilities continually crops up in the travel literature and private accounts of visits to the island. A few examples suffice to demonstrate what visitors experienced:

On cleanliness in 1922: 'Tiny donkeys come in at night dragging carts piled high with rough shrubs for fires and ovens emphasize the inadequate scale on which comforts are provided; the whack of the laundry near the cathedral (Ajaccio) reminds that cleanliness is not only next to godliness but next to impossible.'¹³⁸

On the plumbing: In 1926 at Sagone (west coast), at the hotel: 'I asked for hot water – response "And what does Madame want of hot water?" "To wash in". "Ah, la-la! So Madame washes in hot water? Tiens, she will then want a great deal!" She brought me a small tin saucepan with about a pint of boiling

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ A. Andrei, *Les Étapes d'un Touriste en France: À Travers la Corse* (Paris: [n.pub], 189), p.3.

¹³⁶ Charles Elwell, *Corsican Excursion* (London: Bodley Head, 1954).

¹³⁷ Mullen and Munson, p.225.

¹³⁸ Williams (1923), p.243.

water.¹³⁹ In 1926, Santa Maria Zicch : ‘To stay in one of these mountain villages would be impossible. They are entirely innocent of plumbing even of the most rudimentary description.’¹⁴⁰

On the utilities: Although a few places had local networks of electricity, the whole island had to wait until 1927-1933.¹⁴¹ By contrast the mobile elites had been accustomed to electricity by the end of the nineteenth century and in Nice, for example, during the 1920s, there was an enormous expansion of modern utilities, to every part of the resort.¹⁴²

These examples were not exceptional findings, and the standard of the accommodation, particularly in the interior was ‘limited in a way that is frequently distressing’.¹⁴³ There were continual exhortations from the industry for improvement in the pages of the *JDE* and *LCT* and there was some change. By the early twentieth century a few hotels in the interior, such as the du Torrent at St Pierre de Venaco, had installed *cabinets-Anglais*.¹⁴⁴ Vizzavona had been transformed into a popular centre that was described as a ‘hotel village’.¹⁴⁵ Calacuccia, in the remote Niolo region, became known as the ‘Zermatt’ of the island, and by 1927 the ‘commissariat troubles’ of the earlier explorers were found to be over; ‘all reasonable requirements’ could be obtained in the town, and even the village stores were said to be ‘often surprisingly well stocked’.¹⁴⁶ By 1931 it was possible to receive a telegram at the Grotte des Anges, the remote cave used as a base camp for ascents of the Cinto range.¹⁴⁷

However, most inns failed to modernise. Those involved in the tourism industry acknowledged the issue: ‘In the villages the hotels are for the most part mediocre auberges, lacking cleanliness and comfort, lack of modern

¹³⁹ Hawthorne, p.38.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Campocasso (2005), p.12.

¹⁴² Kanigel.

¹⁴³ Ernest Young, *From Russia to Siam with a Voyage Down the Danube: Sketches of Travel in Many Lands* (London: Goschen, 1914), p.112.

¹⁴⁴ *JDE*, Sept. 1901.

¹⁴⁵ Dugmore, p.113.

¹⁴⁶ H.V. Hughes, ‘Camping in the Corsican Highlands’, *Fell and Rock Climbing Club Journal*, 1, 8, (22) (1928), 54-62 (p.62).

¹⁴⁷ John D. Hills, ‘Yet More Corsica’, *Climbers Club Journal*, (1931), 207-19 (p.219).

facilities demanded by foreigners and run mostly by amateurs.’¹⁴⁸ The industry understood improvements had to happen ‘if we do not wish Sardinia, Sicily and the Italian Riviera to attract all the foreigners who want to have a beautiful trip but who place comfort above the picturesque’.¹⁴⁹ Change was promised, but it was not sustained:

The Corsican is not a natural born hotel-keeper. One of their strange peculiarities shows itself in the little but important detail of furnishing bedrooms. It is usually a case of the irreducible minimum, from which, though its sounds impossible, some articles may be lacking. You may be planning a stay of a month or more, and you will be shown a bedroom that is entirely innocent of any place in which clothing may be put. If you are lucky there might be a mantel-shelf, two to three inches wide, and on this all your belongings are supposed to go, and if you ask for a table, good-natured surprise will be shown.¹⁵⁰

Five years later there was a dire portrayal of what was still lacking:

Running water in all rooms and a lot of it. All rooms should have an annex in which there is a bath. Taps must produce clean hot water all day and night and provide free soap [...] Water must be disposed of in the most modern way. [...] Sewage systems must be installed [...] sanitation in the villages must not be less than the towns. It is necessary to have sufficient drinking water, clean streets, and septic tanks. Manure has long been spread out proudly in front of the houses, covering the street with muck.¹⁵¹

The major problem was lack of capital. The vacuum was filled by foreign investors and profits went elsewhere, thus compounding the issue. Many of the new hotels on the coasts, and later enterprises such as cars, were owned and run by foreigners. It was PLM that organised tours to the island and produced the posters that promoted the Balagne. In 1929 it was said that ‘not even the purchase of leisure, a souvenir, a jewel, a perfume or a dozen postcards is from an island company’.¹⁵² Reynolds-Ball believed that Corsica did not reach its potential owing to the ‘inefficient and irregular communication with the mainland’.¹⁵³ The foreign-owned boats (Frassinetti) were subject to continual

¹⁴⁸ *JDE*, April 1904.

¹⁴⁹ Editorial, *LCT*, 1924.

¹⁵⁰ Dugmore, p.28.

¹⁵¹ *LCT*, 1932.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 1929.

¹⁵³ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.467.

complaints: 'The meagre accommodation and unsavoury viands of the boats is a change from luxury to discomfort.'¹⁵⁴

In the 1920s, with increasing pressure there was some improvement, but criticism remained: 'the cabins are not clean or the amenities luxurious. Frassiniet had the monopoly over passenger boats and the company's attitude was seen to be "pay up" and if you are not satisfied, go elsewhere'.¹⁵⁵ When there was the alternative of air travel in the 1920s it was only available to the rich. Regular flights had come from Antibes since the early 1920s. This enabled those tourists staying on the Côte d'Azur to spend several days in Corsica. In 1933, Air France expanded its number of lines with a daily service from Marseilles-Algeria-Tunis. From 1935 there was a Nice-Bastia flight which took one hour linking with Paris, Lyon and Marseilles and in 1938 another route was added with links to London-Paris.¹⁵⁶

If getting to the island became easier by air, getting around the island became more difficult. The once praised roads deteriorated. From the early twentieth century modern transport had been seized upon to experience authentic Corsica. Guides and leaflets were produced containing recommendations for excursions on the *routes forestières and routes départementales*. This created growing traffic on roads that were not created for the motor car. These roads, in many places, were narrow and 'The gradients are very steep and not suitable for bicycles or motors; the corners are extremely sharp, and on one side of the road there is always a precipice'.¹⁵⁷ Goats, pigs, donkeys and landslips were perpetual hazards. In 1926 the roads, which had to be maintained by the Corsican Assembly or the communes were said to be in a sad state.¹⁵⁸ In 1928 motor vehicle owners in the island refused to pay their car taxes as a protest against their bad condition.¹⁵⁹ In the same year there were a number of road accidents that were said largely to have happened on account of 'the state of the roads which make bends dangerous, where there are

¹⁵⁴ Chapman (1908), p.41.

¹⁵⁵ Editorial, *LCT*, 1929. Frassiniet had the monopoly over passenger boats.

¹⁵⁶ Binet, p.283.

¹⁵⁷ Whitwell, p.8. Only the major roads were maintained by the French state.

¹⁵⁸ *LCT*, 1926.

¹⁵⁹ 'Strike Against Bad Roads', *Manchester Guardian*, 26 January 1928.

hollowed out ruts'.¹⁶⁰ The blame was put on the Corsican government:

One is astonished at the indifference that one attributes to the lack of money in the departments whose road network is considered one of the most panoramic in the world. Government does not work in Corsica in this matter. If the politicians do not listen even to the Chamber of Commerce and put the five or six millions necessary to repair the roads, then Corsica is lost to tourism.¹⁶¹

The department of Corsica was unwilling or unable to respond. The island suffered from an economic slump from the late nineteenth-century which meant that there was little capital, either public or private, to spend on infrastructure.¹⁶² This was exacerbated by the First World War. The impact was most greatly seen in the depopulation of the interior. Numbers of Corsicans going to the First World War and those who died are difficult to determine. It is estimated that during the four years of the war, 40-50,000 men (about twenty percent of the population) left the island.¹⁶³ It is probable that at least 10,000 were killed. Most came from the villages whose war memorials bear witness to the loss of life and decimation of families. The deaths and the returning wounded exacerbated the problems of agriculture, industry and commerce. The demographic decline, which in 1914 had been going on for twenty years, accelerated and precipitated a reduction in traditional activities. After the war the move to the towns and emigration abroad, which had begun before the war, gathered pace. Then there was the Spanish Flu which some believed killed more people than the war.¹⁶⁴ The economy had little chance of recovery.

Recovery was not helped by a series of industrial actions that impacted on the tourist. The transport strike of March 1920 resulted in a number of British passengers stranded in Corsica.¹⁶⁵ Then in 1928 the liner, *Numidia*, that was due to sail from Marseilles to Corsica with 250 passengers, was 'scuttled by "Reds".¹⁶⁶ The island continued to be hit by periodic disruption to transport

¹⁶⁰ LCT 1928.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Quote from the exhibition *La Corse et la Grande Guerre – Exhibition*, Museum of Corte 2014.

¹⁶³ d'Istria, p.69.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ *Daily Mail*, 31 March 1920.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 2 November 1928.

when in September 1934 the railwaymen went on strike followed by another continental strike in June 1936 which prevented the regular steamers from leaving Marseilles.¹⁶⁷ Politics was seen as having put a 'ligature round the initiatives and annihilated all efforts' to develop tourism.¹⁶⁸

The idea that tourism would help the development of the country did not take root with the politicians until the economic crisis of 1929.¹⁶⁹ Major investment would have been needed to combat the island's historical legacy. Insecurity from continued invasion had led Corsican villages to develop inland on difficult to access spurs of land which were more easily defensible. There were few fishing villages, as there had been on the Riviera, to develop into chic holiday resorts. Menton, for instance from being a small place that exported lemons, by 1920 had 'seventy-five hotels, two Anglican churches and one Presbyterian, tramways, tennis clubs and hundreds of palm-surrounded villages that spread east'.¹⁷⁰ The only places of any substance on the coast of Corsica were the main garrison towns of Ajaccio, Porto Vecchio, Bonifacio, Bastia and Calvi. With the exception of Ajaccio, these towns were built high-up within the walls of citadels and had no easy access to the beach. To fulfil demand for the coast, entirely new settlements needed to be built.

However, building on the coast was problematic. In 1920 the whole of the sea coast, especially on the east (where some of the best beaches were situated), was infested by malaria.¹⁷¹ The flight to the hills led to a neglect of drainage on the coast; irrigation channels and rivers mouths silted up and marshes developed which formed breeding grounds for the mosquito. Malaria was a long-standing intractable problem. The impact of the disease on the east coast was catastrophic. At the start of the twentieth century life expectancy in the communes of Aléria and Biguglia, for example, was twenty-two to twenty-three years; massive distributions of quinine had been the only measure taken.¹⁷² It was a disease of the summer months, so it had not been a particular issue for the winter sojourners. However, with the spread of tourism to the

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 23 June 1936.

¹⁶⁸ *LCT*, 1925.

¹⁶⁹ Binet, p.340.

¹⁷⁰ 'Last Hope', *Guardian*, 20 June 2006.

¹⁷¹ 'Tuberculosis in Corsica'. *Lancet*, 4 September 1920.

¹⁷² d'Istria, p.91,

summer, and the move towards the coasts, it became a greater issue. The mosquito was not identified as the carrier until the late 1920s; it was believed that it was spread by the return of soldiers who had contracted the disease in the East.¹⁷³ The malaria problem was discussed many times in medical circles; the *Lancet* for example, picked up the issue in 1874 and again in 1920, but little was done.¹⁷⁴

The difficulties were exacerbated in the 1930s when Corsica, like the rest of Europe, had to cope with the Depression. Industries geared to the foreigner were the first to be in difficulty. Exports of timber products fell by fifty percent between 1930-1931; from 1930-1933 production of tannin factories fell by eight-five percent and establishments closed. The last mining sites (except for asbestos) were abandoned and the oldest productions of wine, oil and cédrat disappeared and along with them, even the banks. The population fell by forty percent from 295,000 in 1901 to 160,000 in 1954.¹⁷⁵ Economic problems meant that there was even less to spend on tourism and this industry was also hit and not just in Corsica. On the Riviera the Americans, who spent three times more than other tourists, were the first to leave.¹⁷⁶ The number of foreign visitors plummeted from more than two million in 1927 to fewer than 700,000 by 1936.¹⁷⁷ The Belle Époque luxury palace hotels became too big and too costly to maintain. The hotels were forced to cut their rates and many collapsed. In Nice, between 1925 and 1937 fifteen out of the largest twenty-two palace hotels permanently closed.¹⁷⁸ On the Riviera as a whole, thirty-one hotels with a loss of 3,150 rooms vanished between the two world wars, most after 1930.¹⁷⁹ Most of the society that had created the desire for the lifestyle they offered had gone or moved elsewhere.¹⁸⁰

There was a similar situation in Ajaccio. In 1932 one of the new luxury hotels on the waterfront, the Hostellerie de la Grande Bleue, closed having

¹⁷³ 'Tuberculosis in Corsica'.

¹⁷⁴ *Lancet*, 5 September 1874; 'Tuberculosis in Corsica'.

¹⁷⁵ Campocasso (2005), pp.1-14.

¹⁷⁶ Ring (2005), p.122.

¹⁷⁷ Kanigel, p.179.

¹⁷⁸ Soane, p.235.

¹⁷⁹ Kanigel, p.180.

¹⁸⁰ Elaine Denby, *Grand Hotels: Reality and Illusion* (London: Reaktion, 1998), p.131.

been open a mere two years.¹⁸¹ The once thriving mountaineering tourism got into difficulty and fell into decline. The French Alpine Club closed its section in Ajaccio in 1932 and the two modest refuges built in the mountains in the 1930s fell into ruin.¹⁸² There was enough to sustain Vizzavona which remained a summer resort until the 1950s when the mountains were deserted for the beaches. Here the luxury *Grand Hotel de la Forêt* stayed open all year, but with the move to the coast, the hamlet suffered significant depopulation, the hotel closed its doors and fell into ruin. The continental French did begin to visit Corsica in greater numbers with the advent of paid holidays in 1936 and perhaps attracted by a new cultural icon, the singer and actor, Tino Rossi.¹⁸³ However, from the mid-1930s Mussolini saw an opportunity to regain possessions in the Mediterranean. His rhetoric became one of Italy's "imprisonment" at the hands of her various oppressors, with the British at the top of the list. The "bars" of the prison were Corsica, Tunisia, Malta and Cyprus with Corsica being considered as 'a pistol pointed at the heart of Italy'.¹⁸⁴ Once again war halted progress.

Conclusion

By 1925 the island of Corsica was universally known as *L'Île de Beauté* and was visited all year.¹⁸⁵ Up to the 1930s, although there was significant competition for mobile elite sojourners, Ajaccio continued to provide a haven for those seeking winter sunshine, wishing to indulge in rural nostalgia and have a quiet life. The push away from the Riviera in the early days of the station turned into a pull as Corsica was seen as being 'far from the madding crowd of travellers who have turned Switzerland, Italy and the Riviera into one great hotel, in a country where there are still mountains unspoiled by civilisation and where the old ideals of the fathers and ancestors: home and family are still kept sacred'.¹⁸⁶

The island though, was a paradox. Despite the longing for and finding a rural idyll, disappointment occurred when the island failed to meet the requirements for greater comfort and hygiene. They were demands that could

¹⁸¹ www.hotellesmouettes.fr/4411 (last accessed 24 June 2017).

¹⁸² Binet, p.134.

¹⁸³ Ibid., p.252. 1936 saw his debut as a film star.

¹⁸⁴ Holland (2013), p.213.

¹⁸⁵ Editorial, *LCT*, 1925.

¹⁸⁶ *JDE*, 1902.

not be met. There was never sufficient capital to invest in the city (or elsewhere) to meet the expectations of the later visitors as to the standard of comfort and variety of amenities that they expected from a winter health destination. There were always 'numerous beautiful excursions and walks to be taken in the vicinity of Ajaccio' but other kinds of distractions were more limited.¹⁸⁷ The city did not have, like its rivals on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean, 'fashionable entertainment for its guests'.¹⁸⁸ This was fine for those winter visitors who preferred 'the quiet of Corsica to the distractions of the Riviera'; there was 'little to do but plenty to see'.¹⁸⁹ Response to changing socio-economic conditions was limited. A small casino was eventually built in 1930, and there had been some response to the interest in the coasts with a gradual spread of building from the *cours Grandval* towards the sea. From the 1920s a dozen or so establishments lining the coast road were launched.¹⁹⁰ However, in 1926 the Grand Hotel was considered 'a century back so far as such things [food, service and entertainment] are concerned', and even the attraction of Napoleon had faded.¹⁹¹

However, that the city, as a winter resort, supported a definable group of foreign winter sojourners large enough to support its own church is a measure of success. In the 1930s, the church records show that there were only a handful of the old-style winter sojourners remaining, but the reasons were misunderstood. The 'few winter visitors in Ajaccio' in 1932 was put down to the Depression.¹⁹² Up to this time there was a small core of English colonists who continued the practices of their predecessors and could be seen as part of a greater British world, still to be found in pockets outside the formal boundaries of the British Empire. It was extraordinary that this small English winter colony survived for so long. On the eve of the Second World War, the church, that most representative symbol of the British world, had been closed for two years.¹⁹³ However, in Ajaccio, as elsewhere, the era of the winter sojourn for the mobile elites was over; most of the British left before war broke out; few returned.

¹⁸⁷ Another Wanderer.

¹⁸⁸ Paul Joanne, *Les Stations d'Hiver de la Méditerranée* (Paris: Hachette, 1902), p.244.

¹⁸⁹ 'Winter and Spring in Corsica', *Manchester Guardian*, 12 January 1903.

¹⁹⁰ See Lucchini.

¹⁹¹ Hawthorne, p.27.

¹⁹² *LCT*, 1932.

¹⁹³ *LCT*, 1932; *Illustrated London News*, 12 February 1938.

There were a variety of reasons why Corsica was never more successful in compensating for the decline of the elite sojourner and responding to new trends. Each time the industry looked like making progress it was hit by strikes, economic downturns and wars. By the time the Second World War broke out the transition to a mass tourism destination was far from complete although some important steps had taken place. The image of the island was changed to some extent, although for much of the period most people looked upon Corsica as 'a turbulent island infested with murderous brigands'.¹⁹⁴ In one way the bandits were admitted to be 'a kind of tourist attraction', but the industry view that they put off more people than they encouraged was probably correct.¹⁹⁵ With the demise of the bandits Corsica was said to have 'lost some of its glamour' and, with greater numbers of people, a visit to the island was 'no longer regarded as a great adventure'.¹⁹⁶

With a change in the image of the island, the 1920s were a watershed in the transition from sojourner to tourist. By 1925 there were some 10-12,000 visitors. Initially they were still the wealthier visitors but by the 1930s they were joined by more campers and walkers and the relationship between the islanders and the tourists began to change. Tourists came to be seen as transient 'victims' from whom profits could be made. They were no longer part of the privileged British sojourner world. They stayed for shorter periods of time and began to come more in spring and summer. If they came to Ajaccio at all it was for a short visit or to use the city as a base for exploring the scenic spots in the island. Tourists took tours enabled by motorised transport which developed on a greater scale after the First World War. The coastal resorts also became an attraction. However, there was insufficient wealth to maintain the roads and the historical legacy of building villages inland made developing seaside resorts difficult. Where there were new hotels the focus remained on the mobile elites and there was a failure to provide the type of hotels affordable by the new types of visitors. By the Second World War, the tourist summer playground was only in attenuated form.

¹⁹⁴ Hardeman, p.96.

¹⁹⁵ *LCT*, June-July 1926.

¹⁹⁶ *Manchester Guardian*, 13 August 1935.

Chapter Eleven

Conclusion

In 2015 I was sitting on a bench overlooking the Bay of Ajaccio when I was joined by an eighty-four year old Corsican. On learning that I was English, he became animated about the affinity between the Corsicans and the English over many years despite, as he said, 'A few ups and downs'. It was a strong legacy of memory. The growing empathy between the British and the Corsicans that had begun in the mid-eighteenth century was cemented by the creation of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom (ACK) (1794-96). The ACK introduced the elements that attracted the British to the island over the course of its subsequent history: exoticism, landscape, bucolicism and climate.

This conclusion summarises the findings of this thesis in respect of the sojourners, settlers and tourists who came to Corsica and had a part in the history and development of the island as it changed from a battleground between the British and the French to the cosmopolitan playground it is today. The thesis gives a sense of place to transnational history as the circumstances and the impact on the Corsican communities, interlinked by complex patterns of change, success and failure, are considered in the context of the British world. A select comparative review identifies the key differences relating to size and local inflections that impacted upon the way the different places developed.

Although the sample covered in this thesis is small, it addresses some of the criticisms of globalisation by joining the particular to the general over a long chronological time span. The British communities in Corsica were part of the global world held together by networks of technology and the movement of goods and people. Settler and sojourner communities were examples of the different kinds of British overseas settlements coincident with the growth of Empire. This thesis gives an insight into the smaller, under-researched British communities that exploited the periphery outside the formal confines of Empire. It provides a better understanding of what it meant to be British outside of the Empire and contributes to the mapping of the coexisting networks of multiple British worlds. The thesis fills a gap in the study of responses of British

communities to the impact of cultural change on the wider British world, and makes a contribution to the 'tourist/traveller dichotomy' with an historical angle on the changing nature of the visitors to the island.¹

Legacy

For a short time in Corsica there was a form of direct control, the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom (ACK), just as there was in Menorca, Gibraltar, Malta, Corfu, Cyprus, Egypt and Palestine, where the British left an imprint of their presence that has lasted longer than any occupation. The ACK was important to the future development of the island. Its impact was not marked by the architecture of official buildings as could be seen in places throughout the empire and former temporary British possessions but through a legacy of memory resulting from an intertwined history of two island peoples that formed the basis for ongoing interest in the island and the strong relationship between the British and the Corsicans that still exists.

The island had first come to the attention of the British with the adventures of Theodore, King of Corsica for seven months in 1736, an event that was spoken about throughout Europe. The Corsican cause for independence, as championed by Theodore, attracted some public support but no visitors. It was the revolt against the French occupiers of the island, led by Pascal Paoli, and the visit of James Boswell in 1765 that changed things. Boswell portrayed an idealised notion of a country struggling for independence after centuries of foreign occupation. He drew the support of the British public and a few travellers went with the view to meeting Paoli. The revolt was not supported by the British government until threatened with the diminution of power in the Mediterranean. Following the loss of Toulon in 1793 an Anglo-Corsican alliance resulted in the expulsion of the French and the creation of the ACK.

In the battle for the island Britain's most renowned naval and army heroes appeared on the stage of history at the same time and in the same place. These men and their antagonist, Napoleon, provided an early example of the association of people and place. Their achievements continue to be

¹ Buzard, p.47.

remembered, not least because it was in Corsica in 1794 that Admiral Lord Nelson lost the sight of his eye. Narratives of the military visitors and those who came shortly after the end of the Napoleonic Wars represent the island as a beautiful but dangerous place, inhabited by backward and violent people. This little known island was also revealed as being a rural idyll that had a benign winter climate and unexploited natural resources. These dominant narratives turned Corsica into a desirable destination for sojourners, settlers and tourists.

Sojourners

From the mid-nineteenth century an increasing number of visitors came to Ajaccio. Napoleon made the city Corsica's capital in 1811.² As the place of his birth, it was an attraction for travellers. William Cowen, in 1844, was the first to go to Corsica with a commission to draw Napoleonic sites and others followed.³ From the 1860s the climate acquired a reputation in some medical circles as the latest best place to send invalids suffering from a variety of pulmonary complaints. Ajaccio was among the last in a number of complementary health stations that had developed, from the late eighteenth century. These places attracted significant numbers of the mobile elites of northern Europe who spent weeks or months between October and April in their chosen venue mostly in resorts around the Mediterranean shores.

For much of the period the British were the larger of the groups who formed colonies in separate or segregated areas within the most popular towns. In these places could be found an Anglican Church, luxury hotels, villas and shops catering specially for the sojourners. In essence the Mediterranean acquired, in the winter months, a cultural identity that was significantly influenced by the British. However, popularity brought its problems and, from the mid-nineteenth century, the elites (invalid and non-invalid) began to look elsewhere, for example in the hinterlands of the French Riviera and new places such as Corsica.

Ajaccio did not have the 'Cockney' hordes that were seen by the elites to be invading their favoured Riviera resorts. The city's climate was ideal for

² Taking the place of Bastia.

³ Cowen.

certain types of pulmonary complaints and the cost of accommodation in the island was cheaper than the Riviera. Visitors were encouraged by the ban on carrying of firearms in 1852 which made the island safer for a while, and from 1868 there was a direct steamer from Nice. In addition, writers such as Edward Lear began to make the island better known, and by the late 1860s there was a small English Colony of winter sojourners who could provide an element of familiarity and welcome in an unfamiliar place. Prospective visitors might have expected to find a similar environment to existing Riviera resorts in which they could recreate a British world. However, despite improvements in transport, getting to Corsica still involved a long and uncomfortable journey and the city was ill-prepared to receive foreign visitors. At the time when the existing larger resorts provided for every need, in Corsica luxury accommodation, amusements, transport and road systems were lacking and safety was uncertain due to the political situation and the prevalence of bandits. Furthermore, compared to the French Riviera there was an added complication of two host communities: the Corsicans and the continental French.

By 1874 the English colony was large enough to warrant the transfer of the consulate from Bastia to Ajaccio. The opening of an Anglican Church in 1878 confirmed the entry of the city into the British Mediterranean world. From the 1880s increasing numbers sought out the winter sunshine of Corsica. Although no more than a thousand in its heyday before the First World War, it was a multi-ethnic community that was almost exclusively northern European. The sojourners represented less than six percent of the population of the commune of Ajaccio or less 0.3 percent of the population as a whole. Of the thousand, around a third was Anglophone and the same number German/Austrian. The continental French were always few. Numbers appear small, but if the extensive hinterland of the commune is excluded, the sojourners probably made up some twelve percent of the population of the city itself. As such, the foreigners would have stood out even if dispersed throughout the winter months.

Ajaccio matured as a winter resort from the 1880s largely due to growing numbers of pleasure-seekers. There was a continued search for winter sunshine and belief in the efficacy of the climate. The practice of the winter

sojourn survived the First World War. However, there is little data to estimate the number of visitors in the city after the war and it became increasingly difficult to differentiate between the sojourners and the shorter stay tourists. It is likely that the number of sojourners declined as evidenced by the contribution to the upkeep of the church. Ajaccio was never able to accommodate the sickest individuals and invalids were always few in number. The lack of British doctors was one factor and another was the change in medical practice, from the later nineteenth century, in the treatment and understanding of tuberculosis. Consumption lost its image as a fashionable disease, hotels began to turn away invalids and the closed sanatorium, which was not built in Ajaccio (or anywhere else in Corsica), became the focus of treatment. Nevertheless, there remained a small core of sojourners in the city until the 1930s, but the Second World War put an end to the phenomenon of a British world in the Mediterranean, 'the world's greater winterland'.⁴

There is no evidence to suggest that individuals in the English colony in Ajaccio thought of themselves explicitly as part of a global British world, but they carried with them, self-consciously, their British culture and values as adapted to the circumstances of their situation. The city was a strange environment. To counteract this, the sojourners, as they did elsewhere, attempted to live the kind of life that reminded them of home. The church, a symbol of home and British values, provided a link to the homeland as well as a venue for socialisation. There were other familiar elements that gave a sense of place and belonging. Clubs, for instance, and activities such as tennis provided a buffer against alienation. Other representations of Britishness were expressed through the associated culture of food and portable items which provided a foundation to maintain identity. However, such things were more difficult to obtain than elsewhere in the Empire or on the Riviera, and the Corsican alternatives were unpalatable. The frustrations and complaints about lack of staples of daily British living were not helped by customs duties and restrictive trade practices. The outcome was an attenuated British world adapted to local conditions, which meant the British could never be 'quite at home'.⁵

⁴ Reynolds-Ball (1908), p.23.

⁵ John G. A. Pocock, *The Discovery of Islands: Essays in British History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.23.

An exaggerated Britishness was not feasible. The underlying structural conditions; the size of the sojourner group and wealth of the Corsican community, limited the ability, even had it been desired, to create a little England and forge a British identity as strong as that in other larger British communities in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. Take the Quartier des Étrangers, as the name suggests it was not exclusive to the British. It was occupied by other foreigner sojourners and elites of the two host communities; even the clubs were shared. Differences of wealth and education, religion and language made it difficult for the British to identify who comprised the Corsican elite. This created anxiety about social relationships and etiquette. It made it harder to exhibit 'correct taste' and mix with the right class of person - part of the system of gentility that was seen 'as the common currency of an international, English-speaking middle class which shared a transnational identity as inhabitants of a Greater Britain'.⁶ The sojourner community was too small to create their own entertainment; mixing with other groups was necessary if they were to have a social life to combat the boredom of a prolonged stay abroad.

Relationships were complicated by the long-established and widely-held stereotype of the Corsicans as backward and idle. In a complex situation, the Corsicans were the main 'Other' to both the British and continental French communities. However, on an individual level, in spite of the cultural differences, the homogeneous descriptions were ignored as the British found elements in common with the continental French and Corsican elites. There was familiarity in the soirees, theatre, opera and balls. There was no reciprocal dinner party scene, but calls could be made between members of the British community and visiting naval officers and the owners of private yachts. There were sufficient similarities with the Corsicans, such as the enjoyment of hunting, shooting and fishing, for some deep friendships were to be made.

Settlers

The sojourners do not represent the full range of the British in Corsica. There were also a number of permanent settlers (although few in Ajaccio), reflecting

⁶ Young (2003), p.33.

the expansion of the economic migrant that reached its peak before the First World War, attracted by cheap and plentiful land and unexploited natural resources. The settlers fall into three categories: landowners, those involved in trade and industry and employees. Including families, (but excluding consuls, their families and staffs) there were probably no more than a hundred in total across the period of the study. Numbers were at their greatest from the 1880s to the 1920s coinciding with the apogee of the winter station, the expansion of investment abroad and the growing global economy.

A small number of individuals purchased land, mostly in and around Ajaccio. Like the sojourners, they were of the rentier class. Major Murray was typical of the colonial settler for whom cheap land ownership was their goal, 'premised on the myth (or promise) of the yeoman freehold'.⁷ He was less typical in that he was certainly of the rentier class. Murray developed the largest cédrat plantation in the island when the cédrat was Corsica's largest export. It was an unpredictable crop but, using native cultivation methods and the expertise he had from his own profession, Murray was successful and made a significant contribution to the trading of this fruit. His enterprise benefitted from favourable climatic conditions and markets for the cédrat and his estate was flourishing at the time of his death in 1894.

Few followed Murray's example. There were other landowners on the island but the records do not indicate that they were involved in any large scale agriculture or trade. Thus, the British made little impact in this sector of the economy. By the end of the period of the study it seemed that there had been little change from the eighteenth century when Collingwood observed that 'they plough with a crooked billet and pound their corn in a mortar'.⁸ Failures were regarded as the 'visitation of God', and agriculture was said to be 'several centuries behind farming in England'.⁹ Even by 1912 there was little improvement with 'the demand for agricultural implements likely to remain a very modest one for a long time to come'.¹⁰ In some places money was so rare

⁷ Magee and Thompson, p.43.

⁸ Adams (2005), p.138. Collingwood's letter to Edward Blackett, March 1796.

⁹ Lynch, p.466.

¹⁰ PP 1909 [Cd. 4446-60] No. 4236 *Annual Series*.

that a system of barter existed until the eve of the Second World War.¹¹

Most settlers were clustered around Bastia and were involved, in one way or another in trade, industry and commerce. The industrial revolution that affected much of Europe had left Corsica little touched and the island was in need of modernisation and capital investment. Changes in banking and company law that stimulated trade and encouraged British settlers across the world to engage in economic activity, contributed to drawing Corsica into the global world. The settlers in Bastia had a disproportionate, if always constrained, influence on development of the city.

The British made significant investments (perhaps as high as seventy-five percent of the total), or took managerial or professional roles, in many of the island's mines. Their speculations were largely unsuccessful. Mining in Corsica was, like most other places abroad, a 'catalogue of unfulfilled dreams'.¹² Success or failure of industrial enterprises can be partly attributed to market forces but it was the promise of market forces to make significant profits that drew entrepreneurs there. Failure was no surprise. Corsica, like many areas on the periphery, as the historiography of such settlements has shown, was difficult to develop. There were problems of transport and culture, although there was no attempt to displace indigenous peoples or participate in any form of political activity or governance. Owners and managers expected workers to be industrious, but foreign managers did not understand the culture or the language of the workers and conflict ensued.

It is doubtful whether mining operations contributed significantly or sustainably to the Corsican economy. The mines were mostly loss making, and the stop/start and closure of operations as a result of lack of capital, difficult geology and fluctuating prices of ore, made for instability. Many companies were owned by foreigners. They brought in significant sums of capital to purchase exploration rights and then work the ores. However, much of this went in the purchase of foreign equipment or wages for foreign workers. When active, the mines did create some local employment (male and female), albeit

¹¹ Chiva, p.99.

¹² Adelman (1994) p.264.

limited. It was, though, rural work at a time when there was a general move to the towns and when paid work for women must have been rare. For Arthur Southwell, his mining investments were catastrophic.¹³ Southwell's continued investment in mining was surprising. He had a good knowledge of the mining industry in Corsica and should have been aware of the local conditions that made extraction difficult: distance, geology, malaria and labour. Investment in the mines resulted in little profit and no Corsican mine was active on the eve of the First World War.

Southwell should not be remembered only for his failed mining speculations. His commercial activities were important to Bastia. His early interest in the cédrat trade was followed by involvement in gallic acid and Orezza water. His entrepreneurial spirit helped grow the operations of the port and expand the city. The direct maritime links that Southwell established between Bastia and England, initially to facilitate the family firm's contract for cédrat, made it cheaper and easier for the Corsicans to export their produce. This kindled the growth of the industry. Prior to Southwell's arrival, there were only a small number of artisan producers of candied cédrat in the main towns; most of the fruit was exported in brine to Italy. Candying factories were established in Bastia, but they were on a limited scale and for a limited period as market forces and increased competition forced closures.

Direct shipping links with Europe expanded from 1885 when Southwell established a maritime agency. Ease of export enabled the establishment and/or expansion of industrial enterprises, particularly related to gallic acid but also ironworks, copper foundries, factories of tannin, sawmills, briarwood and distilleries. Improved transport links also encouraged investment in Orezza water, mines of iron, silver-lead, copper, antimony, arsenic and asbestos. Growth resulted in significant increases in volume and tonnage of shipping. This provided, along with lobbying by Southwell and others, a stimulus for the development and modernisation of Bastia's port. Trades allied to shipping grew up around the port area and required more skilled workers. The harbour was deepened, quays were extended and warehouses built, although never as fast

¹³ Ibid.

or as far as Southwell wanted and works were incomplete when he died in 1910. Lack of progress hampered Southwell's ambitions and the impact of the maritime agency and the effects of industrialisation only reached its height in the decades after his death. However, without British involvement it is reasonable to assume that Corsica would have been even further behind in industrial modernisation.

Finally, there was a significant but little researched class of employees. A number were employed in the British-run gas company and in Southwell's enterprises and others had professional roles in the mines. There were also servants of British families. Most employees returned home after a number of years, presumably as they became older or when the island was threatened with war, since, with the rare exception, they are not buried in the island.

The presence of a number of industrial ventures challenges the perception of the primarily agricultural focus of the island. There were a few examples of successful Corsican businesses, but many enterprises were foreign-owned, and much of the profit went abroad in purchases of equipment and wages. However, many of the fragile industries did not survive the difficulties of supply, market forces and the impact of the First World War and the financial crises of the 1920s and 30s. As Corsica was stumbling towards modernisation of its trade the productions associated with the foreigner were the first to be in difficulty.

Tourists

There was a marked transition from the winter sojourner phenomenon towards more mass tourism. Following the First World War the expansion of leisure tourism, particularly touring, replaced sojourning as the dominant sphere of British interest and loosened the ties to a sedentary Mediterranean world. From the 1920s there was a step change in the numbers but it was an evolution rather than a revolution. What was revealed was a continuum from the Grand 'Tourist', through health tourism, the search for winter sunshine and the pleasure of exploring the unknown, to the modern desire for a summer playground.

The term 'tourist' is contested in the historiography but from the late nineteenth century there were increasing numbers of visitors to Corsica who were neither sojourners nor settlers. There was a gradual change from the seasonal sedentary, long-stay elite individual based in Ajaccio to the short stay peripatetic tourer (tourist). The change in the nature of the visitor, the timescale and season, began when the winter station was at its apogee (1880-1914). With a vogue for more active tourism, visitors came from the professional classes to pursue their niche leisure interests. They were traveller-discoverers; natural scientists, mountaineers, writers and artists who were attracted to the interior by the prospect of discovering a new species, achieving a First Ascent, selling their works, or meeting a bandit.

The traveller-discoverers made a significant contribution to the development of facilities for tourism in the interior. Authors and artists were attracted by a beautiful, and despite evidence to the contrary, what they believed to be an unknown destination. Their works helped make the island better known. Two areas, in particular, benefited. The Niolo, the most remote and mountainous part of Corsica, developed around the village of Calacuccia becoming a centre for climbers, general interest tourists, walkers and cyclists. Vizzavona, an area of mountain, forest and river, was nearer to Ajaccio. With its cool summer location, it was a centre for sojourners from the city and elite Corsicans as well as the traveller-discoverers. Facilities grew up around the two hamlets, one situated on the main road and the other by the railway and river.

From the early twentieth century, tourers increasingly arrived in spring and then summer and spent less time in the island. The watershed of change came in the 1920s when the number of visitors grew significantly to some 10-12,000 thus expanding the demographic base of visitor beyond the *Queens'* top 10,000. Even so, as numbers increased beyond the old mobile elites, it was still limited by those who could afford to travel the distance to Corsica and manage the higher costs of the island. Nevertheless, it was sufficient to mark a transition from the winter sojourner and traveller-discoverers to the visitor who was more akin to the modern short stay tourist and whose purpose was purely pleasure. By the 1930s, the tourist predominated. Greater numbers broke the bond between the British and the Corsicans to some extent. The emotional links that

some of the winter sojourners felt for the island disappeared and the empathetic ties between the Corsicans and the British diminished for a number of years.

There were two key factors and that drove the transition from a sojourner-based economy to the tourist – improvements in transport and a change in image of the island. Getting to, from and around the island became more comfortable and quicker. This encouraged more cruise ships carrying shorter stay visitors for whom Ajaccio was just one stop on a tour of the Mediterranean. Tourists explored the island by the newly introduced motorised transport either as individuals, small groups or on organised tours. The expansion of tourism was driven by a change in the image of the island. Up to 1918, artists' paintings and tourism literature featured mainly the sublimity of Corsica's mountains and forests. The sea was shown principally as an adjunct to the old Genoese coastal towns, and the beach was ignored. From the 1920s the publicity included more colourful posters and postcards which included domestic scenes, the beaches of the newly developing northern resorts and Corsica's dramatic coastal scenery. At the same time the attitude towards the bandits began to shift. This was important because those involved in the tourism industry believed, with some justification, that fear of the bandit was a deterrent for some tourists. The myth of the island as home to violence and the vendetta had been intractable. It wasn't until the 1920s when the attraction of the bandits diminished and the 1930s when they were eliminated and the island became safer, that significantly more visitors came.

The island's image as a rural idyll began to be promoted more strongly alongside the early twentieth century desire for rural nostalgia, although the bucolicism of the island was an image that attracted visitors across the period of the study and beyond. In 1952 it could still be said that 'The island has kept much of its old-world charm, and no part of Corsica has been developed into a bogus Riviera'.¹⁴ This was an attraction for the tourist, but also created a paradox. Sojourners and tourists wished to escape modernism and the problems associated with the overcrowded Riviera but expected to find the standards of comfort and hygiene that had been made possible by

¹⁴ Alan Houghton Brodrick, ed., *The People's France* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1952), p.v.

industrialisation and urbanisation. Dissatisfactions increased as higher standards of living at home increased expectations. The trappings of a civilised society: plumbing, electricity and quality furniture were in short supply outside the large hotels. This manifested itself in complaints about almost every aspect of life in the island.

The main barriers to solving the issues were the lack of interest in the tourism industry and, hence, capital investment from governments and the structure of the industry itself. It was not obvious that tourism was of benefit to the economy. The hotels provided a number of jobs but the seasonal nature of the work also created instability and with the migratory nature of the workers, wages were kept low.¹⁵ Tourists brought in money but much did not stay in the island. The hotels and later enterprises such as cars, were mostly owned and run by foreigners, and money flowed out in food and drink, imported to please the tastes of the tourists and the demand for luxury fittings. Unsurprisingly, given past experience, this inflamed internal cultural conflict in the island as land became increasingly occupied by outsiders. The discord created was a powerful influence on holding back the development of settlement.¹⁶

With little money and a fragmented tourism industry that lacked influence, the Corsicans could not respond quickly enough to the growing demands of foreigners, particularly from the 1920s, not only for quality facilities and less expensive accommodation comparable to similar places elsewhere on the Mediterranean or Atlantic shores, but also for the new fashion for sea-bathing. The tourism industry had no agreed plan for the future. It failed to anticipate trends and continued to focus on the past – the winter season and the mobile elites. The new hotels built in the 1920s and 30s even at the coastal resorts of Calvi and Ile Rousse were of luxury construction developed with the winter visitor in mind. These places with their long sandy beaches were ideally suited to the new fashion for summer sea bathing. However, only at Ile Rousse

¹⁵ d'Istria, p.110.

¹⁶ In 1982, for example, there were more than 700 bombings as internal terrorism grew indistinguishable from the more traditional forms of clan violence and the vendetta: Alice Conklin, Sarah L. Fishman and Robert Zaretsky, *France and its Empire since 1870* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 339. Internal conflict caused the death of dozens of people by the end of the twentieth century and is still continuing, Gabriel-Xavier and Vannina Culioli, eds, *La Corse et La Vendetta*, Anthologie, 1 (Ajaccio: DCL, 2001), p.9.

was the hotel near the beach. New hotels were also built at other beauty spots, stopping places on the tours, but they were still geared towards the elite when what was needed were more middle range, comfortable hotels for the greater numbers of less wealthy visitors. However, just as the numbers began to increase, the industry was hit by industrial unrest in the transport industry, the First World War, and the various agrarian and economic crises of the 1920s and 1930s. With hindsight it is easier to criticise. At the time the attraction of winter remained paramount, what was different was its appeal beyond the mobile elites. A spring and summer tourism season had barely begun by the eve of the Second World War.

A Comparative View

This thesis argues that there were sufficient parallels with the British communities in Corsica for them to be considered as part of the developing historiography around the group of mini-Britains that were established outside the formal confines of empire. Nonetheless, it is the differences that are more significant particularly in considering change. Size was an obvious factor that impacted upon the ability to grow and respond to cultural change. However, even more pertinent were the local cultural inflections and individual ambitions that directly and indirectly had an influence on development and that can be teased out and affirmed through comparisons.

There were commonalities that could be found within the British colonial world and other communities for example, Asia, Africa and Latin America. Motivations for migration: health, leisure, 'academic', profit or employment were shared as were encounters with linguistically and culturally different societies. The evidence suggests that sojourners who went to the more distant resorts were of the rentier classes (fewer aristocrats) and were joined by the professionals and tourists who were from the better off elements of society. The nearer Riviera initially had a greater number of aristocrats before being also frequented by the 'Cockney' hordes.

Temporary and permanent expatriates attempted to sustain a British identity and way of life, and the cycle of growth and change were analogous.

Around the Mediterranean winter health stations reached their peak between 1880 and 1914 coincident with the peak of the British Empire, but they were not dependent upon being part of that Empire. Settler activity was concurrent. Both sojourners and settlers suffered from the impact of the First World War, only to briefly regain momentum until the financial crises of the 1920s and 30s put an end to both the winter migration phenomenon and British involvement in the mostly fragile industrial and commercial enterprises. Tourists (short term visitors and tourers) grew alongside the other two communities until becoming dominant between the wars. There was a trend towards shorter spring and summer holidays but the strength of winter tourism remained strong until the 1930s.

Some Corsican historians consider that Ajaccio as a winter health station was a 'history of failure'.¹⁷ And, with a few notable exceptions, the ventures of the British settlers in Corsica, particularly in mining, also lacked success. Ajaccio never reached the size or wealth of rival places on the Riviera or Egypt, for example, but 'failure' is a harsh judgement. There were deficiencies. What was required from a successful winter station (whether for permanent or semi-permanent residents and wherever it was located) was access to British medical care, things to do, quality accommodation and facilities, ease of access and an element of exoticism. These elements drew a nucleus of Britons who encouraged the development of the health stations, and with the critical mass to form separate living areas, established their own church and facilities. Corsica never had the critical mass of other places that enabled it to develop on the same scale. In addition, historical and geographical factors militated against the realisation of ambitions. Nevertheless, there was sufficient for the island to be accorded a place in the British Mediterranean world and a toehold in the growing global economy.

Size was a key element in determining how successful a place might be, particularly for sojourner societies. Critical mass was needed to support comfortable segregated living and a thriving social environment that most elite visitors sought. Size had an impact on growth, the availability of amenities and

¹⁷ Binet, p.152.

generation of income and capital to make the kinds of improvements to hygiene and comfort that continued to be in demand. Size was also a factor in how well communities integrated (both foreign-foreign and foreign-host) and understood one another. At its peak Corsica enjoyed little more than a thousand winter visitors to Ajaccio across the season. Compare this to Nice with around 143,000 in 1911, Algiers with 12,500 in the season 1909-10 and Alexandria which had a foreign population of some 100,000 in the early twentieth century.¹⁸

Notwithstanding the difficulties of comparison due to census gaps and inaccuracies and figures that included workers as well as those of independence means, the difference is stark.

However, it was not just a question of size of the sojourner community. Critical mass was achieved through a mix of communities in one place. In Corsica the total number of sojourners and settlers were spread between the administration capital Ajaccio (sojourners) and the commercial centre, Bastia (settlers). The cities were separated by a long and arduous journey, at least until the opening of the railway towards the end of the nineteenth century. The larger numbers were in Ajaccio but these were mostly seasonal visitors with few permanent residents. The population of Ajaccio was always smaller than that of Bastia and, lacking the vibrancy of a major port and surrounding industry, the city was never able to build a firm foundation to develop and meet the growing demands of its visitors. By contrast, Algiers, another small French capital city but with a large port, had a significant core of permanent British residents. In the winter of 1843-4 there were 343 (excluding British Maltese subjects) and growing numbers of temporary sojourners.¹⁹ Algiers was the country's main port and supported a number of British workers and was the base for the prospectors who invested in the interior; in addition there were a number of British missionaries.²⁰ It was a similar situation in Cairo which from 1882 was the centre of British administration and had a growing number of British subjects many of whom were connected to officialdom or the military. What Algiers and Cairo illustrated was the importance of an all year round strong core in one

¹⁸ Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962; Alfred Gubb, *Winter in Algiers* (London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1912), p.25; David Dunn, 'Imagining Alexandria: Sightseeing in a City of the Mind', *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, 4, 2 (2006), 95-115 (p.100).

¹⁹ Redouane, pp.18-22.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.23-28.

place that enabled all the components needed to maintain the way of life the British expected abroad.

It has never been determined or even suggested how large such a critical mass might be. There were certain indications that the figure might have been reached when a resort could support an Anglican church and a number of luxury hotels. In 1871 the English church of the Holy Trinity opened in Algiers, several years before the church of the same name in Ajaccio.²¹ Algiers also had a Scottish Presbyterian church, which like the Holy Trinity in Ajaccio, was funded by a donation from an individual.²² Both churches were built to accommodate 200 people. The Presbyterian church normally received some fifty in number, but the Anglicans were more numerous and Holy Trinity regularly had congregations of 120-80²³ Such numbers are indicative of a strong British presence which was emphasised by the designation of a portion of the Mustapha-Supérieur cemetery for burial of Christians.²⁴ There were never enough British deaths in Ajaccio to require even a small place in a cemetery. The Holy Trinity church in Ajaccio had been built to house 200 people. However, its congregation rarely numbered more than twenty which suggests that it was more a sign of the ambition of its founder and the unfulfilled promise of the resort.

In addition to a church, the provision of luxury hotels and villas was a sign of a thriving location. In Corsica there were entrepreneurs like Miss Campbell, Bernard Bradshaw, Major Murray and Arthur Southwell who were prepared to invest in Corsica, but the Corsican attitude to their land was a significant constraint that was not such an issue elsewhere. By 1870 Ajaccio had the Hotel Germania at a time when Algiers had an 'absence of adequate hotel accommodation'.²⁵ Yet Ajaccio had to wait until 1896 for its luxury Grand Hotel; by this time in Algiers, the number of 'first-class hotels constructed on European models left little to be desired'.²⁶ There was numerous and varied

²¹ Perkins, p.223.

²² Ibid., Sir Peter Coats.

²³ Redouane, p.24.

²⁴ Perkins, p.223.

²⁵ Gubb, p.33.

²⁶ Perkins, p.220; Gubb, p.33.

accommodation in Nice by this date and vast hotels at Alexandria and Cairo.²⁷ Hotels were not built speculatively. It was the surge of travellers that encouraged entrepreneurs such as Samuel Shephard founder of Shephard's hotel in Cairo as early as 1860.²⁸

The other cultural issue that was particularly pertinent to the growth of the Corsican economy was the well-documented attitude to work. Corsicans preferred not to undertake manual labour for someone else which meant that workers had to come from outside the country, mostly from Italy. Shortage of labour was not just a Corsican phenomenon; it was the overwhelming constraint, for example on frontier development in Argentina and Canada.²⁹ Agriculture required seasonal workers often at a time when the island was at its most unhealthy. The scourge of malaria remained a deterrent both to settlers involved in enterprise and summer visitors and was a significant factor constraining the development of popular tourist resorts. Tourism in the island developed more strongly in the interior and along the northern coasts. This meant that the numbers of visitors were dispersed around the island, thus there was no dynamic central core and getting around the island remained a challenge.

The impact that transport could have on a resort is clearly seen in Egypt. Cairo, Alexandria and Algiers all benefitted from the construction and opening of the Suez Canal in the 1860s, and more often than not it was local inflections that influenced the success or otherwise of the fluctuating fortunes of favoured British resorts. History and geography were significant factors, and all resorts were restricted to some extent by the nuances of their environments. The cultural legacy of Corsica's history and the restrictions of its geography limited the island's ability to respond to change. Furthermore, the island did not make the most of its natural draws – Napoleon and the landscape, and there was little government interest or support by way of capital to develop the island. Neither was there the backing of the consuls for entrepreneurs.

²⁷ Boyer (2009), p.240.

²⁸ Denby, p.134.

²⁹ Adelman (1994), p.184.

An obvious factor, but one worth exploring as its impact was considerable, was the length of time a resort had been established. Older resorts had sorted out some of their early difficulties and had established a reputation. The British were involved in Corsica through the ACK at the end of the eighteenth century, but by the time Ajaccio was establishing itself as a winter health station in the mid-1860s, there was already formidable competition around the Mediterranean and southern European Atlantic shores. In addition, new winter resorts in the Alps were becoming popular. Corsica's main rival, the Riviera, had been growing since the end of the eighteenth century. The British had begun to visit Egypt in the 1790s when it was still part of the Ottoman Empire for health, as explorers and archaeologists.³⁰ In the 1840s a handful of Britons wintered in Algiers, and by the 1860s the foreign quarter, Mustapha Supérieur, was already popular with British and American families, with a sizeable British community of some 1,500.³¹ From 1843 Lloyds had an agent in Algiers and there was a British chaplain.³²

Historical success was often a product of geography. The British had a strategic interest in Corsica during the ACK on account of its position in the Mediterranean, but the need for the island diminished after the loss of the kingdom in 1796 and better transport links drew other places closer together. Egypt had benefitted from the establishment in 1840 of the overland route to India which was the catalyst for the gradual integration of the country into the global economy and which resulted in a large influx of foreigners into Cairo.³³ The growth of Alexandria and Algiers can be partly attributed to their proximity to the Suez Canal. The population of Alexandria increased from 8,000 in 1798 to c.100,000 by 1850 and 232,626 by 1882.³⁴ By contrast that of Bastia was 11,366 in 1800, 15,985 in 1851 and only 20,100 in 1881.³⁵

Transport was a key element. By the mid-1870s there were eleven regularly scheduled weekly crossings from Marseilles to Algiers and the number

³⁰ Lanver, p.9.

³¹ Ross (1991), p.7.

³² Redouane, p.18.

³³ Lanver, p.9.

³⁴ Reimer, p.531.

³⁵ Ldh/EHESS/Cassini until 1962.

had doubled by the turn of the century.³⁶ This was a significant advantage compared to Ajaccio which in 1868 had only just instigated a weekly steamer from Nice. The Riviera profited from better rail and steam links that brought the Mediterranean coast within the reach of an increasing number of travellers. From 1887 the area known as the Côte d'Azur was covered with a preponderance of villas and gardens especially built for the visitors. Corsica was another leg on the journey and most people had to pass through the Riviera to get there.

Growth and development, though, were not just a matter of strategic position, links and networks. Corsica suffered geologically from being a 'mountain in the sea'. When the elites wanted to avoid the 'Cockney' hordes in the larger Riviera towns, there was room on the hinterlands for new luxury hotels and more visitors. Then, when the movement towards summer sun took off, there were undeveloped fishing villages that became chic resorts. To escape both malaria and repeated hostile incursions, Corsican villages were mostly built in the hills with no money to create new resorts on the eastern coast (where the island's best beaches were located) which, in any case, was afflicted with malaria in the summer months. Only Calvi and Ile Rousse in the north came close to being an imitation of the continental French seaside resort.

The geography of the island also meant that there were few flat areas for large scale agriculture. Where there was suitable land (eastern coast) it was unworkable in summer due to malaria. When there was success, as in Murray's plantation, it was in a product (the cédrat) that was a niche crop. Contrast this to Canada and Argentina, the interiors of which were not dissimilar to Corsica, poor and backward until around the 1870s, but there was a demand for their staple products.³⁷ Egypt benefited when the American Civil War restricted the supply of cotton.³⁸ It was this product that integrated Egypt into the European economy.³⁹ Before 1882 Britain had become Egypt's main trading partner.⁴⁰ Corsica's exports of cédrat and gallic acid were tiny in comparison and growth

³⁶ Perkins, pp.219-20.

³⁷ Adelman (1994), p.2.

³⁸ Lanoie, p.153.

³⁹ Lanver, p.9.

⁴⁰ Hunter, p.46.

was held back by restrictive customs laws.

Products were not only exportable items but attractions that, as a result of history or geography, drew visitors to a country and were even more important to tourists than to sojourners. The winter resorts provided a busy seasonal social calendar that included balls, concerts and theatrical performances. However, pleasure seekers increasingly sought historic and cultural monuments. The Biblical Holy Land drew many to Palestine. The Nile and Egyptian pyramids drew thousands of visitors to Cairo.⁴¹ In the 1920s and 30s there were a plethora of travelogues driven by a burst in mass tourism with a desire to see new Egyptian archaeological discoveries that featured prominently in the press. By contrast, newspaper articles on Corsica focussed on the war against the bandits. Bandits had been, to some extent, a tourist attraction, as had Napoleon, but interest in both diminished in the 1920s. Algiers lacked a strong natural draw but a benefit of the city was its proximity to the hot mineral springs. The largest spa, Hammam R'hira had the luxury Hotel des Bains capable of accommodating 400.⁴² The Corsican spas were in poor condition, were difficult to access and had no suitable accommodation.

The successes in Canada, Argentina, Egypt and Algeria were partly enabled by their governments. The interiors of Canada and Argentina were unattractive to foreigners until the 1870s when helped by British loan-capital, foreign labour and encouraging policies changed 'empty grasslands into a burgeoning world economy'.⁴³ In Egypt, the heavy British investment in the early 1870s was facilitated through the policies and wishes of the ruler, Muhammad Ali.⁴⁴ Before 1882, the Khedive supported the expansion of Alexandria.⁴⁵ In Cairo, Khedive Ismail established Mena House within sight of the Great Pyramid of Cheops, and in 1865 built the Gezira Palace hotel.⁴⁶ After 1882 support for development in Egypt came directly from the British government. Algeria benefited from the French government's efforts to promote

⁴¹ Dunn.

⁴² Perkins, p.217.

⁴³ Adelman (1994), p.2.

⁴⁴ Lanoie, p.153.

⁴⁵ Reimer, p.537.

⁴⁶ Denby, p.129.

colonisation.⁴⁷ The Corsican government took little part in the promotion and development of the island for any of the three types of communities. The French government was blamed for lack of action on malaria in the island as well as failing to provide the investment, or any other kind of support needed to improve the economy. So much so that between 1900 and 1956 Corsica lost forty percent of its population, largely through emigration.⁴⁸ During this time the population of Sicily increased by thirty percent, Cyprus by 125 percent, Crete by fifty-two percent and Malta by seventy-two percent.⁴⁹

In effecting change, committed individuals were more relevant than size of community. Sojourners like Miss Campbell in Ajaccio, Reverend Rogers in Algiers and others in the French Riviera resorts had an impact on the development of the city out of proportion to their numbers. British pioneers took the lead in driving improvement in Ajaccio, but they needed the cooperation of the host societies and their compatriots, as well as determination, capital and perseverance to achieve their aims in the face of foreign legal difficulties. It took Miss Campbell several years to obtain legal title to the land on which she built the church. In Algiers, where Reverend Rogers tried to establish a church for the British, there were also complaints about difficulty in obtaining title to properties.⁵⁰ Rogers was not successful until the arrival of Colonel Robert Lambert Playfair, consul from 1867-1896. Playfair collected money from the British residents and obtained land with the result that the Holy Trinity was inaugurated in 1871.⁵¹ Playfair was an ex-Indian army officer. He was energetic, pious and conscientious about his duties, could speak Arabic and was learned. He brought a stability and enthusiasm to the British community which enabled him to be the focus around which both development and a social life could take place.⁵²

The evidence of this thesis suggests that the consuls could make a significant difference or severely impede progress. Playfair was critical to the development of Algiers. He played a central role in the community, and travelogues of the period contain many favourable references to him. Corsica was less fortunate in its consuls. During the period of Playfair's tenure in

⁴⁷ Perkins, p.220.

⁴⁸ d'Istria, p.109.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Redouane, pp.19-20.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.19.

⁵² Ibid.

Algiers, there were six consuls in Corsica; two left under a cloud and two died in office. Foreign office documents relating to the six men contain numerous requests for moves, additional leave and complaints about conditions in Corsica. The consuls were often inefficient and incapable of managing their own affairs or that of the consulate. It was particularly unfortunate that at the time when Ajaccio was trying to become established as a health station with the encouragement of Miss Campbell, that consul Smallwood (at that time based in Bastia and in post between 1864 and 1872) took against her and what she was trying to achieve. He made a number of complaints to the Foreign Office about her conduct all of which were dismissed. In 1896 Drummond, consul from 1891-1897, in an interview to a British magazine expressed hostile opinions against Ajaccio as a winter resort and said that the Corsicans had elevated blackmail to an exact science, that they were alcoholics and did not like to work.⁵³ His actions resulted in demonstrations against him from both the Corsican and British communities in the city.⁵⁴ The Corsican attitude against Drummond was exceptional. Relationships between the British and Corsicans across the period of the study were mostly good.

The empathy between the British and the Corsicans, two island peoples, dated back to the eighteenth century. The phrase 'Our English Colony' has a sense of pride and possessiveness that demonstrated the continuing good relationships between the two people and indicated a sufficiently common identity to differentiate the British and the Corsicans from the others.⁵⁵ In addition the two peoples, for much of the period, shared a common enemy - the continental French. This increased the empathy for the islanders, although it did not deter travellers from visiting the island or the French Riviera, other than in periods of intense conflict. There is evidence that suggests that settlers enjoyed a less easy relationship. They were more likely to come into conflict with the Corsican attachment to their land and their superior attitude created a clash of cultures, sometimes with fatal consequences. Comparatives demonstrate conflicts arising from resistance to foreigners and land acquisition driven by anti-colonialist sentiments and rising nationalism. It is, though, difficult to establish whether discord was with any particular element of the foreign

⁵³ *The Times*, 20 January 1897; AA: 4M266 Police Report 19 January 1897.

⁵⁴ TNA: FO 27/3346, Consul Drummond to FO, 20 January 1897.

⁵⁵ *Journal de la Corse*, 1 May 1866.

communities. Corsica weathered the disturbances of the nascent nationalism that was directed only towards the continental French.

Growing anti-colonial disturbances and the revolution of 1919 in Algeria brought the British winter sojourner era to an end. In Egypt the British had grown increasingly separate and aloof which proved explosive after 1882.⁵⁶ The physical separation of peoples exemplified by the old towns and new quarters reflected the problems in societies themselves and of colonial rule. In both Algiers and the Egyptian cities segregation drove a wedge between communities and exacerbated cultural differences to such a degree that the lack of common ground hampered intimacy. Although separation was desirable to the British, it was not conducive to building relationships that survived tensions. In Corsica there was a benefit from not having a critical mass. The lack of segregation meant that the British had more direct contact with the culture of the host communities and other nations that they might have had elsewhere. The foreign community in Ajaccio gathered in the Quartier des Étrangers, but it was always a shared space with the Corsicans and continental French. And, because of the tenacious hold on their land by the Corsicans, the area never developed in same way as the foreign quarter at Mustapha-Supérieur, in Algiers which was the centre of the British winter community from 1860 and where the British imposed their way of life.⁵⁷ Within Mustapha-Supérieur, the Anglo-American community led a more and more reclusive existence; the hotels were filled with English to the exclusion of other nationalities so much so that it was said 'Algiers is being gradually taken possession of by the English'.⁵⁸ Social activities took place within a narrow circle and the British scarcely communicated with the French, even less so the Algerians.⁵⁹

Lack of size brought another benefit. Corsica avoided the problems that came with growth and industrialisation. By the end of the nineteenth century Algiers, Alexandria, Cairo and some of the larger Riviera towns were considerably urbanised.⁶⁰ Miss Campbell wanted Ajaccio to be more like the

⁵⁶ Lanver, p.51.

⁵⁷ Gubb, p.26; Perkins, p.220.

⁵⁸ Seguin, p.14.

⁵⁹ Redouane, p.23.

⁶⁰ Ross (1991), p.10.

Riviera. Had she achieved her aim, then the city may have suffered from similar problems that that popularity brought: over development, overcrowding, bad drainage and too many British. Rapid growth provided accommodation, churches, restaurants and shops etc. that were the foundations upon which tourism was constructed. However, development destroyed the very things that attracted individuals in the first place. In Algiers when the old fortifications were knocked down in 1900 to be replaced by new houses, the city became too modern for the thirst for exoticism.⁶¹ Lack of critical mass in Corsica avoided this until well into the second half of the twentieth century. Ajaccio retained its rurality and aspect of a small provincial town. The exoticism of the island was long lasting; only in 1935 was it said that a 'visit to the island is no longer regarded as a great adventure'.⁶² The downside, of course, was the continued poor economy and lack of investment.

On the eve of the Second World War, the transition to a summer playground in Corsica was far from complete. The island was only stuttering towards an economic and cultural model for tourism that took advantage of the craze for summer sun. In the view of a seasoned traveller the island's hotel service was 'hopelessly inadequate, the boats were a joke - not one tenth of the people who wish to bring their cars over to Corsica ever succeed in doing so. There is no sense in spending money attracting visitors to the island and then turning them away'.⁶³ In 1940 the British Consul in Ajaccio left the island and neither the church nor the consulate re-opened after the liberation of Corsica in 1943.⁶⁴ However, economically or socially there was little change immediately after the war. Ajaccio was 'one of those southern resorts where retired army men and faintly eccentric single ladies congregated to spend comfortable annuities'.⁶⁵ In 1947 the island was 'still more or less sunk in a post-malarial torpor'.⁶⁶

⁶¹ Redouane, p.23.

⁶² *Manchester Guardian*, 13 August 1935.

⁶³ Bernard Newman, *Savoy, Corsica, Tunis* (London: Jenkins, 1940), p.113.

⁶⁴ The consulate at Bastia closed in April 1938: TNA: FO 369/2488 'Inspection of vice-Consulate at Bastia', 18 March 1938. Ajaccio was closed in 1940: FO 369/2793 File note by Consul Garnett of Algiers, August 1943.

⁶⁵ Carrington (1984), p.3.

⁶⁶ Alan Ross, *Time Was Away* (London: Collins, 1989).

After the war, malaria was conquered with DDT, but it wasn't until the first package tours came by air in the 1960s that anything like mass tourism began and more tourism complexes were built on the northern and eastern beaches. This area is still the most popular, and today the island absorbs more than two and a half million visitors in the summer months.⁶⁷ Representations of Corsica in the tourist brochures show a holiday paradise, but the island is still a paradox. News items focus on assassinations, destruction of property owned by foreigners and the contested politics of the island. There are also rubbish dumps and the outskirts of the two main cities are a mass of light industrial development, but there are still places that 'manifest its pristine quality of exoticism'.⁶⁸ It is possible to find seventy-eight of Edward Lear's eighty drawings of the island much as he would have seen them in 1868. Corsica retains a strong autonomous culture and her 'soul of indestructible granite remains intact'.⁶⁹ Corsican nationalists continue to see the French as an occupying power, although in July 2003 an autonomy referendum defeated, by a small margin, the proposal to abolish the two *départements* on the island leaving only the Corsican Assembly which would have been granted additional functions including some limited powers on raising and spending taxes. Pascal Paoli's name still ignites ferocious passion and the island has a reputation for being somewhat dangerous with some highly publicised violent actions and a multitude of defaced signs proclaiming one nationalist group or another or ordering the *pinzutu* to go home.⁷⁰ The beauty of the landscape is not a myth and those who love Corsica recognise that she is at the same time an island and a mountain; 'she is difficult to live with, she is impossible to live without'.⁷¹

Future Work

An in depth analysis of the comparator places has not been practical in the broad time span of this thesis, thus it is only the foundation for a more systematic examination of sojourners and settlers outside the formal and informal empire in the period. A greater focus on a comparative framework

⁶⁷ Binet, p.203.

⁶⁸ Carrington (1984), p.170.

⁶⁹ Paul Theroux, *The Pillars of Hercules* (London: Penguin, 1995), p.149.

⁷⁰ *Pinzutu* is the Corsican word for the non-Corsican French.

⁷¹ d'Istria, p. 309.

could consider, more closely, developing trends and differences, such as the treatment of settlers and sojourners. There is scope to improve knowledge of who settled in the mini-Britains outside the formal empire and the structure of settler communities. Both these aspects have been overshadowed in the colonial focus of the historiography.

Cultural variations and their impact on resort development remain to be explored in more depth. The thesis only touches on the question of host communities and briefly on the other nationalities who shared the space in Corsica and who were also travelling around Europe and taking their own place in the Mediterranean world. There is scope to develop a better understanding of these communities and there are other groups, too, who would benefit from more in depth research. An intriguing and overlooked factor is the influence of the consuls, who have been seen as the 'Cinderella Service'.⁷²

There is also potential for a greater understanding of the impact abroad of the medical and religious professions, the natural scientists and mountaineers. In addition, the dynamics of the British church overseas (in a non-missionary function) merits further study as does, more generally, the development of culture, tourism and sport outside Britain. The impact of war (First and Second) on the sea and shore, and the individuals who remained in the Mediterranean deserve their own study. The cultural attraction of icons such as Napoleon and the bandits in this study have shown the importance of media and visual representation in creating an image of place and people. There is the possibility to develop this kind of study through the use of intercultural images: stage performances, film, photography, fiction, postcards and posters, alongside the more conventional historical archives. All these topics may be compared on a wider scale.

There are also Corsican-related aspects that have been revealed through this research that would merit further investigation. Napoleon attracted numbers of visitors, but the Corsican part of his life and his impact on the island has been little discussed. The Corsican consuls are worthy of study in their own

⁷² D.C.M. Platt, *The Cinderella Service* (London: Longman, 1971).

right as is the work of the Scottish Women's Hospital and the British-led Serbian Relief Fund in Corsica during the First World War and the experiences of the British internees in the island during the Second World War.

APPENDIX 1

Comparison of Smaller Health Stations, 1908.⁷³

Resort	English ⁷⁴ Doctors	English Dentist	English Chemist	Other Medical institutions	Other English facilities
Ajaccio	0	0	0		Church, 'Strangers Syndicate'.
Hyères	2	1	2	Hyères Nursing Institution of English Hospital- Trained Nurses	Church, Banks, golf clubs, Reading Room, library
Mentone	3	2	3	St John's House of Rest for clergymen and other professional men established 1879. English Nurses' Institute	Church, Library, stores, tourist agency.
Bordighera	3	0	English assistants		Church, bank, tea- rooms, tennis club, Stores, library
San Remo	5	1	1	Nurses' Institute, Homes for Invalid Ladies	Churches English Club
Gibraltar	6	1	2		Cathedral and Church, banks, bootmaker.
Tangier	3		dispenser		Church, stores
Algiers	1	0	1		Churches, stores, bank, Club, golf club, tailor.
Helouan- Les-Bains	2	0	0		Church, Golf course, band, croquet
Assouan	1	0	European pharmacy		Church. Golf and tennis clubs, circulating library. Stores, travel agency.
Malta	Doctors fluent	1	1	Nursing Institution	Churches, club, tennis, polo, golf,

⁷³ All the data is taken from a consistent source: Reynolds-Ball (1908).

⁷⁴ 'English' is per the text and also includes references to American individuals.

					cricket, library, banks, notary, tourist agency, stores.
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Appendix 2 Corsican Mines with British involvement

Mines	Minerals	Dates	Company and Individuals
Luri	Antimony	1888 Concession. 1897 Inactive 1903 Sold	<i>Wiens Novelli</i> : Arthur Southwell (investor and advisor)
Meria	Antimony	1858 Concession 1877 Company incorporated 1880 winding-up petition 1883 Sold	<i>Meria Mining Company Limited</i> : Charles Galland (investor) James Glencairn Cunningham and Johnson – advisors/engineers.
Ersa	Antimony	1878 In possession of Galland 1881 Voluntary liquidation 1884 Sold	Part of Meria Mining: Charles Galland (investor), James Glencairn Cunningham and Johnson – advisors/engineers.
Argentella	Silver- Lead Copper	1886 company incorporated 1890 Company restructure 1893 Sold to Southwell 1894 Voluntary winding-up 1906 Sold	<i>Argentella Mines Limited</i> : Arthur Southwell (investor and advisor) Mine captains: Samuel Lake; Richard Roden and investor); J Broad Roberts A M L Tonkin
Lama	Silver- Lead Copper	1874 Company incorporated 1880 Voluntary winding-up	<i>Lama Company of Corsica Limited (South Aurora)</i> ¹ : James Glencairn Cunningham (investor); Alfred Hancock, mine captain
Ghisoni	Silver- Lead Copper	Known to be exploited by Penberthy Roberts after 1922.	<i>South Aurora</i> : Richard Penberthy Roberts, mine captain
Linguizzetta	Copper	1872 Concession 1874 Mine named 'Victoria' 1877 British ceased work	<i>South Aurora</i> : Arthur Chichester, mine captain
Lozari	Copper Arsenic	1899 Concession 1910 Work suspended on death of Southwell 1912 Sold.	Arthur Southwell (investor) John Richardson, manager for French company.
Cardo	Copper	1869 Company formed. 1872 Concession obtained 1897 Company in liquidation 1905 Sold	<i>The Cardo Mines (South Aurora)</i> : James Glencairn Cunningham (investor)
Olmata/ Frangone	Copper	1878 Concession 1897 Company in liquidation 1905 Sold	Charles Galland (investor) James Glencairn Cunningham (investor and director of operations); Henry Cock/Cook- mine captain
Vezzani Corsican- owned	Copper	1893-5 Negotiations for concession failed 1902-04 Negotiations for concession failed. British managed	<i>Olmata Copper Company of Corsica Limited (South Aurora)</i> : Richard Penberthy Roberts – manager Arthur Southwell (potential investor)

¹ In 1876 Galland declared that he was the founder of the *South Aurora Company* and under its remit in 1878 he obtained the concession for the Pietrabla copper mine but two other parties also claimed the concession and Galland lost out. The South Aurora company under its many guises appeared to be the parent company for a number of mines:
1870 *South Aurora Mining Company*, wound up in 1873 and liquidated 1874.
1874-78 *South Aurora Consolidated Mining Company*. The same company took out a three year contract to explore the copper mine at Saint-Augustin but renounced it in 1879: Gauthier, p.176-77.

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This bibliography has been structured into primary, secondary and tertiary sources which suit the nature of the thesis and the sources used. A range of printed primary sources have been subdivided into: manuscript sources and printed government records, printed books and articles comprising first-hand accounts written close to the events described and newspaper articles of the time. The secondary sources used in the thesis are accounts, magazine and newspaper articles that have been written with the benefit of hindsight or at a significantly later date than the events in question. Reference books and online sources, and fiction have been grouped as tertiary sources.

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Cincinnati Daily Gazette
Cook's Traveller's Gazette
Commercial Advertiser
Contemporary Review
Cornhill Magazine
Corse Matin
Corse Touristique
Country Life
Country Life Illustrated
Curtis's Botanical Magazine
Daily Express
Daily Inter-Ocean
Daily Mail
Daily Mail (Hull)
Daily Mail Atlantic Edition
Daily Picayune
Devon and Exeter Gazette
Gentleman's Magazine
Eclaireur
Economist
Edinburgh Review
Englishwomen's Domestic Magazine
Essex Chronicle
Exeter and Plymouth Gazette
Evening Telegraph and Sheffield Times
Evening News (Portsmouth)
Evening Post
Financial Times
Fort Worth Star-Telegram
Fraser's Magazine
Galveston Weekly News
Gardeners' Chronicle
Gazette Ajaccienne
Gentleman's Magazine
Guardian

Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail
Hastings and St Leonard's Gazette
Illustrated London News
Journal de la Corse.
Journal des Étrangers
Kansas City Star
Kalamazoo Gazette
Ladies' Cabinet of Fashion, Music and Romance
Ladies Monthly Magazine
Literary Gazette
Lloyds Weekly Newspaper
London Gazette
Macmillan's Magazine
Mail on Sunday
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Manchester Guardian
Morning Post
Morpeth Herald
Murray's Magazine
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Nineteenth Century
North Devon Journal
Observer
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Piazza Magazine
Quarterly Review
Queenslander
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