PART TWO

MONUMENTS FOR THE PAST
PUBLIC COMMEMORATIONS AND PRIVATE INTERESTS: 
THE POLITICS OF STATE FUNERALS IN LONDON AND PARIS,
1806–1810

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A good citizen is a credit to his country, and merits the approbation of every virtuous man. Patriots who have sacrificed their tender affections, their properties, their lives, to the interest of society, deserve a tribute of praise unmixed with any alloy.¹

Catherine Macaulay’s majestic opening to The History of England (1769) testifies to how the eighteenth-century British public increasingly came to applaud the virtuous behaviour and actions of men whose names did not belong to the established chronicles of history. While new commercial avenues were explored and the state expanded its authority, the socio-political establishment faced the erosion of its power by an emerging bourgeoisie. Moreover, these middle classes not only threatened the economic and political equilibrium; they also manifested themselves in the cultural domain with ever more zeal by departing from the conventional canon of great men—princes of the blood, the high aristocracy, and the highest military or naval officers—and instead praising men possessing exceptional talent. Henceforth a category that the French called *grand homme*—namely, a man who according to Abbé de Saint-Pierre was ‘distingué par ses grands talens, par sa grande vertu & par ses grands bienfaits’—was integrated into a country’s historical narrative.²

It was first in the private libraries and gardens of Enlightened aristocrats such as the Arcadian settings at British Stowe or French Ermenonville, then in public spaces like the academy exhibitions or city squares, that great men were honoured. The goal was to glorify a
