

ABSTRACT

Keith Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army during the Wars with France, 1793-1815'.

The British Army that fought the engagement at Waterloo in 1815, was outwardly little changed from that which was engaged in the initial campaigns of the Wars, twenty-two years previously. Line upon line of red-coated, musket-armed infantry, manoeuvred as chess pieces across open fields, deciding the issue by volley and bayonet, having spent a hungry night exposed to rain and cold. The cavalry were still beautifully and often impractically clad, and were always seeking the decisive charge, on their unfed and often sickly mounts. The Army's commander still viewed his troops as 'the scum of the earth', who were rarely paid, and predominantly enlisted for life. It would therefore appear that little had altered from 1793 to 1815, and that this will be a study of continuity rather than change. However, this thesis will show that despite outward appearances, the Army that took the field at Waterloo was intrinsically different from the one that entered the conflict in 1793, being modernised in line with other institutions of state, and other European armies. This thesis is first and foremost intended to be a contribution to the history of the British Army from the outbreak of war with Revolutionary France in 1793, to the reduction of the forces after the battle of Waterloo in 1815. It proceeds from an assumption that the understanding of not only that history, but the history of the developing British state, will be significantly advanced through a study of the operation of, and the changes which took place within, the Army during the Wars with France.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRITISH ARMY
DURING THE WARS WITH FRANCE,
1793-1815.

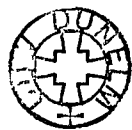
BY KEITH JOHN BARTLETT

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Submitted 1997.



- 2 JUL 1998

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Spencer is a mine of knowledge concerning the military records within the PRO, and I would hope to reciprocate the support he has given to me as he embarks upon the same path.

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Kew, November 1997.

ABBREVIATIONS

Add. Ms.	Additional Manuscripts.
<i>AQ</i>	<i>Army Quarterly.</i>
BL	British Library.
BP	Papers of the Booth Family, Private Collection, Gloucester.
CUL	Cambridge University Library.
D/Lo/C	Londonderry Papers, Durham County Record Office.
G51	Melville Castle Muniments, Scottish Record Office. Papers of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville.
Geo. III	King George III, in Acts of Parliament.
<i>George III</i>	A. Aspinal (ed.), <i>The Later Correspondence of George III</i> (Cambridge, 1968) 5 volumes.
GRE	Grey Papers, University of Durham.
	A 1st Earl
	D General Charles Grey
<i>HCPP</i>	<i>House of Commons Parliamentary Papers.</i>
JM-CUL	Letter Book of General Sir John Moore, Cambridge University Library. (Add. 9340)
JRUL	John Rylands University Library, Manchester.
<i>JSAHR</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research.</i>
Leith	The Papers of Sir James Leith, John Rylands University Library. (English Manuscripts 1307)
Melville	Melville Papers, John Rylands University Library.
Murray	National Library of Scotland, Advocate's Manuscripts 4611-4531, Murray Papers.
NAM	National Army Museum.
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer.
NLS	National Library of Scotland.
Percival	The Papers of the Right Honourable Spencer Percival MP, Cambridge University Library. (Add. Ms. 8713)
<i>PD</i>	T.C. Hansard, <i>The parliamentary debates, from the year 1803 to the Present Time: Forming a Continuation of the Work Entitled "The</i>

- Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest period to the Year 1803*" (London, 1793-1815).
- PP *Parliamentary Papers.*
- PRO Public Record Office.
- ADM Admiralty Office.
- AO Audit Office.
- C Chancery Proceedings.
- CO Colonial Office.
- HO Home Office.
- WO War Office.
- RCME *Report of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry.*
- RCNE *Report of the Commissioner of Naval Enquiry.*
- RCPA *Report of the Committee on Public Accounts.*
- RCPE *Report of the Committee on Public Expenditure.*
- RHK-E The Papers of Robert Hugh Kennedy, National Library of Scotland.
- RHK-M The Papers of Robert Hugh Kennedy, John Rylands University Library.
(English Manuscripts 1308)
- RSCA *Report of the Select Committee on Apprenticeship.*
- RSCF *Report of the Select Committee on Finance.*
- SD The Duke of Wellington (ed.), *Supplementary Dispatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of Field Marshal Arthur Duke of Wellington, K.G.* (London, 1871).
- SRO Scottish Record Office.
- WD Lieutenant Colonel Gurwood, *The Despatches of Field Marshal, The Duke of Wellington; during his various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, The Low Countries, and France, from 1799 to 1818* (London, 1837-1839) 13 volumes.
- Wellesley Letters of Richard Wellesley, 2nd Earl Mornington and 1st Marquess of Wellesley, John Rylands University Library.
- WP Southampton University Library, Wellington Papers.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY

The British Army that fought the engagement at Waterloo in 1815, was outwardly little changed from that which was engaged in the initial campaigns of the Wars, twenty-two years previously. Line upon line of red-coated, musket-armed infantry, manoeuvred as chess pieces across open fields, deciding the issue by volley and bayonet, having spent a hungry night exposed to rain and cold. The cavalry were still beautifully and often impractically clad, and were always seeking the decisive charge, on their unfed and often sickly mounts. The Army's commander still viewed his troops as 'the scum of the earth', who were rarely paid, and predominantly enlisted for life. It would therefore appear that little had altered from 1793 to 1815, and that this will be a study of continuity rather than change. However, this thesis will show that despite outward appearances, the Army that took the field at Waterloo was intrinsically different from the one that entered the conflict in 1793, being modernised in line with other institutions of state, and other European armies. This thesis is first and foremost intended to be a contribution to the history of the British Army from the outbreak of hostilities with Revolutionary France in 1793, to the reduction of the forces after the battle of Waterloo in 1815. It proceeds from an assumption that the understanding of not only that history, but the history of the developing British state, will be significantly advanced through a study of the operation of, and the changes which took place within, the Army during the Wars with France.

1.2. HISTORIOGRAPHY AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY

In terms of methodology the thesis will take the form of a thematic study, within the bounds of what is termed 'new' history, and will seek to discover a trend in the development of the Army during the course of the period under discussion. For the purposes of the study, the model created by Peter Burke will be used, to outline what is meant by the much-vaunted title of 'new' history.¹ He establishes six points which define

¹ Peter Burke, 'Overture: The New History, its Past and its Future' in Peter Burke (ed.), *New Perspectives on Historical Writing* (Cambridge, 1992) 2-6.

what new history is not, to compare it with the 'old' historical methods. First, he states, traditional history is essentially concerned with politics. While this thesis involves the study of political responses to the Army and the Wars with France, it is definitely not a political study. The use of a purely 'political' or even 'high political' methodology would have produced an interrupted view of the subject and the period, broken up by the rise and fall of ministries or personalities. Such a study can be highly successful, but would fail to achieve enough of an over-view to enable a trend to be observed, being bogged down in day to day politics. In terms of this study, the failings of such a method is best observed by reference to Kenneth Bourne's *Palmerston: The Early Years*,² which being a high political study, sees the conflict between War Office and Horse Guards as a battle of personalities, rather than another campaign between civil, military and royal authority, dating back to the Commonwealth. There will be occasions within the thesis that a political methodology will be used, but only where it is unavoidable for the sake of clarity. Most notably this will be seen in the examination of recruitment, where the Secretaries of State for War had such different ideas about how to solve the problem of manpower. In most other areas it is the intention of the study to be driven by the discernible trend of development within society as a whole, and the Army in particular. The ambition and aspirations of individual politicians is only of significance to this study while they affect the Army, and once that ambition takes them away from their military brief, they must also be taken away from the thesis.

The second essential of traditional history is that it should be a narrative. Military history has produced more than its fair share of this style of historical writing. For the period under discussion W.F.P. Napier's *History of the War in the Peninsula*,³ Sir Charles Oman's *History of the Peninsular War*,⁴ and Hon. J.W. Fortescue's *History of the British Army*,⁵ are all accomplished works, but written in a purely narrative form. The six, seven and nineteen volumes respectively, of these studies, are sufficient evidence of why such a style would have proved impossible to use to write this thesis, in terms of word-count alone. Instead, this thesis will use a thematic approach, of the type pioneered by Fernand Braudel, in his *Mediterranean*,⁶ to examine the structures of the Army, rather than seeking

² Kenneth Bourne, *Palmerston: The Early Years, 1784-1841* (London, 1982) 80-181.

³ W.F.P. Napier, *History of the war in the Peninsula and in the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814* (London, 1876) 6 volumes.

⁴ C.W.C. Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War* (Oxford, 1902-1930) 7 volumes.

⁵ Hon. J.W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army* (London, 1910-1930) 19 volumes.

⁶ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, translated by S. Reynolds (London, 1972-3)

a strong story-line through which to describe the day-to-day minutiae. Narrative studies are not limited to the early part of this century. To the list of esteemed academic military historians must now be added a new breed - the illustrative historian, whose books are numerous and repetitive, while still being steeped in the old history of military narrative, with a preoccupation for counting stitches, and a tendency towards gloss. But these works are written to a new agenda, aiming towards a mass market, and despite their lack of footnoted sources, they have succeeded in whetting the appetite of numerous people who would hitherto have been oblivious to the study of military history, and must therefore not be dismissed out of hand. Most notable and productive in this field has been Philip Haythornthwaite, whose vast knowledge of the printed sources on the subject has resulted in many of his works being quoted in far more academic pieces. It is the proliferation of such coffee-table histories that is one reason to suggest that another study of the Wars with France 1793-1815 would be superfluous. However, as with the earlier narrative works, such studies fail to grasp anything beyond the public face of the Army, and this thesis will show that it is but a thin veneer.

The third of Burke's essentials of traditional history is that it should be a 'view from above', the study of the great men of the period. This thesis intends to avoid such emphasis, which John Keegan suggests, 'automatically distorts perspective and too often dissolves into sycophancy or hero-worship.'⁷ Richard Glover's *Peninsular Preparation: the reform of the British Army, 1795-1809*,⁸ is arguably the best study to date of the military during the period under discussion, but suffers from just such a distortion. It covers the Army under Frederick, Duke of York, as the Commander in Chief, and vastly overemphasises the importance of the Duke. Glover writes from a very militaristic standpoint, being critical of the government for not prosecuting the War to the detriment of all else. In ending his study in 1809, he obviates the need to get involved in the Duke of York's wrangles over the Mary Anne Clarke affair, his subsequent resignation, and the subordination of the post of Commander in Chief, to that of the Secretary at War, even after his return. This creates a very clear-cut picture of the state of the Army, and one which is misleading. While the importance of York's contribution to the development of the Army is unquestionable, his was just one element of that development. Parallel to that was a development of the civilian structures of the Army, which were kept deliberately

⁷ John Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A study of Agincourt, Waterloo, and the Somme* (London, 1991) 27.

⁸ Richard Glover, *Peninsular Preparation: the reform of the British Army, 1795-1809* (Cambridge, 1970).

away from the control of any Commander in Chief. In addition, and of most importance, is that after 1809, the Army continued to develop and grow, not achieving its numerical zenith until 1812, nor its optimum efficiency until 1813-14. As this study will show, the cult of Wellington, in particular, and the proliferation of literature concerning him, seriously overstates his contribution to the development of the Army during the course of the period under discussion. Jac Weller's studies of *Wellington in India*, *Wellington in the Peninsula*, and *Wellington at Waterloo*,⁹ despite being powerful works, are nevertheless tainted by their choice of focus.¹⁰ Even the work of S.G.P. Ward in *Wellington's Headquarters*,¹¹ despite being of immense quality, still suffers from the same orientation, which further highlights the necessity for its reappraisal.

The fourth element of traditional history is that it should be essentially document-based, with Rankean emphasis on 'official records emanating from governments and preserved in archives.'¹² Typical of this type of study are the books of Charles M. Clode, whose *Military Forces of the Crown*,¹³ in particular, is a collection of facts derived exclusively from official documents. Despite this, it is still a bible for anyone engaged in the study of the Army during the nineteenth century, and this author is no exception. This thesis makes no apology for its extensive use of the major national archives. However, it has been its aim from the outset to examine more than the generally trawled sources, and to find new and untapped collections of papers. As will be shown below, it has been successful. In addition, the use of other less traditional sources, such as diaries and letter collections have been used to corroborate or contradict the information contained in official sources.

The study of events, according to Burke, is the fifth essential of traditional history. This thesis will not get bogged down in this way. Events will be used to illustrate how or why developments took place within the Army, and with what effect. While being aware of

⁹ Jac Weller, *Wellington in the Peninsula, 1808-1814* (London, 1962); *Wellington in India* (London, 1972); *Wellington at Waterloo* (London, 1991)

¹⁰ This view is supported by Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 27.

¹¹ S.G.P. Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters: A study of the administrative problems in the Peninsula, 1809-1814* (Oxford, 1957).

¹² Burke, 'Overture: The New History,' 4.

¹³ Charles M. Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown* (London, 1869); see also Clode's, *The Administration of Justice under Military and Martial Law* (London, 1872), and *The Statutes Relating to the War Office and to the Army* (London, 1880); See also PRO WO 123/124/-, 'Schedule of the Regulations, Circular Letter, &c., which have been issued since the publication of the Collection of Regulations on 24th March 1807'; WO 123/182/-, 'Memoranda prepared for the information of the Secretary of State for the War Department', 1865. Both of these pieces were prepared by Clode.

the chronology of the key moments in the period under discussion, as with the avoidance of 'high politics', a concentration on events would make this structural and thematic thesis disjointed, and would hinder the study of significant trends. In particular, the thesis will not include the obvious 'battle piece',¹⁴ despite being a study of an army at war. As Geoffrey Best suggests, the fighting does 'not seem to merit more weight in the total analysis of war than the many other elements ... which military historians ... usually neglected.'¹⁵ While reference will be made to engagements which materially affect the developments within the Army, this thesis will concentrate on the structures which enabled the Army to fight, rather than the fighting itself. Even the scholarly works of Piers Mackesy, in his *Statesmen at War*, *War in the Mediterranean*, and *British Victory in Egypt, 1801*,¹⁶ are essentially operational histories, centred around single or multiple engagements, which create somewhat false points of reference, and disrupt the observation of general trends in Army development.

Finally, Burke suggests that traditionally the study of history is essentially objective, giving its readers the facts and leaving them to make up their own mind about the issues. Lord Acton's instructions to the contributors to *The Cambridge Modern History* in 1902,

that our Waterloo must be one that satisfies French and English, Germans and Dutch alike; that nobody can tell, without examining the list of authors, where the Bishop of Oxford laid down his pen, and whether Fairbairn or Gasquet, Liebermann or Harrison took it up,¹⁷

was typical of nineteenth and early twentieth century historians attempts at objectivity. Lieutenant Colonel Gurwood's *Wellington's Despatches*,¹⁸ W.F.P. Napier's *History of the War in the Peninsula*,¹⁹ Sir Charles Oman's *History of the Peninsular War*,²⁰ and Hon. J.W. Fortescue's *History of the British Army*,²¹ are all examples of this genre. However, the

¹⁴ Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 30, 36-46.

¹⁵ Geoffrey Best, 'What is Military History...?' in Juliet Gardiner (ed.) *What is History Today...?* (London, 1988) 13.

¹⁶ Piers Mackesy, *War in the Mediterranean* (London, 1956); *Statesmen at War: The Strategy of Overthrow* (London, 1974); *British Victory in Egypt, 1801: The End of Napoleon's Conquest* (London, 1995).

¹⁷ Lord Acton, *Lectures on Modern History* (London, 1906) 318, quoted in E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (London, 1961, 1987) 9.

¹⁸ Lieutenant Colonel Gurwood, *The Despatches of Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington, during his various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, The Low Countries, and France, from 1799 to 1818* (London, 1837-1839) 13 volumes.

¹⁹ W.F.P. Napier, *History of the war in the Peninsula*.

²⁰ C.W.C. Oman, *A History of the Peninsular War*.

²¹ Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*.

former has been found to be edited to paint a more favourable picture of its subject,²² while examination of the latter works reveals that they are written to the agenda of both their authors and the period in which they were produced, and so confirm that pure objectivity is an unrealistic aim, and it is one to which this thesis does not strive.

Comparison has been used in many instances, throughout this work, although other institutions or armed forces have not been studied in depth. This would have broadened the thesis too much, and the quantity of sources necessary to cover such areas would have been impossible to come to terms with in the time available. In any case much useful work has already been conducted into areas such as the French²³ and Prussian²⁴ armies, and aspects of other institutions of state.²⁵ John Tosh states that this method 'enables us to separate the essential from the particular and to weight our explanations accordingly.'²⁶ It has proved particularly useful in this study, in terms of assessing the origins and uniqueness of the developments within the Army, and assists in broadening the compass of this study, establishing it as part of the historical debate, not only concerning the Army, but of Britain, and also of Europe.

The reason behind the choice of the time scale of the study would seem to be self-explanatory, beginning at the outbreak of the War with Revolutionary France in 1793, and ending with the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. However, most studies of military structure avoid periods of war, and instead examine the peacetime army. According to Keegan,

Action is essentially destructive of all institutional studies; just as it compromises the purity of doctrines, it damages the integrity of structures, upsets the balance of relationships, interrupts the network of communication which the institutional historian struggles to identify and, having identified, to crystallise. War, the good quartermaster's opportunity, the bad quartermaster's bane, is the institutional historian's irritant.²⁷

²² C.M. Woolgar, 'Wellington's *Dispatches* and their Editor, Colonel Gurwood', in C.M. Woolgar (ed.) *Wellington Studies I* (Southampton, 1996) 189-210.

²³ See for example, John R. Elting, *Swords Around the Throne: Napoleon's Grande Armée* (London, 1988); Alan Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, (Oxford, 1989); Alan Forrest, *The Soldiers of the French Revolution* (London, 1990).

²⁴ See in particular, Peter Parrett, *Yorck and the era of Prussian Reform, 1807-1815* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1966).

²⁵ See for example, N.A.M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (Glasgow, 1986); Penny Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain, 1700-1850* (London, 1995)

²⁶ John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (London, 1991) 124.

²⁷ Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 29.

So why study the British Army at a time of such disruption to the very structures the thesis is attempting to examine? The first is that the period has been neglected by academics, despite being sandwiched between two excellent relatively recent studies. J.L. Pimlott's 'The Administration of the British Army, 1783-1793', which covers the years between the end of the American War of Independence, and the beginning of the Wars with France,²⁸ and Hew Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army, 1830-54*,²⁹ which takes the Army to the beginning of the Crimean War. The second reason for the choice of this particular period for the subject of the study, is that of the current historical debate which surrounds it, and which will be discussed below. The final reason for not choosing a peacetime study is, in the words of Michael Howard, 'that it loses sight of what armies are for.'³⁰ The study of an army at war is a very important element of history, but one which has been somewhat neglected of late. An investigation of a major conflict sees a nation tested and stretched to its limits, drawing on their resources in finance, raw materials, manpower, technology (both materiel and theoretical) and the will of all concerned to fight, continue to fight, fund or merely tolerate the continuance of the conflict. It is a study of a nation in extremes, and despite the difficulties it presents, it is a study worth conducting.

Although there are numerous studies of almost every aspect of the Army, and of varying degrees of rigour, there does not exist a single authoritative study of the whole period of the Wars, which sees the Army in anything other than a narrow operational role. This thesis seeks to address this omission. The time is surely overdue for the Army to be studied in a much broader context than merely that of a military force, and therefore this work will seek to achieve this.

The works of numerous authors, most notably John Brewer, with his *Sinews of Power*,³¹ and Linda Colley in *Britons*,³² discuss the idea that the prosecution of war during the eighteenth century, was for the former, the driving force behind much of the modernisation, of what is termed the 'fiscal-military state,' and for the latter the catalyst in nation building. It is therefore extraordinary to find a plethora of studies into the finance of

²⁸ J.L. Pimlott, 'The Administration of the British Army 1783 - 1793', Unpublished PhD Thesis, (Leicester University, 1975).

²⁹ Hew Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army, 1830-54* (Manchester, 1984); see also Hew Strachan, *From Waterloo to Balaclava: Tactics, Technology, and the British Army, 1815-1854* (Cambridge, 1985).

³⁰ Quoted in Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 29.

³¹ John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, money and the English state, 1688-1783* (London, 1989)

³² Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London, 1992)

the state, others into the various institutions, and more into the nationalism of war-time Britain, but not one looking at the point at which British exploits were supposedly directed - the military. Brewer and Colley do include the Army, and in the latter case the amateur military, within their argument, but as neither are primarily military historians, they are directed beyond military structures, and therefore fail to gain a certain understanding of the field, which this thesis will address.

The study seeks to place the Army in the context of the developing state, and so will concentrate on just that institution, only dealing with others where they directly influence the Army itself. For the purposes of the study the Army is taken to mean the regular infantry and cavalry formations, together with the administrative, supply and support structures which served them. It excludes the Militia and Volunteers, as they have been studied in detail in recent years,³³ the medical services,³⁴ and the troops of the East India Company and the Board of Ordnance, except where their inclusion is beneficial to the study. A detailed study of these latter formations merits a separate research project.³⁵ It was decided at an early stage in the research to concentrate on the Army, which was the most important military force at the time, one which can be isolated from the others, and in which, and concerning which, the most important developments and reforms can be seen to be driven.

1.3 SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY

G.R. Elton suggests that the first demand of sound historical scholarship, is ‘a broad-fronted attack upon all the relevant material.’³⁶ It was with this in mind that a survey of the vast array of sources available to a student of the period under discussion, was conducted. As the study was interested in the Army as an instrument of the state, the most

³³ See for example, S. C. Smith, ‘Loyalty and Opposition in the Napoleonic Wars; The Impact of the Local Militia, 1807-1815.’ Unpublished DPhil Thesis (Oxford University, 1984); Colley, *Britons*, 283-320; Austin Gee, ‘The British Volunteer Movement, 1793-1807’, Unpublished PhD Thesis (Oxford University, 1989).

³⁴ Sir Neil Cantlie, *A History of the Army Medical Department*, 2 volumes (Aldershot, 1974); Richard L. Blanco, *Wellington's Surgeon General: Sir James McGriggor* (Durham, North Carolina, 1974), cover the medical services, but little else is written on the subject. R. Glover, *Preparation*, vii, chose to omit them from his work, stating that their study demanded a ‘professional author’. I would concur with his findings.

³⁵ I intend to look at this project at a future date

³⁶ G.R. Elton, *The Practice of History* (London, 1967) 66.

obvious starting point for the research were the numerous government generated documents contained in the main national archives, in particular the Public Record Office. The main records for this thesis are contained in the War Office papers in the Public Record Office. They are an essential body of information, which despite their many lost, missing or destroyed documents, still add up to a vast, unique and relatively comprehensive holding, and somewhat of a luxury, rarely enjoyed by students outside the field of military history. No study of the Army would be complete without thorough use of this archive. The PRO holdings, along with most of the national archives have been researched extensively in previous studies. However, the importance of these archives, although well read and well studied, is in the manner in which they are used, the questions asked of them, and the expectations of the student. In this work there has been an awareness from the start, that it would be the questions asked of these archives, and the way in which the answers are used, that would make this study original.

In order to obtain a fresh insight and a different perspective to those who have studied this topic previously, all record repositories in Britain were contacted, requesting information concerning their holdings of documents relating to the period under discussion. As a result of this survey, a great deal of information has been gleaned from several regional archives. Often dismissed as being of only local importance, several sources of national interest have been discovered, that have been overlooked by many other students of the period. Most notable among these has been the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, where the papers of Robert Hugh Kennedy, the British Commissary General in the Peninsular War, have proved essential in the understanding of the subject. Kennedy was at the hub of the campaign, and therefore the changes imposed upon the Army are clearly noticed within his papers. Ward also quoted from a small selection of Kennedy's papers which he had purchased, and these together with another holding of Kennedy's papers in Edinburgh, gives, for the first time, a near-complete view of the workings of the Commissariat, and the Army generally, at the heart of arguably the most important campaign of the Wars.

Extensive use has also been made of the diaries and personal letters of the period under discussion. Of course there are the usual problems in the use of such material, perhaps more-so in military history than in other areas, due to what Keegan terms 'the

Bullfrog Effect,' the embellishing of war stories by soldiers.³⁷ However, such contemporary accounts are essential to the understanding of the characters involved in a study, that could so easily become impersonal, and they are also useful as a test of the end result of any military development. It must be noted that it is rare for a reform of the Army, as discussed in this thesis, to be noted by a serving soldier. What is more usual and significant is that, as in the case of supply, criticism concerning this element of the soldiers' life, all-but disappears, suggesting an improvement in the supply system described in archive material.

The *Parliamentary Papers*, provide another useful body of information. While clearly showing how developments progressed through Parliament, with insights into the tempering of certain measures to placate Royal or Parliamentary sensibilities, there is scant information as to the origins or reasoning behind the reforms. The *Parliamentary Debates* of Hansard,³⁸ are essential for the detail of the high-profile debates, although they give little information of everyday Army development.

Despite reservations over the previously published secondary works, they have still been used extensively. There are few areas of the Army on which nothing is written, of whatever quality, and this has saved a great deal of time in getting bearings in certain areas. The most important works must be those mentioned above, Clode, Glover and Ward, which between them give enough information to begin any research project on the period under discussion, with a degree of confidence. To this list must be added the unpublished doctoral thesis of Pimlott,³⁹ which covers the development of Army administration from the end of the American War of Independence, to the beginning of the Wars with France. This has been essential in the understanding of the complex period before the beginning of the study, and has saved much time, by describing the origins of a number of the reforms of the Army that remained issues during the period of the thesis. Much that is contained in Pimlott's thesis is of great importance to the discussion of the development of the Army, as related to the development of the state, and it is unfortunate that his work was produced prior to the proliferation of work resulting from *Sinews of Power*, which would have given it greater relevance in the broader historical field.

³⁷ Keegan, *Face of Battle*, 33.

³⁸ T.C. Hansard, *The parliamentary debates, from the year 1803 to the Present Time: Forming a Continuation of the Work Entitled "The Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest period to the Year 1803"* (London, 1793-1815); *PD*.

³⁹ J.L. Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army'.

1.4 THE QUESTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY

By examining the sources described the thesis will introduce the structure of the Army at the beginning of the conflict, outlining the changes which occurred during the course of the period under discussion. The study will be in three parts. Part I, will cover the administrative areas of the Army; Part II, will look at the make-up of the forces, and Part III will examine the logistical arrangements. Chapter 2, Structure, will examine the interaction between the various offices of both the military and civil administration and will begin to test the hypotheses suggested by recent historians of the long eighteenth century, that government and its influence expanded, and that there was a general move towards a 'modernisation' of state structures, and to 'professionalism' in public life.⁴⁰ Chapter 3, Finance, will study how financial structures functioned under the pressures of the Wars, and the extent to which the desire for economic efficiency provided the impetus for change within the Army. Chapter 4, Composition, will look at the composition of all ranks of the Army, and discuss the various methods by which the manpower question was addressed during the Wars. Chapter 5, Training, will examine the training of the Army, beginning with the development of new and uniform drill systems, and expanding upon the improvements made in the field, and the innovations of light infantry. It will also look at the increasing professionalism of the Army, and promotion within its ranks. The education of soldiers, and the motives for its introduction will also be examined. Chapter 6, Supply, will examine the supply of all items to the Army, an area noted for its failings during the course of the Wars, discussing the design, manufacture and standards, but most importantly the improvements in the process of the issue of such items. Finally, Chapter 7, Transport and Communication, will look at the transport arrangements, focusing on traditional and innovative methods of moving troops and supplies. It will also examine the means by which the Army communicated while fighting a global war.

The thesis was structured under these broad headings for several reasons. First, as stated above, a narrative in whatever historical style would have produced a work of vast proportions. Second, by breaking the Army down into these areas of study, the whole topic became a manageable project. Third, to have used a broader thematic structure, specifically

⁴⁰ For example, Brewer, *Sinews of Power*; Colley, *Britons*; Corfield, *Power and the Professions*.

developing themes such as professionalism, corruption, class, etc., would have proved unwieldy, as each area of study produced different findings that would have disjointed the thesis, and would quickly have become repetitive. Fourth, by studying the topic in this way, a better assessment of the general trends prevalent during the period under discussion can be made. Finally, after careful consideration, it has been decided that this is the most effective method to both answer the questions posed, and produce an intelligible picture of the subject, within the bounds of a project of this type.

From the outset this thesis is intended to transcend the boundaries of a purely military monograph. Instead it will examine how the Army as an institution of state, reacted, not only to the Wars with France, but to the developing society in which it was founded. The key feature of this study will be the examination of change. Although there is little doubt that by 1815, the Army was a changed institution, hitherto, historians have failed to recognise the significance of what lay behind that change. This study will question whether change was government or Army led. By examining the different aspects of the Army it will suggest that the changes occurred within the wider agenda of the modernisation of the state. By examining aspects of that change, this thesis will explore how far the Army became a testing ground for key innovations which would later affect nineteenth century government policy. For example, in policies which followed the direction of centralisation, localisation, nationalisation, or even *laissez-faire*. This will necessarily involve a questioning of the notion of the 'long' or 'short' eighteenth century.⁴¹ It will also ascertain if the changes to the Army were effective in the long or short term, or whether they were merely a response limited to the immediate pressures of the Wars. Finally, this study will determine the extent to which the Army, as an institution at the end of the Wars, had been integrated into the state and society.

1.5 THE BRITISH ARMY IN 1793

The opening campaigns of the Wars with France in 1793 proved disastrous for the British Army. Despite earlier attempts at reform,⁴² the force entered the conflict, in the

⁴¹ The debate by historians over the duration of the 'eighteenth century', and whether it can be usefully categorised as a 'long' or 'short' have been helpfully summarised in W.A. Speck, 'The Eighteenth Century in Britain: Long or Short?', in *The Historian*, 51, Autumn 1996, 16-18.

⁴² Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 30-2, *et al.*

words of its most famous historian, Fortescue, with 'their ranks still wasted and thin.'⁴³

The 7,000 British troops under the Duke of York in the Low Countries, lacked logistical support, and seriously outnumbered by the French, suffered successive defeats at the hands of the Revolutionary armies, buoyant after their victories at Jemmappes and Valmy in 1792.⁴⁴ One French observer wrote of the early stages of the Wars, 'To doubt the defeat of an army, sent by the British ministry to any part of the continent to contend against our troops, would have been imputed to disaffection.'⁴⁵ Even in the West Indian campaigns of 1794, where the military expeditions did not end in failure, the climate, together with supply and manpower problems left the commanders over-extended and distraught.⁴⁶

The deficiencies were obvious and public. The British Army, which entered the conflict in 1793, was vastly outnumbered by French forces, that included the swarming *levée en masse*, which overwhelmed opponents, by sheer weight of numbers. It was deficient in command at all levels, with royalty still expecting to lead; a shortage of good commissioned and non-commissioned officers; and the lack of a coherent system of promotion, that placed men in command who were deserving of such a post. The training it had received was both insufficient and disparate, with little assimilation to a uniform standard, and no acknowledgement of the need to respond to French innovation. In supply it lacked any co-ordinated structure, with uniform and equipment still being part of the pecuniary interest of the regimental colonels, and open to numerous abuses; the transport arrangements were made by a variety of departments and individuals. It lacked any semblance of a practical organisation or direction towards a common aim, and with the acquisition of food still being the responsibility of individual soldiers, they were vulnerable to the effects of shortages, which diverted their attention away from their primary purpose. Food was only one of the areas in which the welfare of the British soldier was deficient, for in accommodation, family and financial arrangements, there was little provision for men who were often treated with contempt by the rest of society. Financially, the Army itself was struggling to come to terms with a system that had been devised using peace-time estimates, which created an immediate log-jam in all departments, amid inefficient post-

⁴³ J.W. Fortescue, *Historical and Military Essays* (London, 1828) 211; see also R. Glover, *Preparation*, 215.

⁴⁴ Forrest, *Soldiers of the French Revolution*, 68-82.

⁴⁵ Charles Dupin, *A View of the History and Actual State of the Military Force of Great Britain* (London, 1822) II, 2.

⁴⁶ GRE-A, 186, a, Henry Dundas to General Sir Charles Grey, 6th December 1793; 186, b, George Rose to Evan Nepean, 6th December 1793; 186, c, Commissioners Victualling the Navy to George Rose, 29th November 1793; 2242, Prescott to Grey, 25th October 1794; 2243/35-8, Grey to Henry Dundas, 12th April 1794; 2243/54-6, Grey to Dundas, 8th July 1794.

holders and vested interests. Above all was a structure of command in which checks and balances avoided one man taking control, preventing the rise of a powerful military, and standing in the way of the efficiency of a modern fighting force. It was therefore clear that drastic change to the Army was necessary, if it was to survive, let alone make any impression on its opponents.

CHAPTER 2 STRUCTURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The eighteenth century British Army was a feared institution. It was feared for itself, as a result of the dominance of the Cromwellian Army during the Commonwealth, and it was feared for its potential if manipulated by one person, which was the legacy of James II's attempts to fill its ranks with Catholics. As a result of this fear a system of checks and balances on Army power had developed, which was, by the period of this study, a double edged sword, preventing the rise of an Army to threaten the stability of the state, but also preventing it becoming an efficient and cohesive military force. The confusion and military defeats of the first months of the Wars, revealed that improvements in the Army were essential if the conflict was to be brought to a successful conclusion, but modernisation would require the removal of safeguards which prevented the misuse of Army power, and that would require trust in both the reformed structure, and more importantly, the Army itself.

This chapter will examine the structure of the Army and its administration, establishing their state in 1793, examining the changes that occurred during the course of the Wars, affecting this vital area, and assessing their implications.

2.2 THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

It is not surprising that there were problems during the first months of the Wars, for in 1793, as at the outbreak of any conflict during the eighteenth century, the Army was effectively leaderless. The Commander in Chief was technically the head of the Army, being responsible for its patronage, training and discipline, although by the period under discussion neither for the raising of men nor their operation in the field.¹ His office was

¹ While the Commander-in-Chief was in overall command of the army, the Ordnance Department was under the authority of the Master General of Ordnance. He therefore controlled the artillery, the construction and maintenance of all military works in Britain, and the supply of arms and accoutrements to the forces. The Secretary of State for the Home Department was ultimately responsible for the raising of forces, and their operation in the field was controlled by either the Foreign or Colonial Secretaries of State, depending upon where in the world the operation was taking place. See below 29; 2.5 The Secretary of State for War and Colonies.

funded, in peace and war, from the Army Extraordinary Fund, which was not subject to Treasury control,² giving the holder of the post a great degree of independence of action. Traditionally a Commander in Chief was only appointed during times of war, while in peace the King fulfilled the role, through the Secretary at War.³ This had been the case from the resignation of Conway in 1783, to the appointment of Amherst upon the opening of hostilities in 1793.⁴ Therefore, at the beginning of the period under discussion, a void existed in the administration of the military which needed urgently to be filled, if the Army was to operate effectively.

There had been several attempts to establish the post of Commander in Chief permanently. The earliest recorded attempt was led by Army officers in Parliament in 1740,⁵ and the latest by General Burgoyne in 1789.⁶ This was dismissed by the government of the day which stated that such a role was unnecessary in times of peace.⁷ It is significant that it was the Army officers in Parliament who observed the need for such change, for they were clearly the best placed to assess the needs of the Army. However, it would be the civilian authorities who would arbitrate on such a necessity from this period onwards, and the Army officers in Parliament were neither numerous enough nor influential enough to effect such a reform on their own behalf.⁸ The testing of the decision of 1789 was not necessary again, as the declaration of war in 1793 brought with it the appointment of a new Commander in Chief.⁹

Much has been made of the failings of the seventy four year old Lord Amherst, who took the role at the outbreak of the Wars, after he had been out of touch with the Army for several years.¹⁰ Clearly he was out of his depth, in what rapidly became a global conflict.

² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 333.

³ *Ibid.* II, 336.

⁴ Amherst had been appointed to the acting rank of Commander-in-Chief during 1788, but was not installed permanently until the outbreak of war in 1793. Captain Owen Wheeler, *The War Office Past and Present* (London, 1914) 56.

⁵ *Parliamentary History* (1740) 902.

⁶ *Ibid.* (1789) 1310; Burgoyne suggested that one of the King's sons should be appointed to the post; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 255.

⁷ *Ibid.* (1789) 1318. Sir William Younge, the Secretary at War stated that he would represent the interests of the army. Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 283 suggests that this was the first time in any Parliament that 'they had such a person as a responsible military minister.'

⁸ See 4.6 Officers, 147.

⁹ PRO WO 3/11/36, William Fawcett, Adjutant-General, to Colonels Commanding Regular Cavalry and Infantry Regiments, 14th February 1793.

¹⁰ Fortescue, *Essays* 211; and more recently R. Glover, *Preparation*, 215, take for granted that the failings of Amherst were the cause of the problems experienced by the army from 1793-1795.

But of equal importance in the debacle of the early years of the Wars was the failure of the Army as a whole to successfully change from a peace-time to a fighting force. Pimlott observes that at the outbreak of each war during the eighteenth century the same weakness can be found in the assimilation of the forces and the administration to the different roles required of them.¹¹ It was a situation that would never change while governments persisted in their attitudes that a peace-time Army needed no head except the monarch. However, it is a point which was not lost on the authorities at the end of the conflict, when the post of Commander in Chief was maintained, to be paid for by Parliament.¹² The failure of Lord Amherst in his role as Commander in Chief, and equally the success of the Duke of York, who held the same post from 1795,¹³ reveals that the personality and ability of the man could seriously affect the development and workings of the Army.

The achievements of York as Commander in Chief are described in depth by Glover,¹⁴ who credits him, almost solely, with the reforms of the Army from 1795 to 1809. It is impossible to describe the positive changes that took place in the Army of the period under discussion without acknowledging the major contribution of York. It was during his tenure as Commander in Chief that the bulk of the reforms which would change the Army completely by 1815, were set in motion. Burgoyne had suggested a 'Prince of the Blood' should assume the head of the Army,¹⁵ and despite his failings as a field commander,¹⁶ York was able to exert enough influence to force through changes which were essential to the development of the Army during the period under discussion.¹⁷ However, York was criticised by contemporaries for exceeding his duties as Commander in Chief, meddling in areas which were not part of his role, and more importantly in aspects of finance, an anathema in the military administration.¹⁸ But, such accusations are misleading as the duties of the role of the Commander in Chief had never been defined, and remained that way until 1812.¹⁹ Indeed, there were several occasions when the Commander in Chief had been allocated duties by the cabinet, more appropriately the responsibility of the Master

¹¹ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 31.

¹² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 333, 354-5. See below 29.

¹³ PRO WO 4/156/375, War Office Circular, 13th February 1795.

¹⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation, passim*.

¹⁵ *Parliamentary History* (1789) 1310.

¹⁶ See below 2.6 Commanders in the Field, 42-4.

¹⁷ See below 2.9 Conclusion, 63-4.

¹⁸ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 339.

¹⁹ Royal Warrant, 12th May 1812; See below 2.3 The Secretary at War and the War Office, 31.

General of Ordnance, most notably in the erection of coastal defences.²⁰ This not only further expanded his role, but also reduced the authority of the Master General, and further excused York for exceeding his authority. Glover also provides evidence to support the subordination of the Master General.²¹ Without drawing any conclusions, he points out that, despite holding a cabinet post, the Duke of Richmond, Master General until 1795, and Lord Cornwallis his successor, were all-but ignored by Pitt, while at the same time York was in the ascendancy.²² This was particularly important during the early years of the Wars, when Pitt, together with Grenville and Henry Dundas, formed a triumvirate of military decision making,²³ thus enabling any restructuring of the unwritten military authority to be implemented by the consensus of those making the strategic decisions. In addition, it was seen fit for the Commissioners of Military Enquiry to investigate the Master General, without conducting a parallel enquiry into the office of the Commander in Chief.²⁴ It therefore seems possible that there was a movement towards the acknowledgement of the precedence of the Commander in Chief over the Master General. While this would not enable Ordnance decisions to be made by the Commander in Chief, it would ensure that the expenditure within the Army, would take precedence over that of the Ordnance, and that the latter would be less able to influence policy in their favour. This subordination of the Master General to the Commander in Chief would create a simplified command structure, but one in which the checks and balances of the dual authority over the military forces was removed.

During the course of the period under discussion the office of the Commander in Chief expanded to an unprecedented level. Based in Horse Guards it became the fount from which all orders emanated, and the base in which Army data was processed and disseminated. At the outbreak of the Wars in 1793, Amherst's staff consisted merely of his own secretary, and the expenses of the whole office during the first year of war amounted to only £1029. By 1814 the annual cost of the office had risen to £9761.²⁵ Almost Amherst's first move as Commander in Chief was to request the transfer of the Adjutant

²⁰ 11th RCME (1810) 23-4; 15th RCME (1812) 320-1.

²¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 23; Richmond eventually ceased to attend cabinet meetings, Mary Ellen Condon, 'The Administration of the Transport Service during the War against Revolutionary France', Unpublished PhD Thesis (London University, 1968) 9-10.

²² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 23.

²³ J. Watson, *The Reign of George III* (Oxford, 1960) 365; Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 38; Ian R. Christie, *Wars and Revolutions: Britain 1760-1815* (London, 1982) 219; David French, *The British Way in Warfare, 1688-2000* (London, 1990) 90.

²⁴ 12th RCME (1810) 23-40.

²⁵ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 45.

General and the Quartermaster General from the staff of the Secretary at War to that of the Commander in Chief, as was usual when Britain was at war.²⁶ It was around these two offices in particular that the expansion of Horse Guards took place.²⁷

In war the Commander in Chief would also serve as the link between the King and the Army, and while he was 'entrusted with the organisation, instruction, and discipline'²⁸ of the troops, he would never be involved in any of the finances of the Army which was always the function of the Treasury.²⁹ In 1808 the duties of the Commander in Chief were clarified, emphasising three areas of operation in separate departments within the one office. These were promotion, civil and miscellaneous, and confidential.³⁰ At the same time a formal link between the Commander in Chief, the Secretary at War and the King was established for the first time. With George III, the link could be quite strong, the King insisting on being consulted on all martial issues.³¹ However, increasingly, as the King's illness kept him away from affairs of state, it was the link between the Commander in Chief and the government, in the form of the Secretary at War, that was to be of greater significance.³² This was particularly the case after 1811, as the Prince Regent took little interest in military matters, and Palmerston, who took over the post of Secretary at War in 1809, involved himself fully in military affairs.³³ This was to be the cause of friction between the Duke of York and Palmerston, from the outset.

To the end of the American War of Independence, the Secretary at War had held the subordinate position,³⁴ being seen by Lord Ligonier, the Commander in Chief during the

²⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 340-1.

²⁷ See below, 1.4 - Adjutant General and Quartermaster General, 34-9.

²⁸ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 3-4; see also PRO WO 4/196/160, W. Dundas to W. Huskisson, 15th January 1803.

²⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 201, 265, 348.

³⁰ Memorandum Relative to the Promotion Department in the Commander-in-Chief's Office, 28th August 1808; Memorandum Relative to the Civil and Miscellaneous Department in the Commander-in-Chief's Office, 28th August 1808; Memorandum Relative to the Confidential Department in the Commander-in-Chief's Office, 28th August 1808.

³¹ *George III*, II; Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 368; Wheeler, *War Office*, 56, states that the King believed himself to be 'a Heaven-sent military administrator'; James Hayes, 'The Royal House of Hanover and the British Army, 1714-60,' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, XL (1957-8) 328-57, states that George II and III took both interest in and command of the army.

³² Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 46, states that when the King was incapacitated in 1789, 'no army business whatsoever was conducted.' This is in complete contrast to his illnesses in 1801, 1804, and 1810 to the establishment of the Regency, when there is no appreciable reduction in army business, revealing an Army administration able to function without the monarch.

³³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II 264; Bourne, *Palmerston*, 105-110.

³⁴ Piers Mackesy, *The War for America* (London, 1964) 14-15; H.C.B. Rogers, *The British Army in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1977) 33.

Seven Years War, as merely 'a superior type of clerk.'³⁵ Indeed by the terms of his military commission this was the case.³⁶ However, during the period under discussion, as the responsibilities of both the War Office and Horse Guards increased, the involvement of the two offices in the workings of the Army created a conflict of interest,³⁷ which was only settled, after protracted discussion,³⁸ by a Royal Warrant in May 1812.³⁹ It established a channel for dispute between the two offices, but most significantly clarified the position of both parties, in that all disputes between them were to be settled by reference to the Prime Minister and/or the Chancellor of the Exchequer. These political office holders would be part of the same administration as the Secretary at War, therefore making an unbiased arbitration unlikely. In addition the warrant established the Commander in Chief as an office to be paid for out of the Parliamentary budget rather than the Army Extraordinary Account,⁴⁰ thus potentially rendering even it subject to political interference.⁴¹ This situation made the maintenance of the post of Commander in Chief at the end of the conflict easier, but was also a cause for concern, as in doing so it weakened another major constitutional safeguard, that of monarchical involvement. The remaining martial powers of the crown were those which permitted the declaration of war, the granting of subsidies, and the formulating of treaties,⁴² all of which were made under the direction of government. Only the royal veto remained independent of civilian government. Clode sees the maintenance of the post as a means of keeping the patronage of a newly expanded Army away from the crown,⁴³ and while it would never remove the 'secret

³⁵ Rex Whitworth, *Field Marshal Lord Ligonier* (Oxford, 1958) 215.

³⁶ See for example BL Add. Ms. 37934, 45/6, Commission of William Windham, 11th July 1794; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 264.

³⁷ Memorandum Relative Upon the Office of Secretary at War with Reference to the General Commander-in-Chief, 16th August 1811. Several other members of the cabinet contributed to a series of 'observations' on the subject during the course of 1811. Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, *Appendix CXXX*, 714-22; *Appendix XXXI*, 722-3.

³⁸ CUL, Percival, xiii, 18, Prince Regent to Percival, 28th February 1811; 30, Percival to Prince of Wales, 9th March 1811; 31, Percival to Prince of Wales, n.d.; 32, Prince of Wales to Percival, 5th March 1811; 34, Percival to Duke of York, 4th April 1812.

³⁹ Royal Warrant, 12th May 1812. Disputes between the two departments were in future to be settled through reference to the Prime Minister and/or the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who would arbitrate, and take the dispute to the monarch if necessary; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 265.

⁴⁰ The Extraordinary Account consisted of 'sums which have been voted for the Ordinary Service of the Army, and have not been taken out of the Exchequer,' *5th RCPA* (1781) *Appendix 6*, 586; by inference this Account was surplus money, and was open to abuse, as it was checked only annually by a Treasury clerk, with little military knowledge, *10th RCPA* (1783) 527; see also section covering the modernisation of the duties of the Paymaster in 3.3 The Paymaster General, 71-3.

⁴¹ The Royal Warrant stated that the budget allocation for the office of the Commander-in-Chief was to be no longer paid for as an Army Extraordinary but directly by the Treasury, following a vote in Parliament, Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 335.

⁴² Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain I*, 2.

⁴³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 354-5.

influence' of a monarch,⁴⁴ it would ensure that the Army remained independent of the sovereign. When the Finance Committee of 1828 accepted that the Commander in Chief would answer only to the Secretary of State for War and Colonies, without reference to the King,⁴⁵ any safeguard was effectively removed, in favour of civilian - political - control. By 1837 Wellington stated that 'the Commander in Chief cannot at this moment move a corporal's guard from hence to Windsor without going to a civil department for authority.'⁴⁶ The transfer of the military into the control of the civilian authority was complete.

2.3 THE SECRETARY AT WAR AND THE WAR OFFICE

The effective removal of the seniority of the Commander in Chief came as the post of Secretary at War, as the head of the War Office, achieved both greater significance and authority.⁴⁷ During most of the eighteenth century the Secretary at War had been an office responsible to the King,⁴⁸ but this had been drastically altered by Burke during 1782-3.⁴⁹ By removing the responsibility for payment of the Army from the colonels of regiments, (or more correctly, their agents) and transferring it to the Secretary at War, the control of the colonels over their corps was reduced, and their ability to benefit financially from the Pay List was removed.⁵⁰ In addition, the allocation of financial responsibility to the Secretary at War meant that that post was forced under the control of Parliament as the arbiter of public money, and made it subject to the vagaries of party politics.⁵¹ He was also given the responsibility for all aspects of spending on supply for the Army. The Secretary at War was a Privy Councillor, the spokesman on Army affairs in the Commons,⁵² and

⁴⁴ John W. Derry, *Charles, Earl Grey: Aristocratic Reformer* (Oxford, 1992) 11.

⁴⁵ 4th *Report of the Select Committee on the state of the Public Income and Expenditure of the United Kingdom* (1828) 8-9.

⁴⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 331. Wellington reiterated his comment the following year. Wellington to Lord Melbourne, 4th January 1838, quoted in Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, *Appendix CXLVII*.

⁴⁷ See *Appendix 2*, 267, for list of Secretaries at War.

⁴⁸ Hampden Gordon, *The War Office* (London, 1935) 38-9.

⁴⁹ *Act for the better Regulation of the Office of Paymaster General of his Majesty's Forces*, 2nd July 1782, 22 Geo III, 81, *Parliamentary History*, XXIII, 134-5; Amendment to the Act, 3rd June 1783, 23 Geo. III c.50, *Parliamentary History*, XXIII, 993. (Pay Office Act)

⁵⁰ See also 3.3 The Paymaster General, 71.

⁵¹ Burke's Act was stimulated by the need to reform the Pay Office, the post of Paymaster General, and the financial structure of the army as a whole, as revealed in *5th RCPA* (1781) and *6th RCPA* (1782).

⁵² O. Anderson, 'The Constitutional Position of the Secretary at War, 1642-1855,' *JSAHR*, XXXVI (June 1958) 167.

from 1794 to 1809, a member of the Cabinet.⁵³ As with the post of Commander in Chief, there was never a written description of the duties of the Secretary at War,⁵⁴ and this merely adds weight to the argument of those who follow Fortescue's line that he was a 'rather mysterious functionary.'⁵⁵ Even the Royal Warrant of 1812 merely clarified the position of the office in relation to that of the Commander in Chief,⁵⁶ establishing the Secretary at War's superiority, without describing the duties he was expected to perform.

Through the course of the period the work-load of the Secretary at War increased along with the expanding Army, so that from 1782 to 1796 his staff at the War Office increased from twenty two to thirty five,⁵⁷ and from 1798 to 1806 from forty one to 112,⁵⁸ despite legislation to the contrary.⁵⁹ Even with this expansion, at least one department was still unable to fulfil its duties in 1808, and resorted to paid over-time for its staff,⁶⁰ although the Commissioners of Military Enquiry of that year noted that the War Office was the only government office to work five rather than six hours daily.⁶¹ However, the Commissioners also informed of an increased efficiency in the War Office as a whole. All of the staff, except the Secretary at War, whose appointment was made by the government of the day, had been in post for some time, and therefore were familiar with the running of the office.⁶² By the end of the conflict the posts of Deputy Secretary at War and First Clerk, were seen as posts to be 'confided to responsible individuals of much experience,'⁶³ and as that experience increased, so to did their expectation of greater remuneration.⁶⁴ Most members of staff were solely employed by the Secretary at War, with only an unspecified few holding more than one office.⁶⁵ Previously a typical second post would be that of an unnamed clerk who was the military secretary of the Duke of Richmond, whose dual

⁵³ Gordon, *War Office*, 57; Palmerston refused a seat in the cabinet, believing he was too inexperienced, Bourne, *Palmerston*, 89.

⁵⁴ *6th RCME* (1808) 277.

⁵⁵ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, IV, 872.

⁵⁶ Royal Warrant, 12th May 1812; see above 26.

⁵⁷ *19th RSCF* (1797) 358, 399, *Appendix Q2*.

⁵⁸ *36th RSCF* (1798) *Appendix A1*; *6th RCME* (1808) 280-83; See also PRO WO 40/32/3 'Staff of the War Office, 1809' 20th December 1809.

⁵⁹ *6th RCME* (1808) 300, states legislation was introduced in 1783 and 1805 to limit the number of clerical staff.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 285-86.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 288. The Admiralty, Treasury, Navy, Commissioners of the Navy; Commissioners of the Public Accounts, were all stated to work a six hour day.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 301.

⁶³ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 169.

⁶⁴ PRO WO 4/426/346-353, Palmerston to Harrison, 23rd September 1814.

⁶⁵ *6th RCME* (1808) 290.

employment would mean prolonged absence from the War Office.⁶⁶ By 1808 the second jobs were stated to be compatible to their roles in the War Office, and 'the interruption to the business of the office, from the holding of these other employments, is not very material.'⁶⁷ These included clerks who were employed as translators and agents.⁶⁸ However, the Commissioners still suggested that even this type of employment should end, and concurred with the findings of the Select Committee on Finance in this respect.⁶⁹ The main criticism that was levelled at certain members of the War Office staff, was the continued presence of sinecures. The contract for the compiling and printing of the Army List, which was held by Mr. Wilkinson, a principal clerk, was criticised, as the work was actually being done by a Mr. Ray within the War Office, at public expense.⁷⁰ Likewise, a Mr. Merry, the Chief Examiner of Army Accounts, had been awarded the contract to supply coal to the Gibraltar garrison in 1793, with the approbation of the King. The Commissioners reported that such sinecures should continue only during the life of the present holders, and that in future all contracts of that nature should be submitted for competitive tender, as it would benefit the public, as well as reducing the confusion of such offices.⁷¹ The sinecure of the publication of the Army Lists was negotiated away by Wilkinson over the course of the next four years.⁷² In return for permitting the Stationary Office to produce the lists, and for the government to take the profits, he was to act as agent for the sales, and receive an emolument for each copy sold. The new system did not take full effect until 1812,⁷³ but reduced the cost of producing the Army Lists by half,⁷⁴ and Wilkinson's income for this duty, from £103.3*s*, to £62.11*s*.6*d*. in 1812, and £64.17*s*. in 1813.⁷⁵ The same system was also introduced for the production of the Militia Lists.⁷⁶ Merry relinquished his sinecure in return for the post of Deputy Secretary at War, and a

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Appendix 16.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 290.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Appendix 8, numbers 11, 23, 24, 25.

⁶⁹ 22*nd* RSCF (1797) 452, III; 6*th* RCME (1808) 290.

⁷⁰ 6*th* RCME (1808) 303.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 291-3.

⁷² PRO WO 4/514/119, Harrison to Secretary at War, 8th July 1808; WO 4/514/122, James Pultney to Harrison, 1st August 1808; WO 26/41/63-7, Harrison to Secretary at War, 1st August 1808; WO 40/28/4 Harrison to Secretary at War, 30th November 1808; WO 4/515/420-2, 'memorandum respecting the Publication of the annual Army List submitted to the consideration of the secretary at War,' 24th December 1811; WO 4/515/420, Palmerston to Wilkinson, 8th February 1812.

⁷³ PRO WO 4/515/517-20, Wilkinson to Merry, 19th October 1812.

⁷⁴ PRO WO 4/515/417-24, Wilkinson to Secretary at War, 24th December 1811.

⁷⁵ PRO WO 4/516/162, Wilkinson to Merry, 17th September 1813.

⁷⁶ PRO WO 4/514/120, Harrison to Secretary at War, 15th July 1808; WO 26/41/68-73, Harrison to Secretary at War; WO 4/514/122 Pultney to Harrison, 1st August 1808.

salary of £2,500 per annum, the year after the Commissioners' report.⁷⁷ The removal of these sinecures would lead, not just to greater professionalism of War Office staff, but would also emphasise that the Crown no longer had complete control over the patronage of the Army's civilian departments.

Despite the increase in the staff of the War Office, by the end of the conflict, rationalisation ensured that the office costs were more or less pegged. Substantial savings had been made by buying off former officers, who had previously been given weighty pensions, with lump sums. A report on the costs of the office in 1813, revealed that while wage bills increased by £1444.15s, the previous year, the savings on allowances and pensions amounted to £5399.12s.4d, a net saving of £3954.17s.4d.⁷⁸ The saving made during 1813 was only £1000,⁷⁹ but clearly the costs involved in the running of the office were being reduced. The increase in wage costs were as a result of an increase in the perceived expertise of the staff in the War Office, with many of the clerks dealing with tasks that had originally been intended for officers of a higher rank, and so requiring a rise in wages.

The cost of the War Office had been traditionally met from fees, the money obtained from the recipients of pensions, leave of absence and half pay warrants, and the purchasers of commissions. These had been consolidated into one Fee Fund in November 1797.⁸⁰ However, from 1802 this proved insufficient and the deficit had to be made up from grants from Parliament.⁸¹ By 1808, the cost of maintaining the War Office had increased so much, it was suggested that since the proportion of the budget met by fees was so negligible, it would be more efficient if the entire cost of the Office was derived from Parliamentary grants.⁸² The recommendation was approved by the House of Commons, taking effect in December.⁸³ This was in keeping with the findings of the Commissioners for Examining Public Accounts, who were instrumental in the removal of fees from the business of the Customs and Excise departments, and had expressed that there was 'great

⁷⁷ PRO WO 40/32/3 George Harrison, Treasury Office, to Merry, 20th December 1809.

⁷⁸ PRO WO 4/426/246-252, 'Increase and diminution in salaries, emoluments and expenses of the War Office.' 17th March 1813.

⁷⁹ PRO WO 4/426/346-353 Palmerston to Harrison, 21st March 1814.

⁸⁰ 19th RSCF (1797) 359; PRO WO 26/37/290, War Office Circular, 1st November 1797; 36th RSCF (1798) 681, 685, *Appendix A2*.

⁸¹ 6th RCME (1808) 297-99;

⁸² *Ibid.*, 300.

⁸³ PRO WO 26/41/41, J. Pultney to Paymaster General, 29th December 1808.

reason to believe it may be applied to every department of government.'⁸⁴ Although it had taken some time, it had brought the War Office in line with other offices of state. This change in the source of finance for the War Office was in many ways merely a cosmetic exercise, as by 1808, it was believed by those employed within it, that 'in matters of *money*, the War Office is considered as subordinate to the Board of the Treasury,' and;

although it is in the King's name the Secretary at War usually acts, yet, in many instances, he receives particular instructions from the Board of Treasury, and from the Secretary of State, and in various instances, where the Secretary at War may not think proper to take upon himself the responsibility of a measure, he either makes an official application to the Board of Treasury, or applies personally to the King's confidential Servants for their concurrence.⁸⁵

The War Office had become completely integrated into Parliamentary government, without recourse to the check of monarchical approval, nor any independence over its finances. The old sinecures had been removed, and in their place were salaried office holders, with substantial levels of professionalism and efficiency, and a career structure that would ensure financial reward for increased responsibility. In addition the War Office had been established as superior to the office of the Commander in Chief, further subordinating the military to the civilian. The maintenance of the office in 1815, ensured that a permanent civilian administration was maintained over the military, establishing the continuity of professional civil servants directing Army affairs that remains today. In 1837 the the Royal Commission under Lord Howick even recommended that it took over all military authority from the Commisariat , Master General of Ordnance and the Commander in Chief.⁸⁶

2.4 ADJUTANT GENERAL AND QUARTER-MASTER GENERAL

As stated in the discussion of the office of the Commander in Chief, two other posts within the Horse Guards, and subordinate to those described above, came to prominence during the Wars with France. Originating in 1673,⁸⁷ it was not until the Duke of York's

⁸⁴ *Journal of the House of Commons*, xxxviii, 714.

⁸⁵ *6th RCME* (1808) 279. Evidence given by Mr. Lewis, 'whose experience in the business of the War Office has been very great.'

⁸⁶ *PP* (1837) xxxiv,8-16, 27th February 1837.

⁸⁷ PRO WO 24/3, 'General Establishments of all His Majesties guards, Garrisons, and Land Forces, Commencing the xith of November 1673.' The post of Adjutant General appears on Estimates for the first time.

tenure of the Commander in Chief's post, that the offices of Adjutant General and Quarter-Master General achieved such importance,⁸⁸ although General Stewart, Adjutant General under Wellington in the Peninsula, still complained that both offices did not have the importance they had in the armies of other states.⁸⁹ During times of peace the two offices came under the jurisdiction of the Secretary at War, but when a Commander in Chief was appointed, as with Amherst in 1793, they became a part of his staff,⁹⁰ although their actual appointment only came under the control of the Duke of York in 1795.⁹¹ Initially the occupants of the posts held the brevet rank of Army colonels.⁹² However, as the Wars progressed and their departments expanded, they were granted general officer rank and pay.⁹³ Within both departments, all expenditure beyond the accepted estimate had to be sanctioned by the Secretary at War, who also had to authorise staff appointments.⁹⁴ This is further endorsement of the subordinate role which developed for the Commander in Chief's office, and the departments within it.

The funding of the departments had traditionally been through estimates submitted by the Secretary at War, with the monies deposited in the accounts of the office holders, making them 'public accountants.' An enquiry of 1782 had found that officers of the Quartermaster General's department had gained £417,592 at the public expense in this way.⁹⁵ This system continued until 1803, when, as a result of a recommendation from Charles Yorke, the Secretary at War, both the departments were requested to, 'render half-yearly Accounts (with vouchers) of their actual disbursements, for the salaries of their Clerks, for stationary, and for the other usual contingencies of their respective Offices'.⁹⁶ By 1810 this system was so well established that the Quartermaster General stated 'it is a general principle in the Quartermaster General's department that no officer of it is to become a public accountant.'⁹⁷ In this manner a major step in the modernisation of military

⁸⁸ Captain Owen Wheeler, *The War Office Past and Present* (London, 1914) 68-9.

⁸⁹ Do/Lo/C/18/52/298-306, Stewart to Castlereagh, 24th August 1809.

⁹⁰ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 340-1.

⁹¹ John Sweetman, *War and Administration: the significance of the Crimean War for the British Army* (Edinburgh, 1984) 77.

⁹² Rogers, *British Army in the Eighteenth Century*, 35.

⁹³ PRO WO 4/196.160, William Dundas to Huskisson, 15th January 1803; *11th RCME*, (1810) *Appendix* 11, A4, 80-1.

⁹⁴ *11th RCME* (1810) 6, 15.

⁹⁵ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 136.

⁹⁶ *11th RCME* (1810) 33, *Appendix* 11, A1. Charles Yorke to Duke of York, 19th January 1803.

⁹⁷ NLS, *Murray Papers*, 60/45-7, Murray to Cathcart, 16th June 1810.

administration took place, with two of the principal office holders losing their rights to process funds through their own accounts.

Although the two departments 'ranked together with regard to their consequence and importance in the Army,'⁹⁸ the Adjutant General's office was always responsible for a greater work-load, and, as a consequence, employed a larger staff. In 1792 the department occupied two rooms in Crown Street, Westminster,⁹⁹ and employed the Adjutant General, his deputy, and two clerks, at a cost excluding wages of £520.¹⁰⁰ By 1808 the staff of the office had increased to include the Adjutant General, a Deputy Adjutant General, an Assistant Deputy Adjutant General, (and eleven other Assistants in the military districts), fourteen clerks, three messengers, and an office keeper,¹⁰¹ at a cost of £1537.1s.1d. per year.¹⁰² Even after the Wars, the cost of the department continued to rise, and by 1827 had reached £6806.6s.2d.¹⁰³

The duties of the Adjutant General's department were 'all matters relating to the discipline, arming, and clothing of the Troops,'¹⁰⁴ and as a consequence 'must depend on the state of the Military Force of the Country, and means which it has been judged necessary from time to time to adopt for the purpose of maintaining, regulating, and increasing that force.'¹⁰⁵ Through the period under discussion the department's duties would clearly expand along with the augmentation of the Army, and also that of the various volunteer corps. However, the department 'assumed a new and important character,' when it took over the responsibility for regular regimental returns for troops in Britain in 1793,¹⁰⁶ and foreign stations in 1795,¹⁰⁷ together with the regulation of officers movements when in Britain, in 1797,¹⁰⁸ and the compilation of returns for submission to

⁹⁸ *11th RCME* (1810) 3.

⁹⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 340.

¹⁰⁰ *11th RCME* (1810) 6.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 341.

¹⁰³ *4th Report of the Select Committee on the State of the Public Income and Expenditure of the United Kingdom* (1828) 192.

¹⁰⁴ *11th RCME* (1810) 3.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁰⁶ PRO WO 3/27/161, William Fawcett to Generals of Districts, 22nd July 1793. See also 2.8 Inspection, 53.

¹⁰⁷ PRO WO 3/19/101, William Fawcett to General Prescott, 5th December 1798; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 341.

¹⁰⁸ PRO WO 3/17/286, Harry Calvert to Officers Commanding in Chief on Foreign Stations, 11th November 1797; WO 3/17/287-8, Harry Calvert to Regimental Agents, 11th November 1797.

the monarch, the Commander in Chief, and the government, in 1798.¹⁰⁹ It expanded still further in 1807, when the duties of the newly abolished post of Inspector General of Recruiting were transferred to the control of the Adjutant General.¹¹⁰ The absorbing of these duties was seen as a means of simplifying that area of the administration of the Army, while at the same time saving the public money. Although only reducing the manpower required from 252 to 216, by merely dispensing with the services of the Inspector General, General Whitelock, £3400 per annum in wages was saved.¹¹¹ With these additions, tied to the Adjutant General's traditional role of the issuing of General Orders to the whole Army, the department became the key to the implementation of reform and the maintenance of control throughout the Army, which was to prove essential in its development during the course of the Wars.

The department of the Quartermaster General was responsible for the movement of the troops, including the procuring of information which would enable such movement. It expanded along with the other departments within the office of the Commander in Chief, as the needs of the Wars dictated. In 1793, the department was contained in one room within the War Office, and consisted the Quartermaster General and his secretary.¹¹² By 1809, this had increased to the Quartermaster General, his Deputy, thirteen Assistants, seventeen temporary Assistants, three Deputy Assistants, three temporary deputy Assistants, two draftsmen, a confidential clerk, six clerks, an office keeper, a housekeeper, a servant, and three messengers.¹¹³ However, when the department's records were requested by the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in 1809, only those after 1803 could be produced.¹¹⁴ Such a situation is all-the-more surprising for a department within the office of the Commander in Chief, at the time of the dominance of the Duke of York, when his reforms and efficiency are usually what is noted. It would suggest that he did not have as tight a control over the Army as is usually stated, if he did not even have such control over one of his own departments.

There were two major additions to the duties of the Quartermaster General's department during the course of the period under discussion. The first concerns the

¹⁰⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 387; II, 341.

¹¹⁰ PRO WO 30/44/37, General Order, 1st June 1807; *11th RCME* (1810) 4.

¹¹¹ *11th RCME* (1810) 7.

¹¹² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 340.

¹¹³ *11th RCME* (1810) 15.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

movement of troops,¹¹⁵ which prior to 1803 had been a somewhat complicated affair. To move a body of men an order was made out in the Quartermaster General's department in the form of a memorandum, with notes to all Commanders of Districts through which they would travel, as well as to the Barrack Office, Commissary General, and the Admiralty Transport Board if necessary. This would be sent to the Secretary at War, who, after copying and endorsing would send it on to the relevant parties. In 1803 it was suggested that the Quartermaster General's department be made responsible for all areas of movement, and for all correspondence connected with it, with both civil and military departments, on receipt of a formal signature from the Secretary at War or his Deputy.¹¹⁶ The suggestion was implemented, despite it 'being attended with a considerable addition of expense to the Public,'¹¹⁷ as clearly it would simplify the movement of an ever-expanding Army, expected to operate across the globe. It also placed the movement of troops under the control of the Quartermaster General, directly sanctioned, not by the Commander in Chief, his direct superior in Horse Guards, but by the Secretary at War in the War Office. This is further evidence of the subordination of the Army to civilian authority. By the simplification of the system of transport responsibility for the movement of troops was placed under the jurisdiction of one man, the Secretary at War.

The second area of expansion came with the establishing, during 1805, of the Depot for Military Knowledge.¹¹⁸ It was to be the repository for drawings, books, plans, maps and memoirs, along the lines of the French *Dépôt*.¹¹⁹ It received a grant of £2000 to set it in motion, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel John Brown.¹²⁰ Initially the establishing of the Depot was delayed through lack of space, which was not solved until an additional storey was added to part of Horse Guards, and an extra room acquired from another department.¹²¹ However, by 1809, so little had been procured by the depot, that the initial £2000 had been sufficient for its maintenance for the previous four years.¹²² This is another

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 13; see also 7.2 Shipping, 222-28.

¹¹⁶ PRO WO 1/630/465-9, Robert Brownrigg, Quartermaster General, to York, 26th March 1803; WO 1/630/473, York to Yorke, 26th March 1803; WO 4/189/155, Yorke to York, 6th April 1803; *11th RCME* (1810) 89, *Appendix* 12, Examination of Brownrigg, 28th April 1809; Commander-in-Chief to Right Honourable Charles Yorke, Secretary at War, 26th March 1803.

¹¹⁷ PRO WO 1/630/477-78, Yorke to York, 6th April 1803; *11th RCME* (1810) 89, *Appendix* 12.

¹¹⁸ *11th RCME* (1810) 14, 17-8; see also 7.6 Maps, 241-2.

¹¹⁹ PRO WO 1/630/457-62, York to Castlereagh, 3rd August 1805.

¹²⁰ *11th RCME* (1810) 17; WO 1/838/443, Edward Cooke, Treasury Office, to William Huchison, 9th September 1805; WO 4/200/98, W. Dundas to York, 10th December 1805.

¹²¹ PRO WO 1/630/457-62, York to Castlereagh, 3rd August 1805; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 30.

¹²² *11th RCME* (1810) 18.

surprising example of the inefficiency of the Quartermaster General's department, and one which would prove very costly, particularly during the early campaigns in the Peninsula.

The departments of the Adjutant General and Quartermaster General expanded to unprecedented levels following their transfer to the control of the Commander in Chief's office in 1793, although at all times their expenditure beyond the estimates was controlled by the Secretary at War. In 1803, later than most other departments, the holders of these offices ceased to be public accountants, with all payments made under the voucher system, and their pay increased to £1 per day above that of their normal Army pay.¹²³ The main area of expansion of the Adjutant General's department was in the inspection of the troops and the compilation and dissemination of data, which was to make it the key department in the implementation of reform and the maintenance of control, throughout the Army. The addition of transport co-ordination to the duties of the Quartermaster General, brought the movement of troops under the control of one man for the first time, but this responsibility was not vested in a military man, but in the civilian Secretary at War. The efficiency of the Quartermaster General's department, despite being part of the jurisdiction of the Duke of York, during his tenure of the office of Commander in Chief, was called into question first by its inability to submit any documents prior to 1803, to the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in 1809, and second by the early failings of the Depot for Military Knowledge. These latter problems might suggest that the question of efficiency could be another reason why civilians increasingly came to dominate the affairs of the Army.

2.5 SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (AND COLONIES)

The ultimate civilian authority over the Army was vested in the Secretary of State for War and Colonies, which was itself a product of the Wars with France. In 1793 the structure of government placed the Army under the control of two offices; the Foreign and Colonial Office, which was responsible for the Army abroad; and the Home Office, which was responsible for the Army in Britain. This separation of authority was potentially disruptive, with each demanding troops for its own purpose, and was changed within a year of the outbreak of the Wars, upon the creation of the office of Secretary of State for War.¹²⁴

¹²³ PRO WO 4/196/160, W. Dundas to W. Huskisson, 15th January 1803.

¹²⁴ This change was not merely for military expediency. When the Portland Whigs joined Pitt's government in July 1794, part of the arrangement involved the Duke of Portland taking over from Henry Dundas at the

In 1798 the office took over responsibility for colonial affairs. This was seen by Dupin as an obvious marriage. He stated that,

In England, where the navy is far more powerful than the Army, the government of the colonies is associated with the superintendence and direction of military operations; while, in France, where the maritime authority has much less influence in the government, it is yet entrusted with the command of the colonies. But a sufficient explanation can, I conceive, be given of this apparent political paradox. From the very circumstance that the dominion of the seas is possessed by the British navy, the transport of troops and stores from mother-country to the colonies becomes merely a secondary object, gained without danger or difficulty. There are not more obstacles to communication between Great Britain and America, than between England and Ireland, and the ministry of war can dispatch succours across the Atlantic and the Irish Channel with equal facility. It is, therefore, natural that the executive power of the Army, and the defence of the colonies, should rest in the same hands. But in France, on the contrary, the greatest obstacle to the defence and preservation of the colonies arises from the contingencies of the ocean.¹²⁵

Glover criticised the amalgamation as effectively creating two half-time posts.¹²⁶ However, rather than weakening both offices, the amalgamation can be seen as an integral part of a policy of colonial expansion and consolidation. It would aid the development of the British Empire throughout the nineteenth century, moving the emphasis of the military away from the European theatre of war, and placing it firmly upon the defence of British colonial interests.

During the Wars, the Secretary of State was the military voice of the cabinet. His was the ultimate authority over the Army and the Ordnance, in respect of their employment and supply, and therefore the figure most likely to attract criticism. Neither Glover or Fortescue have much in the way of praise for any holder of this office, excepting Castlereagh.¹²⁷ But neither had time for any civilian interference in military affairs, and so a directing civil office would be seen as a disruptive influence. Instead the Secretary of State was an integral part of the political structure of Great Britain, and any conflict of interest between the various offices of state¹²⁸ was merely a consequence of cabinet government.

Home Office. The new Secretaryship therefore owed as much to Pitt's desire to keep Dundas close to him, as to the perceived need for a Minister of War. *Later Correspondence of George. III*, Vol. II, 1-220.

¹²⁵ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 32-4.

¹²⁶ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 15.

¹²⁷ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 234; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 32.

¹²⁸ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 28.

The Secretary of State was rarely a military man, but that was not considered of great importance, as his role was the direction of policy rather than the intricacies of the Army. Dupin observed, 'It will be seen that the duties of the minister of war and colonies have no relation to the technical details of the military service, and are of a nature almost entirely political'.¹²⁹ However, in 1809 it was deemed necessary to add a second Under-Secretary of State to the office of the Secretary of War and Colonies. This post was to be filled by a military officer, who was to advise the Secretary on martial matters.¹³⁰ This would prove vitally important in the understanding of the developing civilian authority over the military.

2.6 COMMANDERS IN THE FIELD

In military operations the role of the Secretary of State was purely directional. The government chose the military commander, but imposed no specific plan on him, instead giving him a general object for the expedition, and leaving the military decisions to him. However, this required a good working relationship between the two, and could be the source of friction. The Letter of Service of the field commander effectively gave him absolute authority over the troops under his command,¹³¹ permitting him to hold Courts Martial, and issue warrants for the settlement of expenses. Ward sees the creation of such a powerful military officer as precisely what Britain had been trying to avoid for 150 years.¹³² But, it is difficult to see in what other manner the Army in the field could be controlled, when at times it was completely out of contact with its civilian masters.¹³³ This virtual delegation of ministerial authority was tempered by the fact that the commander had no power to select his own senior officers, beyond his personal staff,¹³⁴ and he still relied upon the structure of the Army in Britain for supply. The view of the elder Pitt had been,

that in order to render any general completely responsible for his conduct he should be made as far as possible inexcusable if he should fail, and that, consequently,

¹²⁹ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 38.

¹³⁰ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 16.

¹³¹ See for example, PRO HO 51/147/118, Royal Warrant, 2nd September 1793; WO 6/20/242, Royal Warrant for York, 11th September 1799; GRE-A, 829, Portland to Grey, 9th August 1796.

¹³² Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 32.

¹³³ See 7.7 Communication, 243-52.

¹³⁴ See for example, PRO WO 3/11/214, Fawcett to Duke of Richmond, Commander of Southern District, 15th November 1793, informing him of appointments to his staff; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 31-2.

whatever an officer entrusted with a service of confidence requests should be complied with.¹³⁵

At the outbreak of the Wars with France, through the inability of the state to comply with the wishes of their field commanders, this statement was found to be true. Blame for failure was diverted from the field commanders and on to those in higher authority, such as Amherst.¹³⁶ By the time of Moore's appointment to the command of the Army in Portugal in 1808, the Secretary of State, Castlereagh, was complying with Pitt's suggestion, and furnishing him, as best as he could, with all his requests for men and supplies.¹³⁷ In this way any criticism of the expedition was directed at the general, and not the minister.¹³⁸

In the same manner the Duke of York's active service ended due to his own incompetence as a field commander, and through the ability of the government to choose the leader of armies on foreign service. Taking control of the expedition to the United Provinces in 1793,¹³⁹ his failure was such that it generated substantial criticism in Britain, and much popular debate,¹⁴⁰ which ensured that he did not command another field Army. The debate was resurrected when, as Commander in Chief, he was in line to command the Army against an invading French force,¹⁴¹ a debate which was only solved by the passing of the threat of invasion. Significantly, his failings ensured that the command of the Army by any member of the royal family became less likely. During the Wars, most of the royal dukes and princes held general officer rank, but without any active involvement in the

¹³⁵ Beckles Wilson, *The Life and Letters of James Wolfe* (London, 1909) 410-11, as quoted in Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 32-3.

¹³⁶ See above, 2.2 Commander-in-Chief, 24-9; see also for example GRE-A, 186a, Henry Dundas to Grey, 6th December 1793, regarding the difficulties experienced in supplying Grey with Fresh meat.

¹³⁷ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 37.

¹³⁸ See for example PD, XIII, (1809) 799-802, 805-809, House of Lords, 24th March 1809.

¹³⁹ PRO HO 51/147/108 or 109,128, Commission of York as General and Commander-in-Chief of forces in the United Provinces.

¹⁴⁰ See for example, An Englishman, *The Prince of Wales, A Second Plain Letter to His Royal Highness, wherein His Plain Duties to Himself, his Wife, His Child, and to the Country, are more plainly shewn than in the first; also that His Royal Highness is an accomplished gentleman, a virtuous man, a good Christian, and a sound philosopher. With remarks on the correspondence upon his claim for military rank and employment; which likewise prove the Duke of York to be a great author, a good swimmer, and an able general* (London, n.d.); An Englishman, *The Duke of York. A Letter to HRH, or, A Delicate Inquiry into the doubt whether he be more favoured by Mars or Venus, with Hints about Dunkirk - Holland - The Army - The Case and Treatment of the Hon. A. C. Johnstone - Remarks of General Fitzpatrick's consistency* (London, 1807); *The Present State of the British Army in Flanders; with an Authentic Account of their Retreat from Before Dunkirk. By A British Officer in that Army, who was living on the 24th of September* (London, 1794).

¹⁴¹ *The Bonne-Bouche of Epicurean Rascality; dedicated to the worst man in His Majesty's Dominions; containing more ample elucidations of the conduct of His Royal Highness the Duke of York, as Commander in Chief; with some remarks on the policy of his commanding the army in case of invasion: to which is added a postscript, containing a corrosive Styptic to the poisonous Effects of a Pamphlet announced for Publication, entitled, "The Agent and His Natural Son."* (London, 1807).

conflict. The Duke of Gloucester, the king's brother, became a Field Marshal on 12th October 1793,¹⁴² and died on 25th August 1805, without ever taking command of a force. Prince Edward, Duke of Kent, became a Major General on 2nd October 1793, a full General on 12th January 1796, and a Field Marshal on 5th September 1805.¹⁴³ His only active command was of a brigade during the Grey-Jervis expedition to the West Indies, during 1794, but even here, having arrived in March,¹⁴⁴ he was little more than a 'spectator,' at the taking of Martinique,¹⁴⁵ and he returned to the Nova Scotia as Governor the following month.¹⁴⁶ In 1802 he was appointed Governor of Gibraltar,¹⁴⁷ but his efforts to restore order resulted in a mutiny¹⁴⁸ and his recall, after which he took no further part in the war, despite requesting active duty.¹⁴⁹ Prince Ernest, Duke of Cumberland, and Prince Adolphus, Duke of Cambridge, were both commissioned in the Hanoverian Army in 1792,¹⁵⁰ seeing service with the Duke of York in the Low Countries.¹⁵¹ On 25th April 1808, they were both promoted to full Generals in the British Army, and Field Marshals on 26th November 1813. However, despite several requests for permission to join expeditions, neither was permitted to play a part in any active service.¹⁵²

The Duke of Cumberland was forthright in his belief that it was the political influence of the newspapers that was preventing the service of the royal princes, in particular the Duke of York. He made it clear where he placed the blame for the appointment of Sir John Moore instead of York, to lead the expedition in Spain.

¹⁴² All commission dates from *Army List*, (1793), (1796), (1805), (1809), (1816).

¹⁴³ PRO HO 51/147/110, Royal Warrant, 2nd October

¹⁴⁴ *George III*, 1030, Prince Edward to the King.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower: The British Expeditions to the West Indies and the War against Revolutionary France* (Oxford, 1987) 82.

¹⁴⁶ *George III*, 1051, Prince Edward to the King, 23rd April 1794; see also SRO G51/1/609, Henry Hamilton to Henry Dundas, 23rd July 1794, containing an extract from Governor J. Wentworth from Halifax Nova Scotia, on the merits of Prince Edward taking command there, 22nd July 1794.

¹⁴⁷ *George III*, 2603, Duke of York to the King, 23rd March 1802.

¹⁴⁸ John Brooke, *King George III* (London, 1972) 561.

¹⁴⁹ *George III*, 3597, Duke of Kent to the King, 6th February 1808; The King to Duke of Kent, 9th February 1808, request for active service, rejected.

¹⁵⁰ *George III*, 806, Prince Adolphus to the King, 2nd November 1792; 809, Prince Adolphus to the King, November 1792.

¹⁵¹ *George III*, 876, Prince Ernest to the King, 3rd May 1793; Duke of York to the King, 6th August 1793; Prince Adolphus to the King, 26th August 1793.

¹⁵² *George III*, 1718, Prince Ernest to the King, 14th April 1798, request to be given any military post rejected; 2001, Prince Adolphus to the King, 1st August 1799, request to take part in the Helder expedition rejected; 2466, Prince Adolphus to the King, 5th July 1801, request to be given any military post rejected; 3699, Duke of Cumberland to the King, 30th July 1808; The King to Duke of Cumberland, 1st August 1808, request to join Peninsula expedition refused.

Had the Ministers not been so frightened by newspapers they would not have hesitate sending out the Commander in Chief, who from his station in life and rank in the Army was the proper person to command, but, fearing the attacks of papers, they sacrifice the good of the Army and appointed a man perfectly inadequate to the situation both from his want of capacity and want of *experience*... Should, however, he go in the supreme command then the door is open for other Generals to serve, and at least *I* might have an opportunity of serving my country, which I long for, and really it is a disgraceful thing that in such a great cause as this, that *none* of the King's sons are with the Army.¹⁵³

While Cumberland blamed the newspapers for the choice of Moore for the expedition to Spain, his words shed even more light on the reasons behind the decision. Not only had the royal princes proved inept in command, they were also too senior to be given anything except the head of an expedition. By 1808 York and Kent were the only two Field Marshals in the Army, while Cumberland and Cambridge had been promoted to full General. Were they to be sent on an expedition, they would almost certainly have needed to be given its command, as there were few senior to them who were not of an age to debar them from service abroad. That the command of the Spanish expedition was given to a Lieutenant General of only middling seniority suggests that the government had decided to send a competent officer, rather than a prince of the blood, further distancing the operation of the Army, not only from the Commander in Chief, but also from the crown.

In the same way, the government had superseded Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Wellesley in 1808, even after his victories, and despite his popularity and political influence, with two more senior men of the same rank, Sir Hew Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard. Both men were still junior to any of the royal princes, but were chosen to command the largest expeditionary force Britain had ever put into the field. Despite criticism of the government's 'striking ineptitude' over the appointments,¹⁵⁴ it is clear they were merely exerting their authority, and appointing more senior men to command a vital campaign. That the chosen commanders were inept, is not for this thesis to examine. What is important was that the civilian government had the power to appoint their own commanders, and chose to overlook the king's sons, and the influential Wellesley, in favour of men they preferred, and with whom they believed they could work towards the aims of the government, not those of the Army or the crown.

¹⁵³ Eldon MSS, as quoted in *George III, 3699n*, Duke of Cumberland to Sir James Scott, 14th October 1808; see also *The Objections to the appointment of Frederick, Duke of York and Albany to the command of the British Army in Spain briefly answered* (London, 1808) *passim*.

¹⁵⁴ See for example, Michael Glover, *Britannia Sickness: Sir Arthur Wellesley and the Convention of Cintra* (London, 1970) 66.

A good working relationship was essential between the field commanders and their Secretary of State. Despite the problems created by Cintra, Castlereagh was able to work well with his family-friend Wellesley,¹⁵⁵ as was Lord Liverpool, who took over the Secretaryship in November 1809.¹⁵⁶ Wellesley appears to have sought to have a similar association with each holder of the post. Despite regularly writing in critical terms regarding deficiencies in men, money and supplies,¹⁵⁷ he was always deferential and accepting of the position of the civilian minister above him.¹⁵⁸ In particular he attempted to distance himself from the party politics being waged at home, stating ‘we must keep the spirit of party out of the Army, or we shall be in a bad way indeed.’¹⁵⁹ He continued in this vein, even when he became the target of opposition criticisms,¹⁶⁰ or when his brothers became leading figures in the opposition, and his grievances could have fuelled their arguments.¹⁶¹ In fact Wellington’s correspondence with the civilian minister increased as the war progressed. From April 1809 to April 1810, he sent 147 letters to the Secretary of State. This was maintained throughout the Peninsular campaign, reaching 238 for the twelve months to April 1814.¹⁶² It is significant that the increase in contact between the field commander and the Secretary of State developed after the Duke of York had vacated the office of Commander in Chief following the Mary-Anne Clarke affair, suggesting that the absence of his influence in some way enabled greater contact, and consequently greater Parliamentary control of the Army. Even after York’s return in 1811, the Duke sent only thirteen letters to his office, until the end of the campaign.¹⁶³ It shows an awareness on the part of Wellington of the established channels of communication, and the protocol of the

¹⁵⁵ John K. Severn, ‘The Wellesleys and Iberian Diplomacy, 1808-12’ in Norman Gash (ed.), *Wellington: Studies in the military and political career of the First Duke of Wellington* (Manchester, 1990) 36.

¹⁵⁶ *WD*, v, 317, Wellington to Liverpool, 28th November 1809.

¹⁵⁷ See for example *WD*, iv, 425, Wellesley to Castlereagh, 14th June 1809; viii, 270, Wellington to Liverpool, 11th September 1811; xi, 373, Wellington to Bathurst, 15th December 1813; (men) iv, 456, Wellesley to Castlereagh, 22nd June 1809; iv, 583, Wellington to Liverpool, 20th March 1810; xi, 459, Wellington to Bathurst, 16th January 1814; (money) iv, 528, Wellington to Castlereagh, 24th July 1809; v, 217, Wellington to Liverpool, 20th June 1810; xi, 517, Wellington to Bathurst, 13th February 1814, (supplies).

¹⁵⁸ *WD*, v, 317, Wellington to Liverpool, 28th November 1809; ix, 270, Wellington to Bathurst, 4th July 1812; Neville Thompson, ‘Lord Bathurst and the Administration of the Peninsular War, 1812-14,’ in Alice D. Berkeley, *New Lights on the Peninsular War. International congress on the Iberian peninsula. Selected papers 1780-1840* (Almada, Portugal, 1991) 157-164.

¹⁵⁹ *WD*, v, 404, Wellington to Liverpool, 2nd January 1810.

¹⁶⁰ *WD*, v, 404, Wellington to Liverpool, 2nd January 1810; v, 542, Wellington to Liverpool, 1st March 1810; see also Smith, *Earl Grey*, 173-4.

¹⁶¹ Thompson, ‘Lord Bathurst and the Administration of the Peninsular War,’ 157.

¹⁶² *WD*, xiii, 146-186.

¹⁶³ *WD*, xiii, 209, eleven to the Commander-in-Chief; ix, 603, one to the Quartermaster General; vii, 441, one to the Adjutant General.

military hierarchy. Despite his popularity in Britain and within the Army, he did not forget that he was the commander of an expedition directed by the cabinet in London, and not independent of political, and therefore civilian control.

2.7 ARMY ORGANISATION

The dramatic alteration in the civil and military hierarchical structure of the Army, was not mirrored in the basic military organisation. The troops a field commander controlled were divided into the basic unit of Army organisation, the battalion of infantry¹⁶⁴ or the regiment of cavalry. They were commanded by a colonel, although always in absentia militarily by a lieutenant-colonel,¹⁶⁵ and administratively by an agent,¹⁶⁶ making the colonelcy of a regiment something of a sinecure, the distribution of which was held by the king. The colonels had substantial authority, being responsible for all aspects of a unit's existence. They were perceived to have even greater power than they actually possessed, due to their association with the usurpation of civil authority by the generals during the Commonwealth.¹⁶⁷ As a result, checks were placed upon their power, such as the purchase system, which removed much of the authority over patronage from them.¹⁶⁸ Through the period under discussion further limitations were placed upon their control of the patronage within their own corps,¹⁶⁹ and an increasing number of Army-wide regulations were introduced which took away certain of their powers, such as their choice of training system,¹⁷⁰ and restricted the use of others, such as the regulating of uniform and equipment.¹⁷¹ In fact the colonels were to become merely the middle management of the Army, men whose power and control was to diminish through the course of the Wars with France. In 1793 there were 116 regular infantry battalions and cavalry regiments, which by 1815, had increased to more than 350. As the Army expanded, and its regulation tightened, the proportionate ability of the colonels to affect anything except the management of their

¹⁶⁴ In most cases, the term battalion and regiment can be used synonymously when referring to the infantry. However, as described later, the addition of further battalions to the strength of certain regiments means that using the term battalion is subject to less confusion.

¹⁶⁵ This rank was effectively the last permitted to be purchased.

¹⁶⁶ See 3.6 Agency, 82-91.

¹⁶⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 28.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 67-8, 72, 85, 92.

¹⁶⁹ See for example, GRE-A, 868, Circular Letter, Windham to Grey 30th September 1796; Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 91.

¹⁷⁰ See 5.2 Drill, 164-8

¹⁷¹ See Chapter 6.4 Clothing and Equipment, 202-13.

own corps became restricted to those of their number with power and influence beyond the Army.

As a result of the Dutch crisis of 1787, the strength of infantry battalions was raised from eight to ten companies, with a strength of about 400 men.¹⁷² Their wartime establishment of between 600 and 1000 men was only re-introduced after the Nootka Sound crisis, in 1790,¹⁷³ although as late as 1807, many regiments still functioned at the lower establishment, and were encouraged by the Duke of York to move towards the higher figure.¹⁷⁴ No further additions to their strengths were introduced, even during the Wars. Instead, within the infantry, there was a move towards the establishment of further battalions of the same regiment, with parallel organisations under the same colonel, but with separate lieutenant-colonels.¹⁷⁵ This was particularly popular with Pitt, who used recruits from the abortive Additional Force and Voluntary Consolidation Acts, to establish the principle in several regiments of the line.¹⁷⁶ The concept was never established Army-wide, and since seniority within the regiment always lay with the first battalion, there was a tendency for the second battalion (and any subsequent battalions) to be weaker, having supplied the best men to the parent formation. A regiment which sent out a single battalion on campaign would always send its best men, drawn from all battalions, and so any remaining battalion would often be both under strength, and full of second rate soldiers.¹⁷⁷ However, it would ensure that the first battalion was maintained up to strength, a luxury which was often impossible for single battalion regiments. Occasionally, more than one battalion of a regiment would see service at the same time. In these circumstances they would operate as entirely separate entities, and would be treated as such by the field

¹⁷² PRO WO 26/33/195, Royal Warrant, 25th September 1787.

¹⁷³ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 293-9.

¹⁷⁴ PRO WO 1/635/449, York to Castlereagh, 25th August 1807.

¹⁷⁵ PRO WO 40/28/9, J.W. Gordon, Horse Guards, to Moore, War Office, 14th June 1808; WO 40/28/3, York to Colonel G. Harris, 73rd Regiment, 23rd December 1808; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 60; Londonderry, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, VIII, 65; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 231; See also 4.2 Expansion, 104-10. Within the cavalry, the idea of additional formations was never attempted.

¹⁷⁶ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 231; See also 4.3 Intervention, 117-9.

¹⁷⁷ See for example BP, Charles Booth to Thomas Booth, 6th August 1805, 'a second battalion is never so well looked after as a first, ... because the raw recruits joining by one or two at a time keep the battalion, (which is nearly composed of them) in constant drill in the marching manual and platoon exercise &c., and when they are sufficiently acquainted with which, they join (if fine men) the 1st Batt'n, and they reap the fruits of our labour'; William Booth to Thomas Booth, 19th October 1806, the 1st Battalion of the 95th (Rifle) Regiment of Foot was sent on service in 1806, and consisted of men from each battalion over five feet eight inches in height, 'most of them above five feet ten and eleven.' Oman, *Wellington's Army*, 180, states that there were exceptions to this general rule, with certain second battalions remaining in England with near full strengths, although he does concede that they would include 'the weak and ineffective men' not only of the second battalion, but also the first.

commander. Sir Charles Oman examined all such formations, and found that even when these battalions fell below a fighting strength, they would be sent home rather than merged with what should have been their parent formation. This is an example of two distinct developments which can be observed during the course of the period. First, by sending the battalions home to recruit, the separate battalions would theoretically be brought up to strength, maintaining several, rather than a single unit for potential use. Secondly, the patronage within the entire corps was essential to the power of the colonels, and therefore could not be removed without recourse to compensation.¹⁷⁸ Despite the demise of the structure of additional battalions in the intervening years,¹⁷⁹ it was to be an integral part of the reforms of Cardwell in 1871,¹⁸⁰ and a means to massively augment forces during the two world Wars.¹⁸¹

From 1788, the composition of a line battalion of infantry was eight centre or battalion companies, and one each of light and grenadier.¹⁸² The grenadiers took the right of the line, and were considered the smarter men of the unit, invariably taller, although by the period in question little specific training was given to them. The light company took the left of the line and were given some additional training, in particular to enable them to extend and cover the remaining companies of the battalion when formations were changed.¹⁸³ Battalions designated as *Light Infantry* or *Rifle*, consisted of ten identical companies. The compliment of officers in a line battalion in 1793, was two lieutenant-colonels, two majors, six captains, one captain-lieutenant, and twenty subalterns.¹⁸⁴ A sergeant was borne on establishment to cover each officer, and this remained unaltered until the development of light and rifle battalions, which were each permitted to carry an

¹⁷⁸ See 2.7 Army Organisation, 46-7.

¹⁷⁹ See for example, GRE-D, I/9 (1), Memorandum by General Grey on the proposed system for establishing the reserve depots for Regiments employed in the Crimea at Malta and Gibraltar, watermarked 1854; I/9 (3), Memorandum by General Grey on the augmentation of the army by permanent depots', December 1853; I/9 (4) Copy of a memorandum by Sidney Herbert on recruitment for the regular army from militia regiments, watermarked 1853.

¹⁸⁰ GRE-D, II/4 (1), Cardwell to Grey, 19th October 1865; II/4 (2), Cardwell to Grey, 16th December 1869; II/4 (17) Cardwell to Queen Victoria, 16th December 1869; II/4 (19) Queen Victoria to Cardwell, 22nd December 1869.

¹⁸¹ See for example, Clive Hughs, 'The New Armies' in Ian Beckett and Keith Simpson (eds.), *A Nation in Arms: A social study of the British army in the First World War* (London, 1990) 99-126.

¹⁸² PRO WO 3/7/10, Adjutant General to Lieutenant General Matthew, 15th January 1788. The exception to this rule were the regiments bearing the old titles of fusiliers, the 7th, 21st and 23rd Regiments, which had only one light company, trained in the same manner as that of the line battalions, and nine battalion or fusilier companies, with no extra training.

¹⁸³ See also 5.4 Light Infantry, 171-8.

¹⁸⁴ The proportion of Lieutenants to Ensigns does not appear to have ever been fixed.

extra lieutenant, sergeant and corporal on the establishment of each company, on account of their performing duties in extended order, which needed a greater degree of control.¹⁸⁵

During the course of the period under examination the duties required of all the unit officers increased, with a greater expectation of attendance,¹⁸⁶ a higher degree of inspection and control,¹⁸⁷ together with a general increase in duties brought about by the onset of war. In an effort to reduce the work-load of the field officers of regiments, in 1803 three extra captaincies were introduced in both the infantry and the cavalry.¹⁸⁸ Previously the companies or troops of these officers had been commanded by their senior lieutenants, in the case of the major and lieutenant-colonel, and the senior lieutenant of the regiment in the case of the colonels. Although this increase in establishment would cost the public £821.5s for each unit,¹⁸⁹ the increase in efficiency it brought about must surely have been worth the increased expenditure. For much the same reason, several specific ranks were created in both the infantry and cavalry for senior NCOs, which increased a units' compliment, and enabled greater efficiency through more control.

In 1793, a cavalry regiment consisted of six troops, totalling about 600 men.¹⁹⁰ The compliment of officers was two lieutenant-colonels, two majors, three captains, eight lieutenants, and eight cornets.¹⁹¹ However, in 1804 a Royal Warrant had to specifically encourage regiments to appoint a second lieutenant-colonel and major.¹⁹² This process was still not complete by 1807, when due to the numbers of field officers acting as general officers, it was emphasised that the additional post was necessary, just to gain 'one effective Lieutenant Colonel.'¹⁹³ At the outbreak of the war, the establishment of a cavalry

¹⁸⁵ PRO WO 40/29/(B)1, Duke of York to Colonel Trigge, (Colonel of the 68th), 10th September 1808; WO/40/29/(B)1, York to Secretary at War, 10th September 1808; WO 4/206/292, Pultney to Colonel of 68th Regiment of Foot, 17th September 1808.

¹⁸⁶ For a full discussion of this subject see Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' Chapter 6, 209-58.

¹⁸⁷ See below, 2.8 Inspection, 53-8.

¹⁸⁸ PRO WO 4/189/410-11, Yorke to Agents of all Regiments, and Yorke to commanding Officers of all regiments, 27th May 1803; WO 4/189/419, War Office Circular, 27th May 1803; the Foot Guards were to increase their number of captains by five in the 1st Regiment, and four in the Coldstream and 3rd Regiments, WO4/189/418-9, Yorke to the Commanding Officers of the Regiments of Foot Guards, 7th June 1807.

¹⁸⁹ WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815.

¹⁹⁰ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 112-3; A regiment of the Household cavalry always numbered substantially more than 600 men, often parading as many as 1200.

¹⁹¹ H.C.B. Rogers, *The Mounted Troops of the British Army* (London, 1967) 68.

¹⁹² PRO WO 4/207/390, Royal Warrant, 23rd November 1804.

¹⁹³ PRO WO 1/635/449, York to Castlereagh, 28th August 1807.

regiment was increased to 900 by the addition of three extra troops.¹⁹⁴ When sent on campaign, a large depot of men was always left in Britain, as the source of drafts of new recruits. However, this would mean that the average strength of a cavalry regiment on active service was reduced to around 600, drawn up in four troops.¹⁹⁵

The paper expansion of the Army continued throughout the Wars,¹⁹⁶ while active service wastage resulted in units being drastically under strength. By December 1814, eighteen battalions of the Peninsular Army numbered less than 350 rank and file.¹⁹⁷ Battalions of Embodied Detachments, or composite battalions, made up of such units, were attempted in 1809,¹⁹⁸ consisting of ‘A corps of eight hundred Rank and File with a proper proportion of Officers & Non Commissioned Officers, having been embodied from the Detachments at the Army Depot.’¹⁹⁹ The ability of such units to function is further confirmation that a uniform system of administration and training was in use, which enabled them to operate together.²⁰⁰ Previously it had only been the additionally trained light infantry and grenadier companies of regiments which were formed together to operate as a single battalion.²⁰¹ It was believed that despite supply problems,²⁰² resulting from each soldier being entitled to issues of clothing and accoutrements from different colonels, these units would be ‘in every other respect perfectly efficient.’²⁰³ However, despite seeing service in the Peninsula,²⁰⁴ they had to be recalled and broken up into their individual regiments due to serious disciplinary problems.²⁰⁵ Dundas reported that,

their discipline as must be the case with Corps similarly constituted may naturally be supposed to have relaxed... Under all these circumstances I have to request that

¹⁹⁴ PRO WO 3/11/38, Fawcett to Colonels of Cavalry Regiments, 12th February 1793; WO 3/11/30, Fawcett to Agents of Cavalry Regiments, 14th February 1793.

¹⁹⁵ Oman, *Wellington's Army*, 194.

¹⁹⁶ See 4.2 Expansion, 104-10.

¹⁹⁷ *SD*, vol. 8, 495-498.

¹⁹⁸ PRO WO 3/350/289, Calvert to Lieutenant Colonel Cochrane, 2nd Battalion, 36th Regiment, 24th June 1809.

¹⁹⁹ PRO WO 1/641/221-4, Adjutant General to J. Robinson, Esq., 3rd July 1809.

²⁰⁰ See also Chapter 5 Training, Section I, Drill, 164-8.

²⁰¹ See for example, GRE-A, 200, ‘Return of strength of the several corps composing the army commanded by Grey, embarked at Barbados on the expedition against Martinique,’ 1st February 1794. The light and grenadier companies of the whole army were drawn together in six composite battalions; 2243/54-6, Grey to Henry Dundas, 8th July 1794. Flank companies sent from Ireland.

²⁰² PRO WO 1/641/221-4, Adjutant General to J. Robinson, Esq., 3rd July 1809; WO 1/641/225, Mr. Moore, War Office, to Adjutant General, 6th July 1809; WO 1/641/233, W. Dundas to Castlereagh, 7th July 1809.

²⁰³ PRO WO 1/641/221-4, Adjutant General to J. Robinson, Esq., 3rd July 1809.

²⁰⁴ WP, General Orders, 9/1/2/1, 16th July 1809.

²⁰⁵ PRO WO 6/133/174, J. Robinson, Secretary of State's Office, to Commander in Chief, 9th July 1809.

Your Lordship will be pleased to direct that immediate measures be taken to order these detachments home.’²⁰⁶

By 1813, the tendency, despite the Duke of York’s reservations,²⁰⁷ was to allow regiments to remain as separate entities irrespective of massive reductions. The preferred solution of Wellington in these circumstances became the formation of a Provisional battalion,²⁰⁸ in which two reduced units were each re-structured to four companies, the remaining officers and non-commissioned officers being returned to Britain to recruit and rebuild the battalion.²⁰⁹ Wellington informed Bathurst,

Whenever a battalion in this Army, which should have no second or first battalion in England or Ireland, should fall below 350 rank and file, fit for duty, these men should be formed into four companies; and the officers and non-commissioned officers of six companies should be sent home, in order to receive and form drafts. These will answer all the purposes of a second or third battalion.²¹⁰

The organisation of a Provisional battalion would maintain the independence of the original units, and while operating in one formation, would give the Peninsular Army an effective body of experienced troops. Wellington stated, ‘I am desirous, if possible, not to reduce this Army in old soldiers. One soldier who has served one or two campaigns, will render more service than two recently sent from England’.²¹¹ The 2nd battalions of the 24th and 58th Regiments of Foot, and the 2nd Regiment of Foot and the 2nd battalion of the 53rd Regiment of Foot, were each reduced to four companies and linked as Provisional battalions during 1813,²¹² earning the approbation of Wellington for their effectiveness.²¹³ The use of this solution for reduced strength battalions also met with the approval of the battalion commanders, who maintained their independence, and the title of the regiment. At least two commanders of such units requested that their corps be linked in this manner when their returns fell below 350.²¹⁴ All parties appeared to gain from this arrangement.

²⁰⁶ PRO WO 1/641/233, W. Dundas to Castlereagh, 7th July 1809.

²⁰⁷ *WD*, x, 629, Wellington to Bathurst, 11th August 1813.

²⁰⁸ PRO WO 1/645/139; *WD*, x, 51, Wellington to Bathurst, 27th January 1813; x, 174-5, Wellington to Bathurst, 9th March 1813. The plan had first been proposed without success in a letter to the Secretary of State, vii, 525, Wellington to Liverpool, 7th May 1811.

²⁰⁹ *WD*, x, 51, Wellington to Bathurst, 27th January 1813; xi, 180, Wellington to Bathurst, 9th October 1813.

²¹⁰ *WD*, xi, 180, Wellington to Bathurst, 9th October 1813.

²¹¹ *WD*, x, 51, Wellington to Bathurst, 27th January 1813; he was to increase their worth to three newly sent out soldiers within two months, x, 174-5, Wellington to Bathurst, 9th March 1813.

²¹² WP, Commander-in-Chief’s Letter Book, 63-68, Wellington to Bathurst, 27th January 1813.

²¹³ *WD*, x, 629, Wellington to Bathurst, 11th August 1813.

²¹⁴ *WD*, x, 629, Wellington to Bathurst, 11th August 1813. The battalions were the 51st and 68th Regiments of Light Infantry from the 7th Division - there is no evidence of this being implemented.

The colonels gained from the maintenance of individual units, with their identities, profits and patronage, while the field commander kept a solid body of experienced troops, which could be augmented with fresh batches of recruits. He also kept them under his control, operating as an active service force and away from the softening influence of the parade-ground training of home service. This solution had actually been an idea initiated by York himself. In 1812 he had formed a provisional cavalry formation of two squadrons from each of the 1st and 2nd Life Guards, and the Royal regiment of Horse Guards, in order to reinforce the Army in Spain.²¹⁵ Wellington had merely developed the idea, and used it effectively to his own ends.

In the same way, Wellington was to adopt a system of Army organisation and control developed elsewhere and use it with unprecedented effectiveness. The establishment of a Divisional structure during the Peninsular campaign, introduced another tier into the management structure of the expanding Army.²¹⁶ The previous brigade organisation, had proved unmanageable with the increased numbers of men, across the vast distances over which the Peninsular War was fought. Earlier campaigns had relied heavily on the personal contact of the Commander in Chief with the individual battalion commanders.²¹⁷ However, by 1810, Wellington, as the field commander would only practically have contact with his divisional commanders, who would be in control of a complete administrative structure within his division, akin to a small Army.²¹⁸ However, the Divisional structure in the Peninsular campaign was novel only in the numbers of men employed. The Duke of York had amalgamated several brigades into *columns* in the Low Countries during 1799,²¹⁹ while Abercromby had structured his forces in Egypt into *lines* of three and four brigades during 1800-1.²²⁰ It was not until the Copenhagen campaign during 1807 that *Divisions* of between two and four brigades were formed from a force of 26,000 men.²²¹ Despite the paper notation of divisions at the battle of Vimeiro in 1808, Wellesley operated the Army in detached brigades,²²² and it was only when Sir John

²¹⁵ PRO WO 1/652/185, York to Bathurst, 17th August 1812.

²¹⁶ The best discussion of this subject remains, Oman, *Wellington's Army*, 163-6.

²¹⁷ See for example, GRE-A, 2249, 'Journal of General Grey, 1796' [actually Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Grey] General Orders, 8th June - 30th August 1796; PRO WO 37/22/-, 'Brigading of the Army in Portugal', 9th October 1810.

²¹⁸ Stephen Petty, 'The General Orders of the Duke of Wellington, 1808-1814,' in C.M. Woolgar (ed.) *Wellington Studies I*, (Southampton, 1997) 139-63.

²¹⁹ Oman, *Wellington's Army*, 163-4.

²²⁰ PRO WO 1/344/187-90, Abercromby to ?, 19th May 1800.

²²¹ PRO WO 1/188/29-33, Cathcart to Castlereagh, 26th June 1807.

²²² Oman, *Wellington's Army*, 163-4.

Moore took command of the force of 21,000 men later that year, that 'genuine' divisions were formed for the first time in the Peninsular campaign.²²³ For two months following Wellesley's return to the command of the Army in Portugal in April 1809, it was operated in a brigade structure, only reverting to divisions after the battle of Oporto.²²⁴ This structure would be used in the subsequent Waterloo campaign.²²⁵ The divisional organisation of the British Army was therefore not an invention of the general who would use it with success during the remaining years of the Wars with France and in the campaign of 1815. It was a traditional system for the control of larger bodies of men, the use of which had been experimented with over the course of the period under examination.

The military structure of the Army was therefore an area of little development during the period under discussion. The most significant change came about in the field, due to the problems faced through an expanded Army, and reduced-strength battalions.

2.8 INSPECTION

Although the structure of the fighting force changed little during the Wars, what is apparent is that there were other structural developments that directly affected this area of the Army. These were to the means of control of the Army, rather than to its fabric. It has already been established that as the Wars progressed the control of the military decisions swung decisively towards the civilian ministry. At the same time the everyday working of the Army remained in the hands of the Commander in Chief's office, which expanded, and was given the authority to develop new systems of control. The most important of these was the inspection system.

The inspection of the Army although conducted for centuries, had only been regulated since 1715.²²⁶ Its aim was to provide those in authority with the information they

²²³ *Ibid.*; the brigades of the Walcheren army of the same year, were divided equally between two *wings*, while the whole force was referred to as a *Division*, PRO WO 1/641/235-8, 'List of the several Corp, General and Staff Officers, composing a Division of His Majesty's Army, to be employed upon a particular service.'

²²⁴ WP, 9/1/2/2, General Orders, 18th June 1809. The notification to the forces of the establishment of the Divisional structure; PRO WO 37/12/22, 'Brigading of the Army in Portugal', 9th October 1810; See also, D/Lo/C/18/50/292-3, 'Weekly State of the Forces on Spain and Portugal under the command of Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Wellesley ...' 15th August 1809.

²²⁵ PRO WO 37/12/87; 88. 'Brigades and Divisions at Waterloo'. 16th June 1815.

²²⁶ PRO WO 26/14/197, Royal Warrant, 25th June 1715; WO 26/14/198, Royal Warrant, 28th August 1715.

required to manage and develop the forces. However, the emphasis placed on inspection had been permitted to lapse, possibly due to the power of the colonels and their protection of their rights over their own corps. It could also have had much to do with the dispersed nature of the forces in peace time, coupled to an inefficient administrative system, which either failed to process inspection returns when submitted, or respond to any declared inadequacies. During the Wars the inspection process became of greater importance as the Army expanded, and attempts were made to implement uniform standards across the entire military force.²²⁷ Glover rightly points to the Duke of York taking over the Commander in Chief's office, as the turning point in the enforcing of the system of inspection and returns.²²⁸ Within three months of York entering Horse Guards, William Fawcett as Adjutant General was at pains to remind officers of their responsibilities to submit returns.²²⁹ Initially concerns were for the more basic and mundane regulations to be enforced. A new system of drill and manoeuvre had yet to be assimilated Army-wide,²³⁰ and maintaining even the most basic of hygiene standards among the troops was a problem.²³¹ But, York's success in this area, meant that it was followed by a campaign against the practice of officers being absent without leave,²³² which developed into a reform of the whole structure of inspection and return, centred around Horse Guards, and in particular the Adjutant General's department.

The responsibility for the maintenance of all inspections became that of the Adjutant General's department in 1793, when it took over the task of ensuring the regular submission of regimental returns in Britain,²³³ (although the new forms on which this information was to be processed were not agreed upon until three months later).²³⁴ The system was expanded to include foreign stations in 1795.²³⁵ This meant that for the first time, all returns would be processed by one military office. In 1797, officers were required to report to the Adjutant General's department on returning to Britain from abroad, stating

²²⁷ Each section of this thesis will emphasise this process.

²²⁸ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 165-9; this point is also made in *11th RCME* (1810) 5.

²²⁹ PRO WO 3/13/208-9, Fawcett to Lieutenant Colonel Benson, 20th May 1795; WO 3/15, Adjutant General to Colonel Hon. Alexander Maitland, 49th Regiment, 5th July 1796.

²³⁰ French, *British Way in Warfare*, 91; See also 5.2 Training, 164-8.

²³¹ GRE-A, 2249, General Orders, 17th January - 6th September 1794, Officers were requested 'to be particularly attentive in seeing that the Men's hands and faces are clean, and their heads well combed.'

²³² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 168-9.

²³³ PRO WO 3/27/161, William Fawcett to Generals of Districts, 22nd July 1793.

²³⁴ PRO WO 3/11/195, William Fawcett to Prince of Wales, 17th October 1793.

²³⁵ PRO WO 3/19/101, William Fawcett to General Prescott, 5th December 1798.

on what authority they had returned.²³⁶ This was part of the attempts of York to end the problem of officers being absent without leave, which was not satisfactorily concluded until 1800.²³⁷ The increase in the role of the Adjutant General's department in the inspection and control of the forces continued in 1798, when it became the source from which the monarch, the Commander in Chief, and Parliament received regular information on the state of the Army,²³⁸ ensuring that all parties concerned in the affairs of the Army were in possession of the same data. The department completely took over this area of military business in 1807, with the abolition of a separate Inspector General of Recruiting, and the absorbing of his duties of investigation and report.²³⁹ By 1811 and the publication of the *General Regulations and Orders*, the required inspections and confidential reports, ensured a constant flow of information to the Adjutant General, from which a better picture of the Army could be produced than ever before,²⁴⁰ and from which both Horse Guards and the War Office could respond.²⁴¹

In Britain, the Adjutant General's office was responsible for gathering and communicating the information of weekly returns to the Commander in Chief and the King, and of monthly returns of the whole Army to the Commander in Chief, the King, and the members of both houses of Parliament.²⁴² By 1811, in order for this information to be as up to date as possible, commanders of regiments were required to submit: monthly returns on the 25th of each month, to the Adjutant General, the General Officer under who the regiment was serving, and the Secretary at War, whether serving at home or abroad; monthly information to the Quartermaster General of marches and quarters; monthly effective states to the Adjutant General, when on home service, and a certificate outlining the settlement of the men's accounts when serving abroad; Quarterly returns of officers absent without leave, which was also to be noted on the monthly return; and on home service, monthly returns of men engaged on recruiting service. The General Officers commanding districts of Britain or foreign stations, were to submit: monthly information to the Quartermaster General of marches and quarters; monthly returns to the Adjutant

²³⁶ PRO WO 3/17/286, Harry Calvert to Officers Commanding in Chief on Foreign Stations, 11th November 1797; WO 3/17/287-8, Harry Calvert to Regimental Agents, 11th November 1797.

²³⁷ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 169.

²³⁸ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 387; II, 341.

²³⁹ PRO WO 30/44/37, General Orders, 1st June 1807; *11th RCME* (1810) 4; See above 2.4 Adjutant General, 34-9.

²⁴⁰ *General Regulations and Orders* (London, 1811) 279-288.

²⁴¹ PRO WO 30/44/37, General Order, 1st June 1807.

²⁴² *11th RCME* (1810) 4.

General; a quarterly return of officers absent without leave in Britain, and half yearly when abroad; a quarterly return in Britain, and a half yearly return abroad, of all general and staff officers serving under him, together with copies of all orders issued since the previous return; and half yearly confidential reports. On campaign the collation and despatch of information to Horse Guards, was the task of the Adjutant General in the field,²⁴³ with the ultimate responsibility being that of the field commander.²⁴⁴ This tightening of the inspection and reporting procedure ensured that all the Army hierarchy were able to build a much clearer picture of the actual state of the forces than ever before.

Perhaps the most significant, and far-reaching element of this area of reform, was the establishing of a rigid system of authority over the Army as a whole, and the officer corps in particular. The introduction of forms designed specifically for the purpose of the returns would enable officers to submit like information, which could be processed with a much greater efficiency,²⁴⁵ and which, according to one observer, would make, 'each review, instead of being a mere matter of parade and display ... a lengthened and serious military study, and one also of the utmost importance, both to the inspector himself and the forces generally'.²⁴⁶ Officers were required to read and sign all returns which they submitted,²⁴⁷ making them responsible for the information contained within them. In addition the practice of officers writing personal accompanying letters with their returns was discouraged as unnecessary, instead, 'for the future, all returns and Reports, as well as letters on Military and Public Business are to be addressed simply to the Adjutant General of His Majesty's Forces, London' and correspondents were to 'lay aside "I have the honour &c. &c."' and to just subscribe his name and rank,²⁴⁸ therefore removing any niceties which might have delayed the process of the documents, or could have been seen as attempts to compromise those in authority. The requirement of officers to provide a

²⁴³ See for example, D/Lo/C/18/52, 'Keeping accurately the Returns of all Descriptions of Regiments, Making General Returns for the Officers in England or for the Commander of the Forces, corresponding with all the detached Officers of the Army and Officers commanding Coprs or all Casualties that occur, making Arrangements for the Sick, Convalescents &c. of the Army. Having all this Correspondence regularly and accurately kept.'

²⁴⁴ *WD*, v, 403, Wellington to Liverpool, 2nd January 1810.

²⁴⁵ PRO WO 3/11/195, William Fawcett to Prince of Wales, 17th October 1793; *General Regulations and Orders*, (1811) 278ⁿ, 288ⁿ.

²⁴⁶ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 62.

²⁴⁷ WP, General Orders, 9/1/2/1 11th September 1809; *General Regulations and Orders* (London, 1811) 264.

²⁴⁸ PRO WO 3/19/101, William Fawcett to General Prescott, 5th December 1798; WO 3/19/135A, Printed Circular Letter, William Fawcett, 10th January 1799.

medical certificate when reporting sick,²⁴⁹ alongside the tightening of the rules governing absence without leave,²⁵⁰ meant that a greater degree of commitment to the service was expected. To this must also be added the introduction of the confidential report, which for the first time enabled general officers to report on their subordinate officers and regiments, without fearing scrutiny by the party concerned. While it is clear some general officers would not take these reports seriously, those who did, provide excellent evidence of the reason such a report was implemented. The information they were able to give assisted the service, without directly offending deficient officers or corps. In 1803, Sir John Moore was able to suggest that the 4th Regiment of Foot had a, 'want of military experience,' and that there was 'no great ardour in the officers to distinguish themselves, or to encourage the men to discharge their duty, by good example rather than by punishment,' and he blamed their commander Lieutenant Colonel Bunbury for these failings. In this way he hoped that Horse Guards would find a way to replace Bunbury, without disgracing such a long serving officer.²⁵¹ All these measures assisted in further distancing those in authority from their subordinates, producing a professional and bureaucratic system of inspection and reporting, which would enable the Army to expand and perform efficiently and uniformly.

In addition to the achievement of uniformity across the Army, the development of a successful system of inspection also enabled the easier costing of the forces. Under the terms of the Pay Office Act of 1783, accurate returns were demanded from the whole Army, to enable the estimating of annual pay.²⁵² Through the improvement of the inspection and return system, a clearer picture of the state of the military would be available, which would therefore enable a more accurate estimate. However, it would be this area of inspection and return that would be the cause of the greatest problems for the Army administrators, due to the inefficiency of those implementing the system, and the sheer volume of information produced.

²⁴⁹ PRO WO 3/32/257-8, William Fawcett to Matthew Lewis, 13th March 1800.

²⁵⁰ PRO WO 3/32/24, 25, 60 - Leave of absence.

²⁵¹ See for example, CUL, Moore, Moore to Dundas, 30th December 1803. Bunbury was not replaced until 1st August 1805, *Army List*, (1805).

²⁵² Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army' 174-8.

2.9 BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Just as the inspection system of the Army expanded, so to did the government-initiated investigation procedures. During the course of the eighteenth century, enquiries into all aspects of the military were conducted by the Board of General Officers. It was established in 1706 under the presidency of Charles Churchill, (the brother of the Duke of Marlborough).²⁵³ By the later part of the century, its membership consisted of a quorum of five from seven General Officers selected from a list of about fifty, compiled from the Army List each October.²⁵⁴ Initially, its terms of reference and powers were broad ranging. However, by the mid-century the Board had become principally concerned with the endorsing of new patterns for Army clothing, and by the time of this study it 'seems to have degenerated into a forum for the discussion of military trivia.'²⁵⁵ It is not surprising that such a body would be unsuccessful in reform, clearly being part of the same vested interest they were established to investigate. Many would have had colonelcies in the Army, and therefore also a proprietary interest in maintaining the status quo.²⁵⁶ By 1793, even their one remaining sphere of influence, that of clothing, had shown them to be weak and ineffective,²⁵⁷ unwilling to step on the toes of the colonels. The Board was maintained throughout the conflict, being available for reference on any martial matters as the need arose,²⁵⁸ but specifically uniform and equipment. These included a Board for the examination of supplies of clothing and equipment to the Portuguese Army,²⁵⁹ and another those of the whole Army in the Peninsula during 1812.²⁶⁰ However, the scale of the conflict, and the vast quantity of supplies required, meant that even a group of generals could do little to influence what was passed to the Army by contractors, and Wellington in

²⁵³ Rogers, *The British Army in the Eighteenth Century*, 37.

²⁵⁴ WO 26/26/352-54, Royal Warrant, 26th October 1763.

²⁵⁵ Alan J. Guy, *Economy and Discipline. Officership and administration in the British army 1714-1763* (Manchester, 1985) 30.

²⁵⁶ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 81, states that the command of a regiment 'is so lucrative, that a lieutenant-general, or even a general with a staff appointment, is less rich than a colonel enjoying the profits of his regiment. - It is on this account that the greater number of commissions of colonel are held by major-generals, lieutenant-generals, generals, and even field-marsals.'

²⁵⁷ See 6.4 Clothing and Equipment, 202-14.

²⁵⁸ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 42.

²⁵⁹ *WD*, v, 241-2, Wellington to Castlereagh, 20th October 1809.

²⁶⁰ *WD*, ix, 409, Wellington to Bathurst, 8th September 1812. This Board included a civilian member of the Commissary General's office, and required them to move to larger premises. PRO WO 4/426/35, Palmerston to R. Wharton, 31st August 1812; 55, Palmerston to Harrison, 14th November 1812; 76, Palmerston to Harrison, 25th December 1812.

particular was under the impression that the provision of such boards merely caused unnecessary delay.²⁶¹

The second, and most far reaching investigation into the Army attempted to that date, was established during the period under discussion. Despite suggestions linking it to the Duke of York,²⁶² it had little to do with him, (except perhaps in inference to his alleged corrupt practices).²⁶³ Instead, the Commission of Military Enquiry of 1805 to 1812²⁶⁴ arose out of Pitt's attempts to deflect the criticism of the Whig opposition,²⁶⁵ in the aftermath of the impeachment of Lord Melville, as First Lord of the Admiralty.²⁶⁶ It was also in a line of several such enquiries into various public offices, whose origins had been the 'sound principles' laid down by the Committee for Examining Public Accounts in the 1780s.²⁶⁷ This commission had also been a means of taking 'the wind out of the Opposition's sails' in order to gain time for the government of Lord North.²⁶⁸ During 1797, the Select Committee on Finance was established.²⁶⁹ Their terms of reference, and those of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, was to root out alleged corruption, and point to methods of saving the public money, in the light of the escalating cost of the war. To this end the Commission of 1805 was composed of members with relevant skills in finance and law, as well as in the military, in order to make sense of the information they were to receive.²⁷⁰ The information was gathered mainly through questionnaires sent out to witnesses, although several investigative visits to sites and offices were conducted by the Commissioners themselves.²⁷¹ The eighteen reports²⁷² were produced over six years, and formed a detailed survey of the state of the administration of the Army, and the method by which reforms could be carried out. Their recommendations were mostly implemented

²⁶¹ *WD*, x, 290, Wellington to Bathurst, 13th April 1813.

²⁶² E. Halévy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1949) i, 18-19; n.I.

²⁶³ W.H. Greenleaf, 'The Commission of Military Enquiry, 1805-12' in *JSAHR*, XLI, 171-181.

²⁶⁴ 45 *Geo.* III c.47.

²⁶⁵ 4 *PD*, 10th April 1805, 332.

²⁶⁶ Melville was impeached as a result of being implicated in improper allocation of navy funds, when he was its Treasurer. *10th RCNE* (1805).

²⁶⁷ J.E.D. Binney, *British Political Finance and Administration, 1774-92* (Oxford 1958) 282; Reports of the Committee for Examining Public Accounts, (*RCPA*).

²⁶⁸ John Torrance, 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation: The Commissioners for Examining the Public Accounts 1780-1787' in *Past and Present*, 78 (1978) 56.

²⁶⁹ *9th RSCF*, *25th RSCF*, and *26th RSCF*.

²⁷⁰ The Commissioners were, J. Drinkwater, Sam. C. Cox, Giles Templeman, Henry Peters, Charles. Bosanquet, B.C. Stephenson, and L. Bradshaw.

²⁷¹ Greenleaf, 'The Commission of Military Enquiry,' 177.

²⁷² *Appendix 1*, 281, for a list of Reports of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry.

without opposition, which followed perfectly the lines already laid by their predecessors.²⁷³ These included, the abolition of sinecures;²⁷⁴ the tendering for services;²⁷⁵ the cutting of jobs;²⁷⁶ the removal of the payment of fees,²⁷⁷ and the restructuring of the organisation of departments,²⁷⁸ and, as with their predecessors, were in keeping with Max Weber's 'bureaucratic system of organisation'.²⁷⁹

It is interesting to note that the reports of the Commissioners covered all areas of the administration of the Army, with the exception of the offices of the Commander in Chief²⁸⁰ and the Secretary of State for War and Colonies. It is not surprising that a government sponsored enquiry would not investigate its own department of state, but it seems strange that the office of the Commander in Chief was not examined, when that of the Master General of Ordnance, supposedly of the same standing as the Commander in Chief, was investigated in 1810-11.²⁸¹ As stated above, it suggests the emergence of the post of Commander in Chief as the senior military office, over that of the Master General.

Despite such notable omissions, the reports of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry greatly assisted in the reforming of the military forces of Britain. The topics addressed ensured that the modernisation of the Army as a public body, was kept in line with other such institutions of the period, with economies and the introduction of new bureaucratic practices. The findings of the Commissioners reveal that the thinking of those charged with the reform of the public service was moving beyond that described by Brewer. With neither sinecures nor dual employment being acceptable, and a move away from funding through fees,²⁸² a clear shift from the typical eighteenth century structure can be observed.

²⁷³ Torrance, 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation', *passim*.

²⁷⁴ *6th RCME* (1808) 302.

²⁷⁵ *ibid.* 291-3.

²⁷⁶ *ibid.* 296.

²⁷⁷ *ibid.* 308.

²⁷⁸ *ibid.* 319.

²⁷⁹ Torrance, 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation', 58.

²⁸⁰ The Adjutant General and the Quartermaster General's departments, as part of the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, were investigated in the *11th RCME* (1810).

²⁸¹ *13th RCME* (1811).

²⁸² See for example, *6th RCME* (1808) 290, 297-9, 301; Brewer, *Sinews*, 71-3, 75-7, 86-7.

2.9 CONCLUSION

Writers on the subject usually point to the emergence of a strong Army administration during the Wars with France, as evidence of the steady shift towards the control of the Army by the military hierarchy itself, with the three offices of Commander in Chief, Adjutant General and Quartermaster General taking the power back from the civil authority.²⁸³ Ward in particular points to the Commander in Chief overshadowing the Secretary at War, who he states became 'merely the regulator of the Army's affairs for economics' sake.²⁸⁴ However, what can be seen from the reform of the administrative structure of the Army is that subtly, and out of a procedure of often confused checks and balances, a clear structure of authority emerged, contrary to the accepted thesis. Supreme direction and control was clearly placed in the hands of the civilian ministers, while military officers were permitted to engage in the intricacies of military organisation and the daily functioning of the Army. Areas seen to be dominated by the military officers, had actually been delegated by the civilian ministers.

Reform of the Army was generated from three sources. First, much of it was Treasury-driven, with the motive of saving the public money, and reducing unnecessary expenditure on the vast force engaged in the Wars. Secondly, other areas were reformed as part of a general trend towards the modernisation of government departments, not least due to the influence of the Whigs, and their attempts to reform the state in general and reduce the power of the crown. Finally the military hierarchy itself was involved in its own reform, particularly under the direction of the Duke of York, but with a framework established by parliament.

The success of the attempts to save the public money is difficult to assess. Certainly individual reforms reduced the costs of certain areas of military administration, such as the removal of the posts of Paymaster General and Inspector General of the Recruiting Service. However, the scale of both the Wars and Army expansion meant that such savings as could be made were absorbed in the massive costs of the continuing conflict, and the constant demands for money from field commanders.²⁸⁵ In addition, to successfully prosecute the Wars, certain reforms resulted in a greater cost to the public, such as the centralisation of

²⁸³ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, *passim*.; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 17.

²⁸⁴ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 31.

²⁸⁵ See also 3.8 Commissariat Accounts, 96-100.

the transport system. While savings were made in certain areas, it is not difficult to appreciate Dupin's observations that the administration of the British Army was the 'most expensive in Europe.'²⁸⁶

During the course of the period under discussion the post of Commander in Chief, as the King's representative in the Army, had been established as the senior military office, taking precedence over the Master General of Ordnance. It had achieved a permanence, in peace as well as in war, but only at the expense of its independence. Its funding was to be derived from the Treasury of the government of the day, via the War Office, rather than from the Extraordinary Fund which had given it political autonomy. It was now subordinate to the civil power in every way. This is clear evidence of the movement of the Army from that of a typically eighteenth century Army of a monarch, to a nineteenth century Army of the people. In consequence the position of the Secretary at War within the War Office became an even more important civil post, second only to the Secretary of State, being the link between the military and civil elements of the Army administration. This expansion was due to an increase in duties, through both a larger Army and the consolidation of many tasks into the one office. Despite attempts to curtail the numbers employed, the sheer weight of work expected from the War Office ensured its even greater expansion. Along with this came an acknowledgement that an increased professionalism was required from its staff, together with a removal of sinecures, and the end of the holding of dual offices, in line with other departments of government. The funding of this office was also centralised, moving away from functioning on money derived from fees, to grants from the Treasury. In all military departments the ability of staff to operate as public accountants was eliminated, removing their ability to make profit from an office, and ensuring a further modernisation of the military.

Many of the checks and balances which had hampered the efficient working of the military were removed in favour of a simpler system of control. A hierarchy was developed which placed the Secretary of State in control of the Army, with a clear chain of authority below him. In theory one man could now impose his will on the Army and control it to his ends. However, by the end of the Wars with France the state had confidence that its Army was no longer a threat to the stability of Britain, and that the system of government was in itself a sufficient check on the authority of any one man. The movement of troops, their

²⁸⁶ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 44-5.

financing and administration was drawn into the hands of an ever-decreasing number of people. The ultimate safeguard in this was that the overall control of the military force was firmly in the hands of the civilian government.

Much of the reform of the administration of the Army itself was carried out by the military officers of Horse Guards, in particular the Duke of York. Without his understanding of the Army, much of the administrative reform would have been superficial. The development of a system of inspection was an essential step towards a uniform military structure. Such control of the system was only possible with the strong leadership directed through his staff by York. It is ample evidence of why the late eighteenth century request for a Commander in Chief in peace-time usually requested a son of the monarch, for in him would be the inferred power of the crown, that would be absent from even the most senior of generals.

York is universally acclaimed by subsequent authors. Ward goes so far as to suggest that he ‘carried an influence such as no Commander in Chief had had since the King commanded the Army in person.’²⁸⁷ Many describe his involvement in the modernisation of the Army, and suggest the implementing of a *system* of uniform control. However the *system* to which many authors have averted as an historical construct, actually did exist. That its architect was the Duke of York is borne out by Harry Calvert in his evidence to the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in 1810. He stated that the Army had taken on a new character as a result of the ‘new *system* introduced by late Commander in Chief,’ the Duke of York.²⁸⁸ When questioned further he answered that,

By System introduced into the Army, it was my intention to characterize the uniformity of regulations established in and extended to every description of the military Force of the Empire, on whatever station employed, as applicable to the *clothing* and *arming* of the Troops, to their *field exercise* and *discipline*, and to the *interior economy* of the several Corps, and the immediate and personal superintendance of the whole Army, exercised by His Royal Highness, founded on *Special and confidential Reports* and accurate *Returns* of every description, whereby the actual state of the Army, as constituting one great aggregate body, and of every distinct part of it, were constantly under his observation.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 16-17.

²⁸⁸ *11th RCME (1810) Appendix 2*, 59. ‘Examination of Major General Harry Calvert, Adjutant General of His Majesty’s Forces; taken upon Oath, the 18th April 1809.’

²⁸⁹ *ibid.*

Calvert's words were repeated by James in his *Regimental Companion*, in 1811,²⁹⁰ and are picked up by Ward, who credits Calvert himself with the creation of the *system*.²⁹¹

Surprisingly Glover, who describes so eloquently the reforms of the Duke of York, fails to observe the deliberate formation of an overall system of organisation, supply and management of the Army. The following chapters will go some way to correcting this omission, while taking its development to the end of the conflict, and testing its efficiency.

That York was permitted to make the Army his own is significant, but as can be seen the overall control of the military was never far away from the civil administration. From York's fall from grace in 1809 to the end of the Wars, it is clear that the main control of the Army was in ministerial hands, and that the *system* could even be improved upon. Failings in the Quartermaster General's department during York's first term of office reveal that he either did not have complete control over even his own office, or that he was prepared to turn a blind eye to its failings, while forcing through reform in other areas. Indeed, the politicians were perhaps better suited to continuing the reform of the Army administration, based on the advice of the traditional military officers, together with reports from the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, without reference to preconceived ideas, and at a distance from military vested interests.

²⁹⁰ Major Charles James, *The Regimental Companion* (London, 1811) iii, 109-11.

²⁹¹ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 19.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Long before the period under discussion, Britain had developed the art of mobilising resources to fight Wars. Through the eighteenth century her forces fought in four conflicts, funded through loans, which were repaid through taxes at the end of the Wars. However, these loans were never completely repaid, and therefore the national debt increased. The financial structure of Britain was geared to providing funds to efficiently service that debt. This repayment would ensure confidence in the economy, and enabled further loans to be raised at the outbreak of the next war. This meant that Britain became what Brewer has termed, a ‘fiscal-military’ state,¹ with the whole financial structure geared towards providing enough funding to fight the Wars. Each conflict during the eighteenth century cost substantially more than the previous. The first, the War of the Spanish Succession cost the country approximately £95 million; the American War of Independence, about £124 million; while the Wars with France cost Britain in the region of £1039 million.² In terms of taxation, Britain raised approximately £5.2 million per year during the Wars of Queen Anne, £9.9 million per year during the American War on Independence, while during the Wars France £13.2 million per year was raised from 1798 to 1801, and £28.3 million per year from 1801 to 1815.³

While it was considered as inevitable after the cessation of hostilities with the American colonists, that another war would ensue, it was clear that if the national debt was not seriously addressed, the ability of Britain to fund it would be substantially impaired.⁴ This led to the implementation a regime of strict debt management across all government spending. In terms of the Army, a rigorous restructuring was implemented, which reduced costs while attempting to maintain an effective fighting force,⁵ and, as discussed in Chapter 1, drastically altered the financial structure of the Army, by the transfer of financial authority from the Paymaster General to the Secretary at War.

¹ Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, xvii.

² Figures take from, Philip Harling and Peter Mandler, ‘From “Fiscal -Military” State to Laissez-faire State, 1760-1850’, in *Journal of British Studies*, 32 (1993) 48-9; Patrick O’Brien, ‘Public Finance in the Wars with France, 1793-1815’, in H.T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution, 1793-1815* (London, 1989) 176.

³ Patrick O’Brien, ‘Public Finance’, 177. O’Brien’s figures are depressed and expressed in constant prices.

⁴ *ibid.*, 171.

⁵ Pimlott, ‘Administration of the British Army’ 121-208.

However, no amount of financial restructuring could have prepared Britain for the unprecedented levels of expenditure needed to prosecute the Wars with France. In order to fund the conflict government borrowing was drastically increased from 1793, with ninety percent of the expenditure covered by borrowing, and the national debt doubling to 1798.⁶ From 1799, several forms of taxation were used, most successfully income and property taxes, and by the end of the conflict 64% of British expenditure was covered by taxation.⁷ This proved to be a catalyst for further frugality, as not only was there fears that the national debt was rising alarmingly, but there was a perceived in-built waste of money in old public offices. Philip Harling and Peter Mandler suggested that the ‘auditing procedures were cumbersome and wasteful; ... and sinecures and other “irregular” emoluments abounded’.⁸ John Torrance has suggested that successive administrations believed it to be their obligation to those bearing the burden of taxation to cut down on this wastage,⁹ and that when in opposition, the Whigs attempted to use evidence of such waste of public money to embarrass the government, and force through their agenda of reform in general. In addition, as a result of the high taxation, there emerged a body of middle class public opinion in favour of economy, which could not be ignored.¹⁰ Therefore, with this middle class ‘cry for economy’,¹¹ the Tories’ commitment to debt management, and the Whigs advocating the reform of the whole system, there was a clear trend towards frugality, but one which would prove fraught with difficulties in the light of the exceptional cost of the Wars.

In addition to the ideology of economy, the conflict was costing so much that there was a general shortage of capital. It is estimated that in 1804, the War cost Britain about £29.78 million, while at the same time the government gross revenue stood at £40.70 million. By 1813, these figures had risen to £70.69 million and £76.69 million respectively.¹² Christopher Hall points out that this meant the ‘proportion of revenue spent on the war went from over half to almost the whole total sum.’¹³ What resulted, was that

⁶ Michael D. Bordo and Eugene N. White, ‘A Tale of Two Currencies: British and French Finance During the Napoleonic Wars,’ in *The Journal of Economic History*, Volume 51, (June 1991) Number 2, 310.

⁷ Patrick O’Brien, ‘Public Finance’, 181.

⁸ Harling and Mandler, ‘Fiscal Military State’, 48.

⁹ Torrance, ‘Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation’, 79.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 73-4.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 74, 76.

¹² N.J. Silberling, ‘The financial and monetary policy of Great Britain during the Napoleonic Wars’, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, XXXVIII (1924) 240-7.

¹³ Christopher D. Hall, *British Strategy in the Napoleonic War 1803-15* (Manchester, 1992) 15-16.

the strategic thinking of all administrations converged towards an acceptance that economy was also a governing factor, in that area of the conflict.¹⁴ The expedition to Walcheren was an example of this, being sent to an area of strategic importance, but close enough to Britain to ensure that supply of men and materiel would be cheaper than more distant alternatives.¹⁵ To the same end, all administrations were involved in penny-pinching, with change proposed at the promise of comparatively minimal savings. Palmerston suggested cuts to the Wagon Train in 1810, that would result a saving of only £23,433 per year,¹⁶ and the Commissioners of Military Enquiry reminded the War Office, that a saving of a farthing per day per man in the Army, would save £50,000 per annum.¹⁷ In this light it is not surprising that the financial structures of the Army would be under intense scrutiny.

Chapter 1 discussed some of the changes brought about by the move towards economy and reform, within the general structure of Army administration. These included the restructuring of the War Office, and the imposition various investigations into the administration of the military, which also had serious implications for the financial organisation of the Army. This chapter will continue to examine the Army structure, concentrating on the areas of financial administration. It will study how these structures functioned under the pressures of the Wars, and the extent to which the desire for economic efficiency either provided an impetus for change, or was compromised by the vast scale of the conflict, or by other less tangible factors.

3.2 ARMY FINANCE

The expenditure of the Army during the period under discussion was processed through two accounts, the *Ordinary* and the *Extraordinary*. Ordinary expenditure was granted to the Army under the terms of the Mutiny Act, the annual legislation giving Parliamentary approval to the establishment, funding and discipline of the Army for the following year.¹⁸ The preparation of the estimates of Ordinary expenditure was a key function of the War Office. Their presentation to, and passage through, Parliament was the task of the Secretary at War, who, at the beginning of the period was the only politician

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁵ *Castlereagh Correspondence*, VI, 300.

¹⁶ *PD* (1810) XV, 609.

¹⁷ *6th RCME* (1808) 323.

¹⁸ For a full description of the Mutiny Act, see Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 110-119.

with direct responsibility for the Army. This was a major element in the civilian control of the military, for although the estimates were compiled using figures supplied by the Army, it was the civil department which formed the submission, and was responsible for its successful passage. The Mutiny Act could also be a forum for prolonged political debate, which could delay its implementation, and thus disrupt the functioning of the Army.¹⁹ However, during the Wars, the importance of its swift passage was recognised by all oppositions, who rarely did more than go through the motions of objection, reserving criticism for areas of ideology, such as corporal punishment.²⁰ The money allocated was disbursed by the Paymaster-General to those responsible for the expenditure of the forces, namely the Regimental Agents, and the several Deputy Paymasters General, under warrants from the Secretary at War.²¹ The Regimental Agents would deal directly with clothiers for the manufacture of uniform, and were also responsible for all other Regimental expenses.²² They would channel the money to the Regimental Paymasters, who were responsible for pay and certain food purchases.²³ The Deputy Paymasters would disburse funds to the Commissariat when an Army was in the field. They were responsible for the food and supply of the whole Army, and would ultimately have to account for all funds allocated to a field Army.²⁴ Each party would then be held responsible, as Public Accountants, for the funds allocated to them, until they had successfully submitted their accounts.²⁵

¹⁹ *PD* (1809) XII, 526; Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 111.

²⁰ *PD* (1808) X1, 1115 -22; (1811) XX, 698 -710; (1812) XXI, 1263-92; See also J. R. Dinwiddy, *Radicalism & Reform in Britain, 1780-1850* (London, 1992) 121-32.

²¹ See Figure 1, 69; *19th RSCF* (1797) 356-7; *35th RSCF* (1798); Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 110.

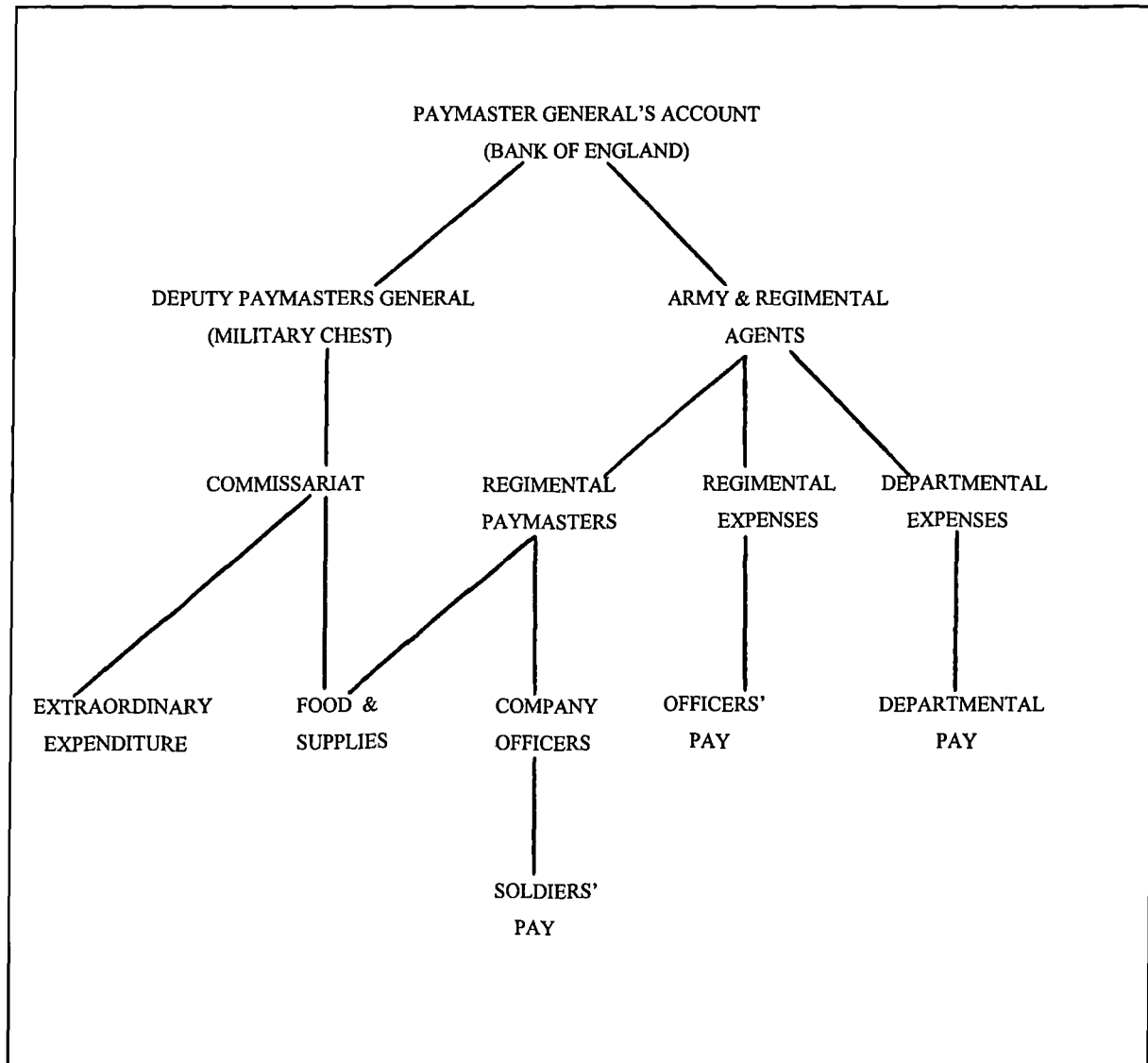
²² This was the case until 1808(?) when they lost control of food and forage; see below, 2.6 Agency, 82-92.

²³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 299.

²⁴ See below, 3.8 Commissariat Accounts, 96.

²⁵ See Figure 2, Process of the Paymaster General's Account, 3.7 Comptrol and Audit, 94.

Figure 1 - Allocation of Funds from the Paymaster General's Account²⁶



Extraordinary or Contingent expenditure, was all spending for which estimates could not be submitted, and therefore funding had not been voted by Parliament. In Britain it was allocated under the authority of the General in command of a district, or the Commander in Chief, by means of application to the Paymaster General, who would obtain a Royal Sign Manual Warrant from the Treasury directing payment.²⁷ On foreign service in peace time, the expenses could be incurred upon the orders of Governors and Military Officers, without recourse to the Treasury,²⁸ while on active service, the expenses incurred by the Army were contracted for by the 'financial agents of the Treasury,' namely the

²⁶ 19th RSCF (1797) 356-7; 35th RSCF (1798); Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 110.

²⁷ 8th Report on Public Accounts (1783) 48; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 111. A Royal Sign Manual Warrant required the signatures of three Lords of the Treasury.

²⁸ 19th RSCF (1797) 350; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 190.

Commissariat and Deputy Paymasters General.²⁹ In addition, Regimental Agents had traditionally been permitted to claim any excess, over and above their allocation, which would then be charged to the extraordinary budget.³⁰ The money was distributed from the *Extraordinary Account*, the source of which was ‘sums which have been voted for the Ordinary Service of the Army, and have not been taken out of the Exchequer.’³¹ In effect this Account was surplus money, and was always considered as open to abuse,³² as it was checked only in retrospect, by the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, followed by the Auditors of Public Accounts at the Audit Office,³³ before being included in the Army estimate for the next year, voted upon, and repaid into the Ordinary Account.³⁴ In 1792 barracks were built in Canada with funding from the Extraordinary Account, and without recourse to Parliament.³⁵ Despite attracting criticism,³⁶ the same source of finance was used to establish the Commander in Chief’s office upon the outbreak of war in 1793,³⁷ and such funding was not brought under the direct control of Parliament until 1833, when Lord Grey implemented reform requiring full estimates for all Army expenditure.³⁸ However, the Commander in Chief’s prerogative to use Extraordinary funds, as head of the Army, was not used during the remainder of the period under discussion. This is significant in the light of his systematic subordination to the Secretary at War, outlined above.³⁹ It reveals a degree of acceptance of the non-financial role of the Commander-in-Chief’s office, together with recognition of the authority of the civilian War Office, the staff of which were swift to point out any perceived over-stepping of the mark on the part of Horse Guards.⁴⁰

²⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 190-1.

³⁰ See below, Section 2.6, Agency, 82-92.

³¹ *5th RCPA* (1781) *Appendix* 6, 586.

³² Criticism was particularly directed at the Extraordinary Account after the American War of Independence, and its use in various areas, such as administration, levy money for mercenaries, and subsistence for Provincial forces, Pimlott, ‘Administration of the British Army,’ 149; In addition the Commanders and Quartermaster General were stated to have made £417,592 by manipulating the account in paying for transport, *7th RCPA* (1782) 130-8.

³³ *10th RCPA* (1783) 527.

³⁴ *7th RCPA* (1782) *passim*.

³⁵ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 241.

³⁶ *Ibid.*; *2nd RCME* (1806) *passim*.

³⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 139.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ 2.2 Commander in Chief, 24-30; 2.3 Secretary at War and the War Office, 30-34.

⁴⁰ See for example, PRO WO4/413/73, Leveson Gower to Commander in Chief, 14th August 1809.

3.3 THE PAYMASTER GENERAL

The process of reform of the financial structure of the Military had begun in the wake of the American War of Independence.⁴¹ As revealed in Chapter 2, under the terms of Burke's Pay Office Act, the office of Paymaster General effectively lost its independence, being made subordinate to the Secretary at War. The post, which was always held jointly by two men, was no longer able to formulate the estimates by which money for Army pay was allocated, and by which they had been able to accrue funds of surplus money within personal accounts, after they had disbursed the allocation to the Regiments for their actual strength. The Paymaster General was now forced to use estimates prepared for the Secretary at War by the Army, and all money allocated was to be sourced directly from Parliament, being held by the Bank of England until required. In addition, they and their staff were to receive annual salaries, paid quarterly, and their ability to take fees, from any source, was removed. The intention was to create a simplified system,⁴² which accounted for all money processed through the Army accounts,⁴³ avoiding the alleged corrupt activities of previous members of the Pay Office.⁴⁴ By 1797 the Select Committee on Finance reported that,

It does not appear to your Committee that the Paymaster General has any active control over Public Expenditure; it being his duty to make payments ministerially and without discretion, in persuance of Warrants directed to him by the Secretary at War or the Treasury ... or in payments of the drafts of the Deputy Paymasters abroad, for the Ordinary services of the Army.⁴⁵

They went on to say that, 'The Pay Office must therefore be looked upon as an Office of mere Account.'⁴⁶ The inclusion of the Paymasters General and the Pay Office into the military administrative structure had therefore been achieved. All employees were salaried, without either the need nor the ability to take fees, and officially they did not process funds through their own personal accounts.

⁴¹ For an analysis of the Pay Office system prior to 1792, see Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 155-8.

⁴² *9th RCPA* (1782) 331.

⁴³ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 157.

⁴⁴ *6th RCPA* (1782) 727.

⁴⁵ *19th RSCF* (1797) 356.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

Certainly the reforms of the Paymaster General's accounting system in 1783, prevented any holder of the office processing public money through his personal account. However, it still proved possible for Pay Office staff to manipulate the system, and to transfer public money into their own accounts. In 1797 this was detected on two occasions, being perpetrated by men who had claimed to be conducting deals to obtain specie.⁴⁷ Their ability to do this was blamed on delays in the accounting process, and it was suggested that,

without an earlier Examination, and Auditing of Accounts, irregularities can hardly be prevented; and that temptation will never be wanting to make use of Public Money, while there exists a great probability of its being, for a long time, uncalled for.⁴⁸

This proved to be a constant complaint, but one which was difficult to address, as due to the Army augmentation, a massive backlog had built up in all areas of Army accounting. In 1797, the Select Committee on Finance reported that,

no Accounts have been delivered by the Pay Office to the Commissions for Auditing Public Accounts since the 24th December 1785, being a period of upwards of eleven years; and as the whole of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Expenses of the Army are paid either directly by the Paymaster, or indirectly by his Sub-accountants, it is obvious that the sum not finally accounted for by the Pay Office must be of an enormous extent!⁴⁹

By 1807, the Committee on Public Expenditure were informed that it was expected the Paymaster General's account for 1782, (the year before Burke's Pay Office Act), would be completed by Christmas 1807, twenty four years after the date it was due.⁵⁰ It was also stated that 'not one Account of any Paymaster General has been finally settled and declared, nor made ready for declaration,' in the previous ten years.⁵¹ With such delays in the accounting process, it is easy to see how it was possible to misappropriate funds.

The delay was caused by the sheer volume of work generated by the expanded Army, and was exacerbated by the inability of the Pay Office to employ suitable clerks.

⁴⁷ *1st RCPE* (1807) 5.

⁴⁸ *1st RCPE* (1807) 6.

⁴⁹ *19th RSCF* (1797) 356.

⁵⁰ *1st RCPE* (1807) 6

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Several newly recruited members of staff were dismissed through incompetence or lack of basic academic ability, and the Committee on Public Expenditure reported that,

It would hardly have been deemed requisite to point out the propriety of appointing persons duly qualified by their knowledge of writing and arithmetic, ... to discharge the duties of Clerks in the Office, if the present Paymaster had not very lately found it necessary to discharge some of those who had been admitted into the office, on account of their insufficiency, and inexperience.⁵²

Attempts were made to clear the backlog of Paymaster General's accounts through legislation. In 1805, a further Pay Office Act was passed,⁵³ which repealed that of Burke. It re-emphasised the contents of the 1782-3 legislation, and further attempted to tighten up the accounting process, demanding that all accounts from 1782 to 1804 be made up and submitted forthwith. The Act had little effect on the Pay Office, which continued in its failure to produce regular accounts.⁵⁴ It was even reported that the Office had totally disregarded the contents of the Auditor's Act the following year,⁵⁵ which had stated that all future accounts should be delivered within three months of the end of the year.⁵⁶ Further calls were made for a simpler accounting system, one that would enable a greater degree of flexibility within the accounting process.⁵⁷ It was suggested that it was not necessary for a Paymaster General to sign every warrant for the forces abroad, being able to delegate much of their work,⁵⁸ thus releasing them from unnecessary bureaucracy, and beginning the development of the Paymasters General as political office holders, rather than civil servants. The suggestions were incorporated in the Pay Office Act of 1808, the intention of which was the accelerating of the 'Making-up, Examination, and Audit of the Accounts of the Paymaster General of His Majesty's Forces,'⁵⁹ and it was extended to include the Army of occupation in France during 1815.⁶⁰ The Act gave the government, without recourse to Parliament, the freedom to implement,

Rules and Regulations for the more speedy and effectual Examination and Settlement of the Accounts of Regimental Expenditures, or of such other Expenditures for Army Services, as usually have been, or shall hereafter be

⁵² *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵³ 45 Geo. III, c.58.

⁵⁴ *1st RCPE* (1807) 7-8.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁵⁶ 46 Geo. III, c.141, viii.

⁵⁷ *1st RCPE* (1807) 8.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 7; *6th RCME* (1808) 344.

⁵⁹ 48 Geo. III, c.128.

⁶⁰ *PP* (1814-15) II, 839.

examined in the Office of the Secretary at War, as shall appear to be most expedient, and to facilitate the Final Settlement of such Accounts.⁶¹

The new system was found to be of some success, and the backlog of accounts began to move. In 1801, only 460 of the 9546 accounts for the period 1798 to 1800 had been successfully examined,⁶² whereas by 1812 only twenty six of those remained unexamined.⁶³ In 1815 there was a total of only twenty seven accounts outstanding up to 1814,⁶⁴ but it would be peace and the subsequent reduction of the forces that would ultimately permit the system of Army account to work as it was intended. It was March 1821, before Palmerston reported that there were no unexamined accounts, for any period after 1798.⁶⁵

From 1782, the post of Paymaster General had changed from one of a lucrative public accountant, through a civil office holder, to a political placeman, under the supervision of the Secretary at War, extending the role of the government to take an even greater control of the Army, through its finances. As with so many areas of military administration, the system fell down due to the sheer volume of work to be processed, and needed to be completely overhauled, during the Wars. While the new, flexible, system of 1808 managed to clear much of the backlog of accounts, and cope with an Army which continued to expand to 1812, a turn-round of accounts as envisaged by the legislation, was only achieved after 1815.

3.4 THE WAR OFFICE

The delay in the submission of accounts, was common throughout the accounting process, and the difficulties experienced by the Pay Office were bound to be mirrored in the War Office, which was the hub of Army finance. Indeed the Committee on Public Expenditure of 1807, investigating the delays in the accounting of the Pay Office, reported that,

⁶¹ 48 Geo. III, c.128, ii.

⁶² *6th RCME* (1808) 307.

⁶³ *13th RCPE* (1812) 36.

⁶⁴ *PP* (1814-15) IX, 271.

⁶⁵ *PP* (1821) XV, 143.

the whole business of the Pay Office is so intimately connected with that of the War Office, that it is hardly possible to report fully on the former, without entering into an ample examination of the latter.⁶⁶

As with the Pay Office, the estimates, on which the 1783 War Office accounting system had been based, had been formulated using peace-time figures. Therefore, at the outbreak of the Wars, an immediate backlog of the augmented Army's accounts developed,⁶⁷ which increased still further with the additional responsibilities of the non-regular military formations.⁶⁸ This deficiency was observed by Mr. Tayler, the Examiner of Army Accounts, but he was under the impression that the War would soon be over, that the backlog would be cleared at the onset of peace, and so failed even to report it.⁶⁹

By 1797 it was clear that the war was not about to end, and the overloaded system was not working. Of the 1273 accounts that should have been processed by the War Office, since the introduction of the new system in 1783, only 248 had been settled, 159 were being processed through the office, but 866 were not even submitted by the Regiments or their Agents.⁷⁰ It was suggested by the Select Committee on Finance, that if the terms of the Act of 1783 were not capable of being met, then they should be changed, and if they were capable of being met, they should be enforced.⁷¹ Attempts were made to alleviate the problems by augmenting the staff of the Accounts Department, which, due to its relatively recent formation was not endowed with the experienced staff of other War Office departments.⁷² At the outbreak of the Wars the establishment of the Department was the Chief Examiner of Army Accounts, his Assistant, and 'thirteen persons'.⁷³ By 1798 this had increased to include the Examiner, three Assistants, and eighteen clerks.⁷⁴ This was steadily increased until in 1806, the establishment stood at the Chief Examiner, seven Assistants, and fifty one Clerks.⁷⁵ In addition an Assistant and three clerks were employed solely in clearing pre-1797 accounts,⁷⁶ and another Assistant with 'several clerks' was processing accounts from 1797 to 1803 (when the new system was finally up and

⁶⁶ *1st RCPE* (1807) 9.

⁶⁷ *6th RCME* (1808) 311.

⁶⁸ *35th RSCF* (1798) 681; *6th RCME* (1808) 307.

⁶⁹ *6th RCME* (1808) 311.

⁷⁰ *3rd RSCF* (1797) 41-2; *6th RCME* (1808) 303.

⁷¹ *19th RSCF* (1797) 357-8; *6th RCME* (1808) 306.

⁷² *6th RCME* (1808) 306, 321.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 306.

⁷⁴ *36th RSCF* (1798) *Appendix* (A1) 684; *6th RCME* (1808) 280.

⁷⁵ *6th RCME* (1808) 280-3.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 306-7.

running).⁷⁷ Even with this increase, all clerks were permitted to work extra hours, and most were confined to their own duties, to preserve even their limited expertise.⁷⁸ However, as noted in Chapter 2, unlike all other Government Offices, the War Office traditionally only worked five hours per day, which did not increase throughout the period, and paid overtime was often the only available solution. This could hardly have contributed to the effective management of the accounting system.

In 1797, the recommendations of the Select Committee on Finance, were implemented,⁷⁹ which imposed a production line approach on the completion of accounts. Each account remained in the Register Room of the Accounts Department, until all its component parts were assembled.⁸⁰ It then moved, as one piece of work, through every stage of the accounting process, returning to the Register Room after each.⁸¹ However, the new system met with limited success. Mr. Foveaux, the Examiner suggested that this was due to it being ‘formed on an old foundation,’ with so much of a backlog of accounts to clear,⁸² and the Commission of Military Enquiry reported that, despite,

all the endeavour which has been from time to time made to prevent the recurrence of the arrears of the Regimental Accounts, *that part* of the Establishment has for many years past been wholly unequal to its duties.⁸³

Further calls were made for the simplification of the whole system of military account, in particular to enable those without an ‘official’ education to understand and therefore examine it.⁸⁴ Their suggestions were introduced through the flexibility enabled by the Pay Office Act of 1808,⁸⁵ which sanctioned the use of a single pay list for all ranks, enabling all the information to be clearly seen and understood. In addition the flexibility sanctioned by the Act, permitted the removal of the necessity for the War Office to pass Regimental Accounts back to the Regimental Agent before final completion, thus removing one

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 308.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁷⁹ *19th RSCF (1797) Appendix P5*; *6th RCME (1808) 318-19*.

⁸⁰ These composed the States and Returns from the Regiment, the Regimental Paymaster’s Returns, and the Regimental Agent’s Abstract Account.

⁸¹ *6th RCME (1808) 318-9*.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 321.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 286.

⁸⁴ *1st RCPE (1807) 9*; *6th RCME (1808) 320, 322-3*.

⁸⁵ 48 Geo. III, c.128.

complete element of the accounting process, saving valuable time, and eliminating an area of Agency involvement.⁸⁶

The Commissioners of Military Enquiry had also recommended that the final responsibility for processing regimental accounts should lie with the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, as it was not conceivable that the same office that had sanctioned the expenditure in the first instance, should ultimately endorse the accounts for that spending.⁸⁷ However, this was staunchly opposed by the War Office, who saw the Comptrollers as too distant from the business they were to examine, and suggested that their intrusion would merely add to the delay in accounting, and prove more expensive to the public.⁸⁸ After much deliberation, the Treasury accepted the Secretary at War's protestations, and sanctioned the augmenting of the War Office for the purpose of further examining the regimental accounts, rather than the office of the Comptrollers of Army Accounts.⁸⁹ This not only endorsed the implementation of a new system of processing regimental accounts, it also ensured the authority of the War Office over all Army finances. The Committee on the Public Expenditure in 1811 confirmed this view, reporting that the Secretary at War should be responsible for,

all expenses incurred on account of all ordinary military services, for which he should be held responsible, as well as for the regular examination, and audit of all Accounts of that part of military expenditure.⁹⁰

Despite delays in the acceptance of a standard form on which to process the new system,⁹¹ its results were readily observed. By 1812, Palmerston, as Secretary at War, observed of the previous year's accounts,

by far the greatest proportion have already been examined; and that upon the fullest consideration which they [the Accounts Department] can give on the subject, they see no reason to doubt the sufficiency, under the present arrangement of the Department, to settle the Accounts of this and future years, without any other than such temporary arrear as must unavoidably happen.⁹²

⁸⁶ *1st RCPE* (1807) 35, Evidence given by Charles Long, 22nd April 1807.

⁸⁷ *6th RCME* (1808) 354; PRO WO 4/423/244-256, Pultney to Harrison, 13th April 1809.

⁸⁸ PRO WO 4/429/2, Pultney to Harrison, 9th March 1809; WO 4/429/3, Harrison to Secretary at War, 25th March 1810; WO 4/429/4, Pultney to Harrison, 13th April 1809.

⁸⁹ PRO WO 4/429/16-18, Harrison to Pultney, 29th April 1810; WO 4/429/18-27, Merry to Harrison, 24th May 1809 (10?).

⁹⁰ *10th RCPE* (1811) 24.

⁹¹ *13th RCPE* (1812) 39.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 34.

Therefore, after twenty years of attempts to produce a workable system, the War Office accounts were finally being processed within the specified time. By the massive increase in staff, in a new dedicated department, together with the imposition of an innovative system, and a flexibility which enabled; stages of the accounting process, which proved unnecessary, to be cut; areas of delay to be isolated and extra staff assigned; and ultimately, the development of a procedure that worked efficiently, even as the Army expanded to its largest ever level. However, the delays in the War Office appear to have been easily rectified when compared to those which resulted from the failure of Regimental Paymasters and Agents to submit their accounts.⁹³

3.5 REGIMENTAL PAYMASTERS

The Regimental Paymaster was responsible for the payment of officers and men, together with any purchase made directly for the Regiment, such as additional food supplies. In 1793, the post was held by an officer of the Regiment, and although occasionally he would be required to give sureties to guarantee his services, 'his Regimental Commission (being usually that of a Captain) and his character as an Officer, were deemed sufficient to ensure a due performance of his trust.'⁹⁴ By 1797, the arrangement had proved inadequate to the pressures placed upon it by the Wars, with delays being experienced at every level of the accounting process. It was suggested that these delays, experienced throughout the Army accounts process, originated with the Regimental Paymasters, who found it difficult to conduct the financial business of the Regiment, while at the same time attending to their other military duties.⁹⁵ In addition, the nature of the service of the Regiment, which was often broken into detachments, meant that it frequently proved impossible to maintain a regular accounting system.⁹⁶ Several units had failed to produce any accounts at all since the introduction of the revised system in 1783.⁹⁷ The Select Committee on Finance in 1797, recommended that if the Regimental

⁹³ *19th RSCF (1797) Appendix P2, a, 396.*

⁹⁴ *6th RCME (1808) 305.*

⁹⁵ *19th RSCF (1797) Appendix O, 395.* The evidence of Messrs. Cox and Greenwood.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 356; *35th RSCF (1798) 621.*

Paymasters were not capable of meeting their terms of employment, then the system should be changed.⁹⁸

The perceived solution was the new system of 1798, which introduced the separate post of Regimental Paymaster.⁹⁹ The Secretary at War informed the Colonels of Regiments that they,

must make provision for a person, for whom they would be responsible, not a serving officer, bearing a Special Military Commission, to take on the role of Paymaster solely, without any other duty, and without any expectation of promotion.¹⁰⁰

He was to be appointed by the Regimental Colonel, and was to receive pay at fifteen shillings per day,¹⁰¹ 'the pay of a major,'¹⁰² and in terms of hierarchy, he was to be below that of the junior captain of the Regiment.¹⁰³ In addition he would be permitted to employ a clerk, at the pay of a Sergeant, if the Regiment numbered over 500 men.¹⁰⁴ He was to pay sureties to the tune of £2000 immediately, with two additional sums of £1000 in due course,¹⁰⁵ as the holder of a position of 'public trust.'¹⁰⁶ It was hoped that a full time Regimental Paymaster would 'therefore be at liberty to give undivided attention to the business of their office.'¹⁰⁷ To that end, strict guidelines were set out demanding the mustering of the Regiment on the 24th day of each month, from which a General State and Pay List could be compiled and sent to the Agent, and on to the War Office. It was to register all ranks, with a separate sheet for officers, and it replaced the bi-monthly returns introduced under Burke's Act, which many units had simply disregarded.¹⁰⁸

⁹⁸ *19th RSCF* (1797) 358.

⁹⁹ War Office Circulars, 18th November 1797, and 6th December 1797, in *35th RSCF* (1798) Appendix D, 661.

¹⁰⁰ *6th RCME* (1808) 306.

¹⁰¹ War Office Circular, 15th July 1806.

¹⁰² *13th RCPE* (1812) 34, Palmerston to the Commissioners of Public Expenditure, 7th January 1812.

¹⁰³ *General Regulations and Orders* (London, 1811) 6.

¹⁰⁴ War Office Circulars, 18th November 1797, and 6th December 1797, in *35th RSCF* (1798) Appendix D, 661; *6th RCME* (1808) 315-7.

¹⁰⁵ War Office Circulars, 18th November 1797, and 6th December 1797, in *35th RSCF* (1798) Appendix D, 661; *6th RCME* (1808) 306.

¹⁰⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 302, states that the paying of a surety was the common rule at the time. However, the first legislation to this effect was 50 Geo. III, c.85; Torrance, 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation', 64.

¹⁰⁷ *35th RSCF* (1798) 622.

¹⁰⁸ *19th RSCF* (1797) 356; *35th RSCF* (1798) 621.

The submission of monthly States and Pay Lists should have been an asset to the whole military, giving a clear picture of the actual establishment of the forces at any time. This should have proved invaluable in both the planning and administration of the Army during the Wars. Unfortunately the scheme proved over-ambitious for all parties concerned, with the monthly returns producing just too much information, for an already stretched administrative system. In 1806, the requirement was reduced to a quarterly muster for States and Pay Lists,¹⁰⁹ and was maintained throughout the Wars, despite attempts to reinstate the monthly returns.¹¹⁰ In theory, the appointment of an exclusive Paymaster to Regiments should also have improved the efficiency of the payment of the forces, but most initial incumbents turned out to be anything but 'professional' in their performance of the role. By the recommendations of the War Office circulars, which introduced the new system, ideally, the men were to be Half-Pay Officers.¹¹¹ But, as they were to have no expectation of promotion, it is not difficult to see why it was hard to employ men of a sufficiently high calibre. Unlike Excise officers, who had to buy a month of training before appointment,¹¹² there was no formal training for paymasters. This would mean that their knowledge of accounting would be limited, and clearly their military experience was also insufficient to execute their role effectively. In 1800 the Examiner of Army Accounts found that

many of the new Paymasters were very deficient in the qualifications requisite for the effectual performance of their duties; so much so, that the confidence which the War Office had expected might be placed in them was withdrawn, and it was found absolutely necessary to examine their Accounts with the minuteness and caution that rendered an expeditious settlement of them impossible.¹¹³

As with the War Office, it was suggested that the whole process of Regimental Accounting should be simplified, enabling those without an 'official' education to understand it.¹¹⁴

The failings of the new system were not merely practical, they were also structural. The ability to appoint the Regimental Paymasters gave back some degree of patronage to

¹⁰⁹ PRO WO 4/303/162, 165; WO 4/322/177, 121, 127; *6th RCME* (1808) 315.

¹¹⁰ PRO WO 40/29/11, Secretary at War to Commander in Chief, 7th March 1807; Commander in Chief to Secretary at War, 23rd March 1808; Secretary at War to Commander in Chief, 23rd March 1808.

¹¹¹ War Office Circulars, 18th November 1797, and 6th December 1797, in *35th RSCF* (1798) *Appendix D*, 661.

¹¹² Torrance, 'Social Class and Bureaucratic Innovation', 64.

¹¹³ *6th RCME* (1808) 307.

¹¹⁴ *1st RCPE* (1807) 9; *6th RCME* (1808) 320, 322-5.

the Regimental Colonel, although under strict guidelines. However, in that the Regimental Paymaster was considered to be a Public Officer, not liable to military duty, and acting under the immediate authority of the Secretary at War,¹¹⁵ there was clearly a conflict of interest, as he was effectively serving two masters.¹¹⁶ It brought out the old fears of the Army, and its control of its own finances, with the Commissioners of Military Enquiry of 1808, being warned that, the 'whole system of account could be destroyed by the command of a superior officer.'¹¹⁷ Ultimately, no conflict developed out of the fears of potential divided loyalty, although it continued to generate debate throughout the period.¹¹⁸ The Regimental Paymaster was clearly a public servant, as it was with the War Office that he lodged his bond, and it was the public, who would be liable for any default,¹¹⁹ unlike the previous system, in which the ultimate responsibility for loss lay with the Regimental Colonel.¹²⁰ In addition, as a commissioned officer, he would also be liable for dismissal under Martial Law, not by the Colonel, but by the Secretary at War.¹²¹

The efficiency of the Regimental Paymasters was to improve during the course of the period, as the Army and the paymasters became familiar with the new system.¹²² By the introduction of the flexibility under the 1808 Pay Office Act, into the War Office Accounts Department, the passage of accounts was speeded up, and more checks were possible on the new paymasters' accounts. As the system was tightened, it became even more important for a Regimental Colonel to get a competent man, rather than just a placeman. Certainly complaints about the paymasters cease, suggesting that those holding the post became more efficient, and the only evidence of any of their number defaulting after 1810, refers to men from foreign corps.¹²³ Perhaps evidence of ultimate success of system is that it was not changed until 1856, when the Secretary of State took over the appointment of all Regimental Paymasters,¹²⁴ ending finally the question of divided loyalty.

¹¹⁵ 35th RSCF (1798) 622; 6th RCME (1808) 306.

¹¹⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 300-1.

¹¹⁷ 6th RCME (1808) *Appendix* 38, 511-3. 'Memorandum relative to Regimental Accounts upon the present System', William Merry, November 1805.

¹¹⁸ 10th RCPE (1811) 20-4; 13th RCPE (1812) 33-4.

¹¹⁹ 6th RCME (1808) 475; 13th RCPE (1812) 33-4.

¹²⁰ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 2.

¹²¹ 13th RCPE (1812) 33.

¹²² See 3.4 The War Office, 74-8; 3.6 Agency, 82-92.

¹²³ PRO WO 4/399/79-82, 'Return of Accountants under the Foreign Branch of the War Office, who have become defaulters since the 1st January 1810,' 13th February 1822.

¹²⁴ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 302.

3.6 AGENCY

Despite the removal of many of the delays in the processing of the accounts of the Regimental Paymasters, the key area of Army finance during the period under discussion, was that of the Agent. There were, in theory, two types of Agent, the Regimental and the Army. The former dealt with the monetary business of individual corps or regiments, while the latter was responsible for the whole financial arrangements of Army offices and departments. By the outbreak of the Wars in 1793, the duties of the two types of agent had predominantly been taken over by larger houses, who were private bankers, dealing with both Army and regimental finances in the same way, and therefore can be effectively dealt with under the single heading.¹²⁵

The post of agent had been officially established under William and Mary,¹²⁶ and by the period under discussion its business was stated to be,

to apply for, receive, disburse and account for Public Money advanced to him under General Regulations, or by particular Orders: He is the ordinary channel of communication between the Regiment and the Public Departments, and is resorted to, not only for providing and forwarding of Arms, Clothing, and other Regimental Supplies, but also in the business, public or private, of the individual Officers.¹²⁷

In effect, agents performed all the duties that enabled the regiment or department to function. Together with the Lieutenant Colonels of regiments, this arrangement ensured that the colonel had little to do, other than oversee the patronage of his corps, and take the profit he derived from it. This confirms regimental colonelcies as the only sinecures within the bounds of this study, that were not even identified as such, let alone recommended for abolition.

In Britain, the money allocated to each from the Mutiny Act, was disbursed to the Regimental Agent from the Paymaster General's Account in the Bank of England. This was then passed by the Agent to the Regimental Paymasters for the pay of the officers and men, and also to those supplying the Regiment with clothing and equipment.¹²⁸ When the

¹²⁵ As per 6th RCME (1808) 333-66.

¹²⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 74; H.C.B. Rogers, *The Army in the Eighteenth Century*, 45.

¹²⁷ 35th RSCF (1798) *Appendix* (M.3) 679, Mr. M. Lewis, Deputy Secretary at War, 12th May 1798; 6th RCME (1808) *Appendix* (59) 574; The latter duties, 'the business, public or private, of the individual Officers,' will be dealt with in 4.6 Officers, 154, while the former will be addressed here.

¹²⁸ See 6.4 Clothing and Equipment, 202-14.

Regiment was serving abroad the Agent only received the allocation for clothing and equipment, pay being disbursed via Deputy Paymasters General in the field.

Prior to Burke's Pay Office Act, Agents had performed many of the services later associated with the War Office, for which they had received payment in the form of poundage, a deduction of two pence per pound from all funds processed for their Regiments. Under the terms of the Act, poundage was ended for soldiers' pay, being replaced by estimated costs of the services provided, but it was still maintained for the pay and half-pay of officers.¹²⁹ In addition they received the pay of a soldier per troop or company, each day. This was allocated to the Regiments as pay for a non-effective, or fictitious soldier, known as a Hautbois or Warrant Man.¹³⁰ This practice had been partly removed under Burke,¹³¹ but the payment of Warrant Men continued throughout the period under discussion, being re-emphasised by the Pay Office Act of 1805, as part of the privileges of the Regimental Colonel.¹³²

In theory this was the final amount allocated under each heading of the estimates. However, as stated above, agents had been traditionally permitted to claim any excess, over and above the estimate, which would then be charged to the following year's extraordinary budget.¹³³ It is a striking example of the confusion caused by the legacy of the old system of military management, with a private individual contracting to provide a service, being recompensed by the government for his trouble, and then being able to submit further claims for the same services. However, it was a system that was deeply rooted in the traditions of the Army and its civilian administration, and proved to be one area in which the reforming zeal of the war years barely touched.

The system at the outbreak of the Wars ensured that the key to the processing of Army finance was in the hands of the agent.¹³⁴ All relevant funds passed through them to their client units or offices, and the accounts necessary to finalise the Army budget, were passed back through their houses, to the War Office. All this led to a log-jam within the

¹²⁹ *10th RCPE* (1811) 19.

¹³⁰ *6th RCME* (1808) 370-1.

¹³¹ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 136-44.

¹³² *45 Geo. III*, c.58. xviii.

¹³³ *PP* (1807) IV, 283-91, 'An Account of the Sums of Money Issued to each and every of the Army Agents on the British Establishment, By way of Compensation for his and their trouble in the Affairs of the different regiments of which they have the Management; and for any other Public Expense,' 4th August 1807.

¹³⁴ See Figure 2, Process of the Paymaster General's Account, 94.

various agencies, but one which was difficult to remove as there was little effective control over them. As agencies were not public departments, once they drew the money to which they were entitled, the public effectively lost track of it, until the submission of the final accounts. As these were always in arrears, the amount of money unaccounted for was substantial. Even though, in theory, agents were not allowed to keep any public funds on their books,¹³⁵ there was great scope for the manipulation of public funds, due to the great delays in the processing of accounts, and the lack of any redress on the part of the public. When the Commissioners of Military Enquiry selected several agents' accounts at random, every one produced discrepancies. The accounts of the 14th Regiment for the year 1795, was found to show that the agents, Greenwood and Cox, had exceeded their estimate to the public by £1475.10s.8½d.¹³⁶ This would obviously fuel the arguments of those who suggested public funds were at risk from the agency system.

Despite this obvious risk, the agent bore no liability for the funds he processed, that lay with whoever had appointed him, whether a regimental colonel in the case of regimental agents, or the Secretary at War in the case of Army agents. The regimental colonels were responsible for any loss incurred by their appointed agent,¹³⁷ and were recommended to take out take sureties from their agents to insure against potential losses, in keeping with others who handled public money, such as the Regimental Paymasters and Excise Officers. However, in this agreement between gentlemen, such a sign of mistrust was clearly not the done thing, as throughout the period under discussion, only foreign regiments appear to have adhered to the suggestion.¹³⁸ This was confirmed by Mr. Ross, of the failed house of Ross and Ogilvie, in his evidence before the Commissioners of Military Enquiry,¹³⁹ who, in their sixth report recommended that it was essential that sureties should be taken by colonels, in order to safeguard both themselves and the public.¹⁴⁰ However, little heed appears to have been taken of this advice, as in 1812, Palmerston informed the Committee on Public Expenditure, that no agent paid any form of security, excepting those responsible for foreign regiments,¹⁴¹ and this was confirmed in information he gave to the

¹³⁵ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 182.

¹³⁶ 6th RCME (1808) 516, *Appendix* 40.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 304.

¹³⁸ *PP* (1807) IV,271, Amount of securities given by the Army Agents for the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, 3rd August 1807.

¹³⁹ 6th RCME (1808) 580, *Appendix* 62, Examination of Alexander Ross (Questions 4 and 5), 22nd March 1808.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 351.

¹⁴¹ 13th RCPE (1812) 33.

House of Commons the following year.¹⁴² No attempt was made to enforce the taking of security after 1808, which is more surprising considering that after the 1805 Pay Office Act, all liability for the default of paymasters and (consequently, in terms of the funds for which they were responsible) agents, would rest with the Secretary at War, which in effect meant the public.¹⁴³ In this way the agency system can be seen to have become a pseudo government department. It was independent and able to make a profit, while supported by public funds in the event of loss, and more importantly, without any means of examination or redress on the part of the public. All but the accounts they were required to produce were deemed private, and their actions were all as a result of their power of attorney from the colonels. At the same time, as civilians, they were outside martial law.

By the outbreak of the Wars, the whole concept of Agency had become enmeshed in the respectability of tradition, to such an extent that their removal had never previously been considered. When in 1795, the office of the Barrackmaster General was closed, the £100,000 processed by the house of Greenwood and Cox, the agents for that department, was transferred to the Bank of England, but then the same agency was given responsibility for its management.¹⁴⁴ This despite their accounting being so poor as to be ‘totally useless.’¹⁴⁵ Agents had been institutionalised to the point that even parliamentary committees were guilty of confusing their status. In 1811, the Tenth Report from the Committee on the Public Expenditure, suggested that the new Regimental Paymasters should be made subordinate to their regimental agents, placing them ‘under the special control of the Agent, whose Deputy, in point of fact, he is; and whose Deputy he ought to be rigidly considered in point of practice.’¹⁴⁶ This would have resulted in a commissioned Army officer owing allegiance to a private company, with all the connotations of dual loyalty. It is not surprising that committees were confused about the status of agents, when even the Commander in Chief regarded paymasters as their deputies, and suggested that agents should be considered as public servants.¹⁴⁷ However, this debate was part of a much

¹⁴² *PP* (1812-13) XII, 201-3, Return of an order of the House of Commons, dated 18th December 1812, calling for A Statement of the Sums of Money paid annually to each and every of the Army Agents, for Pay, Staff Contingencies, &c. for the Regiments of the Line, Militia or otherwise, under their Agency; from the 25th December 1810, to the 24th December 1811; for what periods these payments are made in Advance, and the names of those Agents who receive the same: With the Amount of Securities (if any) given by them for the faithful discharge of the trust reposed in them, 1st May 1813.

¹⁴³ 6th *RCME* (1808) 475; 13th *RCPE* (1812) 33-4.

¹⁴⁴ 1st *RCME* (1806) 6-7.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁴⁶ 10th *RCPE* (1811) 21.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

wider battle over the control of the Army. If the Regimental Paymaster was a servant of the Agent, then ultimately he was controlled by the Regimental Colonel, from who the Agent received his power of attorney, and therefore, ultimately, the Commander in Chief. This would give the military authority over its own finances, albeit only to a small degree, something which for centuries had been strenuously avoided.

In the 200 years since their conception, the agents had developed a great deal of power, through the unique service they provided, and their friends in high places, many of who had personally benefited from their services. In addition many agencies had consolidated, producing fewer and larger houses. In 1780 there were fifty one agencies,¹⁴⁸ and by the outbreak of the Wars this had been reduced to thirty four.¹⁴⁹ In 1804, the oldest agency, the house of Ross and Ogilvie collapsed, leaving substantial debts.¹⁵⁰ Its business, consisting of the 3rd Regiment of Foot Guards, and seven other regiments, was absorbed into the house of Greenwood and Cox, which by 1807 was by far the largest of twenty four agencies, acting for 194 regiments.¹⁵¹ This consolidation brought accusations of dubious practice,¹⁵² and also fears that the collapse of so powerful a house would have disastrous consequences.¹⁵³

No agency had such friends in high places, as those of Greenwood and Cox. It was suggested that forty five MPs held accounts with them,¹⁵⁴ but in particular the Duke of York was known to be indebted to the house for several thousand pounds.¹⁵⁵ This served to fuel the speculation in certain quarters that agents generally, and Greenwood and Cox in particular, were involved in corrupt activities, using the support of their powerful friends.¹⁵⁶ The Duke's debt certainly laid him open to allegations of corruption, and of assisting in the building of Greenwood and Cox's monopoly of agency. Sir Francis Burdett outlined these concerns during a debate in Parliament during 1812, stating,

¹⁴⁸ *The Army Agent* (London, 1780) *passim*.

¹⁴⁹ *Army List* (1793) 49-317.

¹⁵⁰ 6th RCME (1808) 580-1, *Appendix* 62, Examination of Alexander Ross, Esq., 22nd March 1808.

¹⁵¹ *PP* (1807) IV, 295.

¹⁵² *Mentorius, Mentoriana; or a Letter of Admonition and Remonstrance, to His Royal Highness the Duke of York, Relative to Corruption, Oppression, Cowardly Revenge, Agency-Monopoly, Meretricious Influence, and Other Subjects Connected with the Army* (London, 1807) 9-10.

¹⁵³ *PD* (1812) XXIII, 1276-85, 29th July 1812.

¹⁵⁴ *PD* (1812) XXIII, 1276-85, 29th July 1812; *PD* (1813) XXVI, 1154-5, 7th July 1813.

¹⁵⁵ Wheeler, *War Office*, 106.

¹⁵⁶ See for example, *Mentorius, Mentoriana, passim.*; An Inhabitant of Craig's Court, *The Agent and His Natural Son; A New and True Story. With Important Strictures on the Commander in chief; Relative to his Duties, and his Confidants* (London, 1808) *passim*.

It appeared very suspicious that one man should have engrossed almost the whole agency of the Army. If, as was said, an intimacy subsisted between the gentleman alluded to and the duke of York, it was not then difficult to perceive the influence that occasioned this monopoly, for it could not be considered wonderful that the colonels of regiments should have that connection in view.¹⁵⁷

York was also staunch in his support of the whole agency system, advocating its return to the days before Burke's Act took away much of the financial control they had had over the bodies for which they were responsible. He told the Committee on the Public Expenditure that the Army should, 'revert to the practice that prevailed previous to the establishment of the new system, [in 1783] and which practice it was never his idea, at any period to change.'¹⁵⁸ Such support of an agency structure that was already under public scrutiny, did nothing to allay accusations of corruption, and seems somewhat naive in the face of popular criticism. The accusations were confirmed in the eyes of many when the Duke fell from grace over alleged corruption in the area of Army brokerage.¹⁵⁹

The fall of York gave the opponents of the agency system new impetus, and made the situation of agents vulnerable for the first time in their history, with a clear opposition against them, and without the support of their most powerful friend. The subsequent enquiry into York and Mary Anne Clarke, resulted in the removal of the agents' ability to broker Army commissions. However, even despite the damning evidence against them, the processing of funds through the agents proved impossible to remove, and even the changes that were achieved were hard-fought.

In 1797, in evidence given to the Select Committee on Finance, Mr. Lewis, the Deputy Secretary at War, had suggested that a new system of agency could be adopted, provided by a single Army-wide Board of Agency. He stated his belief that this Board would save money, and safeguard public funds, in the light of several agency collapses.¹⁶⁰ Nothing was done about the recommendation, and in June 1800, when the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury wrote to Windham, the Secretary at War,

¹⁵⁷ *PD* (1812) XXIII, 1276-85, 29th July 1812.

¹⁵⁸ *10th RCPE* (1811) 20-1.

¹⁵⁹ See 4.6 Officers, 154.

¹⁶⁰ *19th RSCF* (1797) 144-5; *6th RCME* (1808) 306.

enquiring as to what progress had been made in this matter.¹⁶¹ Windham was at pains to point out that even if a scheme, such as that suggested by Lewis, was possible,

I am led to my conviction, that no attempt can be made in my Department to abolish the present system of Regimental Agency, at least during the War, with safety to the public Service.¹⁶²

That nothing further was done concerning the subject is confirmed by a Circular Letter of May 1801, which reiterated the status quo.¹⁶³ Even requests in the House of Commons for information that could lead to the establishment of a Board of Agency, were avoided for over five years,¹⁶⁴ with the excuse that ‘it would be impossible to give it, from the complicated state of the accounts.’¹⁶⁵ It was not until the investigation of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, that serious recommendations were made which initiated change within the system of agency. Being driven by financial considerations, as well as professional opinion, the Commissioners focused on three issues which were to govern their decisions. First, was the reduction of expense’, second, ‘the diminution of risk attending the public money remaining in the hands of private persons’, and third ‘the acceleration of the general business connected with Regimental Expenditure, and especially the final settlement of the Accounts belonging to it.’¹⁶⁶ They insisted that explanations be given of Mr. Lewis’ comments in 1797; that the lack of action on that subject should be fully explained;¹⁶⁷ and that all parties concerned address the issue, with a view to implementing the three points. While all civil officers agreed that a change of system would save the public in the region of £25,000 per annum,¹⁶⁸ the military officers questioned were of a different opinion. The Duke of York was adamant that the change would be disadvantageous,¹⁶⁹ and Generals Dundas and Harcourt could see no reason why a change would prove to be of any advantage.¹⁷⁰ They stated that there had been no loss to the public, even when agencies had collapsed, excepting that of Ross and Ogilvie, but were

¹⁶¹ 6th RCME (1808) 334.

¹⁶² PRO WO 4/179/240-3, Windham to George Rose, 12th June 1800; WO 4/179/282-5, Windham to George Rose, 17th June 1800.

¹⁶³ PRO WO 4/182/484, Yorke to the Colonels of all Regiments, 4th May 1801.

¹⁶⁴ PD (1807) IX, 810-12, 14th July 1807; PD (1813) XXVI, 1154, 7th July 1813.

¹⁶⁵ PD (1812) XXIII, 1276-85, 29th July 1812.

¹⁶⁶ 6th RCME (1808) 337.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 398-402, *Appendix 4*, Evidence of Matthew Lewis, 11th and 12th January 1808.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 338-9; 395-7, *Appendix 2*, Examination of Francis Moore, Esq., Deputy Secretary at War, 16th June 1807; 465-6, *Appendix 16A*, Examination of Sir James Pultney, Bart., Secretary at War, 15th January 1808.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 347-8, *Appendix 55*, Queries and Answers from the Commander in Chief, 6th April 1808.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 347-8; 583-4, *Appendix 64*, Questions to General Sir David Dundas, with his answers, respecting Agency; 586, *Appendix 65*, Questions to General the Honourable William Harcourt, with his answers.

unable to give any explicit figures to support their argument, due to the disordered and belated state of agency accounts. Despite this lack of evidence, and the damning admission of poor accounting, the Commissioners decided against establishing a Board of Agency, accepting that during war-time it might be inadvisable to make so vast a change. Instead they recommended a system which further subordinated the Agent to the Secretary at War. They stated that, 'the system should be regulated by clear and explicit orders to be issued from the office of the Secretary at War,'¹⁷¹ and that all financial matters should be processed through the agent, both to and from the regiment. They concurred that a saving could be made, and expressed a belief that it could result from a reduction in agency charges by up to a third, (the suggestion of the Comptrollers of Army Accounts)¹⁷² or by a replacement of all charges with a one percent charge on all issues for regimental services,¹⁷³ (the suggestion of Cochrane Johnstone).¹⁷⁴

This subordination of the agents to the Secretary at War was, in Palmerston's view, a success. In 1812, he stated to the Committee on Public Expenditure, that he had enough power to control them, and declined any further authority, adding that should he require it, he could obtain it through the Mutiny Act.¹⁷⁵ Even the accounts were being processed at a satisfactory rate, Palmerston stating that, 'by far the greatest proportion have already been examined.'¹⁷⁶ It is not surprising that he was so content with the arrangements, for not only had he achieved substantial financial control over the agents, he had also only complied to those arrangements which suited his purposes. To the annoyance of Horse Guards,¹⁷⁷ Palmerston had maintained his direct contact with the regimental paymasters, as well as the agents, which in the opinion of the Commander in Chief, rendered 'the Paymaster in a manner independent of the authority of the Colonel and the Agent, and consequently lessening that responsibility upon which the security of the Public has ultimately rested.'¹⁷⁸ However, Palmerston reminded the Commander in Chief that the finances of the Army were the business of the Secretary at War, and had nothing to do with Horse Guards.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 352.

¹⁷² PRO WO 4/22/206-211, Pultney to Harrison, 1st April 1808.

¹⁷³ 6th RCME (1808) 353.

¹⁷⁴ PD (1807) IX, 810-12, 14th July 1807.

¹⁷⁵ 13th RCPE (1812) 33.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁷⁷ WO4/413/73, Leveson Gower to Commander in Chief, 14th August 1809.

¹⁷⁸ 10th RCPE (1811) 21.

¹⁷⁹ PRO WO 4/437/18-19, Palmerston to Commander in Chief, 6th March 1810.

Despite such reservations, the system was to remain in place, with the Secretary at War maintaining contact and exerting his authority over both regimental paymasters and agents.

The reduction in agency charges was to prove more problematic. It was impossible to ascertain the state of the agents' accounts at any one time, due to the delays in the system, and their disordered state. During the three debates in parliament on the subject of agency, during the period under discussion,¹⁸⁰ opponents of the system claimed that the public was owed several thousand pounds by agents, while at the same time, their supporters claimed the contrary. Neither side was able to convincingly refute the other, since substantive evidence did not exist, due to the state of the accounts. Even the agents themselves found it difficult to find their way through their own records. No accounts for Greenwood and Cox existed prior to 1794.¹⁸¹ When a representative of that house was examined by the Commissioners of Military Enquiry in 1807, he stated that his house was a creditor of the public of £141,156.18s.2d.¹⁸² However, after enquiries revealed that the public were actually creditors of Greenwood and Cox, a statement was sent to the Commissioners by the agents, which revealed that the public were owed £28,043.9s.8d.¹⁸³ While this shows a clear lack of competence, and could so easily have led to further investigations, and even allegations of corruption, the excuses of the agents were accepted, (despite the disorder of accounts being one reason offered for the collapse of Ross and Ogilvie),¹⁸⁴ and the agency system was permitted to continue, but with fees reduced by a quarter, taking effect from 25th July 1809.¹⁸⁵

The reduction in agency fees had a significant effect on the cost of the service. In 1807, Parliament was informed that the total cost of agency for the period from 25th December 1805 to 24th December 1806, was £6,537,634.19s.11d.¹⁸⁶ By 1812, the same services, for a substantially expanded Army, were costing the public, only £4,819,622.16s.6d.¹⁸⁷ Of these totals, the amount allocated to Greenwood and Cox remained relatively constant, at 49.9 and 48.6 percent respectively.

¹⁸⁰ *PD* (1807) IX, 810-12, 14th July 1807; *PD* (1812) XXIII, 1276-85, 29th July 1812; *PD* (1813) XXVI, 1154, 7th July 1813.

¹⁸¹ *10th RCPE* (1811) 17.

¹⁸² *6th RCME* (1808) 356; 546, *Appendix* 49, Examination of George Pindar, 26th May 1807.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 357; 547, *Appendix* 50, General Statement of Unsettled Balances of Accounts in the Agency of Messrs. Greenwood and Cox and Co., 11th June 1807.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 580-2, *Appendix* 62, Examination of Alexander Ross, 2nd March 1808.

¹⁸⁵ WO4/413/73, Leveson Gower to Commander in Chief, 14th August 1809.

¹⁸⁶ *PP* (1807) IV, 295.

¹⁸⁷ *PP* (1812-13) XII, 199.

The Pay Office Act of 1805, had attempted to tighten the accounting practice of the agents, along with that of the Regimental Paymasters.¹⁸⁸ Agents were instructed to make up their accounts within six months in Britain and nine months abroad, in a 'clear' fashion. Any agent not doing so was to be regarded as a debtor to the crown. The funds were to be paid into the account of the Paymaster General in the Bank of England, from which the agent would draw them, only when required. Finally, all the agents' accounts had to be made up at the request of either the Paymaster General, or the Secretary at War. It was an attempt to improve the financial management of Army accounts generally, but also to bring the agency system into line with other areas of Army administration, by subordinating it to the Secretary at War, who could demand accounts, and held the ultimate sanction of dismissal, over the agent.¹⁸⁹ However, by 1808, it was clear that the provisions of the Act were not being complied with, and it was repealed,¹⁹⁰ leaving only the stipulation of the time in which agents were permitted in which to make up their accounts.¹⁹¹ The flexible rules which replaced it, that could be altered as necessary without recourse to Parliament, encouraged Palmerston in his belief, that by 1812, the object had been achieved, with accounts being processed at a desirable rate,¹⁹² and with very few instances of extended delays.¹⁹³

Despite being under investigation by four separate commissions and committees during the course of the period, the system of agency remained in place. Notwithstanding continued opposition,¹⁹⁴ which gradually reduced the services required of them, and the fees they were permitted to claim, the system continued until 1892,¹⁹⁵ and beyond in the form of private banking which is still used by many Army officers.¹⁹⁶ The consolidation of the system also continued through the nineteenth century. There were only three houses by 1914,¹⁹⁷ which was further reduced by the collapse of McGriggor and Co. in 1922.¹⁹⁸

¹⁸⁸ 45 Geo. III, c.58. xxi-xxv.

¹⁸⁹ 13th RCPE (1812) 33.

¹⁹⁰ 48Geo. III, c.128, i.

¹⁹¹ 48 Geo. III, c.128, iii.

¹⁹² 13th RCPE (1812) 34.

¹⁹³ PP (1821) XV, 149, 'General State of Annual Accounts of Army Agents', 16th March 1821; PP (1825) XVIII, 67, 'Return showing the number of the Accounts of Agents and Paymasters for periods prior to 25th December 1810, which were unsettled on 25th December 1821.....', 2nd February 1825.

¹⁹⁴ See for example, WO 43/83/4, Cox and Co. to War Office, 2nd September 1844; Secretary at War to Cox and Co., 3rd September 1844.

¹⁹⁵ J.D. Turner, 'Army Agency', in *JSAHR* (1934) XIII, 34.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 35-6.

¹⁹⁷ Wheeler, *War Office*, 107.

¹⁹⁸ Turner, 'Army Agency', 32, 35.

During the period under discussion the changes that affected Army agents were few. Most significantly they were brought increasingly under the control of the Secretary at War, who received their completed accounts, and had the ability to dismiss any agent who transgressed. They lost their ability to broker commissions,¹⁹⁹ and their fees were reduced by twenty five per cent, despite the opposition of a large body of powerful military opinion. However, these officers were able to prevent the transfer of agency to a General Board, despite there being obvious savings involved. By doing this, a great part of the proprietary control of regiments was maintained by the colonels, which would otherwise have reverted to a civil department, under an even more powerful War Office. It had significance in many other areas, most notably in the supply of arms, clothing and equipment.²⁰⁰ It also meant that, despite a check being made on agents' accounts, they maintained control over substantial amounts of public money, outside the direct jurisdiction of either the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, or the Audit Office.

3.7 COMPTROL AND AUDIT

As stated above, an examination of money allocated from the Extraordinary Account was made by the Comptrollers of Army Accounts. This had been the case from 1783,²⁰¹ when it was disclosed that the only audit of these funds was made annually by a junior Treasury clerk with little military experience.²⁰² By this date it was suggested that the Comptrollers, under the Treasury, had become 'a mere sinecure,'²⁰³ with few responsibilities outside the checking of clothing patterns, and the accounts for victualling and supplying forces abroad,²⁰⁴ and were therefore of little use as a check against financial corruption. If this had been the case prior to 1783, through the course of the next decade the Comptrollers assumed new responsibilities, which ensured that, by the period under discussion, they were recognised as an effective check against the perceived corruption of Army finance. These included the examination of the accounts of the Paymaster General and his Deputies, likewise the Commissaries, all contracts for supplying money, provisions

¹⁹⁹ See below 4.6 Officers, 154.

²⁰⁰ See below 6.4 Clothing and Equipment, 202-14.

²⁰¹ *Act for the better Regulation of the Office of Paymaster General of his Majesty's Forces*, 2nd July 1782, 22 Geo. III, c.81; Amendment to the Act, 3rd June 1783, 23 Geo. III, c.50. (Pay Office Act)

²⁰² *10th RCPA* (1783) 527.

²⁰³ PRO WO 8/231/131, Comptrollers Office to Pitt(?), 20th November 1782, as quoted in Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army,' 151.

²⁰⁴ *10th RCPA* (1783) 528.

and stores for the Army, all Army accounts both Ordinary and Extraordinary, muster rolls, and the provision of clothing for invalids.²⁰⁵ The separation from those they were examining was emphasised, as they were 'to report all frauds, neglects, abuses and defaults to the Treasury to which Department *alone* they were to be responsible.'²⁰⁶ However, attempts to make the Comptrollers responsible for all regimental accounts met with strong opposition from the War Office, who were able to maintain final control of these finances.

The Audit Act of 1788²⁰⁷ marked the establishment, by the Treasury, of the Commission on Public Accounts, and the Audit Office. The Audit Commissioners were to be independent of government control, although as they were appointed directly by the Treasury, without recourse to Parliament, their independence is immediately questionable. In addition, the ultimate direction and control of the areas of examination remained with the Treasury.²⁰⁸ Throughout the period under discussion, the Audit Office was the final arbiter of all public spending, and despite criticism by the Committee on Public Expenditure in 1810, which questioned its efficiency,²⁰⁹ it remained unaltered. The Committee recommended certain principles on which an audit should be based, and observed that there was no independent examination of the actual expenditure of the military.²¹⁰ However, these recommendations, were not implemented until 1846.²¹¹ By that time the offices of the Comptrollers of Army Accounts had merged with the Audit Office,²¹² uniting the civil and military accountants. After passage through the various stages of audit,²¹³ the Army accounts were submitted to the Treasury, for their final discharge, and the granting of a *Quietus* to all accountants. At this stage the Secretary at War would issue a Certificate of Discharge to the Paymaster General, completing the accounting process.²¹⁴ In theory the passage of the accounts was to take no more than three months from their arrival in Britain,²¹⁵ however, the accounting process was one beset by delays, throughout the course of this study.

²⁰⁵ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 190.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁷ 25 Geo. III, c.52.

²⁰⁸ 1st RCME (1807) 73.

²⁰⁹ 5th RCPE (1810) ii, 20.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, ii, 22, i.e. the comparison of books, vouchers and receipts for the items obtained for the army, against the sum of money allocated for that purpose, under the headings of Ordinary Expenditure.

²¹¹ 9 & 10 Vic., c.92. s.2.

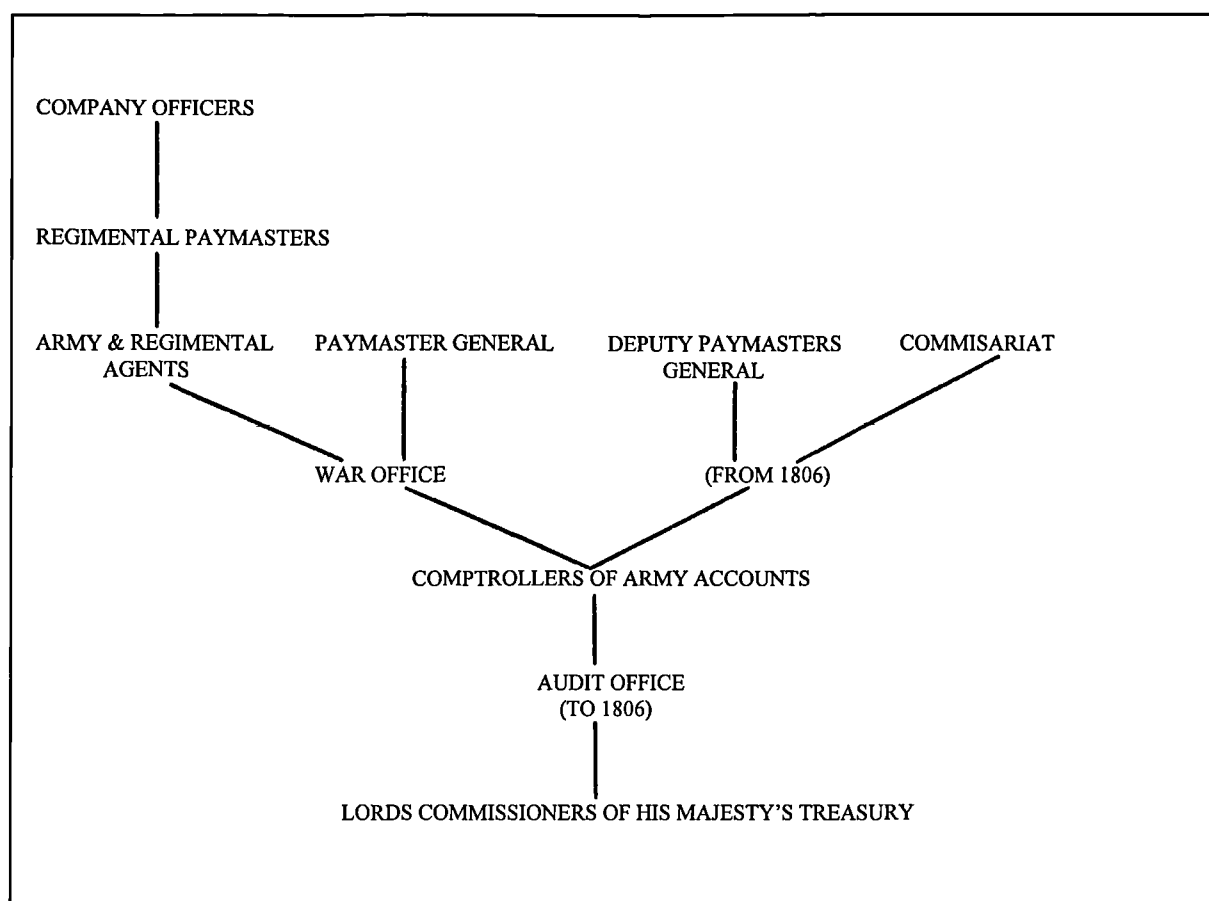
²¹² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 193. Clode states that merger took place in 1835.

²¹³ See Figure 2 - Process of Account of the Paymaster General's Account, 94

²¹⁴ 10th RCPE (1811) 19; See Figure 2 for the Process of the Paymaster General's Account, 94.

²¹⁵ 45 Geo. III, c.58, vi ; 48 Geo. III, c.128, i, iii; 6th RCME (1808) 305.

Figure 2 - Process of the Paymaster General's Account²¹⁶



During the Wars with France, the volume of accounts which needed to be processed by the Comptrollers, and consequently the Audit Office, increased along with the expansion of the Army, to such a degree that in 1806, the Treasury requested further Auditors and a third Comptroller be appointed, in order to clear the backlog of unexamined accounts.²¹⁷ The additional staff were permitted to be employed, and the Comptrollers given statutory rights to examine all military accounts.²¹⁸ In addition, a new patent was issued to the Comptrollers, giving them 'the most extensive jurisdiction over the military expenditure of the Country.'²¹⁹ It was recommended that in all practicable cases, examination of accounts should precede payment. However, as it was appreciated that the workload of those checking the Army accounts was great, and that the system was already in arrears, it was decided that the Commissariat, both in Britain and abroad, would be placed under the Comptrollers, who were empowered to examine finally, all provision and store accounts,²²⁰ without recourse to the Audit Office. All other military accountants were

²¹⁶ 19th RSCF (1797) 356-7; 35th RSCF (1798) 621; 46 Geo, III, c. 141, xx; 10th RCPE (1811) 19.

²¹⁷ PD (1806) VII, 676 -82, 16th June 1806.

²¹⁸ 46 Geo. III, c. 80, ii.

²¹⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 191.

²²⁰ This was to include stores such as tents and other camp equipment, which was stored and distributed by the Commissariat, but only on the authority of the Quartermaster General.

also exempted from examination by the Audit Office, providing their accounts had been passed by the Comptrollers,²²¹ although, in practise the Treasury could demand a second audit from any public accountant.²²² This would pave the way for the merger of the two offices of audit, although it would not take place for forty years. In addition, the Comptrollers were required to examine, under oath if necessary, all matters concerning the expenditure of money, provisions and stores, and it was reiterated that they were to report to the Treasury 'all frauds, neglects or abuses.'²²³ Their Department was to be made a depository for every kind of information relating to the areas they were examining, ensuring that the accounts of the Army would no longer be processed by men without a knowledge of military finance.

The success of the Comptrollers of Military Accounts was further emphasised by the appointment, in 1814, of a fourth Comptroller, or Auditor General, with responsibility for the Peninsular campaign,²²⁴ the expense of which had become a preoccupation of the Treasury and certain members of parliament.²²⁵ He was to operate with the Army, and his powers were even more extensive than those of the Comptrollers in Britain. He was to execute his office under the direction and control of the Treasury, and had the authority to require anyone receiving money or public stores, for which they were accountable, to render the accounts on oath, and submit all relevant paperwork to substantiate them.²²⁶ However, despite being given such powers, it is interesting to note that the audit he made was not deemed final, and that a re-examination by the Audit Office was suggested, perhaps to avoid the accusation of the Comptroller being compromised by his proximity to those he was employed to police. The presence of the Auditor General was obviously deemed a success, as when the Army moved into France, the legislation was amended to permit him the same jurisdiction there,²²⁷ and an Auditor General travelled with Wellington to the Low Countries, for the Waterloo campaign.²²⁸ It would, however, be more than seventeen years before even the Peninsular accounts were settled,²²⁹ which does

²²¹ 46 Geo. III, c. 141, xx.

²²² *1st RCME* (1807) 73.

²²³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 191.

²²⁴ 53 Geo. III, c.150; PRO WO 1/852/303, Royal Warrant, 15th August 1813; WO 1/852/299, Mr. Wharton, Treasury, to Colonel Bunbury, 27th August 1813.

²²⁵ See for example, *PD* (1813) XXVI, 893; *PD* (1813-14) XXVII, 70-1; *PD* (1813-14) XXVII, 155-6; *PD* (1814) XXVIII, 56-7.

²²⁶ WO 1/852/307, 'Instructions of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to Richard Dawkins Esq. Auditor General of Accounts of Public Expenditure in Spain and Portugal', 20th August 1813.

²²⁷ 54 Geo. III, c.98.

²²⁸ Although no legislation appears to have sanctioned this, the presence of a Comptroller is noted in subsequent regulations. See for example, *PP* (1814-15), II, 839.

²²⁹ RHK-M, 2/B4, Kennedy to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 16th July 1831.

not suggest that the Auditor General was able to exert much influence over the finances of the Army, during the single year available to him before the peace. He appears to have preoccupied himself with the minutiae of the Army accounts, examining every transaction, and demanding their cross-referencing with warrants and vouchers.²³⁰ His investigation was to continue for a number of years after the war, and his findings led to several investigations into the handling of the Peninsula accounts,²³¹ resulting in the dismissal of at least one Deputy Commissary General.²³²

3.8 COMMISSARIAT ACCOUNTS

All money sanctioned by Parliament, under the Mutiny Act, for the pay and allowances of British troops, was processed through the Paymaster General in Britain. For troops on home service, the funds were disbursed through Regimental Agents, or Deputy Paymasters General of Districts. If destined for those on active service, it was despatched to the Army Headquarters, and deposited in the Military Chest, under the control of a Deputy Paymaster General. However, he would be unable to issue any of the money without the sanction of the Commissary General, on whom he would draw a cheque, and who would ultimately have to account for it. In addition the Commissary General would have the responsibility for the distribution of all extraordinary funding, released to him on the authority of the Commander's Warrant. He was therefore, in effect, responsible for all funding of a field Army,²³³ and after 1806, responsible to the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, for the audit of his accounts.

The state of the accounts prior to the arrival of the Auditor General, could well have had much to do with his inability to affect their prompt settlement, and indeed could have directly influenced his appointment. In 1813, the accounts were requested for the preceding years of the Peninsular campaign, from the Commissary General in Spain, Sir Robert Hugh Kennedy,²³⁴ who immediately returned to England.²³⁵ It had become apparent that the accounts were not in order, and blame was directed at him. The main antagonist was Sir

²³⁰ RHK-M, 2/B2, 'Report and Observations of the Auditor General's Office,' 13th February 1816.

²³¹ RHK-M, 2/B2, Kennedy to Herries, 10th September 1816; Kennedy to the Board of Commissioners, 21st April 1818.

²³² *Morning Chronicle*, 4, 12th January 1822.

²³³ For a description of this process in the Peninsula see Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 71-6.

²³⁴ RHK-M, 3/B3/8 Audit Office to Kennedy, 13th December 1813.

²³⁵ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 74n.

Francis Baring, MP, a member of the influential banking family, and a long-time advocate of public economy,²³⁶ and who had been one of the original members of the Commission of Naval Enquiry.²³⁷ He wrote to John Herries, the Commissary in Chief, declaring that his ‘criticism is the way in which the accounts have been left for years unattended,’ and suggesting maladministration on the part of Kennedy.²³⁸ This came at a time when Kennedy was processing more funds than any of his predecessors, following the decision to channel subsidies for the payment of the Spanish and Portuguese troops, through Wellington, rather than the respective governments.²³⁹ This amounted to almost £1,400,000 for 1813 alone,²⁴⁰ which could itself have been enough to prompt the appointment of an Auditor General, even without the additional concerns for the Treasury of alleged poor accounting. However, the appointment of the Auditor General in Spain, came as a result of a plea by Kennedy, ‘to the Duke of Wellington, to recommend the appointment of an Auditor to the Army for the purpose of minutely investigating so vast an expenditure past and in progress.’²⁴¹ It would appear that Kennedy wanted to cover himself amid the allegations, and the vast sums of money which had already passed through his office, for which he would ultimately have to account, and be liable to possible surcharges. Wellington confirmed this, suggesting that the amount already processed by Kennedy amounted to around £50,000,000.²⁴² Kennedy hoped to avoid such pitfalls by working with the Comptrollers in Spain, and this was supported by Wellington, who saw the appointment as a means of relieving ‘the Commissary General from the weight of responsibility of his accounts of the expenditure of money, and of the issue of stores.’²⁴³ The apparent inability of the Auditor General, Dawkins, to effect the prompt settlement of the accounts, Kennedy suggested was that,

instead of joining the Army, [Dawkins] fixed himself in Lisbon, and is therefore as little qualified to pass just decisions upon the Commissariat arrangements of the War, as if he had been two thousand miles distant from the Peninsula.²⁴⁴

²³⁶ See for example, Francis Baring, *Observations on the establishment of the Bank of England and on the Paper Circulation of the Country ...* 2nd edition (London, 1797) 50-51. Baring advocated that Britain should not spend beyond its means, to prosecute the war.

²³⁷ *RCNE* (1802-1806); He was also responsible for victualling in the later years of the American War of Independence. Condon, ‘Transport Service’, 35.

²³⁸ RHK-M, 3/B8, Herries to Kennedy, 16th November 1814.

²³⁹ John M. Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder. British Foreign Aid in the Wars with France, 1793-1815.* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1969) 258-9.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 260.

²⁴¹ RHK-M, 2/B2 Kennedy to John Herries, Commissary in Chief, 10th September 1816.

²⁴² PRO WO 1/260/381, Wellington to Earl Bathurst, 19th December 1813.

²⁴³ PRO WO 1/258/45-62, Wellington to Bathurst, 13th April 1813; *WD*, X, 287-90, Wellington to Bathurst, 13th April 1813.

²⁴⁴ RHK-M, 2/B2 Kennedy to John Herries, Commissary in Chief, 10th September 1816.

This despite Kennedy's express suggestions upon Dawkins' appointment, that,

it is very important that a part of it [the Auditor's establishment] should be either present with the Army, or in its immediate vicinity; but I have no doubt that it will already have occurred to you, that, without an arrangement of this nature, some of the principal advantages of local investigation will be lost.²⁴⁵

Dawkins was also criticised in Britain for the delays in his enquiries,²⁴⁶ but despite clashing publicly with Kennedy,²⁴⁷ he was still able to find evidence of mismanagement on the part of members of the Commissariat, 'which has subjected the Public to great Losses, and Himself to heavy surcharges',²⁴⁸ and for which proceedings were instituted, seven years after the end of the war.

Allegations of maladministration on the part of Commissary Generals were not unusual. The financial responsibilities of their office had been the downfall of several of their number, two of whom had been given terms in jail for their failure to process their accounts successfully, or for outright corruption.²⁴⁹ Even those who were able to avoid such pitfalls, could wait for many years before finally being given their quietus. Kennedy was not discharged from his 1794-5 accounts until 1805,²⁵⁰ Sir Brook Watson, who was Commissary General in the Low Countries during 1793-5, was granted his discharge in 1812, five years after his death,²⁵¹ and Kennedy did not receive his quietus for his 1807 accounts until 1819.²⁵² He was asked to resubmit his Peninsula accounts on numerous occasions, prior to their final acceptance in 1831.²⁵³ Before being granted their quietus, many Commissary Generals found themselves surcharged for missing vouchers or warrants, or losses of public money. Deputy Commissary Generals Aylmer and Dalrymple, for example, were surcharged £33237.18s.3¼d. and £33461.2s.5d. respectively, in 1816,

²⁴⁵ PRO WO 1/260/381-83, Kennedy to Dawkins, 5th December 1813.

²⁴⁶ *Morning Chronicle*, 4, 12th January 1822.

²⁴⁷ RHK-M, 2/B2 Commissary General's Department to Kennedy, 24th July 1819.

²⁴⁸ *Morning Chronicle*, 4, 25th December 1821.

²⁴⁹ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 72; see also 6.2 The Commissariat and the Contract System, 192-200.

²⁵⁰ RHK-M, 2/B3/passim., 'Copies of my letters respecting my Dutch Accounts'; particularly, Kennedy to Thomas Farquar, 19th August 1805.

²⁵¹ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 71.

²⁵² RHK-M, 2/B2, Discharge of Kennedy as Deputy Commissary General to the Baltic Expedition, 3rd December 1819. He owed the public thirteen shillings and sixpence.

²⁵³ RHK-M, 2/B3/8, Audit Office to Kennedy, 13th December 1813; 1328/2/B2, Audit Office to Kennedy, 15th August 1822; 1328/2/B2, Audit Office to Kennedy, 26th March 1822; 1308/3/B3/2, Kennedy to William Hill, 27th March 1828; 1308/2/B4, Kennedy to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 16th July 1831.

for failing to account for the differences in British and 'Foreign' (Spanish, Portuguese, and French) weights and measures,²⁵⁴ and Kennedy was still being requested to pay surcharges for 1811, of £1291.7s., in 1828.²⁵⁵ Unfortunately, the flexibility allowed to the Commissariat in the field, which enabled them to function under such difficult circumstances, was not respected in the calm of a post-war Treasury office, which had been one of Kennedy's reasons for requesting the appointment of an Auditor General.²⁵⁶ Kennedy defended the simplification of the Commissariat system, stating,

Every person who has ever been with an advancing or retreating Army must have observed the confusion which prevails in every Town or Village on the arrival of the Troops. ... The Marches in the Peninsula and France were seldom accomplished before one o'clock in the afternoon - sometimes not even until four, five and even six o'clock. You will therefore perceive the difficulties under which the Commissariat had to act, in providing for the Troops between the performance of one March and the commencement of another. And it must be recollected that the Commissariat had also those Marches to go through. ... The most simple System of Account that could be found was then necessary.²⁵⁷

However, those checking the accounts, after the threat of war had passed, were not prepared to make any allowances for a simplified system, and so Kennedy and his sub-accountants, incurred questionable surcharges, and took many years to settle finally their accounts to the satisfaction of the Audit Office.

The theory of an Auditor General was sound, being able to examine the Commissariat accounts in situ, and, in theory, observe any inconsistencies in the 'vast expenditure, past and present'. But due to Dawkins' late appointment, a huge backlog of unexamined accounts had developed, which proved impossible to examine before the end of the Wars. This was not assisted by the reluctance of Dawkins to move with the Army, for by being at a distance from the forces, he would not only fail to deal with the immediate financial situation, but also fail to develop an understanding and appreciation of the mode of conducting the finances of the Army. Kennedy had requested an Auditor, 'on the spot',²⁵⁸ but had ended up with someone that might as well have remained in London.

²⁵⁴ RHK-M, 2/B2, Kennedy to Herries, 10th September 1816.

²⁵⁵ RHK-M, 3/B3/3 Comptrollers of Audit to Kennedy, 'Statement of Surcharge' 24th December 1828.

²⁵⁶ PRO WO 1/260/393-5, Kennedy to Herries, 23rd March 1813.

²⁵⁷ RHK-M, 2/B2/, Kennedy to Herries, 10th September 1816.

²⁵⁸ PRO WO 1/260/397-411, Kennedy to Herries, 13th April 1813.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The study of the financial structure of the Army during the Wars with France, can so easily be seen as one of delays. Upon the augmentation of the Army, all departments processing funds and accounts reeled at the vast scale of the expanded forces, and the sheer volume of the work required to be handled. However, to see it merely as a study of delay, would be to miss certain important changes, that developed the financial administration of the Army into an effective element of government control, albeit, not one that completely followed the established pattern of other financial departments of the state.

Every financial department increased the number of people it employed as the war progressed, since all were geared to a peace-time establishment. All experienced difficulties in employing suitable men for the roles intended of them, with the War Office in particular suffering from the lack of qualified individuals. Even the Regimental Paymasters, who were appointed to specific duties, were found to be inadequate to the roles intended of them. While clearly an expertise would develop through the repetition of the tasks required, new simpler systems were advocated and eventually introduced, enabling those without an 'official' education to be employed. However, no area of Army finance followed the Excise example of requiring a training course prior to entry. From the beginning of the conflict, when each Army finance department consisted of an official and a number of 'persons', as with those areas examined in Chapter 1, a definite organisation of military finance officers was established. As the war progressed, a clear career structure developed, with definite job descriptions and salaried positions within the administrative hierarchy, removing the necessity to take fees, and increasing both the professionalism and accountability of staff.

Throughout the period under discussion, there were two clear preoccupations in the area of finance. The first was towards economy, and the saving of public money in particular. While the costs of all areas of the Army inevitably rose substantially during the Wars, there was still a preoccupation with the waste of public funds, and any savings that might be made through the elimination of such waste. The second preoccupation was that of the accountability of those processing public money. This was given greater impetus by discoveries of dishonesty in the Barrack Office, and in high profile cases of corruption, such as that against Lord Melville. The most important result, was that the idea of public

accountancy - the processing of funds through an official's personal bank account, became an anathema. In particular, the Pay Office became 'an office of mere account.' As discussed in Chapter 1, the drive for accountability also extended to calls for more checks to be placed upon the financial authority of the Secretary at War. This preoccupation would ensure that calls for flexible or simplified systems of account would be delayed because of difficulties in achieving accountability. The structure of the audit of the Army accounts ensured that the ultimate authority over the finance of the forces lay with the Treasury, through the Audit Office, and the Comptrollers of Army Accounts. However, this authority was in direct conflict with the flexible approach adopted by the Commissariat on active service, and in particular during the Peninsula campaign. In that theatre they struggled under the pressure of the extended nature of the war, which had meant that an estimated £50 million had been processed through the Commissariat in Portugal and Spain, between 1808 and 1813. Despite establishing the precedent of an Auditor General in the field, ultimately the distance of the audit of the accounts from the conflict, both in miles and time, ensured a lack of understanding of the exigencies of active service. It is, of course, important to note that the audit of the military accounts by the Treasury offices, maintained the line of civilian control over the finances of the Army, and was ultimately the only check on the dominance of the Secretary at War in this area.

Initially, the solution to the problem of the delays in the accounting process was to employ more staff. Every department expanded to unprecedented levels, and overtime was sanctioned in the War Office. But, it became clear that since the war was likely to be prolonged, other solutions needed to be attempted. The gradual removal of many sinecures, enabled the employment of men who would actually fulfil their duties. The establishment of a structure based on clearly defined roles, would obviously assist in addressing the problems faced by the various financial departments, as would the introduction of new and innovative modes of working, such as the production line process in the Regimental Accounts Department of the War Office. In addition the simplified system of account ensured that processing was made easier, as did the adoption of new forms on which returns were made. However, the reform of the system was fraught with problems. The volume of work required was obvious, but less so was the fact that all the attempted reforms were based upon the old flawed system. Often the attempts at its reform proved over-ambitious, such as the monthly returns by Regimental Paymasters, or revealed a lack of understanding of the structures of Army finance, such as the relationship between



Regimental Paymasters and Agents. It was not until the Pay Office Act of 1808, which gave complete flexibility to the government to impose any new system upon the financial organisation of the Army, that anything resembling a solution to the problem of delays was achieved, and it would be the onset of peace in 1815, that would finally permit the system to work as envisaged.

Through the Wars, the Secretary at War maintained and strengthened his control of Army finances, despite concerns being expressed at the consolidation of so much power, effectively in the hands of one man. Attempts were made to impose the Comptrollers of Army Accounts on certain areas of War Office jurisdiction, notably Regimental Accounts, but this was successfully opposed, and ultimately the War Office was further augmented to cope with the extras work-load. In particular the presence of Lord Palmerston as Secretary at War after 1809 ensured the prominence of the post. He was adamant that contact was maintained by the War Office with all financial officers of the Army, namely Regimental Paymasters and Agents. This ensured that civilian control was maintained over regimental purse-strings, against attempts of Horse Guards to regain control of that area. Significantly, the Commander in Chief did not use the only source of funds available to him throughout the conflict, accepting that any money required by his office, was obtained through a request to the Secretary at War.

Despite reform of all other areas of Army finance, ensuring a modern system of handling public funds, the system of agency remained largely intact well beyond the Wars with France. Despite losing their authority to act as brokers, and a proportion of their fees, the agents remained powerful and somewhat mysterious figures. They were the placeholder to the Regimental Colonel's sinecure, and a private company or individual, responsible for processing large sums of public money, and enabling regiments and departments to function. Even with the prospect of saving a minimum of £25,000 per annum, (a sum greater than that estimated to be saved by Palmerston's Wagon train cuts in 1810), the idea of an Army-wide Board of Agency was dismissed, and agents continued, albeit with their position under greater public scrutiny, and under the direct authority of the Secretary at War. Their disordered accounts, the lack of security for the public funds held on their books, and the development of a near monopoly by Greenwood and Cox, led to allegations of corruption, and manipulation of the system by their friends in high places, in particular the Duke of York, (or vice versa). However, agency power would never be as substantial as

it had been at the outbreak of hostilities, being reduced further throughout the nineteenth century, effectively ending in 1892. Despite such a long and dubious history, surprisingly little information on agents survives. Consequently few authors have addressed the topic in any detail, merely adding to its mystery. Although the process of account was tightened up, and a greater emphasis placed on the authority of the Secretary at War, it is most significant that the agencies remained while all other dated institutions fell.

By 1812, according to Palmerston, the reformed accounting process of the Army was working well, with few accounts in arrears, and certainly the lack of complaints bears this out. The Secretary at War had gained control of the financial structure of the Army, and had consolidated his authority, against challenges from both Parliament and Horse Guards. The civilian authority over the Army was therefore complete, for not only had he been able to subordinate the post of Commander in Chief, and with it authority over all aspects of the Army, but he had now achieved power over their finances. The fears of past generations of the consolidation of the control of the Army in the hands of one man had been achieved, not by a General or a King, as had been the concern, but by a politician, without even a seat in the cabinet.

CHAPTER 4 COMPOSITION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Under the terms of the Royal Warrant appointing him to his post, the Commander in Chief controlled the Army in times of war.¹ But, as has been observed in Part I, this authority was tempered during the period under discussion, by the emergence of the powerful post of the Secretary at War, the authority of which effectively incorporated the Army into the structure of government. Part I mapped the influences on the military administration of the developments in the British state, with the evolution of career structures, salaries and job descriptions; the tightening of the financial control of the Army by the central government; and increased accountability to the treasury. Part II will assess whether these developments in state bureaucracy and administrative structure affected the manpower of the Army; whether such reforms were continued into the composition and training of the military itself; and whether the Commander in Chief was able to maintain control of the main area of his role, through his management of the composition and training of the Army.

This chapter deals with the composition of the Army during the Wars. It will examine the expansion of the British military force to meet the needs of a vast global conflict; the methods by which this was achieved, both innovative and traditional, together with the politics that affected them; and how men of all ranks were enticed into a service that both contemporaries and later observers have suggested was harsh and brutal. It will attempt to establish who the men were that made up the Army; try to isolate their motives for serving; and assess the changes affecting the composition of the Army, that took place between 1793 and 1815.

4.2 EXPANSION

During the course of the eighteenth century, the size of all European armies increased substantially. The British Army was no exception. In the War of Spanish

¹ See for example, WO4/156/357, Royal Warrant, 13th February 1795, appointing the Duke of York as Commander in Chief.

Succession, 135,000 British troops took the field. This figure was expanded to 170,000 during the Seven Years War, and to 190,000 during the American War of Independence.² At the outbreak of war with France in 1793, it was clear that an Army of even greater numbers of men was going to be required, to counteract the vast armies that France had committed to the European theatre of war. Between 1793 and 1815 the British Army's manpower increased to unprecedented levels. From a peace-time establishment of 17,013 men in 1793, it almost doubled by 1794,³ and by 1812, at its largest ever, the regular Army alone numbered 245,996 men.⁴ The expansion of the Army had always been a highly contentious issue. Even with the threat of the French dominance of Europe, the legacy of the past - of Cromwell and the Generals, and of James II's attempts to rule with a Catholic Army - was still pertinent, and still part of the opposition to a strong standing Army.⁵ Furthermore, there were suggestions that Britain could never compete with France in the numbers game, and that it was therefore pointless raising such a vast force. In 1793, the French had over 350,000 men available for service, which by 1794 had more than doubled to 750,000.⁶ Major General Le Marchant, who served as a Captain during the early campaigns in the Low Countries, was under no illusion that Britain could not compete with France. He wrote, 'Whatever reinforcements we have, the enemy will receive threefold, and I am therefore confident the game is up, and we are incapable of winning the war.'⁷ By 1806, through conscription, and a still active volunteering system, they were able to raise in one year as many new recruits as the total number of men serving in the British Army at its largest in 1812.⁸

In 1802, when the suggested estimate for the Army establishment was put at 110,000,⁹ one opposition MP argued that,

You can never equal the military power of France, and as you can not, why stop at 110,000? Why not raise 120, 130, 140,000? If this argument be worth anything, it

² Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 30.

³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 274, 398.

⁴ *PP* (1812) ix, 189; (1812-13) xiii, 1.

⁵ See for example Francis Steuart (ed.), *Horace Walpole, Last Journals During the Reign of George III* (London, 1900) II, 413.

⁶ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, 26, 34. Even with this number, 300,000 more men were demanded; Forrest, *Soldiers of the French Revolution*, 68-82.

⁷ Denis Le Marchant, *Memoires of the Late Major General Le Marchant* (Staplehurst, 1997) 41.

⁸ Elting, *Swords Around a Throne*, 326. In 1805-6 the French were able to raise 200,000 men by conscription alone, with several thousand still volunteering

⁹ *PD* (1801-3) xxxvi, 1044, 8th December 1802.

applies equally to our raising only 1000. Why, if we can never be equal to France, raise a man?¹⁰

This idea that the French population was so great that Britain could never compete in the military numbers game was a common theme during the course of the period, and little was given to whether a populous country could actually get its men into the field. The French, always great publicists of statistics, had stimulated the fears by claiming a population of twenty seven million.¹¹ These fears were addressed to some extent by the compilation of a detailed survey of the able-bodied male population in Britain, as part of the 1798 Defence of the Realm Act,¹² which was qualified by the census of 1801, and repeated in 1803.¹³ The census returns revealed that the British population stood at just under eleven million, with an estimated four million in Ireland.¹⁴ John Rickman, who had first mooted the idea hailed its success, stating, 'France has certainly encouraged her own subjects and alarmed Europe by her vaunted twenty seven millions.'¹⁵ Although no information exists to suggest that either the census or Defence of the Realm returns were ever used by the government to assess the availability of recruits for the regular forces,¹⁶ in the manner of a previous Scottish survey,¹⁷ it did serve as a bench mark against which the levels of recruitment could be assessed.¹⁸ By 1811, France was believed to have a population in excess of thirty two million, which would have meant that Britain was outnumbered almost three to one.

¹⁰ *The Speech of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. in the House of Commons, (8th December 1802) on the motion for The Army Establishment for the ensuing year* (London, 1803) 6.

¹¹ During the eighteenth century the French had used similar propaganda, based around cartography, to convince Britain that French America was more populous and so presented a greater military threat. Linda Colley, 'Frontier Texts and European Culture', Trevelyan Lectures, University of Cambridge, 20th February 1997.

¹² 38 Geo. III c.27.

¹³ The Defence of the Realm Acts, of 1798, and the Defence Act, and General Defence Act of June and July and 1803, 'demanded from each country the numbers of able-bodied men in each parish, details of what service, if any, each man was prepared to offer to the state, details of weapons he possessed, details of the amount of livestock, carts, mills, boats, barges and grain available, details of how many elderly people there were and how many alien and infirm.' Colley, *Britons*, 289. Many of the returns are missing, therefore a total figure is impossible to assess.

¹⁴ *PP* (1801-1802) vii, 451.

¹⁵ John Rickman, 'Thoughts on the utility and facility of ascertaining the population of England', in *The Commercial and Agricultural Magazine*, II, (London, June 1800) 391-9, as quoted in D.V. Glass, *Numbering the people: The eighteenth century population controversy and the development of census and vital statistics in Britain* (London, 1978) 106-13.

¹⁶ J.R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century: The Story of a Political Issue* (London, 1965) 246.

¹⁷ SRO GD 51/5/244, 'General View of the Population of Scotland drawn up from Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of that part of the Kingdom, compared with the returns made to Dr. Webster in 1775', January 1798.

¹⁸ C.W. Pasley, *Essay on the Military Policy and Institutions of the British Empire* (London, 1811) 17.

Greater alarm was induced by the thesis that this would rise to five to one if those populations who France had subordinated were included in the equation.¹⁹

It is little wonder that there were also calls for Britain to adopt an isolationist policy towards the rest of Europe, reducing the Army to a size that would protect Britain's shores, while leaving the other states of Europe to prosecute their own war against France, or find some other compromise.²⁰ This was never taken up as a serious alternative, with all administrations committed to prosecuting the Wars,²¹ and therefore raising the required levels of manpower. With the option of conscription for overseas service, on French lines, out of the question,²² other means of meeting the French threat had to be found. The solution - or as close to a solution as could ever be achieved - came in a variety of forms, which will be examined during the course of this chapter.

The reduction of the Army after the American War, poorly managed in its early stages, was reformed by Pitt's administration from 1784.²³ Infantry regiments that had been earmarked for disbanding remained on establishment,²⁴ eventually being returned from an eight to ten company strength, before the outbreak of the war.²⁵ At the same time, priority was given to recruiting, to ensure that units were kept up to the new strengths.²⁶ The Nootka Crisis of 1790 tested the still-reforming system, and it appears to have responded well, with units augmenting, while supported by those on the Irish establishment.²⁷ 1793 was to prove a very different matter, and the need for trained men as opposed to just numbers became apparent.

The peace-time establishment of the Army in 1793 was set at 17,013, the same number of men as the previous year.²⁸ This was clearly too low to fight a war against the

¹⁹ Pasley, *Military Policy*, 17.

²⁰ John Stewart, The Traveller, *The Tocsin of Britannia; with a Novel Plan for a Constitutional Army* (London, 1794) 4.

²¹ Christie, *Wars and Revolutions*, 273. States that on taking office in 1806, even Fox jettisoned ideas of peace.

²² Limited conscription was only resorted to on one occasion, in order to raise men for the Navy and Artillery, through the Quota Acts of 1796, see 4.7 Conclusion, 162.

²³ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 30.

²⁴ *ibid.* 8, 52. These regiments were 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th and 70th.

²⁵ PRO WO 26/33/195, Royal Warrant, 25th September 1787.

²⁶ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 354.

²⁷ *ibid.* 360-1.

²⁸ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 398.

massed armies of France,²⁹ buoyant following their victories at Jemappes and Valmy in 1792. By 1794, the British total had increased to 27,289, which according to Emsley, meant that together with the navy and embodied militia, one in ten of all eligible males were already serving in the regular armed forces.³⁰ An increase of almost one hundred percent, suggests that Pimlott is correct in his assessment of the capacity of the Army to augment its forces efficiently. This is further emphasised by rises of equal proportions during the next two years. Over the course of the Wars the number of men serving was to increase considerably, reaching its peak in 1812. Establishment was maintained at over 200,000 men until the reductions after Waterloo, never being reduced below 71,000 throughout the remainder of the nineteenth century.³¹ This reveals the acceptance on the part of the country as a whole, that a large standing Army was not only acceptable, but also necessary. It was a recognition that this was also necessary due to the commitment of British forces to colonial duties, and a realisation on the part of subsequent administrations, that to fight a modern war vast numbers of trained men were required immediately.

Moreover the massive expansion of the Army had been achieved in real terms. Between 1791 and 1821, the population of England rose by 44.097%.³² The Army, during the same period, omitting the war-time expansion, increased in size from around 17,000 to 71,000, an increase of 417.65%. As a proportion of the population, the rise was from 0.219% to 0.634%. Therefore the regular Army increased nearly ten fold in comparison, and three times in proportion, to the population from which it was drawn. To the figure for regular soldiers serving during the period in question must be added the numbers of militia and volunteers. As early as 1805 their involvement had raised the number of men bearing arms in Britain to 810,000, one in four of all eligible males.³³ Hall suggests that although outnumbered by the French forces, the proportion of men Britain was able to field, which he estimates at three to four percent of the total population, far outweighed that of France. To achieve the same commitment as Britain, France would have needed to muster over one million men.³⁴

²⁹ Forrest, *Soldiers of the French Revolution*, 68-82, states that the number of men in the French armies rose from between 350,00 in 1793 to 750,000 in 1794.

³⁰ Clive Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars, 1793-1815* (London, 1979) 33.

³¹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 274, 398.

³² E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, *The Population History of England, 1541-1871. A Reconstruction* (Cambridge, CUP, 1981) 577, 588. England only has been used due to the availability of data across the period. The figures used are, 1791, 7.776 million, 1821, 11.205 million. Difference is 3.429 million, which is 44.097% of the original figure.

³³ *PD* (1805) III, 809, 19th March 1805.

³⁴ Hall, *British Strategy*, 6-7.

In terms of operational effectives, the returns of such substantial numbers of British troops are deceptive. The commitments at home and abroad ate away at the manpower totals. In 1804, 89,185 regular soldiers were stationed in Britain, with 52,204 engaged in garrison duties across the empire, from a total of around 150,000 men. After the threat of invasion ended, a high level of troops was still deemed essential in Britain, only reducing to 55,938, while with 75,760 in garrisons, by 1811, the number unavailable for operational duties decreased by just over 11,000.³⁵ Therefore, the numbers of men needed to prosecute an increasingly offensive war, the 'disposable force', could not be found merely through the redistribution of the anti-invasion forces, and other means needed to be found.

British forces were also augmented in a number of other ways, which do not form part of this work, but will be mentioned here to complete the picture of the Army expansion. Traditionally, mercenaries, and particularly Germans, had been employed by British governments engaged in Wars throughout the eighteenth century. In 1793 the same tactic was instituted,³⁶ continuing, despite criticisms,³⁷ throughout the Wars.³⁸ As the conflict progressed, a new method of using foreign forces emerged. In contrast to the French system of pressing the armies of satellites into the Grande Armée, the British system involved the taking over of the organisation, training and supply of the whole foreign Army, commanding it with a proportion of British officers, but always maintaining its national identity. It was first developed within the Corsican³⁹ and Sicilian Regiments,⁴⁰ then introduced to great effect with the Portuguese Army from 1809,⁴¹ and then attempted with the Spanish, during the later stages of the Peninsular War.⁴² The important aspect of

³⁵ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 303-5; Hall, *British Strategy*, 8; Rory Muir, *Britain and the Defeat of Napoleon, 1807-1815* (London, 1996) 14.

³⁶ French, *British Way in Warfare*, 92. States that over 28,000 German mercenaries were hired in the first year of the Wars. In defence of this policy Grenville stated that Britain would not be compelled to enlist, 'our own youth from the plough, and loom, and thereby not merely put a stop to our domestic industry, but also drain the island of its population, and diminish our natural strength', as quoted in Peter Jupp, *Lord Grenville, 1759-1834* (Oxford, 1985) 155.

³⁷ See for example, Stewart, *The Tocsin of Britannia*, 22; Smith, *Lord Grey*, 59.

³⁸ French, *The British Way in Warfare*, 92-3; Robert W. Gould, *Mercenaries of the Napoleonic Wars* (Brighton, 1995) 8-9.

³⁹ Desmond Gregory, *The Ungovernable Rock: A History of the Anglo-Corsican Kingdom and its Role in Britain's Mediterranean Strategy During the Revolutionary War (1793-1797)* (London, 1985) 88-9.

⁴⁰ Desmond Gregory, *Sicily. The Insecure Base: A History of the British Occupation of Sicily, 1806-1815* (London, 1988) 48-9.

⁴¹ F.O. Cetre, 'Beresford and the Portuguese Army, 1809-1814,' in Alice D. Berkeley (ed.) *New Lights on the Peninsular War; International Congress on the Iberian Peninsula, Selected Papers, 1780-1840* (Almada, Portugal, 1991) 149-56.

⁴² Charles Esdaile, *The Spanish Army in the Peninsular War* (Manchester, 1988) *passim*.; Charles Esdaile, *The Duke of Wellington and the Command of the Spanish Army, 1812-14* (London, 1990) *passim*.

this method of supplementing manpower, was that the troops could be treated in almost every respect as a British unit, and so, administratively and militarily it simplified the operation of an allied Army for the commander.

Foreign troops also augmented the British Army indirectly, through the system of alliances, but more effectively, the system of subsidy. Britain was able to use its trading and manufacturing wealth, through its highly developed taxation system, to avoid diverting even more manpower from its own businesses, by financing whole states to continue the fight against the French. The on-going subsidising of the Prussian war effort, which amounted to more than £5½ million, from 1794 to 1815, and that of Russia which reached almost £10 million, for the same period,⁴³ were only a fraction of the estimated £65 million spent in this area, and this figure represented only 8% of the total cost of the Wars.⁴⁴

Another source of manpower tapped during the period under discussion, was the use of British colonial troops. Traditionally men from throughout the empire had been used as either militia or irregular formations. But, during the Wars with France, they began increasingly to be recruited as regular units, officered by the British, and included within the Army List. They were seen as the obvious answer to both the shortage of troops, together with a means of avoiding the European soldiers' susceptibility to the tropical climates.⁴⁵ The colonel of one black corps suggested that by negro recruitment 'the hard duty of the troops in such a climate would be saved the British Regular forces, and the lives of thousands saved to the country.'⁴⁶ During the early stages of the Wars, eleven regiments of slaves were bought into service in the West Indies.⁴⁷ This financial arrangement cost the government anything from £30 to about £80 per man, depending upon the state of the market.⁴⁸ The colonial lobby objected to this arrangement, fearing an attempt at greater control from central government, and of disrupting the status quo of the islands,⁴⁹ but the regiments remained in place throughout the Wars, releasing units from British to serve in other theatres. However, even with the addition of foreign and colonial troops, it was clear

⁴³ Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder*, 366-8.

⁴⁴ French, *British Way in Warfare*, 118.

⁴⁵ JRUL, Melville, File 694/61, 'Memorandum on Extending the Service of East Indian Troops'.

⁴⁶ PRO WO 1/1105/461, Charles Stevenson to Secretary at War, 14th May 1800.

⁴⁷ R.N. Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats: The British West India Regiments, 1793-1815* (New Haven, 1979) *passim*.

⁴⁸ PRO CO 318/31/141-61, Henry Bowyer to Windham, 18th April 1807. States that during 1806 and 1807 slaves cost about £74 per man; Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats*, 55, has a price range from £56 - £77 between 1795 and 1800; Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar, and Seapower*, 363, gives other costs as low as £30.

⁴⁹ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar, and Seapower*, 363.

that if Britain intended to field an Army against France, a direct expansion of the British establishment had to take place.

4.3 INTERVENTION

Under the terms of Burke's Pay Office Act of 1783, the cost of raising men for the Army passed from the regimental colonels, and onto the government.⁵⁰ In return for their financing of recruiting, Parliament assumed complete control of all policy concerning that area.⁵¹ The Wars with France saw this new control tested for the first time, under extreme circumstances. Colley states that, 'for five years after the outbreak of the war with Revolutionary France in 1793, the British government's response [to the issue of recruitment] ... was careful and limited'.⁵² This statement must be questioned. In as far as no legislation was passed concerning recruiting, except the annual Mutiny Acts, which increased the establishment of the military,⁵³ the statement is correct, but the other responses, beyond legislation, also need to be examined. None of the initial schemes for expanding the Army were novel, it is true, but neither can their haphazard introduction be described as careful, nor their results limited. The ill-fated 'Recruiting for Rank' during 1794,⁵⁴ and the far from successful Quota Acts of 1796,⁵⁵ reveal that there was no master plan surrounding the new control of recruiting by government. However, whether disorganised or careful, the Army had doubled in size each year from 1793 to 1796,⁵⁶ through traditional recruiting methods, and the equally traditional recruitment of foreign mercenaries, which can hardly be described as limited. It was only the greater need for manpower consequent upon a developing conflict, that required the introduction of legislation to further stimulate recruiting. From the Quota Acts, successive administrations introduced twenty one Acts of Parliament,⁵⁷ designed to augment the armed forces, most often, and most effectively by the use of the militia as a source of men. Glover criticises

⁵⁰ 23 Geo. III c.50, s.46.

⁵¹ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 181-7.

⁵² Colley, *Britons*, 287.

⁵³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 389.

⁵⁴ PRO WO 1/167/83, Amherst to Interested parties, 15th August 1794.

⁵⁵ 37 Geo. III c.4, as amended by 37 Geo. III c. 24, and 37 Geo. III c.39. Although these Acts concerned the recruitment for the navy and artillery, they are of consequence in terms of government intervention in the recruitment issue.

⁵⁶ See 4.2 Expansion, 105.

⁵⁷ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 313-14.

the recruiting policy of the several governments during the period under discussion, stating that all 'lacked the moral courage to take the men they needed for victory by direct conscription for offensive service.'⁵⁸ However, the progression through the conflict takes the recruiting of men for the Army from pure volunteers, to the closest form of expansion to universal conscription that the country would experience until 1916. This was tempered by an acceptance that the standards and conditions of service of the Army had to be the same as those for the rest of society. It was also shaped by the terms of a state that was developing its systems of government, and attempting to extend them to its Army, as has been shown in Part I. The outcome can therefore be seen to be government generated.

The militia as it was constituted during the Wars with France, was established in 1757. It was raised by the authority of the Home Office, recruiting soldiers by general volunteering, and through the means of a ballot of all eligible men within a county. A man could exempt himself from service, by the purchase of a substitute, a practice which was to be the butt of much criticism during the period, since a man who was willing to enlist in the regular forces, could make money out of first enlisting as a substitute in the militia⁵⁹. Their service was limited to home defence duties, on a part-time basis during peace, but in times of war embodiment resulted in full-time service, under martial law.⁶⁰ The militia remained embodied during the whole of the period under discussion, except for several months during 1803,⁶¹ thus creating not only a second tier of semi-regular military units, which would compete with the regular forces for the same men, but also one which would contain fully trained men at a time when such a commodity was in great demand from the Army. This was an ideal source of recruits for the regular service, if only the government could find a way to tap the resource.

The first attempt to use this pool of trained militia manpower was in 1795, when an Act was passed to augment regular forces from the soldiers of the militia.⁶² Such an attempt met with little success, since the militia colonels took offence at being used as 'merely recruiting officers',⁶³ and 'drill sergeants',⁶⁴ although the same year they had

⁵⁸ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 215.

⁵⁹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 217.

⁶⁰ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 15-17.

⁶¹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 48.

⁶² 35 Geo. III, c. 83.

⁶³ Charles Ross (ed.), *Correspondence of Charles, first Marquis Cornwallis*, (London, 1859) II, 290.

⁶⁴ PRO HO 50/30, Lord Carnarvon to Dundas, 18th June 1799.

forfeited their right to draw lots annually for precedence, for the duration of the Wars, which suggests a certain amount of compliance, if not subordination. The militia was a source of substantial local patronage, but defended only by a relatively small lobby in Parliament.⁶⁵ It certainly did not have the political clout that had prevented the drafting of militiamen during the American War of Independence.⁶⁶ Extensive anti-militia riots took place, due to the popularly held belief that balloting was the first step to a general conscription,⁶⁷ and this disorder may well have contributed to the government's perception that such compulsory service, if extended to the regular forces, would meet with social unrest in the manner which affected French conscription.⁶⁸ The colonels' objections were tempered in 1799, when a call for men to capitalise on the revolution in Holland was made,⁶⁹ which resulted in the successful recruiting of almost 16,000 militia men.⁷⁰ But, as Glover has pointed out, the publicity needed to persuade the colonels to part with their men, even for such a worthy cause, resulted in the French being alerted, and the subsequent failure of the expedition.⁷¹ Such was the opposition of the militia colonels, that no attempt at a large-scale recruiting drive from the militia was made again until 1805, when about 10,000 militia men were recruited into the regular forces⁷² by means of high bounties, and the linking of militia regiments to regular Army units, in an attempt to build a relationship, and so aid recruitment.⁷³ However, the support of militia colonels for this measure was not automatic, and regular Army colonels met with a mixed response in their efforts to gain recruits for their corps. Sir John Moore complained of this to the Adjutant General, stating,

I have the honour to acquaint you ... that I have little personal connection, or interest with any Militia Regiment - the only chance therefore that the 52nd has of getting any number of Volunteers from the Militia, is by trying a variety of Regiments.⁷⁴

⁶⁵ Joshua Wilson, *A Biographical Index to the Present House of Commons* (London, 1808) *passim*. In 1808 there were twenty MPs who described themselves as Militia Officers.

⁶⁶ Western, *English Militia*, 206.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 294-9; Emsley, *British Society*, 165, 176; Thomas Bartlett, 'An end to moral economy: the Irish militia disturbances of 1793,' in *Past and Present*, 99 (1983) 41-64.

⁶⁸ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, 39, 152, 232, 235-7; Forrest, *Soldiers of the French Revolution*, 83-87. For a detailed study of French Conscription see, Isser Woloch, 'Napoleonic Conscription: State power and civil society', in *Past and Present*, 111 (1986) 101-28.

⁶⁹ C. W. Vane (ed.), *Memoir and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh, Second Marquis of Londonderry* (London, 1848-53) VIII, 79.

⁷⁰ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 284.

⁷¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 228.

⁷² Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 145, states 9,000; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 166, states 11,161.

⁷³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 293.

⁷⁴ CUL-JM, Moore to Adjutant General, 3rd April 1805.

He pointed out that while he was having difficulties, the other regiments under his direction, the 43rd and 95th, had influence in various corps, and were able to gain the required recruits. It was therefore individual relationships, rather than government direction that proved of greater consequence. One officer who did transfer from the 1st West Yorkshire Militia to the 52nd, reported that while their colonel had no objections to the recruiting of men from his corps, he made no attempt to direct them in their choice of unit. This resulted in only three privates volunteering to go to the 52nd, while more than one hundred enlisted in the 34th.⁷⁵ Moore reported to the Secretary at War, that ‘the Officers of the Militia were in general so averse to the measure and threw so many obstacles in its way.’⁷⁶ But, despite the objections of the militia colonels, from 1805, upwards of 10,000 men each year volunteered for regular service from the militia,⁷⁷ with 28,492 militiamen responding to the draft in 1809 alone.⁷⁸ The colonels were placated by being able to retain surplus officers and NCOs after the drafts,⁷⁹ and to recommend officers for commissions into the regular Army.⁸⁰ This gave them the substantial patronage of Army pay, pensions and status, which regular service brought. At the same time they were finding it hard to fill militia commissions generally,⁸¹ therefore even their local power base was on the wane. The subsequent deficiencies in the militia regiments were made up by further ballots, which were relatively well enforced by the local authorities.⁸² There was no recurrence of the anti-militia disorder experienced in 1796, suggesting that even if the militia colonels objected to the measure, popular opinion supported the strengthening of the Army, in the face of the threat from France. It will be seen that it was this area of recruitment that enabled the Army to expand during the course of the period, as general recruiting produced consistently uniform returns.⁸³

Criticism has been levelled at the recruitment of militiamen, most recently by Glover.⁸⁴ He states that ‘the strength of a unit in action should be the strength of a team’

⁷⁵ BP, Charles Booth to Thomas Booth, 20th March 1805; Charles Booth to Thomas Booth, May 1805.

⁷⁶ CUL-JM, Moore to Secretary at War, 14th July 1805.

⁷⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 284, 293-4, 295; 300, 301-4.

⁷⁸ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 223.

⁷⁹ 39 and 40 Geo. III c.1, s.19; 51 Geo. III c.20, s.33.

⁸⁰ PRO WO 1/635/347-59, Castlereagh to York, 7th August 1807; WO 3/585/27-42, ‘Instructions for Volunteering’, 20th April 1811.

⁸¹ Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford, 1991) 298-9, 303.

⁸² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 250.

⁸³ See 4.4 Recruiting, 127.

⁸⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 228-9.

and suggests that such men could not be part of that team, but merely constitute a 'scratch side'. This interpretation misses several points. First, as Oman points out, militia men were fully trained soldiers. They were well aware of what they were letting themselves in for, since they could not volunteer until they had served at least a year.⁸⁵ The militia was increasingly used in Britain to fulfil military duties and so release regular troops,⁸⁶ and certainly by the time of Castlereagh's militia drafts they were being used without question in the difficult sphere of public order.⁸⁷ Secondly, even if the quality of the militia recruits is questioned, if a regiment was in need of men, it was far better to enlist militia men, than completely raw recruits, or to be under strength. Finally, it was the nature of the training and structure of the British Army of the period, to enable all soldiers to brigade with others, whether of the same regiment or not. Battalions of detachments, light infantry companies and grenadiers were common, and although not ideal formations, were used successfully on a regular basis.⁸⁸ Also, as assimilation to the new uniform system of training took place within all forces, integration of units would again become easier.⁸⁹ Despite his criticism of militia drafts, Glover concedes, that 'the system did produce excellent recruits.'⁹⁰

The lengths to which those in charge of recruiting were prepared to go in attracting militiamen, beyond those employed to enlist civilians, reveals that they were considered to be superior recruits. There was a drive to recruit militia NCOs into regular service during 1800. They were to resign their positions, and volunteer to be recruited as privates, on the understanding that they would be reinstated to their original ranks upon joining their regular unit.⁹¹ By 1811, any militia NCO could transfer to the line at his militia rank, providing he brought with him a proportion of militia privates.⁹² This clearly shows that contemporary commanders believed the quality of the militiamen to be at least comparable

⁸⁵ C. Oman, *Wellington's Army* (London, 1913) 210.

⁸⁶ PRO WO 1/631/355-69, York to Castlereagh, 10th November 1805; WO 1/631/371-93 'Statement of the Force that will remain in Great Britain as it is proposed to be Stationed in Districts, together with the Staff which is recommended for its Establishment', November 1805; WO 1/632/157-210, York to Windham, 18th March 1806.

⁸⁷ Ian F. W. Beckett, *The Amateur Military Tradition* (Manchester, 1991) 72-3.

⁸⁸ See for example, GRE-A, 200, 'Return of strength of the several corps composing the army commanded by Grey, embarked at Barbados on the expedition against Martinique,' 1st February 1794. The light and grenadier companies of the whole army were drawn together in six composite battalions; 2243/54-6, Grey to Henry Dundas, 8th July 1794. Flank companies were sent from Ireland; PRO WO 1/619/89, Lt. Col. Calvert to Officer Commanding 1st Royals, (copy to fifteen other commanding officers) 23rd March 1798. The Light companies of all the regiments to be formed together to practice the light drills; See also 5.4 Light Infantry, 171.

⁸⁹ See 5.2 Drill, 164-8

⁹⁰ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 229.

⁹¹ NAM, Papers of Sir George Nugent, Adjutant General's Office Circular, Dublin 18th August 1800.

⁹² PD (1810-11) I, 304.

to those in the regular service, and once government accepted that they were an obvious answer to the recruiting problem, despite the objections of the colonels, regular units benefited from the influx of substantial militia drafts.

Even with the relative success of such drafts, they remained unpopular with militia colonels. However, the size of their Parliamentary lobby meant they had very little political clout, in comparison to the Army, and since their regiments were embodied, they remained under the central control of martial law. Their options were therefore limited, and there was little left for them to do in their defence, beyond the obstructive tactics observed by Moore, or the alternative of leaving the service. As Henry Dundas stated in correspondence with Castlereagh in 1807, ‘Depend upon it [recruiting from militia regiments] will disgust your most respectable Militia officers, and many of them will leave it.’⁹³ However, the need for manpower far outweighed the need to placate militia colonels, and the regular drawing of trained recruits from militia regiments continued throughout the Wars.⁹⁴ By the end of the conflict, successive administrations had exerted their authority over the interests of the militia colonels, in order to gain several thousand recruits for the regular service. But, despite suggestions that militia regiments should become a second line of defence,⁹⁵ or even second battalions of regular units,⁹⁶ they remained independent until the Haldane reforms of 1906,⁹⁷ and the government had to resort to drafting from their ranks again at the outbreak of the Crimean War.⁹⁸

In an effort to limit the reliance upon the militia, other formations were raised with the specific intention of feeding the line with men. The Army of Reserve,⁹⁹ part of the Additional Force Acts of 1803,¹⁰⁰ was seen by Fortescue as an ‘deplorable failure’,¹⁰¹ since it did not reach its target of 50,000 men. It did, however, produce some 30,000 recruits, of which over 19,000 volunteered for regular service.¹⁰² In the same way, the Permanent

⁹³ Vane, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, VIII, 78.

⁹⁴ PRO WO 6/173/180, Bunbury to Harrison, 21st February 1811.

⁹⁵ PRO WO 1/407/85, Anon. to Secretary at War, 31st March 1806.

⁹⁶ Sir Henry Calvert to Castlereagh, February 1809, as quoted in Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 60.

⁹⁷ Edward M. Spiers, *Haldane: An Army Reformer* (Edinburgh, 1980) 92-115.

⁹⁸ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, 57.

⁹⁹ PRO WO 4/190/220, War Office Circular, 11th July 1803; WO 4/190/236, War Office Circular, 8th July 1803; WO 4/190/309, War Office Circular, 21st July 1803.

¹⁰⁰ 43 Geo. III c.55; c.96; c.120; 123.

¹⁰¹ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 73.

¹⁰² PRO WO 1/627/361-2, York to Lord Hobart, 16th March 1804. ;WO 1/627/365-9, ‘Plan for adding 2nd Battalions to Regiments of the Line’, 16th March 1804; WO 1/627/371-373, Lord Hobart to York, 21st March

Additional Force Act of the following year is also criticised by Fortescue for failing to meet the estimated number of recruits,¹⁰³ despite producing 13,000 men.¹⁰⁴ These attempts at recruiting are significant in several ways, and reveal three areas of recruiting policy generally. First, both attempted to introduce a centralised control of recruiting, by enlisting men for ‘general service’, rather than for individual regiments, a principle that had been introduced in 1799.¹⁰⁵ This idea was unofficially discontinued in 1806, and was officially abandoned in 1816.¹⁰⁶ Its failure to attract men was commented upon by Palmerston when giving evidence to the Finance Committee in 1828. He stated,

I believe there is a great disinclination on the part of the lower orders to enlist for General Service; they like to know they are to be in a certain Regiment, connected, perhaps, with their County, and their friends, and with officers who have established a connection with that district.¹⁰⁷

The second point of note in the abandoned legislation is that the recruits raised were placed, not into a front line unit, but into second battalions, where they were trained, before being sent to their principal battalion.¹⁰⁸ This practice was continued by Castlereagh when he returned to office. He stated,

Nothing can appear more perfect than the system of second battalions if they can have the double quality of being reasonably efficient in themselves for the purposes of home defence, while they, at the same time, feed their first battalions on foreign service.¹⁰⁹

Glover points to the reintroduction of this system in the Cardwell reforms of 1871, stating that ‘relatively few remember that Cardwell was only reviving York’s system of seventy years before.’¹¹⁰ In fact, York had merely revived a system instituted in 1756, for the

1804; WO 4/193/261-5, Bragge to Colonel Lynch, Captain Landon, 30th April 1804; *PP* (1805) viii, 159-81, 19th June 1805; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 54; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 231.

¹⁰³ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 160.

¹⁰⁴ PRO WO 4/193/261-5, Bragge to Colonel Lynch, Captain Landon, 30th April 1804.

¹⁰⁵ PRO WO 26/38/1, Royal Warrant, 14th August 1799; Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 22.

¹⁰⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 23.

¹⁰⁷ Evidence of Lord Palmerston to the Finance Committee of 1828, as quoted in Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 22-3.

¹⁰⁸ PRO WO 1/627/371-373, Lord Hobart to York, 21st March 1804; WO 3/37/412, Harry Calvert to Adjutant General, Dublin, 8th August 1804; WO 3/37/446-7, Calvert to Lieutenant General HRH Prince William Frederick, 22nd August 1804; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 231.

¹⁰⁹ Vane, *Castlereagh Correspondence*, VIII, 65.

¹¹⁰ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 232.

raising of a second battalion by each of the fifteen old regiments of the Army.¹¹¹ At the outbreak of the Wars a number of units still had second battalions, but several were unable to maintain them, due to their inability to gain sufficient recruits. The 29th Regiment, for example, amalgamated its first and second battalions in 1795,¹¹² whereas the 69th Regiment raised a second battalion in the same year, and was able to maintain it to 1816.¹¹³ The 2nd (or Queens) Regiment, raised and amalgamated its second battalion in 1795, but having raised it again in 1804, were able to maintain it beyond the period under discussion.¹¹⁴ There was obviously no clear pattern to the raising or maintaining of second battalions during the first ten years of the Wars, and much would depend upon the individual colonels, and their enthusiasm to raise men. Second battalions were established in ten further regiments during 1804, using the recruits from the Army of the Reserve,¹¹⁵ and in 1807 thirty more were created.¹¹⁶ They acted, as Castlereagh suggested, as a body through which recruits could be processed, since in the initial stages of the Wars, they were maintained in Britain. This would always place single battalion units at a disadvantage, having to detach recruiting parties when on active service. This problem was addressed in 1809, when a separate recruiting company was established for single battalion units,¹¹⁷ a system also adopted by multiple battalion regiments, when, due to the need for extra units, they had more than one battalion in the field,¹¹⁸ or upon the disbanding of secondary battalions in 1816.¹¹⁹ However, the single battalion regiments still found it difficult to maintain their strengths, and during the Peninsular campaign, several were forced back to Britain or into provisional battalions.¹²⁰ This is further evidence that the use of militia

¹¹¹ PRO WO 4/52/144, Barrington to the Officers Commanding, 27th August 1756; SP 44/189/318, Royal Warrant, 22nd September 1756.

¹¹² PRO WO 4/160/347, Matthew Lewis to Major General Lord Cathcart, Colonel 29th Foot, 3rd September 1795.

¹¹³ PRO WO 4/157/36, WO Circular, 9th March 1795; WO 4/159/230, Windham to Officer Commanding 69th Regiments of Foot, 9th March 1795; WO 26/35/502, Royal Warrant, 11th March 1795; WO 3/162/27, Horse Guards to Deputy Secretary at War, 9th September 1816; WO 3/375/382, Darling, DAG to Officer Commanding 69th Regiment of Foot, 6th September 1816; WO 4/719/23, War Office Order, Palmerston to Officer Commanding 69th Regiment of Foot, 10th September 1816.

¹¹⁴ PRO WO 4/157/36, WO Circular, 9th March 1795; WO 4/159/230, Windham to Officer Commanding 69th Regiments of Foot, 9th March 1795; WO 26/35/502, Royal Warrant, 11th March 1795; WO 4/160/347, Matthew Lewis to Major General Coates, Colonel 2nd Foot, 3rd September 1795; WO 4/193/202-5, Bragge to General Coates, 24th April 1804.

¹¹⁵ PRO WO 1/627/361-2, York to Lord Hobart, 16th March 1804; WO 1/627/365-9, 'Plan for adding 2nd Battalions to Regiments of the Line', 16th March 1804; WO 3/37/412, Harry Calvert to Adjutant General, Dublin, 8th August 1804; WO 3/37/446-7, Calvert to Lieutenant General HRH Prince William Frederick, 22nd August 1804.

¹¹⁶ PRO WO 4/204/91-3, Francis Moore to Officers Commanding ..., 29th May 1807.

¹¹⁷ PRO WO 1/641/59, Commander in Chief to Castlereagh, 13th May 1809.

¹¹⁸ Oman, Wellington's Army, 173.

¹¹⁹ WO 4/719/23, War Office Order, 10th September 1816.

¹²⁰ See 2.7 Army Organisation, 51.

regiments as a means of recruits was an essential part of the recruiting process, particularly for single battalion units, who did not have a trained reserve on which to call.

The final point to be made regarding the perceived failure of the Additional Force legislation, is that, as with much recruiting legislation of this period, it was to be less successful due, not to government failings, but to the inability or unwillingness of local authorities to make it work. The Quota Acts had failed, not least because parishes had preferred to pay fines rather than send recruits, or to send unsuitable men.¹²¹ In the same way the Additional Force Act, and the Permanent Additional Force Act, were unsuccessful due to the failure of local authorities to act upon, or in many cases even under the new legislation.¹²² The state was still not so expansive as to be able to enforce all legislation in the regions. Even the three surveys of manpower and population, models in the centralisation of control, relied upon local officials to collect the data.¹²³ Despite all the attempts at a central control of recruiting, it was possible for it all to break down, due to the opposition or ineptitude of the local officials. Colley suggests that this could be a reaction to earlier Defence of the Realm legislation, in which responsibility passed from the localities to Parliament, resulting in certain local magnates giving little support to new measures.¹²⁴ It could also be a response to the constant stream of demands for manpower, and the bureaucratisation and centralisation of the whole recruiting process.

The localised view of military matters had been understood by those responsible for recruiting for some time. Regiments had held a county title since 1782, when the government had perceived it as a method of stimulating recruiting for regiments engaged in the American War of Independence.¹²⁵ However, few had maintained the links with their allotted area after 1784,¹²⁶ although the county name remained in all their titles into the period under discussion. The first acknowledgement of the continued efficacy of the cultivating of territorial links during the Wars, appeared in the 1796 *Regulations and Instructions for the Carrying on of the Recruiting Service*, which stated that,

¹²¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 215-6.

¹²² Emsley, *British Society*, 104

¹²³ Glass, *Numbering the People*, 91; Colley, *Britons*, 289-90.

¹²⁴ Colley, *Britons*, 294.

¹²⁵ C.T. Atkinson, 'County Titles and Infantry Regiments' in *JSAHR* (1940) XIX, n.548, 247; W.Y. Baldry, 'County Titles and Infantry Regiments' in *JSAHR* (1935) n.345, 223; Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 239-41.

¹²⁶ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 242.

Regiments of Infantry are to send their Recruiting Parties to those Counties of which they bear the Name; by which means it is hoped that they will acquire a local Interest that may materially assist them in obtaining Men.¹²⁷

A reiteration of the association of regiments with counties was put forward in 1806,¹²⁸ but the success of this type of recruiting scheme is impossible to assess, without examining the returns of every regiment. However, the units for which evidence is available, suggests the qualified success of the project. The 68th (or Durham) Regiment, was completely rebuilt between the years 1806 and 1808 following service in the West Indies, and during that time it was made up of about twenty five percent of men from Durham County. By 1811, this had been reduced, mainly through illness, to about fourteen per cent,¹²⁹ which would be the highest proportion of men from the county to serve in the regiment until the Durham connection was cultivated again during the 1890s.¹³⁰ While the 68th were able to utilise the county link with Durham during their home service, the absence of a second battalion through which to base a recruiting policy, together with the exigencies of the service, meant that the local contingent was diluted as the Wars progressed. Despite the intervention of the government in introducing the county links, an Army-led recruiting regime would always flounder when faced with active service, and is further evidence of the need for the policy of recruiting to be taken away from the Army completely, and of the efficacy of drafting the militia into the regular Army.

The most criticised recruiting scheme of the whole period under discussion must be that introduced by William Windham. However, it is the first integrated program of military recruitment to be attempted throughout the period, and one which took a completely different look at the problem of gaining men for military service. Having taken the position of Secretary of State for War and Colonies, in 1806, Windham's 'New Military Plan' attracted opposition from many quarters, both contemporary and more recently.¹³¹ The idea that the regular Army was of paramount importance, and could be strengthened without the stimulus of the militia ballot, by means of better pay, pensions and the option of short service for soldiers, was imposed upon a military in need of

¹²⁷ *Regulations and Instructions for the Carrying on of the Recruiting Service*, (London, 1796) Article I, 4.

¹²⁸ PRO WO 1/407/53, Lord Sidmouth to Commander in Chief, 'Memorandum on the raising of two types of force', 26th February 1806.

¹²⁹ S.G.P. Ward, *Faithful, The Story of the Durham Light Infantry* (London, 1962) 97-8.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 240-5.

recruits, in the belief that 'a better description of men will be induced into the Army.'¹³²

However, Windham was also driven by ideas of reform of the state as a whole, and the place of the Army within it. He stated,

To say the truth, and, surely, every gentleman must know it, the improvements in the Army - for I admit there have been some very material ones - have by no means corresponded, in this country, with those which have been made in every other station in life; and the service, therefore held out no sufficient degree of encouragement. The only two substantial resources we have had, are the bounty and the ballot; but the bounty has been carried to such an excess, as to have the most injurious effect on the service, and to raise the price of the market to us. Indeed, the very existence of the bounty affords a strong, and, I think, irresistible argument, that the service of itself is not deemed worth the taking.¹³³

The key to the scheme was the placing of the Army at the forefront of the military effort, by improving the conditions of service, reducing the emphasis on the Volunteers, and the militia ballot, and introducing a system of universal military training. These measures met with little contemporary criticism, which was not the case for Windham's main proposal, the limited enlistment for regular troops.

The basic idea of universal training had been that of Dundas. In 1797 he had suggested that all nineteen and twenty year olds be given military training,¹³⁴ and continued to support the concept in the debates of 1806.¹³⁵ However, it had been the Volunteers that had come out of Dundas' original idea, and he had been unable to control their expansion, and metamorphosis. He wrote to Windham, then Secretary at War, in 1798, stating, 'I know of no other way of doing it but in the way it is now going on, nor do I conceive it either prudent or practicable in any other way.'¹³⁶ The Volunteers were numerically strong, but weak in almost every other area. They were made up of over 1000 corps, many of less than company strength, that had failed to amalgamate despite encouragement, and less than eleven percent of their number had agreed to serve outside their own military district by 1799.¹³⁷ Their commitment was dubious, it being suggested

¹³² PD (1806) VI, 666, 3rd April 1806.

¹³³ *New Military Plan. The Speech of the Rt. Hon. Wm. Windham, Secretary of State, &c. Relating to the Regular Army, Militia and Volunteers, Delivered in the House of Commons, on Thursday, April 3, 1803.* (Norwich, n.d.) 7.

¹³⁴ SRO GD 51/1 888/2, Henry Dundas to Alexander Dirom, 7th August 1797.

¹³⁵ PD (1806) VII, 1085-6, 11th July 1806.

¹³⁶ SRO GD 51/1 912/2, Henry Dundas to Windham, 10th April 1798.

¹³⁷ PRO WO 1/407/489, 'Abstract of Troops in the several Districts of Great Britain', January 1801; Cecil Sebag-Montifiore, *A History of the Volunteer Forces* (London, 1908) 199, n.2; Austin Gee, 'The British Volunteer Movement, 1793-1815', Unpublished DPhil Thesis (University of Oxford, 1989) 68.

that much of the increase in Volunteering was due to their exemption from the militia ballot,¹³⁸ and with no compulsion to do anything more than join to gain the benefits, as they were not controlled by any military discipline.¹³⁹ Their exemption from the militia ballot was cited as a contributory factor to the rise in the price required for bounties.¹⁴⁰ Reform of the system had been attempted under Lord Hobart as Secretary of State during 1801,¹⁴¹ establishing the Supplementary Militia, and using Prussian models to avoid a conflict between the compulsion to serve and a disruption of production.¹⁴² But under Windham the Volunteers were left to their own devices, with their Inspecting Field Officer being removed, and funding reduced.

Windham had described the volunteers as ‘painted cherries which none but simple birds would take for real fruit’, and ‘children planting sticks and then supposing they had planted trees,’¹⁴³ pointing to their lack of both training and commitment. While it is clear that their presence was numerically and morally significant during the invasion scares, and several corps were reported as fit to join the line,¹⁴⁴ few believed they were useful for anything beyond static duties. The Lord Lieutenant of Cumberland and Westmoreland admitted as much, he stated,

It is really wonderful to see the rapid progress they have made and though I have no great reliance on such troops in general, yet I think the Resource this system has afforded at this moment forms an essential part of our security.¹⁴⁵

Glover sums up his coverage of the Volunteers by quoting from Cornwallis in 1803, who wrote,

Government have acted properly, in endeavouring only to make [the Volunteers] as much soldiers as it was possible to render a force so composed, and no man, whether civil or military, will persuade me that 300,000 men, trained as the Volunteers at present are, do not add very materially to the confidence and the actual security of this country.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 84.

¹³⁹ WO 1/407/609-12, ‘Memorandum - Volunteers’. January 1801.

¹⁴⁰ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 217.

¹⁴¹ PRO WO 1/407/609-12, ‘Memorandum - Volunteers’, January 1801; WO 1/407/533-46, Downing Street, ‘Memorandum - Volunteer Corps’, 18th March 1803; WO 1/407/549-61, Memorandum - Volunteer Corps’ May 1801.

¹⁴² Western, *English Militia*, 236-8.

¹⁴³ *PD* (1806) VII, 319, 21st May 1806.

¹⁴⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 236-7.

¹⁴⁵ As quoted in Hall, *British Strategy*, 6.

¹⁴⁶ Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, III, 509.

The volunteers were the best that Britain could achieve in the circumstances. A massed armed body was required to repel a real threat from France, and what was achieved served the purpose. It therefore made sense to consider the cost of such an organisation, when the purpose of their formation, the French invasion threat, had effectively passed, and any domestic policing assistance from the volunteers had been rejected by several units refusing to turn out to deal with disorders in 1800 and 1801.¹⁴⁷ In this light the volunteer movement can be seen as an expensive extravagance that had outlived its usefulness. It was also an armed force, out of the control of the central authority that was increasingly asserting itself over the other military formations. Despite Castlereagh's resurrection of them upon his return to office in 1807, sheer financial expediency ensured that he would eventually be forced to cut off all support, leaving only those able to fund themselves, which effectively meant a police force in 'the great towns and populous manufacturing district.'¹⁴⁸ Despite there being a substantial proportion of MPs who were volunteer commanders,¹⁴⁹ it does not appear that they ever constituted a Parliamentary lobby to press their mutual case.

It is interesting to note that the fate of the Volunteers was not shared by their mounted arm, the Yeomanry. Their services were lauded by the same sources that criticised the Volunteers,¹⁵⁰ and were increasingly relied upon throughout the nineteenth century, with many units becoming part of the military establishment under the Haldane reforms.¹⁵¹ That they could be relied upon is perhaps evidence enough of why they were maintained, together with their obvious uses of cavalry, as opposed to infantry, in crowd control, which would be their key role. In addition, the Volunteers had gained a reputation for being officered by the bourgeoisie,¹⁵² whereas the Yeomanry were very much of the old order. Since the threat of invasion had passed, and the home forces role had reverted to policing duties, it is clear that the force for whom loyalty would be given without question, would

¹⁴⁷ Clive Emsley, 'The military and popular disorder in England, 1790-1801', in *JSAHR*, 61 (1983) 105-6; Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 86.

¹⁴⁸ PRO WO 1/407/303-37, 'Memorandum on the system of defence, more particularly the formation of a sedentary militia and the training of the people', no date; A copy of this memorandum is in the Castlereagh Papers, PRO Northern Ireland, D.3030/1980, and is dated August 1807, Smith, 'Local Militia' 362.

¹⁴⁹ Wilson, *House of Commons*, *passim*. There were sixty nine MPs who commanded volunteer corps in 1808, constituting 10.68% of the Commons.

¹⁵⁰ WO 1/407/549-61, Memorandum - Volunteer Corps', May 1801.

¹⁵¹ Spiers, *Haldane*, 92-115.

¹⁵² Smith, 'Local Militia', vi-vii, 42-126; David Eastwood, *Governing Rural England: Tradition and Transformation in Local Government, 1780-1840* (Oxford, 1994) 14.

be maintained. This point is emphasised by the schemes that were imposed effectively in place of the Volunteers, Windham's Training Act and Castlereagh's Local Militia. Both were to be controlled by government, avoiding any of the experiences of the lack of authority over the Volunteers.

Windham's Training Act was never implemented, but had called for the compulsory training of 200,000 balloted men each year. The drills would be conducted under the supervision of a drill sergeant,¹⁵³ from the regiment 'which now bear the name of the particular districts, a connection it is hoped may be established between the Army and the mass of the people.'¹⁵⁴ It was far more in keeping with Dundas' original idea of universal training. These men would be the basis of Windham's New Military Plan, forming an armed peasantry, and a body of men with some military training, to replace any deficiencies in the line.¹⁵⁵ Training could be avoided by either the payment of a fine, or by the service in a volunteer corps,

so as to afford at once an escape for the rich from a service that might be irksome, and to promote the purpose of changing by degrees the composition of the volunteers from persons who serve for pay to those who willingly serve at their own expense.¹⁵⁶

The intention was to provide a trained populace, who had an affinity to a county, and to the regiment bearing its name. Through this it was hoped that recruiting could be stimulated. In this deliberate linking of regular to amateur military formations, the origins of the Haldane territorial system can clearly be seen, and this has been overlooked amid the traditional criticism of Windham's' scheme.

The Ministry of All Talents lasted just over a year, which was not enough time for the Training Act to take effect. When Castlereagh took over at the War Department, he replaced Windham's Training Cadres with the Sedentary, later Local Militia. His intention was to create a system very similar to Windham's, keeping the Volunteers down to 100,000 men in the larger towns, with universal training for all able-bodied men between eighteen and thirty. However, from these trained men a 200,000 strong Sedentary Militia

¹⁵³ *PD* (1806) VII, 844-55, 25th June 1806.

¹⁵⁴ *George III*, 419, Windham to King, 27th March 1806.

¹⁵⁵ *PD* (1806) VI, 681, 3rd April 1806.

¹⁵⁶ *George III*, 419, Windham to King, 27th March 1806.

would be formed, which would train for an extra twenty eight days in the year.¹⁵⁷ This would have provided a substantial force, with better training than any other non-regular formation throughout the Wars. Unfortunately, the universal training element was never adopted, and only the Local Militia was formed. This force was raised by voluntary enlistment, with the deficiencies made up by ballot. Substitutes would not be permitted, but a man could avoid service by the payment of a £10 to £30 means tested fine, thus placating the wealthy as Windham had done.¹⁵⁸ The most important aspect of the Local Militia above all other non-regular formations, was that it was formed under the direct control of government, and although it functioned under military discipline at all times, with its men subject to martial law, any attempt at greater Army involvement was strongly opposed.¹⁵⁹ The whole Local Militia was organised into battalions, with a full compliment of officers and NCOs, and a full-time staff, many of who were from the regular Army or militia.¹⁶⁰ However, the system was by no means perfect, and despite attempts in 1811 and 1812 to entice men into the regular service, many obstacles were placed in their way by the Local commanders,¹⁶¹ in a similar fashion to those created by the Regular Militia colonels upon the initial drafts from their corps. S.C. Smith suggests, 'it is indisputable that Castlereagh's initial hopes were dashed', as only ten to fifteen men per regiment volunteered. This means that between 2,700 and 3,500 men per year enlisted from the 270 Local battalions.¹⁶² However, since ordinary recruiting was producing on average only 10,000 men each year, the contribution of the Local Militia takes on a new significance. Its success as an armed force is born out by the sound performance of several units during the Luddite unrest in 1812,¹⁶³ in direct contrast to the lack of action of the Volunteers under similar circumstances in 1800 and 1801. This justifies both Windham and Castlereagh, in framing their non-regular formations in the control of the central, rather than the local authority. It would serve to restore the faith in such formations and to allay any fears of an armed populous.

The main area of Windham's New Military Plan, concerned the emphasis placed upon the regular Army, both its recruitment, and the conditions of service of its members.

¹⁵⁷ PRO WO 1/407/303-7, 'Memorandum on the system of defence, more particularly the formation of a sedentary militia and the training of the people', no date.

¹⁵⁸ 48 Geo. III c.111.

¹⁵⁹ Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 210-14; Smith, 'Local Militia', 367.

¹⁶⁰ Smith, 'Local Militia', 343-4.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, 304, 363, 366.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, 365.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, 258-84.

As stated, the intention was that ‘a better description of men will be induced into the Army,’¹⁶⁴ and Windham suggested that these men would not be enticed into the service, ‘Till some change shall take place by which the condition of a soldier shall be made to appear desirable to a larger proportion of the population of the country than it does at present.’¹⁶⁵ This he proposed to achieve in four ways. First, the payments to Chelsea Out-Pensioners were to be enhanced; secondly, the pay of subalterns, for long a contentious issue,¹⁶⁶ was increased; and thirdly, payments to the widows of officers, and to those on the compassionate list, were to be expanded. None of these methods proved at all contentious, with the King and the Duke of York accepting their worth.¹⁶⁷ However, the fourth method, which was the introduction of limited service enlistment for soldiers, met with substantial criticism. The scheme involved a man joining the Army for seven years in the first place, at the completion of which he could re-enlist for a further seven years, for an increase in pay of 6*d.* per day. After that period he could again re-enlist for an extra seven years, for another 1*s.* per day, or choose to retire on a pension of 6*d.* per day, or to serve for seven years in a veteran battalion. At the end of twenty one years a soldier would retire on a pension of 1*s.* per day, without any commitment to the country. Windham stated that,

The general principle is to raise the value and estimation of the service, and to attract the soldiers to it, as well by the credit in which he sees it held, as by the advantages which he may expect to find there.¹⁶⁸

Windham should have expected opposition from the highest quarters. In 1804, several Generals were canvassed as to their opinions on short service,¹⁶⁹ and almost unanimously they voiced their objections.¹⁷⁰ Most agreed with Sir John Moore, who suggested that men needed to be encouraged to develop skills as soldiers which they could only do over a long enlistment. He continued, in his five page reply that,

I have heard no complaint originating with him, [the soldier] against the terms of his enlistment. Should a change [be made] which may affect Troops who, as they

¹⁶⁴ *PD* (1806) VI, 3rd April 1806.

¹⁶⁵ *George III*, 4, 417, Windham to King, 27th March 1806.

¹⁶⁶ See for example, *An Humble Address to the Members of the Honourable House of Commons, in behalf of the Subaltern Officers of the Army* (London, 1795)

¹⁶⁷ PRO WO 1/632/157-80, York to Windham, 18th March 1806; *George III*, 4, 419, King to Windham, 28th March 1806.

¹⁶⁸ *George III*, 4, 418, Windham to King, 27th March 1806.

¹⁶⁹ PRO WO 1/902/1-6, Memorandum, 4th(?) May 1804.

¹⁷⁰ PRO WO 1/902/9-139. Fourteen replies dated from, 31st May to 6th July 1804.

are, combine qualities very uncommon, and which make them perhaps the best soldiers in Europe?¹⁷¹

Moore stressed his opinion that soldiers needed to be encouraged to 'look to their corps as their country, and to their officer as their only protection.' If a General such as Moore, whose humanity is without question, objected to the principle of limited enlistment, it is not surprising that Windham's scheme met with such vehement condemnation. However, despite the intense criticism, the New Military Plan was put into practice.¹⁷²

The early results did not back up Windham's belief in his scheme, with a similar number of men enlisting in the Army during 1806, as during every other previous year of the war. In 1805, 11,677 men joined the regular Army through ordinary recruiting, while in 1806, 11,875 men enlisted. However, the returns for 1807, the first in which the system was fully operational, show that 19,114 men enlisted. This rise can only be put down to Windham's influence, as the following year, under the direction of Castlereagh, ordinary recruiting returned to a more common figure of 12,963 men.¹⁷³ The terms of enlistment was only one factor governing the increase in enlistment. The priority given to the Army enabled an increase in the number of recruiting parties in Britain, in order to capitalise on the scheme, and to compensate for the reduction in emphasis on non-regular forces, and the removal of the militia ballot. In 1806 the number of parties in Britain was increased from around 400 to over 1,100.¹⁷⁴ Glover suggests that this further weakened the weak battalions,¹⁷⁵ but the results justified a temporary weakening, and had the Talents continued in office, the increased attention paid to the recruiting for regular service, must surely have raised far more men than was the case after the Portland administration took office.

¹⁷¹ JM-CUL, Moore to Major General Brownrigg, 11th June 1804; also PRO WO 902/85-95.

¹⁷² 46 Geo. III c.48.

¹⁷³ *CJ* (1813-14) LXIX, 635, 'Return of the number of men raised for The Regular Army, exclusive of Foreign and Colonial Corps, by Ordinary Recruiting, during the last Ten Years', 13th November 1813.

¹⁷⁴ *PP* (1806) x, 350-1; (1807) iv, 331. Gives a rise of 453 to 1,100; *PD* (1807) IX, 1221, 13th August 1807. Castlereagh is quoted as suggesting the rise was 405 to 1,113; PRO WO 1/637/157-78, York to Castlereagh, 1st February 1808; WO 1/637/181, WO 1/637/181, 'Abstract of the Recruiting Returns for 1806'; WO 1/637/185, 'Abstract of the Recruiting Returns for 1807'. The data, supplied by York, suggests that the number of parties increased from 380 at the beginning of 1806, to 3102 during 1807. However, the tone of his accompanying letter reveals a strong inclination against Windham's schemes, and so the figure of 3102 parties must be questioned.

¹⁷⁵ Richard Glover, *Britain at Bay: The Defence of Against Bonaparte, 1803-14* (London, 1983) 140.

Windham's New Military Plan had not had time to work, before the Talents fell. The half finished scheme had therefore had not produced its potential results, and commentators have been able to point to this as part of its failing. Windham is doubly damned as through the establishment of the Local Militia, and substantial drafts from the Regular Militia, Castlereagh was apparently able to solve the manpower problem for the Army. However, the introduction of the type of reforms into the Army that had been seen in the rest of public service was Windham's aim from the outset, and in that he was successful. His increases in the pay and pensions of soldiers were to be continued by subsequent administrations, genuinely raising the status of the soldier to the level of the civilian. His limited service enlistment was perhaps a measure before its time, in that it was to become an accepted part of Army recruitment during nineteenth century conflicts, being used with particular success in 1847, and during the Crimean War.¹⁷⁶ Even the Duke of York admitted that some method was needed to encourage men to take the first step to enlistment, from which they would get used to soldiering and re-enlist, 'as the great difficulty has always been to make a man first engage in a military life, after which he is easily induced to extend his services unlimitedly.'¹⁷⁷ and it must be noted that when Castlereagh took over as Secretary for War in 1807, while he reintroduced enlistment for life,¹⁷⁸ he did not remove limited enlistment. He stated,

He had no objection to limited service, and he had formerly promoted, to a certain extent, engagements limited in space as well as time. But why should limited service be in a manner enforced, to the total exclusion of unlimited service, even when the men were perfectly satisfied, and desirous to enter without limitation.¹⁷⁹

By the addition of an extra two guineas to the bounty of a recruit who chose enlistment for life, few chose the short service option.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁶ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 30-1; Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, 56, 70-5.

¹⁷⁷ PRO WO 1/634/125-38, York to Grenville, 15th February 1807.

¹⁷⁸ 48 Geo. III c.15.

¹⁷⁹ *PD* (1808) x, 988, 8th March 1808.

¹⁸⁰ *PD* (1805) v, 693-4, 28th June 1805. Only 250 of 9000 men chose short service; *PD* (1819) XXXIX, 988, 15th March 1819. Even when the difference was reduced to sixteen shillings, this continued to be the case.

4.4 RECRUITING

While an extra bounty could induce men to accept stricter terms of enlistment, it was the traditional forms of attracting them, that would bring them to the point of enlistment. The system of 'Ordinary Recruiting' had changed little in the centuries before the outbreak of the Wars with France. A recruiting party, led by a sergeant, still encouraged men to enlist, by every means available to them. Men were given the shilling, and were attested to serve the monarch in front of a local magistrate, before being marched off to their regiments for training. There was little advice available to those performing the duty of recruiting, beyond the experience of other soldiers, and with a shortage of men, and rewards to the party for procuring them, there was little incentive to procure volunteers of a particular quality. Consequently, upon the augmentation of the Army in 1793, there was criticism of the calibre of recruit reaching regiments,¹⁸¹ and the standards accepted changed regularly.¹⁸²

As a result of continued criticism, the first uniform regulations for the recruiting of soldiers for the Army, were issued in September 1796.¹⁸³ These *Regulations and Instructions* laid down in twenty six articles the methods of recruiting to be practised, the structure of the recruiting service, and the type and quality of recruit to be sought. Glover suggests that no such standards existed for the implementation of the Quota Acts in 1796,¹⁸⁴ but clearly the *Regulations and Instructions* give an ample description of what constituted a suitable recruit for the whole of 'His Majesty's Forces',¹⁸⁵ and not just the regular Army. They stated that, for example,

The Standard for Men raised for the Heavy Cavalry, shall be Five Feet Seven Inches, and for the Light Cavalry and Infantry Five Feet Five Inches; but no Recruits are to be taken, even of those Sizes, who exceed Thirty-Five Years of Age, or who are not stout and well made... ¹⁸⁶

¹⁸¹ See for example, Harry Calvert to John Calvert, 26th April 1793, in Henry Verney (ed.), *Journals and Correspondence of Sir Harry Calvert* (London, 1853) 67.

¹⁸² PRO WO 3/11/15, General Order, 10th December 1792. Five feet six inches, and not exceeding thirty years of age; WO 3/11/15, General Order, 14th December 1793. Five feet five inches, and not exceeding thirty five years of age.

¹⁸³ *Regulations and Instructions ... Recruiting Service* (London, 1796).

¹⁸⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 215.

¹⁸⁵ *Regulations and Instructions ... Recruiting Service* (1796) Frontice.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* Article XIV, 17-18.

These requirements would be in a constant state of change throughout the period under discussion, as the need for men increased. However, the *Regulations and Instructions* remained in place, a new edition being printed in 1798.¹⁸⁷ The articles covered all aspects of recruiting, and included the health of the men. Article XV stated that, 'No Recruit is to be on any Account inlisted, who has the least Appearance of Sore Legs, Scurvy, Scald Head, or other Infirmary, that may render him unfit for His Majesty's Service.'¹⁸⁸ The work established that a Field Officer would control each of the twenty four recruiting districts in Britain, (fifteen in England, five in Ireland and four in Scotland), and under his authority the recruiting parties of the various units would operate.¹⁸⁹ These parties would consist of an officer and a number of experienced men who had served at least two years.¹⁹⁰ It would therefore seem fair to suggest that the advice laid down, and the experience of those involved in recruiting would be enough to recruit only those men suitable to be soldiers. However, such was both the need to fill the ranks, and the financial incentives for all parties involved, that the quality of men accepted to serve left much to be desired. By the end of 1796, this problem had been partly addressed, with the implementation of the *Regulations and Instructions*, and by recruiting officers being ordered to employ 'any surgeon of respectability of character', at the War Office's expense, to examine the recruits.¹⁹¹ This was augmented by the addition of a Hospital Mate in during 1797,¹⁹² although it was not till 1802 that a surgeon for each recruiting district was appointed to the permanent recruiting staff.¹⁹³ However, such was the level of recruiting, that civil medical practitioners were still being employed in 1810.¹⁹⁴

The co-ordination of all recruiting was under the central authority of the Inspector-General. However, by the period under discussion, the appointment proved something of a white elephant, with its holder, General Whitelock costing the country £3400 per annum in

¹⁸⁷ *Regulations and Instructions for the Carrying on of the Recruiting Service* (1798); WO 3/19/206-7, Harry Calvert to Major General Whitelock, 19th February 1799.

¹⁸⁸ *Regulations and Instructions... Recruiting Service* (1796) Article XV, 18; although the men sent on the recruiting service had to have two years' service, it is clear that the officers do engaged did not have such experience, Robert Blakeney, *A Boy in the Peninsular War* (London, 1989) 5-6.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.* Article II, 5; Article XI, 12; PRO WO 26/36/393, 'Recruiting Districts', no date.

¹⁹⁰ *Regulations and Instructions ... Recruiting Service* (1796) Article V, 7

¹⁹¹ PRO WO 3/30/26, Fawcett to Officer Commanding 46th Regiment, 30th December 1796.

¹⁹² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 219.

¹⁹³ Henry Marshall, *Military Miscellany* (London, 1846) 63.

¹⁹⁴ PRO WO 4/467190, Palmerston to Lieutenant General F. Dundas, 26th November 1810.

wages, while being unable to manage the recruiting service effectively.¹⁹⁵ His duties were incorporated into the office of the Adjutant General in 1807¹⁹⁶, although the direction of recruiting remained firmly with the government. This brought together all recruiting and inspection services within one office, establishing a consistent control over the troops from the point of enlistment. The whole system was further centralised in 1813, by the establishment of joint depots for recruits. Despite the initial cost of £21,356, it was expected to save the public about ££8,500 per year.¹⁹⁷

The Regulations and Instructions and the Inspector General were key examples of the involvement of the government in the control of the Army. Despite the desperate need for men, the War Office implemented the scheme, which raised the standard of recruits, to a new and uniform level, and so removed a number of potential recruits. This was maintained ultimately by transferring the responsibility for the whole recruiting service to the office of the Adjutant General, who managed it along with the inspection system. Despite the transfer of these areas away from civilian control, it was still the government who dictated the direction of recruiting, sanctioned the number of men to be raised, and financed the whole process. Despite a regulated system of recruiting being in place, the act of enticing men to enlist still relied heavily on the traditional system of the recruiting party, together with an ever-increasing array of inducements which contributed to attracting men to join the Army.

4.5 INDUCEMENTS

It was a widely held view during the period under discussion that men were pushed rather than pulled into military service,¹⁹⁸ escaping their lot in civilian life by enlisting. In 1788, Sir William Fawcett suggested that for this reason there was little need to improve the conditions of soldiers, except, 'perhaps the addition of a couple of pairs of shoes, to the Private soldier, ... might make his lot tolerable.'¹⁹⁹ However, this idea did not prevent a

¹⁹⁵ *PP* (1805) viii, 125, 'Establishment of the Officer of the Inspector General of the Recruiting Service'; PRO WO 1/631/195, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon to Edward Cooke, 15th October 1805; WO 1/631/343, Gordon to Cooke, 4th November 1805; *11th RCME* (1810) 7.

¹⁹⁶ PRO WO 30/44/37, General Order, 1st June 1807; *11th RCME* (1810) 4.

¹⁹⁷ PRO WO 4/426/142, Palmerston to Harrison, 29th April 1813; 154, Palmerston to Harrison, 15th May 1813; 156, Palmerston to Harrison, 29th April 1813.

¹⁹⁸ PRO WO 1/902/75-85, Lord Chatham to Brownrigg, 7th June 1804.

¹⁹⁹ PRO WO 3/7/76, William Fawcett AG to Lieutenant General Mackay, 29th May 1788.

succession of schemes to entice men into the Army, by making it a more attractive proposition to those in a position to volunteer. This section will examine the inducements developed to encourage recruitment, and will assess the level of their success. It will attempt to ascertain whether the contemporary view of a man being pushed into the Army is correct, or whether the inducements were sufficient to pull men from civilian life.

The first, and most heavily criticised inducement was the payment of a bounty to recruits. The *Regulations and Instructions* list the maximum sums to be paid to a recruit. For the heavy cavalry it was £5.15s.6d, for the light cavalry £3.13s.6d, and for the infantry six guineas, in addition to which, those recruiting him received a percentage.²⁰⁰ Contemporary evidence suggests that soldiers rarely received the correct amount. A recruit in the 71st Regiment of Foot in 1806 received eleven guineas at Leith,²⁰¹ while in the same year William Lawrence of the 40th Regiment of Foot received only two and a half guineas in Dorchester, despite a rumour that his regiment gave sixteen.²⁰² Since both units were entitled to pay their recruits six guineas, it seems clear that market forces were at work within the recruiting service, with different areas and different regiments of the country generating different bounty payments.²⁰³ Clode states that the militia ballot was rightly called the 'Parent of High Bounties',²⁰⁴ since it drew those wishing to serve in the Army away from regular service, and into the militia as a substitute. This is in keeping with Windham's idea, and was one reason why he removed the ballot under his New Military Plan. The purchase of substitutes had existed as long as militia ballots, and the cost had increased accordingly with each embodiment of the militia.²⁰⁵ The period under discussion saw the militia embodied for almost twenty three years, and with every new draft from the militia to the regular service, the cost of procuring a substitute would increase along with demand on an ever-decreasing commodity. Most who could afford it enrolled in an insurance 'club', which for a regular payment would guarantee to buy a substitute if the member was unlucky enough to be balloted. Any sum from £10 to £60 could be the going rate, depending upon the numbers required,²⁰⁶ and the area of the country. Clode states that

²⁰⁰ *Regulations and Instructions ... Recruiting Service*, Article XXII, 23-28.

²⁰¹ Christopher Hibbert (ed.), *A Soldier of the 71st. The Journal of a Soldier of the Highland Light Infantry 1806 - 1815* (Plymouth, 1975) xiii.

²⁰² George Nugent Banks (ed.), *The Autobiography of Sergeant William Lawrence, A Hero of the Peninsular and Waterloo Campaigns* (Cambridge, 1987) 11-13.

²⁰³ See also Section 4.5, Recruiting, 129-31.

²⁰⁴ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 289.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 48-9.

²⁰⁶ T.H. McGuffie, 'Bounty Payments in the Napoleonic Period' in *Army Quarterly* (1946) 276.

the cost of a substitute during 1808 was £45 in Monmouth, whereas in the Isle of White only £10.²⁰⁷ In order to compete with the payments that the substitutes could receive, the regiments were forced to raise the bounty payments they made to recruits to ever-higher levels,²⁰⁸ ensuring that each recruit became an expensive commodity.

While normal recruits were enticed through the standard bounty, even greater incentives were directed towards trained militia-men, who could receive an initial bounty when they joined the militia, and a second on enlisting into the regular forces.²⁰⁹ In addition, men from disbanded regiments, who could not be automatically transferred to front line units, were tempted to re-enlist by offers of a second bounty of up to ten guineas.²¹⁰ Wellington emphasised the need to maintain these experienced soldiers no matter what the cost. In 1813, he informed the government that he had already expended 800,000 dollars on these men,²¹¹ but that he would rather keep the troops he had, than be sent up to three times the number of new recruits.²¹²

Another financial incentive dating from centuries before the period under discussion, was the payment of prize money. It originated when the cost of war was met by the crown, and therefore any money raised through war was returned to the crown as payment.²¹³ During the reigns of William III and Anne, the prize, along with the cost of war had been brought under Parliamentary control and distribution.²¹⁴ As a reward for a successful battle or campaign, it was always a possibility for all ranks,²¹⁵ and therefore can be seen as an inducement for enlistment. At the beginning of the period under discussion, the allocation of prizes were granted to field commanders by the monarch, under

²⁰⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 292.

²⁰⁸ T.H. McGuffie, 'Bounty Payments', 279.

²⁰⁹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 225-6.

²¹⁰ PRO WO 40/16/5, Horse Guards to Matthew Lewis, 30th October 1802; WO 40/16/5, Duke of York to King, 1st February 1803; W03/36/352, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Nugent, 21st November 1803; WO 1/627/303, Clinton to John Sullivan Esq., 8th March 1804.

²¹¹ *WD*, x, 246, Wellington to Bathurst, 30th March 1813.

²¹² *WD*, x, 51, Wellington to Bathurst, 27th January 1813; *WD*, x, 174-5, Wellington to Bathurst, 9th March 1813.

²¹³ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 290-6.

²¹⁴ 4 & 5 William III, c.25; 6 Anne, c.64.

²¹⁵ GRE-A, 131, 'Royal Proclamation for the granting and distributing of prizes during the existing hostilities', 17th April 1793; PRO WO 1/1102/83-98, 'Correspondence with Lord Spencer relating to Prize and Appeal Courts', 16th December 1798 to 17th January 1799; WO 6/150/134, E. Cooke to W.W. Pole, 14th November 1807; WO 6/150/134-8, 'Instructions' 5th November 1807.

Parliamentary direction,²¹⁶ assessed by a Prize Court in the field, and distributed by a Prize Agent, whose task it was to sell all seized goods, and turn them into money for distribution.²¹⁷ Advertisements would often be placed in newspapers, informing those eligible to come forward to claim their prize, to ensure that the allocation was seen to be fair.²¹⁸ However, the system was beset with delays,²¹⁹ which would not have enhanced the perception of prize money as an inducement to enlist as a soldier.²²⁰ The problem of these delays was first addressed in 1802, when the Duke of York suggested that a 'Regulation' be established to prevent the difficulties previously experienced.²²¹ As no such system existed, each prize court referred to the same body established after the previous engagement, so that the prize money for the Egyptian campaign was allocated using the formula introduced by Grey in the West Indian campaigns of 1793-4.²²² A Board of General Officers was constituted, which was to sit under the chairmanship of General Clarke, and examine all further matters relating to the prize system, fixing the rates and proportions of all prizes.²²³ This new system was in place in time to deal with the substantial task of distributing the Peninsular prize money, which resulted in the distribution of more than one million pounds.²²⁴ It was to be distributed on a principle of eighths, by which Wellington received one sixteenth of the total himself, while the same amount was divided between the field officers. Two eighths were allocated to the field officers, while the captains, subalterns and sergeants each received an eighth divided between all men of those ranks. The private soldiers received two eighths between them, which must have been a great incentive to future enlistments.²²⁵

²¹⁶ PRO WO 1/31/579-81, Charles Grey to Henry Dundas, 20th August 1795; GRE-A, 627, King to Grey and Jervis, 22nd June 1795. Granting the commanders the value of the ordnance stores captured at Guadeloupe, to be distributed as directed.

²¹⁷ PRO WO 1/20/377, Christopher Robinson to the Earl of Liverpool, 14th May 1810.

²¹⁸ GRE-A, 685, *London Gazette*, 24th October 1795. Concerning stores and ordnance captured in Martinique, St. Lucia and Guadeloupe, March and April 1794.

²¹⁹ GRE-A, 2179, Fisher to Grey, 8th October 1802. Grey was still involved in the distribution of West Indian prizes.

²²⁰ PRO WO 1/626/547-9, York to Grinfield, 15th July 1803; WO 1/626/543-5, York to Hobart, 2nd November 1803.

²²¹ PRO WO 1/624/975, York to Hobart, 12th December 1802.

²²² RHK-M 4/B1, 'Observations to accompany the Return of the Commissioned Officers and other Individuals of the Commissariat who were present at the landing of the 27th August 1799 on the Coast of Holland', 19th May 1800.

²²³ PRO WO 3/35/274, Harry Calvert to Generals Trigge, Pultney, Dalrymple, Craig, Clark, 2nd December 1802; WO 3/35/327, Calvert to General Alured Clarke, 2nd December 1802; WO 4/189/493-4, Charles Yorke to Rt. Hon. Sir C. Morgan, 20th June 1803.

²²⁴ PRO WO 1/1133/401-2, Mr. Campbell, [Prize Agent] to Bathurst, 26th June 1815.

²²⁵ WO 1/1133/407-9, Campbell to Bathurst, 28th June 1815.

It has long been accepted that the pay given to soldiers was in no way a contributory factor in enticing men to join the Army.²²⁶ Certainly when compared to other occupations the soldier's wage appears to be very low. Monetarily, the wages of soldiers were substantially below those of other workers, despite rises during the period under discussion.²²⁷ In 1791 Sir William Fawcett proposed an increase in soldiers' pay, which doubled the amount they received from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per day, which together with an allowance of bread, ensured that the soldier would receive 18*s.*½*d.* per year, over and above any deductions from his pay.²²⁸ This was less than 1*d.* per day, but was the first time that a soldier's pay had deliberately included anything but subsistence.²²⁹ Pay was further increased during 1797, in the wake of the naval mutinies over wages.²³⁰ By the removal of several stoppages and responsibilities on the part of the soldier, he was to be left with 2*d.* per day from his pay, after deductions.²³¹ Pay was again increased for long service soldiers during 1806, under the New Military Plan²³² Despite these increases, soldiers' pay was still one of the lowest for which data is available.

However, a number of key factors have failed consistently to be used in assessing a level of income for soldiers. The first is that soldiers accommodation was always provided under the terms of his enlistment. As the Wars progressed, more and more accommodation of a better quality became available, so that by the end of the period under discussion, there was enough barrack accommodation for 115,00 troops in Britain,²³³ ensuring that fewer men would need to spend time in the hospitality of the landlords of public houses. In the

²²⁶ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 224.

²²⁷ Data of wages taken from, WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815; Phyllis Deane, *The First industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 1979) 262; Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation. An Economic History of Britain, 1700-1914* (London, 1983) 196; Eric J. Evans, *The Forging of the Early Modern State. Early Industrial Britain, 1783-1870* (London, 1983) 43; R. Colls, *The Pitmen of the Northern Coalfield: Work, Culture and protest, 1790-1850* (Manchester, 1987) 49-50; John Rule, *Albion's People. English Society, 1714-1815* (London, 1992) 179-8.

²²⁸ PRO Chatham 30/8/243/1-2, 'Proposal for relieving the present necessitous situation, of the Private Soldier, of the Infantry of the Line' Sir W. Fawcett, 24th August 1791.

²²⁹ PRO WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815.

²³⁰ PRO WO 1/1100/179, Colonel Fisher to Secretary of State, 30th May 1797; G.E. Manwaring and Bonamy Dobrée, *The Floating Republic. An Account of the Mutinies at Spithead and the Nore in 1797* (London, 1935) 175, 246, 265-6; Christie, *Wars and Revolution in*, 240.

²³¹ WO 26/37/86-94, War Office Circulars, 25th May 1797; WO 26/37121-4, 126-7, and 129-32, Royal Warrants, 25th May 1797.

²³² PRO WO 4/201/297-298, War Office Circular, 15th July 1806; WO 4/369/454-7, War Office Circular, 15th July 1806.

²³³ PRO HO 50/443/1, 'Memorandum upon the Barrack Department of Great Britain' 2nd March 1826; Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 228.

field too, the soldier's accommodation was improved, although it was not until 1811 that the Round Tent, developed in Flanders during 1794,²³⁴ was issued to all active forces.²³⁵ The second factor rarely discussed is that of medical arrangements. Obviously, enlisting in war time brought with it the increased risks of injury or illness through campaign, but with the improvements in medical arrangements, not least those of McGrigor²³⁶ and Jenner,²³⁷ a soldier could expect a much improved response to injury or disease, and could also gain every-day medical treatment through his regimental surgeon, free of charge. The final factor is that of food. At the outbreak of the Wars a soldier was expected to provide all but a small amount of his own food out of his wages.²³⁸ However, in April 1795, following major food disturbances, in which troops began to feature,²³⁹ food was removed completely from the list of items that soldiers needed to provide for themselves.²⁴⁰ In its place the Army would supply bread to the men, who would pay a maximum of 6*d.* for a loaf, and anything above that would be found by the government. It has been estimated that by the end of the Wars, due to the level of inflation, the government was subsidising every soldier to the tune of £5 per year for food.²⁴¹

The combined effects of these services, for which all other workers would have to pay, became more significant as war-time inflation took hold. John Rule has estimated that the effects of this inflation resulted in a sixty to sixty five percent rise in the cost of living during the war years.²⁴² This meant that most workers experienced at best no difference in their standard of living, but more commonly a net decrease.²⁴³ As shown above, soldiers clearly fall well behind all other groups. However, the main element of the rise in cost of living was the high price of food, which, as has already been described, was removed from the equation in 1795. In addition, all other items of the expenditure of soldiers were made effectively inflation-free by the working of government contracts. Soldiers' 'necessaries',

²³⁴ PRO WO 1/168/63, York to Henry Dundas, 8th January 1794.

²³⁵ Keith Raynor, Unpublished research paper on 'British Army Bell Tents of the Napoleonic Wars'.

²³⁶ Cantlie, *Army Medical Department*, *passim*; Blanco, *McGrigor*, *passim*.

²³⁷ *PP* (1801-2) ii, 267; PRO WO 3/152/213, General Order, 15th November 1803; Calvert to Francis Knight, 17th February 1804; WO 40/14/6, Harry Calvert to Lewis, 27th August 1800; J. Healy Esq., Hutchinson, Camp, 4 miles from Alexandria to Secretary at War, 11th April 1801; Mr. Keate to Matthew Lewis, 13th April 1801; Merry to Keate, 18th April 1801.

²³⁸ PRO WO 3/27/94-6, General Order, 14th January 1792.

²³⁹ Emsley, *British Society*, 42.

²⁴⁰ Fortescue, *British Army*, III, 520.

²⁴¹ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, 210.

²⁴² Rule, *Albion's People*, 178.

²⁴³ M.W. Flinn, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750-1850', in *Economic History Review* 2nd Series, xxvii, (1974) 404,407; Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867* (London, 1979) 168; Deane, *First Industrial Revolution*, 148; Evans, *Forging of the Early Modern State*, 141, 150; Mathias, *First Industrial Nation*, 196.

the items he had to provide for himself, did not increase in price throughout the Wars. Soldiers were therefore able to function outside the rampant inflation experienced by all other occupations during the period under discussion, and the increase in their pay can be seen as a rise in real wages, setting them apart from other groups of workers, and giving them a standard of living rise over the course of the Wars. Compared with G.N. Von Tunzelman's real wage statistics,²⁴⁴ using as its starting point the 6*d.* paid until 1797, or even the subsequent 1 shilling, the pay of a private soldier can be seen to rise in real terms and confirms a standard of living rise over the period under discussion. This would have even greater effect after the close of hostilities, when many other occupations contracted and reduced their wages, while Army pay was maintained at its previous level. Pay can therefore be seen to have been a greater incentive to enlistment than has previously been acknowledged.

Within the Army, wages were also used to encourage men to stay within the service. By the development of a clear career structure, through which the other ranks could progress. The rank of Sergeant Major was given to the senior sergeant of each regiment of infantry in 1797, and of cavalry in 1800,²⁴⁵ with the holder receiving regular pay increases throughout the period.²⁴⁶ In 1802, a 'Sergeant Armourer' was added to the establishment of each regiment of both arms,²⁴⁷ while in 1813, the senior sergeant of each company of a regiment of foot was given the rank of Colour-Sergeant,²⁴⁸ completing the augmentation of the rank structure. The uniforms and equipment of these ranks were of a substantially better quality, setting them apart from the rest of the enlisted ranks. This created not only the new ranks, but movement in the ranks below them, and therefore greater incentives for men remain in the Army for life, by advancing through a defined career structure, with clear and attainable increments. It also revealed a narrowing of the gap between the senior non commissioned officers and the subalterns above them, as an acceptance of the essential role which the former were now expected to perform.

²⁴⁴ G.N. Von Tunzelman, 'Trends in Real Wages, 1750-1850, revisited', *Economic History Review*, XXXII (1979) 40.

²⁴⁵ PRO WO 4/177/443-5, War Office Circular, 25th February 1800; WO 4/178/62, War Office Circular, Windham to Officers Commanding Regiments of Dragoons, 14th March 1800.

²⁴⁶ PRO WO 4/217/197, War Office Circular, Number 182, 27th July 1813; WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' 11th February 1815.

²⁴⁷ PRO WO 26/38/452, General Order, 1st July 1802.

²⁴⁸ PRO WO 4/217/197, War Office Circular, Number 182, 27th July 1813; WO 4/390/4, Palmerston to the Duke of Cambridge, 27th July 1813.

Despite attempts to introduce a scheme of universal Army pensions,²⁴⁹ the incentives to enlist did not come in any form of superannuation, until 1806, under Windham's New Military Plan.²⁵⁰ Under this legislation, a small remuneration was given to soldiers who had served fourteen years, and twenty one years, commencing from the date of the Act. The terms of these were considered excessively generous by the Finance Committee in 1817,²⁵¹ and were certainly tempered in the wake of their report.²⁵² Clode questions 'whether any fair equivalent was ever received for the vast increase in Military Expenditure' and suggests that, 'it will probably be found to have added to the cost of raising and of retaining men in the Service.'²⁵³ It can not be ascertained what effect, if any, it had on attracting men to the Army, but it attributed, as Windham had intended, to raising the profile of military careers, in line with other areas of governmental improvement, and easing soldiers back into society at the end of their service.

There was an attempt to integrate military personnel leaving the armed services, back into society, by assisting them to exercise trades,²⁵⁴ but until Windham's scheme, a private soldier would only secure any direct assistance as a result of his discharge through wounds or disability received on military service.²⁵⁵ Chelsea Hospital, was expanded in 1793,²⁵⁶ but could still only accommodate a small proportion of the number of disabled ex-soldiers being returned from active service, and only a tiny proportion of these could ever hope to gain any rehabilitation, in the form of a trade. Only, twenty five were employed in the manufacture of Army footwear in 1813,²⁵⁷ and fifteen were trained as mat and basket makers in 1815.²⁵⁸ At a time of high unemployment, jobs were difficult enough for the able bodied to find, but for a disabled man, the prospects must have been slim. The vast majority of those disabled by their wounds must have relied on their allowances as out-pensioners. This money was distributed through an ever-more intricate system of government finance, which enabled pensions to be paid out of monies raised by the

²⁴⁹ See for example, *New Military Plan*, 24.

²⁵⁰ 47 Geo. III, c.69.

²⁵¹ 2nd RSCF (1817) 53.

²⁵² Clode, *Military Forces*, II, 288.

²⁵³ Clode, *Military Forces*, II, 288.

²⁵⁴ 42 Geo. III. c.69; *PP* (1802) 612-3, 'An Act to enable such officers, mariners, and soldiers as have been in the land or sea service, or in the marines, or in the militia, or any corps of fencibles men, since the twenty-fourth year of his present Majesty's reign, to exercise trades', 22nd June 1802.

²⁵⁵ 2nd RSCF (1817) 17.

²⁵⁶ PRO WO 1/896/609-45, Mr. Keate to Secretary at War, 2nd August 1794.

²⁵⁷ Sir Richard Phillips, *A Morning's Walk from London to Kew* (London, 1817) 45-8.

²⁵⁸ PRO WO 3/160/113, Deputy Adjutant General Darling, to Secretary at War, 11th January 1815; WO 4/221/56, Murray to Colonel Christie, Commandant of Chelsea Hospital, 9th March 1815.

Collectors of the Excise, on their travels through the regions, and avoided the need for pensioners to make a trip to Chelsea.²⁵⁹ The pensions had not kept pace with the high war-time inflation, but were increased to take this into account during 1812, together with additional sums for those who needed the assistance of another person due to their disability.²⁶⁰ Through the war-time pension system, the government assumed a new responsibility for the welfare of soldiers, and encouraged the enlistment in the forces through a paternalistic stance. Other allowances were developed, such as 'Marching Money' granted to ex-soldiers, and the wives of soldiers not accompanying them on foreign service, to enable them to return to their parish of origin.²⁶¹ The whole system of pensions and allowances appears to have worked well, and with only minor modifications coped with the massive increase in those being paid at the close of the conflict.²⁶²

Lawrence Stone has suggested that one incentive for enlisting was the desertion of family responsibility, either through choice or due to severe economic circumstances.²⁶³ The former is often suggested,²⁶⁴ and it is clear that joining the Army would be an effective way to escape domestic life. The latter, although previously somewhat difficult to reconcile, can now be seen to be extremely relevant with soldiers' wages being more competitive than previously suggested. A soldier's family would receive nothing but the basic poor relief upon his enlistment, but that would be no less than if he had stayed at home. It would not be until 1807 that the families of Militiamen transferring to the regular service received a specific allowance for being separated,²⁶⁵ and despite the suggestions of the Duke of York,²⁶⁶ these were never extended to include the families of all soldiers.

²⁵⁹ 28 Geo. II c.1, 'An Act for the Relief of Outpensioners of the Royal Hospital Chelsea'; PRO WO 26/40/159-62, William Plasted to G. Rust, 6th January 1807.

²⁶⁰ PRO WO 4/425/371, Palmerston to George Harrison, 24th April 1812; WO 4/464/135, War Office Circular No. 122, 6th July 1812.

²⁶¹ *PP* (1802-3) i, 225-7, 5th May 1803; (1810-11) i, 329-30, 8th June 1811; (1812) i, 1133-4, 24th June 1812; (1818) ii, 131-40, 21st May 1818; Patricia Y. Lin, 'Extending Her Arms: Military Families and the Transformation of the British State, 1793-1815', Paper given to the University of London Research Seminar for British History in the Long Eighteenth Century, 29th March 1994.

²⁶² PRO WO 44/647/-, 'Regulations for the issue of Marching Money, Out Pension, Family Allowance, and Passage Money', 25th July 1816.

²⁶³ L. Stone, *Uncertain Unions and Broken Lives* (Oxford, 1995) 9.

²⁶⁴ See for example, Pamela Sharpe, 'Bigamy among the Labouring Poor in Essex, 1754-1857', in *The Local Historian*, 24:3 (1994) 141. I am grateful to Dr. Sharpe for drawing my attention to this article.

²⁶⁵ WO 1/1116/415-25, 'Allowances for families of militiamen who volunteer for the line Proposal for providing relief for the families of the non-commissioned Officers, Drummers and Private Soldiers of Regiments of the Line', July 1807; WO1/635/371, J.W. Gordon to Colonel The Honourable Charles Stewart, 8th August 1807; WO1/635/375, Extract of a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Hay to His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent, 29th July 1807.

²⁶⁶ WO 1/637/357, 'Commander in Chief's Proposals Regarding Allowances', 25th February 1808; WO 1/637/475, Horse Guards to War Office, 26th March 1808.

However, although soldiers' pay increased in comparison to other occupations, if an enlisted man could save a proportion of that, there was no facility to send this home to families, until 1842,²⁶⁷ although a similar scheme operating in the Navy from 1758,²⁶⁸ which was extended to the Marines in 1792.²⁶⁹ Therefore it would only be on home service, when families were permitted to travel with the Army, that the benefits of a soldier's pay would be felt by anyone other than the man himself.

The economic circumstances that are believed to have pushed men into the Army were particularly prevalent during the war, as inflation reduced standards of living, and blockades forced many trades to contract. Colley finds that, contrary to a commonly held belief among historians, it was the towns that provided men willing to serve in the military, in greater numbers than rural districts,²⁷⁰ where work of some description was usually available. Possibly the rural workers' next resort to unemployment was to migrate to towns, and maybe only then would they end up in the Army. Since attestations only give place of residence and place of enlistment, the assessment of such a thesis is impossible. Emsley also refers to the effect of fluctuations in the war economy that would force townsmen towards a military career,²⁷¹ and this can be seen in a study of the make up of an infantry company of the later part of the period under discussion, conducted by John Shy.²⁷² The company was composed of Birmingham metal workers forced out of their trades following a fall in the exports to America due to the War of 1812;²⁷³ shoemakers, suffering from the newly introduced industrial processes and subsequent contraction of the military market;²⁷⁴ and, more substantially, textile workers, whose trade more than any was susceptible to massive fluctuations in fortunes as a result of the effects of the Wars on foreign trade and domestic consumption.²⁷⁵ Reports that the pull of the Army was adversely

²⁶⁷ Clode, *Military Forces*, II, 437.

²⁶⁸ Rodger, *Wooden World*, 78-9. Rodger states that only about 5% of seamen used the scheme.

²⁶⁹ Lin, 'Extending Her Arms'.

²⁷⁰ Colley, *Britons*, 300.

²⁷¹ Clive Emsley, 'The impact of war and military participation on Britain and France, 1792-1815' in Clive Emsley and James Watkin (eds.) *Artisans, Peasants and Proletarians, 1760-1860: Essays Presented to Gwyn A. Williams*, (London, 1985) 71-2.

²⁷² John Shy, 'An Infantry Company at Waterloo', *Military Illustrated (Past and Present)* No. 25, (June 1990) 20-27.

²⁷³ Emsley, *British Society*, 137.

²⁷⁴ 6.4 Clothing and Equipment, 212-15.

²⁷⁵ Emsley, *British Society*, 137.

affecting industry, even in times of high employment, are often found in relation to cotton production.²⁷⁶

For one group of recruits, it is obvious that the motive for enlistment was to escape from their lot. Complaints from deserted masters, concerning their apprentices joining the Army, were common.²⁷⁷ The City of Glasgow was so affected by the emigration of apprentices, that it petitioned the Home Secretary to change the law,²⁷⁸ stating that, ‘the Manufacturers of this part of the United Kingdom will ... sustain a shock which they may not for years recover.’²⁷⁹ The legislation that was in force at the beginning of the Wars required any apprentice who had enlisted as a soldier, to be returned to his master.²⁸⁰ However, such was the prevalence of this occurrence, that the Army authorities also began to feel aggrieved at losing so many recruits, often after they had undergone training. In 1806, as more apprentices enlisted in the Army to escape a severe drop in their real wages,²⁸¹ a clause was included in the Mutiny Act, stating that, any man enlisting, and subsequently legally being claimed as an apprentice, was to be returned to his master, and required to undertake to return to his regiment upon completion of his indenture.²⁸² A strict check was kept by the War Office, on those men so discharged, who would be arrested as a deserter if they failed to report to their regiments. One example will serve to illustrate the system. George Thompson, enlisted in the 2nd Foot at Durham on 25th January 1812. He was found to be an apprentice, indentured to Mr. Thomas Forsyth, a shipwright, from South Shields. His indenture did not expire until 28th April 1815, and so he was returned to his master.²⁸³ On 8th May 1815, Merry, the Deputy Secretary at War, contacted Forsyth to remind him of Thompson’s obligations to return to his unit, and asking, ‘whether the said recruit, has proceeded to any local military post for the purpose of rejoining his

²⁷⁶ See for example, *Ibid.*, 74; Andrew John Bailey, ‘The Impact of the Napoleonic Wars on the development of the Cotton industry in Lancashire: a study of the structure and behaviour of a firm during the industrial revolution’, unpublished PhD thesis (Cambridge University, 1985) 5-7.

²⁷⁷ Emsley, *British Society*, 74-5.

²⁷⁸ PRO WO 1/1115/109, ‘Memorial of the Lord Provost, Magistrates, and Common Council of the City of Glasgow’, 23rd May 1807; WO 1/1115/385, Mr. John Lauwrie to Duke of Portland, 25th May 1807; WO 1/1115/389, ‘Memorial of the Merchants House of the City of Glasgow’ 25th May 1807.

²⁷⁹ PRO WO 1/1115/105, James MacKenzie, Lord Provost of Glasgow, to the Duke of Portland, 26th May 1807.

²⁸⁰ PRO WO 25/2962/17, Henry Marsh, apprenticed to Mr. Edwin Pemberton, a jeweller of Birmingham, enlisted in 43rd Foot, 15th June 1811, returned to his master.

²⁸¹ K.D.M. Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor. Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660-1900* (Cambridge, 1985) 252-3.

²⁸² 46 Geo. III, c.15, s.lxvii-lxix.

²⁸³ PRO WO 25/2962/30, ‘Recruits who have been claimed from the Army as Apprentices, have been given up: and are to return to their respective Regiments at the expiration of their Indentures’, number 66141.

regiment.²⁸⁴ It was discovered that Thompson was working as a shipbuilder with Mr. James Evans, in South Shields, and since he had not fulfilled his obligation, the Inspecting Field Officer of the Northern District was informed by Palmerston that, ‘you will cause him to be apprehended as a deserter,’²⁸⁵ Upon his arrest,²⁸⁶ Thompson was returned to his regiment in Gosport.²⁸⁷ While this legislation ensured that the Army never lost a recruit in the long-term, having been forced to complete the very thing he had run away from in the first place, his subsequent re-enlistment would not make for a contented soldier. However, it reveals a high level of administrative and policing arrangements, to enable the recruits to be monitored, and returned to the Army.

In 1813, following the report of the Select Committee on Apprenticeship,²⁸⁸ further restrictions were placed on the return of apprentices to their masters. Section ninety three of the Mutiny Act of that year,²⁸⁹ was interpreted by Palmerston to mean that, any indenture of an apprentice, entered into after the age of fourteen years, (and therefore expiring after the age of twenty one) was invalid, and that any man enlisted under those conditions could be retained by his regiment.²⁹⁰ It is not clear how many men this legislation affected, but it further emphasised the need of the country for men, and the lengths to which the government would go to achieve a stronger Army. It also highlighted the weakness of the apprenticeship system,²⁹¹ which lost even more of its powers by the repeal of the apprenticeship clauses of the Statute of Artificers the following year.²⁹² It would send a message to apprentices, that the Army would attempt to keep them if at all possible, and it was certainly conceivable that officers would turn a blind eye towards the previous career of a new recruit, once he had enlisted.²⁹³

The Army also provided a means for convicts to escape their punishment, by enlisting. The system was used during the American War of Independence,²⁹⁴ appears to

284 PRO WO 4/463/224, Merry to Forsyth, 8th May 1815.

285 PRO WO4/463/226, Palmerston to Colonel Salvin, 31st May 1815.

286 PRO WO 4/463/227, Merry to Adjutant General, 15th June 1815.

287 PRO WO 4/463/232, Merry to Colonel Salvin, 29th June 1815.

288 4th RSCA (1812-13) *passim*.

289 53 Geo. III, c.17, s.lxxxiii.

290 PRO WO 4/463/82, Palmerston to J. Dyke Esq., 19th June 1813.

291 Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor*, 228.

292 54 Geo. III c.96.

293 George Nugent Banks (ed.) *The Autobiography of Sergeant William Lawrence, a hero of the Peninsular and Waterloo Campaigns* (Cambridge, 1987) 19-20.

294 Stephen R. Conway, ‘Recruitment of Criminals into the British Army, 1751-81’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, LVIII, No. 137, (May 1985) *passim*.

have been used throughout the Wars, with lesser criminals being despatched to units permanently serving abroad, such as the 20th Light Dragoons, battalions of the 60th Foot, the Royal African Corps, and the New South Wales Corps. Initially officers were prevented from recruiting in prisons,²⁹⁵ the prisoners being required to petition the Home Secretary themselves for release into the Army, and a pardon. In this way several thousand recruits left prisons to enlist.²⁹⁶ However, as the need for manpower increased, official sanction was given to the active recruitment of men from the prison hulks,²⁹⁷ and while most of these recruits still ended up in foreign regiments, at least one draft was used to make up deficiencies in the 66th Foot in 1804.²⁹⁸ It was suggested in the House of Lords that the authorities were using this method to channel men from the militia and fencibles to the regular forces, by causing them to desert and then punishing them with service.²⁹⁹ There is little evidence for a concerted policy of this type, but it would be another way of filling the ranks with trained men, albeit reluctant ones. Convict recruits could be far more problematic than men who had freely enlisted. In 1808, disturbances ensued after delays in transporting recruits from the hulks to the Royal Africa Corps,³⁰⁰ and regiments were warned about the prevalence of certain batches of convict recruits who feigned illness to avoid duty.³⁰¹ But the greatest problem would be in the perception of the men by the soldiers they were joining. It can not have aided morale or self esteem, to know that the authorities believed military service to be a punishment, and not a trade in which men should freely enter. The ultimate insult to the service, and one which was staunchly objected to by the Duke of York, was that the Army as also used as a punishment for marines who broke the law.³⁰² However, this is merely another example of the subordinate position in which the Army found itself, for the power to determine recruiting policy lay firmly in the hands of the civilian authority, and their aims were to gain more men, from whatever source.

²⁹⁵ J.R. Western, 'Military Service as punishment' in *JSAHR*, 32 (1954) 89, n.1113.

²⁹⁶ SRO GD51/1/637, R. Blair to Henry Dundas, 28th January 1795; PRO WO 1/800/561, William Ottway to Henry Dundas, 11th October 1800; WO 1/800/569, J.B. Littlehales to Lieutenant Flinn, Agent for Transport, 17th September 1800; WO 1/800/573, Lieutenant John Flinn to Colonel Littlehales, 26th September 1800.

²⁹⁷ PRO WO 1/627/345, William Clinton to John Sullivan Esq., 13th March 1804; WO 1/627/411, Clinton to Sullivan, 28th March 1804.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*; WO 1/627/375, Clinton to Sullivan, 17th March 1804.

²⁹⁹ Western, 'Military Service as punishment', 89, n.1113.

³⁰⁰ PRO WO 1/637/147, A. Graham Esq. to Lord Hawkesbury, 8th January 1808; WO 1/637/145, Hawkesbury to Commander in Chief, 22nd January 1808; WO 1/637/141, Gordon to Brigadier General, Hon. Charles Stewart, 27th January 1808.

³⁰¹ Western, 'Military Service as a punishment', 89, n.1113.

³⁰² *Ibid.*

During the course of the period under discussion, special attention was paid to the enlisting of boys, the reason for which, Glover suggests, was that 'boys had the merit of being cheap.'³⁰³ However, in this statement, he completely misses the point of this type of recruitment. Instead of being an 'unpleasant and bibulous trade in children [which] quite certainly meant that for several years six regiments of foot would be unfit for service', the idea of the scheme was to establish a form of military apprenticeship. Boys, who were described as, 'Healthy lads under Sixteen Years of Age, who are likely to grow, may be taken as low as five feet one inch', were initially recruited into a number of battalions during 1797, although nothing was stated concerning the intention of the authorities.³⁰⁴ In 1799, they were all transferred into three battalions, the 22nd, 34th and 65th, and sent to the Cape of Good Hope and India,³⁰⁵ which was to become the policy for the whole scheme of boy recruits. The War Office later stated that,

they are in no case to be sent to the West Indies, or to join a Battalion on active Service, until they are equal, in every respect, to the performance of their Duty as Soldiers.³⁰⁶

When second battalions were raised under the Army of the Reserve, ten boys per company were permitted to be attached to each of these home service formations.³⁰⁷ Similar legislation was passed in 1805 and 1808, enlisting boys in regiments that were refitting or en-route to garrison duty abroad.³⁰⁸ The scheme continued through the Wars, concentrating on home service units and battalions bound for the East Indies,³⁰⁹ and was eventually adopted for the whole Army in February 1813.³¹⁰

There are several points which need to be addressed concerning the recruitment of boys. First, that the boys were never considered as part of the operational strength of a unit is clear from the legislation, which is at pains to describe a training regime for the youths.

³⁰³ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 226-7.

³⁰⁴ PRO WO 3/17/325, W. Fawcett, AG, to ?, 2nd December 1797.

³⁰⁵ PRO WO 1/643/33-37 Memorandum, Calvert to Earl of Liverpool, 22nd January 1810.

³⁰⁶ PRO WO 3/585/238, General Order, Calvert - 25th February 1813.

³⁰⁷ PRO WO 4/196/127, War Office Circular, Dundas to Colonels of Regiments, 9th January 1805.

³⁰⁸ PRO WO 26/40/346-9, General Order 14th October 1807; WO 40/29/(B)9, Calvert to Officers Commanding Regiments, 8th November 1808; WO 40/29/(B)9, Calvert to F. Moore, 11th November 1808.

³⁰⁹ PRO WO 1/643/29, Calvert to Earl of Liverpool, 22nd January 1810; WO 3/585/76, Horse Guards Circular - Calvert to Colonels Commanding Regiments, 17th June 1811.

³¹⁰ PRO WO 3/585/238, General Order, Calvert - 25th February 1813; WO 26/41/343, Calvert to Officers Commanding Regiments, 25th February 1813.

The Circular of 1811³¹¹ describes every aspect of the instruction to be given to the boys, including ‘Messing and Cleanliness,’ of which it states,

The utmost attention is required to be paid by the Officers and Non Commissioned Officers to the Messing, Cleanliness, and General Conduct of these Boys, as from their unremitting Care and Superintendence, the formation of these boys into useful Soldiers is alone to be expected; and on their Exertions must depend the ultimate Success and Benefit which is expected to accrue to the Service from the adoption of this measure.

Glover is highly critical of the drilling of the boys, despite the orders clearly stating that,

It is essential, that Arms should not be put into the hands of these Boys until they have attained some knowledge of the different modes of Marching, Wheeling, and of the Formations that occur in the Ordinary Field Exercise: - And as their strength will not at first be adequate to the management of the firelock, a proportion of Fuzils will be furnished for their use, by the Ordnance Department; suitable Accoutrements must also be provided for them.³¹²

The recommendation of ‘the utmost mildness and lenity as the best means of establishing Discipline, and attaching the Boys to His Majesty’s Service,’ together with ‘the Expediency of establishing a Regimental School for the instruction of such of them as discover abilities, in the necessary qualifications of Reading and Writing, with a view to their becoming hereafter, useful and valuable Non Commissioned Officers’,³¹³ suggests very much an apprenticeship scheme, rather than a means of obtaining cheap, second rate recruits. An additional purpose had also been pointed out the previous year by Harry Calvert, who stated,

By this arrangement the children of soldiers would find an asylum, many unfortunate boys be saved from ruin, and a most valuable addition made to the effective Force of the Country, without any considerable expense, as it is presumed that Boys of this description, would, after the age of Eighteen, be fully competent to perform the duties of Soldiers.³¹⁴

This is the only evidence found during the course of this study, that suggests the development of the tradition of military families among the lower orders, as it was within

311 PRO WO 3/585/76, Horse Guards Circular - Calvert to Colonels Commanding Regiments, 17th June 1811.

312 *Ibid.*

313 *Ibid.*

314 PRO WO 1/643/33-37 Memorandum, Calvert to Earl of Liverpool, 22nd January 1810.

the officer cadre. An extension to this program of training, introduced to the cavalry during 1813, and continued to the end of the Wars, gives an even clearer picture of the intention of the authorities. Boys were to be recruited and offered indentures as apprentices to tradesmen within the Army, such as farriers, boot makers, saddlers, trumpeters, armourers and artificers.³¹⁵ In this way the Army would become, to a certain extent, self sufficient in trades, while being able, to 'impress on these young Minds those principles which will render them good Subjects and faithful Soldiers.'³¹⁶

The second point to note is that the cost of boys was in addition to, and not in place of regular recruits, and therefore it was not the cheap option. Glover rightly states that the bounty given to boys was less than regular recruits.³¹⁷ However, after an enquiry into the costs of the scheme in 1810,³¹⁸ revealed that in most cases there was little difference in the costs of a regular soldier and a boy soldier. The subsequent legislation took this into account, granting boys up to fifteen years of age 10*d.* per day, while those over fifteen were to be given the same pay as regular soldiers, despite not being included in the line until they were deemed fit, and volunteered.³¹⁹ Finally, examination of the service of the units to which Glover refers, reveals that each took part in campaigns within the six years he suggests they would be unfit for service, earning fourteen battle honours between them.³²⁰ The recruitment of boys can therefore be seen as a successful means of generating military-minded recruits, without interfering with the everyday functioning of the regiments.

It is impossible to ascertain the reason why most soldiers enlisted. It is clear, is that as conditions under which they served improved, the amount of pushing required from

³¹⁵ PRO WO 4/436/37, Palmerston to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, 10th August 1813; WO 4/436/146, Palmerston to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, 5th November 1813; WO 4/436/401, Palmerston to the Secretary of State to the Home Department, 3rd June 1814; WO 3/370/157, Calvert to Colonels of Dragoons, 30th May 1815; WO 4/718/128, Palmerston to Colonels of Light Dragoon Regiments, 19th July 1815.

³¹⁶PRO WO 3/585/238, General Order, Calvert - 25th February 1813; WO 26/41/343, Calvert to Officers Commanding Regiments, 25th February 1813.

³¹⁷ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 227.

³¹⁸ PRO WO 3/199/304, Calvert to Lt. Col. Torrens, 8th August 1810. Enclosing 'Statement from the Reports of the Officers Commanding the Royal, the Depot of the Royal Fuzileers, the 14th and 36th Regt.s of Foot, relative to the insufficiency of the Pay allowed to Boys.'

³¹⁹ PRO WO 3/585/85, Circular Letter - Calvert, HG, 1st July 1811; WO 3/585/238, General Order, Calvert - 25th February 1813; WO 26/41/343, Calvert to Officers Commanding Regiments, 25th February 1813; WO 4/213/257, War Office Circular, No. 68. Palmerston to Colonels of all regiments with boys, 11th December 1811.

³²⁰ Anthony Baker, *Battle Honours of the British and Commonwealth Armies* (London, 1986) 259-62.

civilian life was reduced. By the end of the period under discussion, soldiering was an occupation with many more incentives for enlisting than at any other point in its history.

4.6 OFFICERS

It has been shown that through the course of the Wars, the government began to develop a greater understanding of the needs of the Army, and methods by which men could be induced to enlist in the ranks. The development of the commissioned ranks, in line with the forces they were to command, was to prove a very different matter. Britain's upper classes were the least militarised of the whole of Europe,³²¹ and yet it was this body of men that would need to provide the bulk of Army officers in the new, expanded Army. This section looks at the make-up of the body of officers through the period, examining how it developed, through various means. It will examine the system of promotion, and the social standing of officers, as well as continuing to assess to what extent government control extended to this area of the Army.

By 1793, the body of officers of the regular Army was in a state of stagnation.³²² Despite major reductions in manpower at the close of the American War of Independence, the number of officers had been maintained, both officially, by the maintenance of two supernumerary captains, and unofficially, by keeping two lieutenants and ensigns on regimental strengths without the knowledge of Parliament.³²³ There had therefore been few new commissions, since vacancies would be taken up by the supernumeraries. By 1789, the numbers of first commissions (the figure by which change of personnel within the commissioned ranks can be assessed) were running at an average of 230 per year,³²⁴ too few to cause any real shift in the population of the commissioned ranks. The average length of service of each of the officer ranks reveals just how stagnant officer rank was, but also how many of the officers had made the Army their career. In 1791 the average length of service for lieutenant-colonels was 29 years, for majors it was 25.5 years, for captains it was 16 years, and for lieutenants it was 8.5 years.³²⁵ It would not be until 1793, and the

³²¹ Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 69-70.

³²² Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army' 16.

³²³ *ibid.*

³²⁴ The statistics used to determine first commissions are extracted from the lists of promotions and appointments contained in the *London Gazette*, 1787-1816 inclusive.

³²⁵ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 106.

outbreak of war with France, that an average of 450 new commissions per year, caused by augmentation and attrition, would alter significantly the composition of the commissioned ranks, and would continue throughout the period under discussion.³²⁶ By 1815, the average length of service for lieutenant-colonels was just 3.6 years, for majors it was 3 years, for captains it was 2.2 years, and for lieutenants it was 1.6 years.³²⁷ The Wars had resulted in an body of officers that was vastly increased, and one in which the stagnation of 1791 had been completely removed, being replaced by a rank structure that had substantial movement.

The means of entry into, and subsequent promotion within, the commissioned ranks could be either through purchase or patronage. Despite criticism at the outbreak of the Wars, the majority of commissions were still held through purchase.³²⁸ This in itself was seen as a means for the political authority to control the Army, by stipulating which social group could hold rank, effectively through the property qualification of cash, and preventing the filling of the commissioned ranks by any authority but that of Parliament, who controlled the vast financial resources that would be required. This had been borne out by the attempts of James II to purchase a majority of commissions for Catholics, which proved too costly for even the royal purse. It was in this context, as a check on royal authority and a link to constitutional government, that the purchase system, which possessed all the characteristics of an unreformed ancient institution, had the support of such influential nineteenth century Whigs as Lord John Russell, Earl Grey, Lord Panmure, and Lord Palmerston.³²⁹ In addition, the purchase of a commission guaranteed the holder a pension at the end of his service, by transferring to half-pay, or selling his commission completely. This, as Richard Glover points out, 'was a convenient financial device for saving members of Parliament the unpleasantness of asking their constituents to pay taxes to provide pensions for deserving old officers.'³³⁰ Since the cost of buying out those with purchased commissions was eventually to be in excess of six million pounds,³³¹ finance was a key area preventing the abolition of the system. It was therefore unlikely to change,

³²⁶ As above, *London Gazette*.

³²⁷ *Army List*, (1816) *passim*.

³²⁸ Anthony Bruce, *The Purchase System in the British Army, 1660-1871* (London, 1980). This remains the definitive work on the subject, and therefore much of the debate concerning it can be omitted here.

³²⁹ Bruce, *Purchase System*, 66.

³³⁰ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 145.

³³¹ Michael Glover, 'The Purchase of Commissions: A Reappraisal', in *JSAHR* LVIII (1980) 235.

despite concerted attempts to remove the purchase of office from all other areas of society.³³²

Several tiers of commissions were removed from the purchase system during the 1760s, including surgeons and quartermasters,³³³ and most importantly all ranks above and including regimental colonel, together with the whole of the Ordnance.³³⁴ In addition, since a purchased rank was only created at the same time as a new regiment, and died along with its holder, there was an ever-increasing number of non-purchase vacancies available. Michael Glover suggests that if left to natural wastage, the West Indian postings, with the consequent high casualties, would have accounted for the death of the purchase system.³³⁵ But this fails to account for the reasoning behind it, which was to maintain purchase as a check on royal authority, thus preserving the makeup of the commissioned ranks, and in turn the constitution. To that end Sir George Younge, the Secretary at War, had no reservations about raising new corps rather than augmenting old ones, when manpower was required at the outbreak of the Wars, thus creating new purchasable commissions, and perpetuating the system.³³⁶ In addition the system was also a source of useful patronage for the administration.³³⁷ In peace-time, in the absence of a Commander in Chief, all Army patronage lay with the civilian ministry, therefore the commissions contained in fifty eight new regiments of foot, and sixteen new cavalry regiments, raised to meet war-time demands, would be a useful addition to governmental patronage, as well as to the Treasury.

To enter the Army in a commissioned rank, a man had merely to be 'a gentleman fully qualified to hold an ensigncy or cornetcy.'³³⁸ This resulted in many well-publicised abuses, including the commissioning of children.³³⁹ However, the criticisms of the system conflict. It is clear that the body of officers at the outbreak of the Wars could be either stagnant, and filled with career soldiers,³⁴⁰ or full of boys who were not capable of service, but not both. Since the accusations of the latter are largely anecdotal, or based on several

³³² 49 Geo. III c.126, s.iii, vii, viii, 'An Act for the further Prevention of the Sale of Brokerage and Offices'.

³³³ PRO WO 4/59/578, Barrington to John Calcroft Esq., 24th January 1760.

³³⁴ J. Hayes, 'The purchase of colonelcies in the army 1714-1763', in *JSAHR*, 39 (1961) 3-10.

³³⁵ M. Glover, 'Reappraisal', 227.

³³⁶ PRO WO 1/167/83, Circular Letter, 15th August 1794.

³³⁷ K. Robson, 'Military patronage for political purposes: the case of Sir Arthur Weilesley as Chief Secretary for Ireland', in C.M. Woolgar (ed.), *Wellington Studies I* (Southampton, 1996) 115-138.

³³⁸ Michael Glover, 'Purchase, Patronage and Promotion in the Army at the time of the Peninsular War,' *AQ*, Vol. 103 (1973) 212.

³³⁹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 148-9.

³⁴⁰ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 106.

individual cases, it seems fair to assume that Houlding's findings of long service, based on analysis of the available statistical evidence, are the more correct. This also suggests that the whole idea of the mismanagement of Army patronage by civilians should be questioned, and assigned to the realms of point scoring by opposing sides in an ongoing conflict over government control of the Army.

The ability of mere boys to progress through the ranks is clear, if somewhat over-exaggerated. Promotion from Ensign to Lieutenant-Colonel could take as little as three months to achieve, or as long as the paperwork took to process the advancement.³⁴¹ The reform of this abuse rested with the Commander in Chief during the Wars, and as has already been established, for the first two years of the conflict, Amherst did not shine in his performance of that role. It was therefore only upon the succession of the Duke of York to the post, that the problems of promotions were addressed. Within six weeks of taking over at Horse Guards, York had introduced several measures of reform. All prospective officers were to be sixteen years of age, and to have a recommendation from a serving field officer, while subsequent promotions were dependant upon strict requirements based on service. Every officer was required to have served at least two years as a subaltern before he could be promoted to the rank of captain, and have held a full commission in the regular Army for a minimum of six years before he became a field officer. In addition, all requests for promotion were to be directed through an officer's colonel.³⁴² Even these changes seem to permit a remarkably short progression through the ranks. However, it must be observed that many of the most notable officers of the period under discussion benefited from this system, in particular Wellington, who was a lieutenant-colonel by the age of twenty-four.

After York's reforms, 'a gentleman fully qualified' would merely mean that a prospective officer had reached the age of sixteen, was able to read and write, had money enough for the purchase price of the commission, or had been offered a commission for without purchase, and was in possession of a letter from a field officer attesting to his suitability.³⁴³ In both peace and war, the vast majority of first commissions, were obtained without purchase,³⁴⁴ and even those that were paid for were always at the regulation

³⁴¹ Bruce, *Purchase System*, 37-8.

³⁴² PRO WO 3/28/84, General Order, 12th March 1795; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 152-3; Bruce, *Purchase System*, 40.

³⁴³ M. Glover, 'Purchase, Patronage and Promotion', 212.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 212.

price.³⁴⁵ In an Army so greatly expanded, first commissions would always be available. In particular cavalry appointments which proved difficult to fill, to such an extent that their price was reduced during 1793.³⁴⁶ Even first commissions in established regiments of foot did not always bring the regulated price,³⁴⁷ one observer suggesting that, ‘It is a Fact that, at *this Moment*, Purchasers cannot be found for Subaltern Commissions in old Corps, even at *half the regulated Price*.’³⁴⁸ With supply outstripping demand, the use of first commissions as a tool of patronage must surely be questionable.

Money was obviously not the only criteria in assessing a suitable officer. The idea of what constituted a ‘gentleman’ was a question that preoccupied many officers throughout the period. Sir John Moore gave an idea of what he considered were not the qualities of a gentleman, when reporting to the Adjutant General on the conduct of one Lieutenant Lynch, of the 95th Regiment of Foot in 1804.

I think it necessary to observe, that his wife is a shopkeeper’s daughter in Hythe, he married her very lately, not a very eligible connection for an officer to have formed, so close to the Quarters of his Regiment.³⁴⁹

He went on to inform the man’s colonel that,

neither his language, nor his behaviour were those of a Gentleman, ... added to this Lt. Lynch is a mean, uneducated, gaming man, not of a Class who ought to have been recommended to H.R.H. for a commission.³⁵⁰

Such was the abhorrence of this sort of behaviour, that it was ultimately Lynch’s fellow officers who had him removed from the regiment, by directly petitioning the Commander in Chief.³⁵¹ Therefore even after the Army had augmented substantially, the old criteria of an officer and a gentleman was still of paramount importance. While Napoleon sought to impose such values upon his officers, forbidding their marriage and giving them the

³⁴⁵ Bruce, *Purchase System*, 50.

³⁴⁶ PRO WO 3/27/144, Adjutant General to Colonels of Cavalry Regiments, 1st May 1793; WO 3/27/145, William Fawcett to the Colonels of Cavalry Regiments, 7th May 1793; WO 3/11/223, J. MacDonald DAG, Circular to Colonels of Cavalry Regiments (the Blues excepted), 21st November 1793; WO 3/28/18, AGO 21st November 1793.

³⁴⁷ BP, Charles to Thomas, 26th December 1804. An ensigncy in the 43rd Foot was being sold for £400, the regulated price being 400 guineas.

³⁴⁸ *An Humble Address ... Subaltern Officers of the Army*, i.

³⁴⁹ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 15th March 1804.

³⁵⁰ JM-CUL, Moore to Colonel Wynyard, 25th March 1804.

³⁵¹ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 15th March 1804.

financial status to go with their social one,³⁵² a British officer was expected to possess such virtues prior to joining the Army.

The rule that an officer must be able to read and write is somewhat deceiving, as a higher standard of education was increasingly required. Glover states that it was the lack of this ability, that prevented men rising from the ranks, and not social class,³⁵³ but clearly from the above example, each was considered as offensive. As the Wars progressed, the need for a better educated body of officers was apparent, as systems of training became more academically based.³⁵⁴ This was in contrast to those of the mid-eighteenth century, of which Brewer commented, were 'neither so technical nor so complex that the absence of a formal education was a handicap.'³⁵⁵ It would also mean that an officer would need to spend more time with his regiment in order to perfect the more complex drills. In terms of formal training, British officers were behind members of other professions, and the officers of other European powers.³⁵⁶ The Royal Military College at High Wycombe was only opened in 1799,³⁵⁷ while Prussia in 1717, Russia in 1731, France in 1751 and Austria in 1752, had established equivalent military institutions.³⁵⁸ Even after the establishment of a military college, only a small proportion of officers passed through its classes, as promotion did not depend upon it. Since its main advertisement was a free first commission, the fact that most of these were non-purchase in any case, especially during the war, meant that few would delay their entry onto the promotion ladder for the year of the course.³⁵⁹ Nor would the military authorities encourage the universal taking up of places, when there was a general shortage of manpower.

Despite all the other criteria, the easiest way for an officer to gain promotion would always be through purchase. While the supply of first commissions was greater than the demand, the reverse would often (although by no means always) be the case for subsequent steps up the promotion ladder. Over-regulated prices were often paid, particularly in regiments of higher precedence than the 77th Foot and 17th Light Dragoons, that were

352 Jean-Paul Bertaud, 'Napoleon's Officers, in *Past and Present*, 112 (1986) 95-103.

353 M. Glover, 'Purchase, Patronage and Promotion', 212.

354 See 5.6 Education, 184-5.

355 Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 57.

356 Jacques van Doorn, *The Soldier and Social Change: Comparative Studies in the History and Sociology of the Military* (London, 1975) 19; Corfield, *Professions*, *passim*.

357 PRO WO 40/10/A, Barrack Office to Matthew Lewis, 11th December 1798.

358 William Doyle, *The Old European Order, 1660-1800*, (Oxford, 1978) 244.

359 Sir David Erskine, *A Biographical Memoir of Lieutenant Henry Miles of the 1st Royal Scots Regiment, and of Thomas Shore of the 14th Regiment of Foot* (London, 1837) *passim*.

guaranteed to be retained after a war. Such was the acceptance of this additional cost, that in 1810, *The Gentleman's Magazine* saw fit to comment on Captain Robert Craufurd, as he 'could have got £2500 for his company, ...[but] he would accept no more than his sovereign's regulated price, viz. £1500, because he felt bound in honour to adhere strictly to the rules of service.'³⁶⁰ Michael Glover has suggested that the over-regulated price was not as common as is often inferred, and suggests that when in the West Indies, even Captaincies proved difficult to sell.³⁶¹

For those officers who could not afford to purchase their way through to high rank, another route was to involve themselves in the constant manoeuvring within lesser corps. This could mean several regimental transfers, each one the subject of, at least good canvassing on the part of the candidate or his friends, or the services of a commissions broker prior to 1809, with regiments used as stepping stones to the coveted position in a fashionable line unit. A prime example of this was Henry Miles, a product of the Military College of Great Marlow, who began his service as an ensign in the East Middlesex Militia in 1807. In his short military career, which was ended by his death at Bergen op Zoom in 1814, with the aid of friends in high places, he was able to transfer his way to the command of the grenadier company of the 1st (or Royal Scots) Regiment of Foot, via the Sicilian Regiment. His memorial is a series of letters, written by himself, his father, and Sir David Erskine, his friend and commander of his company at Great Marlow, to various members of the military hierarchy, advocating Miles' qualities as a young officer, and as one who should be considered for advancement. Erskine writes in such matter of fact terms about his method of procuring Miles the patronage of the Duke of Kent, that it is clear such courting of patronage was common, if not expected.

I thought it would be of much use to Lieutenant Miles to obtain for him the patronage of his Royal Highness the Duke of Kent; and, as he was a fine looking fellow, I wrote to his Royal Highness, saying I much wished HE would permit him to exchange from the Sicilians into the First or Royal Scots regiment of Foot. To this request his Royal Highness was graciously pleased to send me a favourable answer.³⁶²

In this way the type of officer being promoted was also carefully monitored, and the officers' class perpetuated, even without recourse to purchase.

³⁶⁰ *Gentlemen's Magazine*, 80 (1810) 508.

³⁶¹ M. Glover, 'Reappraisal', 231.

³⁶² Erskine, *Biographical Memoir*, 53.

The purchase system itself was driven by the Regimental Agents, and as with the other areas of finance in which they were involved, there were suggestions of corrupt activities. In theory they were merely to act as intermediaries between the purchaser and the vendor, however they had become heavily involved in the whole system, acting as brokers, and allegedly inflating prices in order to make a profit. Greenwood and Cox again featured in these claims, allegedly selling one cornetcy for £1600, which was £1100 more than they had told the vendor they had received.³⁶³ It is not possible to assess just how prevalent this practice was, but had it been common, it would explain the conflicting evidence of over-regulated prices and of the inability to sell commissions. Certainly the enquiry into the activities of the Duke of York found that it was incompatible for agents to broker commissions, and it was forbidden by an Act of 1809.³⁶⁴ The investigation which followed, revealed a far wider use of brokerage than was first suggested, with one large firm advertising that they could gain an appointment to any government office, at a price.³⁶⁵ There is no record of the prices paid for commissions beyond the regulation price, for any point during the period under discussion. It is therefore possible only to speculate that the price of commissions fell, with the removal of the broker as the middle-man, and it does not appear that the demise of brokerage system had any effect upon the body of officers of the Army.

J. Hayes suggested a model of the social and professional makeup of officers during the eighteenth century, which is composed of four groups.³⁶⁶ The first is nobility and landed gentry, who made up about 25% of most regiments, and who with their interest and money, would find it easier to proceed through the commissioned ranks. The second group is the lesser gentry, who made up the greater proportion of regimental officers, consisting of lowlier branches of the better families, many of who had entered a trade, profession or farming. Since their birth was lower, their money and interest would also be lower, and so their prospects for promotion. The third group was a cosmopolitan one, consisting of foreigners, and the traditional 'Army families' such as the Churchills, Lascelles, Howards,

³⁶³ An Inhabitant of Craig's Court, *The Agent and His Natural Son; A New and True Story. With Important Strictures on the Commander in chief; Relative to his Duties, and his Confidants* (London, 1808) 46-56.

³⁶⁴ 49 Geo. III c.126, s.iv, v, vi, 'An Act for the further Prevention of the Sale of Brokerage and Offices'.

³⁶⁵ Anthony Bruce, *Purchase System*, 61.

³⁶⁶ J. Hayes, 'The Social and Professional Background of the Officers of the British Army, 1740-1763', Unpublished MA Thesis (University of London, 1956) 80-1.

and Campbells. The fourth group would consist of promoted rankers, for whom prospects would be low, with few progressing far up the promotion ladder.

The available evidence for the period under discussion suggests a very different picture, particularly at the beginning of the conflict. In 1793,³⁶⁷ the number of officers who would belong to Hayes' first group was minimal. Most regiments did not have a single person with any kind of title, and only in the Guards could anything like the figure of 25% be found. The First Guards were composed of by 27% titled officers. In the cavalry, surprisingly, the Household regiments had few titled officers, and the regiment with the greatest proportion of titled ranks was actually the 10th Light Dragoons, with 10%. By 1809,³⁶⁸ the numbers of titled officers had increased only slightly, with most regiments still without anyone in that category. The *Army List* of 1816,³⁶⁹ reveals a much changed officer cadre. Only three of the thirty one regiments of cavalry, and fifteen out of the 104 regiments of infantry, was without at least one member with a title. Certain regiments appear to have become 'fashionable' within titled circles, despite their lowly precedence in the line. In particular the light infantry and rifle units, where the populations of titled officers had at least doubled, and in the case of the 60th, increased from two to fifteen, or about 10%. This is particularly interesting as it is suggested that these were units in which purchase of commissions was least common, and that most promotion was upon merit.³⁷⁰ Those regiments that did not have an officer with a title, are notable as units who were not granted any battle honours. While it is clear that officers would often be granted titles for their military exploits,³⁷¹ a sufficient number of new names appear in the lists to suggest an increasing population of titled officers. It therefore appears that these men populated fashionable regiments, such as the Rifles, not just because their flamboyant uniforms appealed, but because what also made a regiment fashionable was its record of service, and in these units, even those with the ability to purchase, chose instead to remain in their regiment, and take promotion through precedence or merit. Despite this significant increase, the Army as a whole contained a mere 4% of officers with titles. Only in the Foot Guards was a figure of 25%, in line with Hayes' thesis, achieved,³⁷² and in those units

³⁶⁷ *Army List* (London, 1793) *passim*.

³⁶⁸ *Army List* (London, 1809) *passim*.

³⁶⁹ *Army List* (London, 1816) *passim*.

³⁷⁰ M. Glover, 'Reappraisal', 233.

³⁷¹ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 11.

³⁷² Clearly all members of gentry families were not titled, and therefore these figures are only useful to a point. However, the *Army List* does note those who were merely titled, 'Hon.', therefore, it is considered that this is sufficient information on which to base the study.

purchase was also most prevalent, with 55% of all commissions being disposed of in that way.³⁷³

The fourth category, that of officers promoted from the ranks, can also be statistically examined, using the returns from the *London Gazette*. It is a source of officers that is often over-emphasised,³⁷⁴ there being many anecdotal tales of enlisted men being commissioned.³⁷⁵ Houlding suggests that during the war of 1739-48, only about 200 men obtained commissions in this way, and that during the Seven Years War a similar number rose from the ranks.³⁷⁶ In 1789, there were only three occasions where men were promoted from the ranks from a total of 214 first commissions, which was 1.4% of the total.³⁷⁷ By 1800, this figure had risen to seventeen out of 472 first commissions, about 3.5%,³⁷⁸ and by the end of the war, a figure of 5.4% is found.³⁷⁹ They were clearly a significant, although tiny element of the body of officers, often being employed as quartermasters, adjutants or riding masters, roles which utilised their skill and years of experience. But for the casualties of war, such men would remain at a lowly rank for the rest of their service. This steady increase through the course of the conflict is a sign of both the accepted experience of NCOs, which would be useful to the Army as a whole, and also the attrition of officers from conventional sources. This expansion in commissions from the ranks continued beyond the Wars, and by the 1830s, between twenty and thirty officers were commissioned through this route each year.³⁸⁰

The other two categories of Hayes are more difficult to isolate. With both titled officers, and those who had risen from the ranks making up at most only 10% of all officers, it would appear that at least 90% of officers belonged to the second and third categories. To this list must be added a group of officers whose wealth was relatively new, obtained through businesses such as trade or manufacturing, and also those whose wealth was tied up in their commission, who relied upon their Army pay to exist. This group would feature more prominently as the war progressed, as traditional sources of officers

³⁷³ M. Glover, 'Reappraisal', 233.

³⁷⁴ M. Glover, 'Purchase, Patronage and Promotion', 212.

³⁷⁵ See for example, J Shipp, *Memoirs of the extraordinary career of John Shipp, Lieutenant in His Majesty's 87th Regiment* (London, 1890); R. Hargreaves, 'Promotion from the Ranks', *Army Quarterly*, Vol. 86 (1963) 200-10; Philip J. Haythornthwait, *The Armies of Wellington* (London, 1994) 28-9.

³⁷⁶ Houlding, *Fit For Service*, 104.

³⁷⁷ *London Gazette*, all issues 1789.

³⁷⁸ *London Gazette*, all issues 1800.

³⁷⁹ M. Glover, 'Purchase, Patronage and Promotion', 212.

³⁸⁰ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, 95.

dried up, and the Army became a method of achieving social acceptance for those obtaining a commission.³⁸¹

Through the eighteenth century there developed a large body of officers, for whom the Army was their sole career, and long service the norm.³⁸² The development of such a regime was similar in many respects to that of the civil administration of the same period,³⁸³ with a clear career structure, regular pay, and an expertise through training, particular to that profession.³⁸⁴ Many civil servants were from the business or mercantile classes and used their positions to advance in the social sphere. In the same manner, many of the same strata of society joined the militia and regular units during the period under discussion, gaining for themselves a position in the newly fashionable military society,³⁸⁵ and rebuilding the stagnated body of officers with new blood. However, the reliance on this class of men by military formations, such as the militia and the volunteers, was counter-productive. It generated criticism from within the traditional martial elites, and David Eastwood has suggested that as a consequence many ceased to accept commissions in these corps.³⁸⁶ As the elites were more prevalent in certain regiments after the Wars, as shown above, it appears that there was a move by this class of person, from the non-regular to the regular formations. Therefore the rise of the bourgeoisie in the militia contributed to the rise of the upper class in the regular service, which was the element of society the civilian authority most wished to attract, as shown in the maintenance of purchase.

Despite attracting a significant element of the social elite, as stated, the Army was also attracting men who relied upon their Army pay, and were therefore, by inference, not of that wealthy elite. This development is most obvious in the increased calls for improvements in the pay of subalterns.³⁸⁷ The author of one treatise on the subject

³⁸¹ Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 79.

³⁸² Houlding, *Fit For Service*, 109-10; Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 56.

³⁸³ See Chapter 2, Structure, 24-64.

³⁸⁴ Corfield, *Power and the Professions*, 25-6.

³⁸⁵ Brewer, *Sinews of Power*, 79.

³⁸⁶ David Eastwood, *Governing Rural England: Tradition and Transformation in Local Government, 1780-1840* (Oxford, 1994) 14.

³⁸⁷ PRO WO 3/7/76, William Fawcett AG to Lieutenant General Mackay, 29th May 1788; WO 3/10/53, Fawcett to Lord Barrington, 26th August 1791; WO 3/10/54, Fawcett to George Younge, 25th August 1791; *An Humble Address ... Subaltern Officers of the Army, passim*.

suggested that as many as two thirds of all officers in 1795 joined the Army and attempted to live off their pay.³⁸⁸ He asserted that,

Every profession, except the Military, gives to the man of genius and perseverance, the present means of supporting himself in his proper fashion, besides holding out prospects of competency and ease; but a Subaltern Officer, from the income of his rank, cannot procure the subsistence of a day.³⁸⁹

However, many still believed that officers should not depend upon their pay by the state, and should be capable of living from their own private means.³⁹⁰ This was fine when there were enough 'young gentlemen' wanting to serve,³⁹¹ but was naïve in the extreme, at a time when the Army was perceived to be finding it difficult enough to fill any of its vacancies, without placing even further restrictions on service. The first pay rise for officers since the reign of William III, came in 1797, which increased by a shilling per day, and all stoppages and deductions removed.³⁹² The system of payment was amended in 1799, to enable all officers to benefit from regular monthly wages.³⁹³ There were further calls to increase all officers' pay in 1806, to bring their wages into line with the other ranks', that had been increased under the terms of Windham's New Military Plan.³⁹⁴ Windham, who had championed improvements to the terms of military service, and particularly soldier's pay, initially rejected the suggestion, stating,

the consequence of the present system was that none could enter the Army as officers, who had not something else besides their pay. This was important in a constitutional view since it prevented them from becoming mercenaries and gave them an interest in the country they defended.³⁹⁵

However, the officers eventually received a minimal rise in pay of between *10d.* and *1s.11d.*³⁹⁶ The civilian administration had again exerted its authority over the Army by restricting the wages paid to the officers, in order to ensure that the desired social make-up

³⁸⁸ *An Humble Address ... Subaltern Officers of the Army*, 16-17; see also Brevet-Major David Roberts, *A Plan for Increasing the Incomes of the Army ...* (London, 1810) *passim*.

³⁸⁹ *An Humble Address ... Subaltern Officers of the Army*, 11.

³⁹⁰ *PD* (1806) VII, 1134-5, 14th July 1806.

³⁹¹ PRO WO 3/7/76, William Fawcett to Lieutenant General Mackay, 29th May 1788.

³⁹² PRO WO 4/169/45-8, War Office Circular, 27th June 1797.

³⁹³ PRO WO 26/37/465, Royal Warrant, 6th February 1799.

³⁹⁴ PRO WO 1/407/105, Anon, 5th December 1805; WO 1/407/105, Anon. 30th April 1806; Mentorius, *Mentoriana*, 26-8.

³⁹⁵ *PD* (1806) VII, 1134-5, 14th July 1806.

³⁹⁶ PRO WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815.

was maintained. It would be difficult for those without private means to survive in the commissioned ranks, in particular during the periods of high inflation discussed above. None of their wage was made inflation-proof by the addition of allowances in the manner of the pay of their men. They had to provide everything they needed themselves, irrespective of the levels of inflation, and the cost of messing could be excessive.³⁹⁷ This was only addressed in 1811, when an allowance of £25 per troop or company was allocated to each regiment for messing.³⁹⁸ However, despite all their hardships, and a number of unfilled vacancies, the body of officers was not in a state of crisis during the Wars. Men were found who were willing and able to make the Army their career.

As the social and the professional standing of officers became of even greater significance during the course of the conflict, it was reflected in the attitudes of officers towards promotion. Clarification was sought for the status, not only of officers of the regular Army in regard to the militia and fencibles,³⁹⁹ but also the comparative ranks of the civilian staff, such as members of the Commissariat, the Paymaster General's Department and the Medical Services.⁴⁰⁰ In a stagnant body of officers, promotion was as slow for all officers, but in the vastly expanded war-time Army, promotion could pass by an officer who could not purchase promotion, or whose regiment did not suffer casualties, and so permit promotion upon seniority. In these cases there was a heavy reliance on promotion by brevet. This involved the raising en-block of a number of officers of the same rank, to the next above it. It was in all circumstances a mass promotion, and therefore it was impossible to find posts for all those given the new rank. As a consequence, many remained in the same regiment, at the same rate of pay, and performing the same duties, with only the authority of the new rank as their gain.⁴⁰¹ However, it did give them a prior claim to any vacancy in the higher rank. The brevet system was used for promotions from captain to major, and above, and was the sole method of promotion to all ranks above colonel. The knowledge of a forthcoming brevet often created a rush to gain the next step of promotion, in order for officers to maintain their seniority above the mass of brevets. Omission from the brevet would mean that an officer had been overstepped by the whole of

³⁹⁷ BP, Charles to Thomas, 24th May 1805.

³⁹⁸ PRO WO 4/211/330, WO Circular, 19th March 1811; WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815.

³⁹⁹ 34 Geo. III c.16, s.3.

⁴⁰⁰ PRO WO 4/207/321, James Pultney to the Commissioners of Transports, 21st April 1809.

⁴⁰¹ PRO WO 1/952/179-, 'Memorandum respecting the Increases of Pay to the Army since the Year 1784' War Office, 11th February 1815. Under the New Military Plan, officers began to receive an increase in pay for brevet rank.

his rank, and therefore legal action could be taken in an attempt to restore his precedence.⁴⁰² The system was staunchly defended, as a means to produce general officers by fifty years of age, which was considered the best at which they could fulfil their duties. Without the use of the brevet, it was suggested that, ‘twenty years hence [it] will leave the Army without general officers except those in their dotage’.⁴⁰³ With the system in place promotion to Lieutenant Colonel could be expected to take sixteen years, and to Colonel another twelve. If the officer spent seven years as a Colonel, he would then attain General Officer Rank by the time he was fifty one, and still active. Without the brevet, the officer would be sixty one by the time he reached the same point of the rank structure, and could not expect to be Lieutenant General before he was seventy six.⁴⁰⁴ An officer would therefore hold two distinct ranks, his regimental and Army. In this way the promotion bottle-neck of the Ordnance was avoided. Within the Ordnance promotion was purely by means of seniority, and as a result was very slow. Since there was no retirement age for officers, old men clung to their commissions, quite often to their deaths. Despite all commissioned ranks possessing a real knowledge of their profession, having graduated from the Royal Academy at Woolwich, it was necessary to give junior officers high command, above their substantially older superiors, who were unfit for foreign service.⁴⁰⁵ Alexander Dickson, who had been a valued commander as a Lieutenant in the Peninsula, was still only a Lieutenant-Colonel when he commanded the whole British artillery at Waterloo.⁴⁰⁶

A significant trend among military officers was a greater emphasis that was placed on the service given to the nation. Colley points to the public interest in dead military heroes, and specifically their deaths, as evidence of the movement towards this loyalty and patriotism.⁴⁰⁷ It can be observed throughout the body of officers. John Moore’s patriotic last words, ‘I hope the people of England will be satisfied. I hope my country will do me justice’, were well publicised at the time.⁴⁰⁸ However, this cult of heroism had effects at the

⁴⁰² *Correspondence Between the Honourable Colonel Cochrane Johnstone, and the Departments of the Commander in Chief, and the Judge Advocate general, during the period, from September, 1803, to August, 1804* (London, 1805) 7-8.

⁴⁰³ PRO WO 3/595/365-8, Torrens to Lieut. Col. Taylor, 20th January 1810.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁵ R. Glover, *Peninsula Preparation*, 143.

⁴⁰⁶ J.H. Leslie (ed.), *The Dickson Manuscripts: Being diaries, letters, maps, account books, with various other papers of the late Major-General Sir Alexander Dickson, G.C.B., K.C.H., K.T.S., Royal Artillery* (Woolwich, 1908) I, 32, and IV, 51.

⁴⁰⁷ Colley, *Britons*, 180.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.* 182.

lowest officer ranks, with an expectation of patriotism and selfless courage with which subalterns met their fate. The *Aberdeen Journal* reported the death in action of Captain J.U.M. Leith of the 68th Regiment, in 1814. The terms in which the indictment is related bear witness to the preoccupation with heroism.

he received the fatal shot ... allowing him only time to say to Lieutenant Stapleton, who was following him: '*Lead on Stapleton, I am no more,*' and who in emulating his noble example, is but too likely to share his fate, having received a wound immediately after.⁴⁰⁹

This public interest in military heroes can also be observed in monuments and art,⁴¹⁰ and was responsible for helping to raise the profile of Army officers, seeing them feature as men of high social standing in popular fiction.⁴¹¹

The disparate factors affecting the body of officers were brought together in the form of greater control of the whole military. In Chapter 1, it was observed that through the greater use of inspection and return, the individual character of units were made uniform, under the Duke of York's 'System'. Officers particularly were affected by this process, for the first time being placed under strict a regime of discipline, which insisted they wear the regulation uniform,⁴¹² perform the regulation drills,⁴¹³ and remain with their regiment unless granted permission to take leave. In addition they were subject to the confidential reporting system, which ensured that Horse Guards were aware of the qualities and failings of all officers in the whole Army, on which information they could act to improve the service.⁴¹⁴ While it appears that every attempt was made to accommodate even those officers not making the grade, through this facility, more than any other, those in authority could control the body of officers of the Army to a greater extent than ever before.

⁴⁰⁹ *Aberdeen Journal*, 30th March 1814, 1. I would like to thank Steven Shannon of the Durham Light Infantry Museum, for supplying me with this reference.

⁴¹⁰ WO 6/51/298-301, Bathurst to Marquis Wellington, 17th July 1813; WO 6/51/301-3

'Regulations by which the motions for erecting monuments to officers who may fall in actions with the enemy are limited'; Alison Willow Yarrington, 'The Commemoration of the hero, 1800-1864: monuments to British Victories of the Napoleonic Wars,' 2 vols. Unpublished PhD Thesis, (University of Cambridge, 1980) *passim.*; Linda Colley, 'Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain 1750-1830', in *Past and Present*, 113 (1986) 105-6; Colley, *Britons*, 178-182.

⁴¹¹ In both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*, Jane Austin portrays army Colonels as highly eligible men. The difference between the regular and militia is also averted to, with Wickham, a dubious character from the militia, being bought into the regulars to calm him down.

⁴¹² PRO WO 26/36/409-22, 'Report of the Board of General Officers Relative to the Clothing, Appointments, &c. &c. of the Cavalry', 18th May 1796.

⁴¹³ See 5.2 Drill, 164-8.

⁴¹⁴ See 2.4 The Adjutant General and Quartermaster General 34-9.

The commissioned ranks changed drastically during the Wars. From a small and stagnant group of individual career soldiers in 1793, they became a much larger uniform body of professionals, within a career that was constantly moving, and in a force that was becoming increasingly a more accepted part of society. The authority over these men increased considerably as the Wars progressed, with the Commander in Chief's Office imposing Army-wide regulations. However, the ultimate authority over the commissioned ranks always remained the civilian government, who were able to manipulate its constituency by raising new regiments, or augmenting existing units, thus perpetuating the purchase system. This was also done by controlling officers' pay, and so restricting access to the commissioned ranks to those of the prescribed social status, thus making professional standing a key element in attracting officers, rather than remuneration⁴¹⁵. By the end of the Wars with France, the commissioned ranks of the British Army were more obviously an officer corps than ever before,⁴¹⁶ but one under the direct control of the military hierarchy, who were in turn subordinate to the civilian authority of government.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The Wars with France were the pinnacle of the eighteenth century British military expression. Through various means the military forces raised became the largest ever fielded, and would be the largest for almost 100 years. This expansion was driven by successive governments, who kept control of the forces through the manipulation of the recruiting of all ranks, together with the hold on their finances, as established in Chapter 3. While traditional recruiting methods changed little, they were regulated for the first time, and innovative schemes were introduced, designed to recruit the type, as well as the number of men required. Although stopping short of direct conscription, which would not have been acceptable to society as a whole, government-led schemes resulted in the enlisting of substantial numbers of men. These particularly included considerable drafts from the militia, which were achieved despite local opposition to such central authority.

⁴¹⁵ M. Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: a sociological analysis* (Berkeley, California, 1977) as quoted in Corfield, *Professions*, 24-6, 36, 193.

⁴¹⁶ This is a view supported by Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and politics of Civil Military Relations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1957) 19-20.

The establishing of the Army as a career worth entering was a significant achievement of the war-time governments. The welfare of the troops became an issue, initiated by Windham's New Military Plan, and continued by subsequent ministers and the Commander in Chief. The conditions of service of all ranks were improved. Most significantly the wages of the men were increased, and their expenditure reduced. Through this the Army became one of the few professions in which the standard of living improved during the years of rampant inflation. A clear career structure was established, which recognised the increasing role of the non-commissioned ranks, and encouraged them to remain in the Army through increased wages and status.

The commissioned ranks were also affected substantially. The constituency from which they were drawn was broadened, although the tempering effects of low wages were always present. The distinct elements of the purchase system, which ensured the type of officer recruited by the cost of the commission, was sustained throughout, being supported even by the Whigs as a means of maintaining the constitutional safeguards against the power of the crown.

As the Army was incorporated into the state structure, and subordinated to civilian authority, as established in Part I, the necessary numerical expansion to prosecute the Wars, would no longer be seen as so threatening. A substantially increased Army was maintained at the end of the Wars, with little objection, and with an increased social standing and universal acceptance, due to the experience of the years of conflict.

CHAPTER 5 TRAINING

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 4, the methods by which men were recruited into the Army were examined. It was shown that as the Wars progressed, a greater emphasis was placed upon the terms of service of the soldiers, as efforts were made to gain enough recruits to compete against the might of France. As the Army expanded, control of the recruiting services was moved from an independent, centrally controlled department to the office of the Adjutant General, streamlining the system, and giving the management of the act of recruiting back directly to the Army hierarchy at Horse Guards. Under the direction of the Commander in Chief's office, and in particular the Duke of York, the officer corps emerged as a broader and more professional body, although its composition was always subject to the manipulation of government. This chapter will examine the training of the forces, and will question if the government control noted in the other chapters, is reflected in this area of the manpower of the Army, or whether the Commander in Chief maintained control of this vital part of Army organisation.

5.2 DRILL

The mode of warfare during the eighteenth century appears to the modern observer a cumbersome affair. In battle it involved the manoeuvring of long, rigid, opposing lines, in excess of 600 in frontage, apparently in a chess game which could include tens of thousands of men, and which would culminate in the line delivering a volley from as many of its muskets as could be brought to bear. Even for such numbers to travel short distances, an elaborate system of movement was required, and in all cases practised to the point of instinct. Without such systems of drill, an Army would be useless, a disorderly mass without the ability to function at all, as Glover suggests, 'the art of drill was the art of war.'¹

¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 115.

Throughout the eighteenth century various systems of drill and manoeuvre prevailed, either published under the auspices of government,² or privately developed and printed by individual officers.³ Such systems would prove more or less efficient for those individual units performing them, but would be chaotic when regiments were drawn together in manoeuvres, or, more importantly, battle. By the period under discussion, this deficiency was caused as much by the martial policy and recent history of Britain, as by the whim of the colonels. First, the dispersal of units on policing or garrison duties meant that it was only rarely that units were able to meet and train together.⁴ Secondly, the American war had been one which served to de-train units in the mode of European warfare, rather than giving them experience, through the necessity to perform irregular or light infantry tactics.⁵ These had in turn become popular among many in the Army due to their flamboyant nature,⁶ which had led to a backlash from the traditionalists among the military hierarchy.⁷

Even before the outbreak of war in 1793, there had been an awareness among those in the military, of the need for a uniform system for use throughout the Army. Discussions took place at the highest level, between the King, the Duke of York, the Marquis of Buckingham, Lieutenant-General the Earl Ross, General Lord Heathfield, Sir William Fawcett, and eventually Sir David Dundas, as early as 1787, concerning the perceived need for a new universal drill system⁸. Several systems were assessed, and the one eventually chosen was based upon Dundas' *Principles of Military Movement*. Although it was later criticised for its emphasis upon Prussian-like rigidity,⁹ it was the first universal system to be adopted by the British Army, and its practice imposed upon the regiments.¹⁰ It is not

² J.F.C Fuller, *British Light Infantry in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1925) 191, states that only three systems were in use during the eighteenth century. Houlding, *Fit for Service*, lists twelve during the same period.

³ See for example, *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the use of the Militia of the County of Norfolk* (London, 1759); David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly applied to Infantry*, (1788).

⁴ David Dundas, *Principles*, 15.

⁵ *Ibid.* 13.

⁶ *Ibid.* 14.

⁷ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 240; The same criticism was levelled at those returning from the Prussian Army. Parret, *Yorck*, 68.

⁸ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 244. Outlines the events leading up to the adoption of the new system..

⁹ Criticism of Dundas has come from several later observers: H. Bunbury, *Narrative of some Passages in the Great war with France from 1799-1810* (London, 1854) 46; Fuller, *British Light Infantry*, 189-195; Carola Oman, *Sir John Moore*, (London, 1953) 74. More recent authors have been kinder in their treatment of his work: R. Glover, *Preparation*, 118-121; Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 238-241, 242-248.

¹⁰ PRO WO 3/11/19, Fawcett to All Colonels Commanding Regiments, 27th December 1792; 21, Fawcett to All Colonels Commanding Regiments, 28th December 1792.

surprising that the new system was based upon Prussian principles, since both Dundas and the Duke of York had first-hand experience of Prussian military systems.¹¹ The manual was published as *Rules and Regulations for the Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements, of His Majesty's Forces*, in 1792. It had been practised by the Irish establishment since 1789,¹² with favourable results,¹³ and this obviously aided its imposition upon the Army as a whole. The complete manual is a substantial work, and in an effort to address this, and make it more accessible to more than scholars of drills and manoeuvre, several authors abridged it into more manageable pieces.¹⁴ The most notable was the edition intended for NCOs,¹⁵ while most famous of these was the pocket-sized *XVIII Manoeuvres*,¹⁶ which reduced everything into its eighteen simplest evolutions, for use by junior officers.

There does not appear to have been any direct opposition at the time of introducing the regulations, the need for such a system being universally accepted. However, as late as 1795 the Adjutant General was still reminding Colonels of the necessity of adhering to the new Rules and Regulations,

for the essential purpose of promoting uniformity in the Discipline of the Troops, and in order that equal progress may be made, as much as possible, amongst them, towards the general Establishment of one, and the same system, throughout the whole.¹⁷

This pre-empted the inspection reports of the same year, which still refer to the use of old systems by certain regiments.¹⁸ This is not necessarily a sign of opposition to the Dundas system itself, perhaps having more to do with the lack of inspection and control over an

¹¹ Alfred H. Burne, *The Noble Duke of York: The Military Life of Frederick Duke of York and Albany* (London, 1949) 19; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 118.

¹² *Rules and Regulations for the Field Exercise and Movement of the Army in Ireland* (Dublin, 1789).

¹³ PRO WO/35/16/62-5 Marquis of Buckingham to Earl of Ross, 14th October 1788.

¹⁴ For example Robert Smirke, *Review of a Battalion of Infantry, including the Eighteen Manoeuvres* (1799); Sergeant Thomas Langley, *The Eighteen Manoeuvres for His Majesty's Infantry* (London, 1794); Major James Cunningham, *The Tactic of the British Army Reduced to Detail; with reflections on the Service and principles of war* (London, 1812); James Palmer, *Details of the Line Movements prescribed in Part of the Fourth of His Majesty's Regulations for the British Army, exemplified in 85 manoeuvres with diagrams* (London, 1812).

¹⁵ *Rules and Regulations for the Manual and Platoon Exercises, Formations, Field Exercise, and Movements, of His Majesty's Forces. For the use of the Non-Commissioned Officers of the British Army* (London, 1807).

¹⁶ Anon. *General Dundas' XVIII Manoeuvres* (1798). Houlding attributes this work to Captain George Dominicus of the 2nd Royal East-Indian Volunteers.

¹⁷ PRO WO 3/28/89-91, William Fawcett to General Officers, 16th May 1795.

¹⁸ PRO WO 3/14/82-3, William Fawcett to Major General Ainslie, 24th July 1795.

Army in full-scale expansion. Generally the response had been good, with the new work fulfilling its 'essential purpose' of 'promoting 'Uniformity in the Discipline of the Troops.'¹⁹

The drill of the cavalry was an entirely different matter. Houlding states that from 1788, those in authority had expended all their energies developing a system for the infantry,²⁰ and so the cavalry was left to its own devices. Glover writes that in 1790 'the drill of the cavalry was in a hopeless state of chaos.'²¹ When war broke out, the observed deficiencies in the cavalry were such that a cobbled together set of regulations was issued,²² consisting of a set of manoeuvres developed by Dundas when serving in Silesia,²³ and in even greater Prussian rigidity. It included a set of standing orders for the 2nd Dragoons, recently compiled by Lord Pembroke.²⁴ This was not unusual, a stop-gap system having been introduced for the infantry in 1786-7.²⁵ What is most surprising is that a new system was still contemplated in the face of full-scale war. The matter was only fully addressed during the winter of 1795-96, when Dundas, under General William Pitt, perfected a system of cavalry drill and manoeuvres with several regiments, of both dragoons and light dragoons at Weymouth.²⁶ These were published as *Instructions and Regulations for the Formations and Movements of the Cavalry*.²⁷ With its adaptations by Le Marchant in 1796,²⁸ and 1798²⁹ the cavalry had obtained a uniform manual on a par with that of the infantry.

Clearly the introduction of uniform systems of drill and manoeuvre would benefit the military effectiveness of the Army, at a time of its great expansion. It would enable units to operate together, and officers (and in theory men)³⁰ to transfer between regiments.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 249.

²¹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 135

²² *By His Majesty's Command. Rules and Regulations for the Cavalry* (London, 1795).

²³ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 135.

²⁴ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 249.

²⁵ *Ibid.* 231.

²⁶ PRO WO 3/15/114, William Fawcett to MG D. Dundas, 21st April 1796; WO 3/15/129-30, Circular Letter to Commanding Officers of 1st 2nd 3rd dragoons, 11th, 15th 16th Light Dragoons, 8th May 1796; WO 3/15/146, W. Fawcett to Lt. Col. Carnegie, 11th LG, 20th May 1796.

²⁷ *Instructions and Regulations for the Formations and Movements of the Cavalry* (London, 1796).

²⁸ *The Rules and Regulations for the Attainment and Practice of the Sword Exercise* (London, 1796).

²⁹ *An Elucidation of the Several Parts of His Majesty's Regulations for the Formations and Movements of Cavalry* (London, 1798).

³⁰ Without a system of general service such transfers would prove impossible.

The enforcing of the system with both military and political will would also serve to establish a degree of central control, as yet unknown, and one which was to be seen through all areas of the Army during the war years. The achievement of Dundas cannot be over-estimated. His system was rigid enough to enable regiments to manoeuvre together, but, as will be shown, of sufficient flexibility to be adapted to suit prevailing circumstances. Testimony to this would be that the systems were to be the basis of those for over fifty years. Of particular note, is that for the first time manuals of drill and manoeuvre were published by authority for the use, not only by officers, but also by non-commissioned ranks. This may suggest an increased level of literacy, or perhaps an acceptance that the functioning of the enlarging Army, was going to depend heavily upon the effectiveness of the non-commissioned ranks, as well as those with commissions.

5.3 EXPERIENCE

The *1792 Infantry Regulations* and the *1796 Cavalry Regulations*, once established, were further developed by those performing them, through the experience they gained during the conflict. Active service was the first method by which the Army developed its newly acquired systems, although many theatres of campaign would not permit their use in printed form. India and Egypt had expanses of land which enabled an opponent to outflank the British forces, formed three deep, and deficient in cavalry. The West Indies, (and southern Britain for that matter), had few areas on which a battalion could form line, or over which a battalion could move in good order. It has already been noted that the Dundas systems were criticised for their rigidity, however this section will show that one of their strengths was that they were flexible enough to permit adaption to suit prevailing circumstances.

On more open ground, by forming the infantry two deep, the commanders extended their lines, without a reduction in fire power. In this way British regiments gained an effective overlap on French forces, in particular when the latter were in column. This enabled fire to be directed, often against three sides, and can be seen to have worked to great effect in numerous engagements.³¹ This reveals the flexibility of the Dundas system,

³¹ Chandler, *On the Napoleonic Wars*, 130-40.

which enabled so intrinsic a change without adversely affecting its operation. However, this deviation was only sanctioned officially where numbers were low,³² although it was uncommon for infantry to be able to use their third ranks effectively when firing. Unless continually 'locked up', the length of the rear rank's muskets did not clear the faces of the front rank men.³³ Such a departure from the norm had been performed in the American War of Independence, and had therefore been termed the 'colonial system.'³⁴ It was the cause of critical comment by many inspecting generals, who resented the vociferous protestations of those who had served in America.³⁵ Despite its perceived advantages by those in the forefront of the war, the forming of the line two deep was rejected by those producing drill systems until 1870.³⁶ Despite new methods of firing in three ranks being developed and practised, they met with little success, especially on active service, when numbers were often low, and the men were laden with their full equipment.³⁷

Contemporary illustrations only show examples of British regiments formed two deep on active service.³⁸

The problem of enclosed or rough terrain was to prove more difficult to solve within the available systems. It was addressed in the American War of Independence by the development of light infantry tactics. While Dundas included a section concerning light troops,³⁹ it was very limited, covering only nine pages, and concerning only the operation of the light company of a regiment without reference to the massing of light troops preferred by those commanding them.⁴⁰ When the light infantry of revolutionary France shocked Europe, the need for such an arm became pressing, and the development of it within the existing structure was attempted.⁴¹ As established previously, light infantry and Grenadier companies were brought together for training, but this could only be of limited effect due to the dispersed nature of the Army. The development of light infantry will be discussed in the following section.

³² PRO WO 3/27/109, General Orders, 23rd April 1792.

³³ *Rules and Regulations* (1807) 114, 9th article.

³⁴ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 237.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 240.

³⁶ *Field Exercise and Evolutions of Infantry* (London, 1870) 41.

³⁷ JM-CUL, Moore to David Dundas, 4th April 1804.

³⁸ See for example, NAM 961.1167, Painting by Major St. Clair, Battle of Fuentes d'Onoro, 5th May 1811.

³⁹ *Rules an Regulations* (1792) 273-82.

⁴⁰ GRE-A, 200, 'Return of the Strength of the Several Corps Composing the Command of General Sir Charles Grey K.B. Embarked at Barbados on the Expedition against Martinique, 1st February 1794'.

⁴¹ See Section 5.4, Light Infantry, 171.

Active service would also highlight the need for a physically fit Army, as a soldier would be expected to march everywhere with all he required upon his back, in all conditions. This will be considered further in 7.4 Marching Regiments.

A further development in the training systems came with the recruitment of thousands of civilians into the military, in the form of Militia, Volunteers and Yeomanry. Many formal manuals for such formations were written in simpler terms,⁴² reflecting the nature of their military experience, and their expected roles. In addition their training would often be disjointed, with the possibility of forgetting it between training days, and so a simplified system would prove more memorable. To this end several of the abridged versions of both the 1792 and 1796 regulations were written by officers serving with non-regular units.⁴³ Thomas Langley the author of *The Eighteen Manoeuvres for His Majesty's Infantry* was a sergeant in the militia. Another consequence of the war upon drill, would be in the calibre of recruit. The continued militia drafts introduced more and better educated men into the Army.⁴⁴ This would clearly have had an effect, but whether this was to the good or ill of the service is not discernible from the evidence available. Whether better educated men were more likely to question a system that demanded unquestioning obedience, is not clear. Frederick the Great had certainly believed this to be the case, stating, 'If my soldiers began to think, not one would remain in the ranks.'⁴⁵ It is not clear if the 1807 manual, printed for use by NCOs was issued as a response to increased literacy within the armed forces, although there would be little point in its production if there was not an audience.⁴⁶ In addition, greater emphasis continued to be placed on attracting high calibre NCOs, one criteria of which was always seen to be literacy.

The length of the Wars would result in many more men, of all ranks, gaining experience in the systems of training. To these men the systems would be second nature, both on the parade square, and in the field. Twenty-three years of repetition of any system would surely foster efficiency. This would create an indigenous training cadre which would ease the task of instruction for the unit officers. They would also have learned the skills needed to survive in hostile environments, which only experience could give, and this

⁴² See for example *Instructions for the Manual and Platoon Exercise for the Volunteers of this Country* (London, c.1803-1808).

⁴³ Langley, *Eighteen Manoeuvres*.

⁴⁴ Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 110-11.

⁴⁵ As quoted in Houlding, *Fit For Service*, v.

⁴⁶ See Section 5.6, Education, 184-6.

expertise would be passed on to the newer soldiers. These men would possess the wisdom that there was a reason for training, beyond the drill square in Britain - that of survival. Many of these lessons would become incorporated into the standing orders of units, ultimately becoming the practice for the Army as a whole.⁴⁷ Experienced enlisted men were also of use in more formal training methods. After the Peninsular War, of the 200 infantry formations, all quartermasters, and ninety adjutants were from the ranks.⁴⁸

The ability of the Army to adapt its methods and focus of training is significant in that it reveals a flexibility not apparent on an initial view of Dundas' systems, and certainly not expected from a system criticised for being too Prussian. It also reveals that there was an element of flexibility in all areas of the Army, but that this was achieved by means of a centralised system, which accepted such flexibility, and adapted to the prevailing circumstances. This would be tested in the extreme with the development of light infantry.

5.4 LIGHT INFANTRY

At the outbreak of the war in 1793, the British Army had already re-established its light infantry arm. This was achieved by the reintroduction of the tenth, or light company of every infantry regiment, after the Nootka crisis in 1790.⁴⁹ Their training was adequate, bearing in mind that the perception of the needs of light troops was merely to screen the front of a battalion, and would only be seen as deficient after the French used large formations of light infantry to great effect.

To what system the light companies of each regiment were trained, prior to 1792 is unclear. It is possible that enough of the senior officers had experience of Lord Howe's system as practised in America,⁵⁰ and that may have been used. There appears to be only one work on the subject published in English at that time, Lieutenant Colonel A. Emerich's *The Partisan in War*,⁵¹ and continental sources are also limited.⁵² Even after the

⁴⁷ See for example, Le Marchant, *Le Marchant*, 44-6. The 'Standing Orders for the 2nd Dragoons', were to become, *Rules and Regulations ... Sword Exercise* (1797).

⁴⁸ Hargreaves, 'Promotion From the Ranks', 200.

⁴⁹ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 359.

⁵⁰ NAM 6807-157-6, 'Discipline Established by Major General Howe for Light Infantry in Battalion, 1774'.

⁵¹ Lieutenant Colonel A. Emerich, *The Partisan in War: Or The Use of a Corps of Light Troops to an Army* (London, 1789).

introduction of the *1792 Regulations*, few works appeared on the subject, although clearly such training was given to the light companies, as during the first campaign in the West Indies, Grey and Jervis brigaded all such troops together, and used them as three separate 'light' battalions.⁵³ Since no official system was in existence, one must have been worked out on the ground, or have been in place prior to the campaign, that has not survived.⁵⁴ Regardless of which system was used, there was clearly a need for greater numbers of light troops, and this had not been addressed by those developing Army composition or training.

The training of light infantry during the period under discussion was a specialist skill. Contemporaries did not have the experience of the later light brigade (subsequently division), nor of modern scholars used to seeing soldiers operating independently. The first obstacle that needed to be overcome was that of the perception of the establishment, who had to be convinced of the efficacy of such a regime, and prised away from their Prussian rigidity. To them the idea of light infantry was of the irregular, epitomised by the Army that had returned defeated from America, and in direct contrast to the strict linear European formations. Such ideas were soon to be overturned by the experience of the French light infantry against the major continental armies. The need was clearly appreciated for greater numbers of British light troops,⁵⁵ but as shown in Chapter 4, the size of the Army was small, and its role was such that it was either dispersed on policing duties, or abroad on campaign. As Glover points out, the opportunity by which light infantry experiments and training could take place came from an unusual source - the French.⁵⁶ Their Army of England ensured that a large proportion of the British military would remain at home for several years, during which time their policing duties would be taken over by the militia, volunteers and Yeomanry,⁵⁷ and time would be available to develop all aspects of training,⁵⁸ and in particular light infantry tactics, 'it being universally acknowledged, that

⁵² Colonel von Ewald, *Treatise on the Duties of Light Troops* (London, 1803) German edition 1790.

⁵³ GRE-A, 200, 'Return of Strength of the Several Corps Composing the Army Commanded by General Sir Charles Grey, Embarked at Barbados on the Expedition against Martinique, 1st February 1794.' The light Infantry battalions consisted of the light companies of, 1. 6th, 8th, 9th, 12th, 17th, 22nd, 23rd, 35th, and 70th regiments; 2. 15th, 31st, 33rd, 34th, 38th, 40th, and 41st regiments; 3. 21st, 39th, 43rd, 56th, 58th, 60th, 64th, and 65th regiments.

⁵⁴ The light troops were involved in the heavy fighting during the capture of Martinique, suggesting that they were operating a battalions without difficulty.

⁵⁵ Ross, *Cornwallis Correspondence*, II, 331, Cornwallis to Arthur Wellesley, 23rd February 1798, 'The system of David Dundas and the total want of light infantry sit heavy on my mind.'

⁵⁶ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 127.

⁵⁷ PRO WO 1/632/157-180, York to Windham, 18th March 1806.

⁵⁸ R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, 47; Peter Lloyd, *The French are Coming! The Invasion Scare of 1803-5* (Tunbridge Wells, 1991) *passim*.

the formation of a Corps of Light Troops, is become a measure indispensably necessary for the welfare of the British Service'.⁵⁹

S.C. Smith has suggested that this would have also been an excellent opportunity to train the amateur forces in the art of light infantry warfare.⁶⁰ He criticises Glover for suggesting that light troops would need a firm reserve on which to fall back, in the event of attack by cavalry.⁶¹ He states, 'It is difficult to believe that the local [militia] could not have dispensed with the pedantry of the eighteen manoeuvres and have substituted a simplified manual instead' and that the 'time needed to train a given number of recruits would have been lessened.' He sums up by suggesting that,

the real objection was less tangible, since it pertained to the oligarchical perception of the lower orders' social role. Line infantry drill mirrored the class hierarchy of civil society, whereas the fluidity and individuality of Light Infantry training necessarily curbed the influence of officers.⁶²

The first point to make in criticism of this is that as stated above, the training of light infantry was a complex business, not something in which to enter lightly in the recruiting of masses of untrained men. Secondly, the essence of all light infantry tactics of the period was the reserve of formed troops, usually at least equal in number to those skirmishing. Thirdly, to suggest that the light infantry manual was simplified, shows a lack of understanding of the complexity of light infantry training. The manual eventually adopted by the Army states that a soldier must perfect the line infantry drills before progressing to the light infantry movements.⁶³ Fourthly, if such training was in addition to line drills, then the idea of it taking less time is flawed. In addition, it is notable that the French light infantry, that revealed the need for such troops, were in fact veteran soldiers, and not merely a lightly trained rabble.⁶⁴ Finally, the idea that the development of light infantry somehow freed men from the yoke of a hierarchical class structure is again mistaken. The number of officers was increased in light infantry corps, and they remained of a different

⁵⁹ PRO WO 1/619/89, Harry Calvert to Lieutenant Colonel Calvert, 23rd March 1798; see also WO 3/19/4, Deputy Adjutant General to General sir Charles Grey, 6th October 1798; 82, Adjutant General to General William Howe, 27th November 1798; 83, Adjutant General to Lieutenant Colonel Tilson, 27th November 1798.

⁶⁰ Smith 'Loyalty and Opposition', 348.

⁶¹ R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, 234-5, 86-7.

⁶² Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition,' 348-50

⁶³ *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry; and Instructions for their Conduct in the Field* (London, 1798).

⁶⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 123

class. There is no evidence to suggest any greater proportion of men rising to commissioned status from the ranks of light corps. Indeed, in Chapter 4 it was shown that it was this type of unit that attracted a greater proportion of the nobility to its commissioned ranks. The troops were taught to think for themselves, but only within a further rigid structure, controlled by bugle rather than voice in the field, but nevertheless, still controlled. While the argument of this section is that light infantry gave a greater degree of flexibility in training, the contention is that such flexibility was in the hands of the officers, and not the men. The class structure of light regiments was progressive, but no more so than the more forward thinking line regiments.⁶⁵

The process by which the British established a light infantry training camp at Shorncliffe is one that has been covered by both Fuller⁶⁶, and more recently Gates.⁶⁷ Both see the work as being the responsibility of several key men.⁶⁸ While David Gates sees the hand of Sir John Moore in the work, Glover, of course, would have us believe that the whole project was directed by the Duke of York.⁶⁹ Clearly in his role as commander in chief, York would have been pivotal in sanctioning the establishment of the light infantry training. From 1797, he can be observed playing a major role in introducing the principles of light infantry to the Army as a whole, sending out copies of Dundas' light infantry exercise to commanding generals, encouraging them to pay special attention to the training of their light troops, and promising more of the same.⁷⁰ However, it had taken five years of war for him to realise this, during which time, according to Gates, Britain had grown to rely upon foreign corps to fulfil the role of light infantry.⁷¹ While it is clear that York's influence was essential to the formation of the Shorncliffe experiment, from only recently available evidence, it is clear that Moore was even more responsible than has previously been suggested, being involved from an early stage in the minutiae of detail required for

⁶⁵ See for example, *Standing Orders of the 7th (Royal) Fusiliers* (1812) Officers would be expected to serve in the line till they learned their trade, as observed within the light infantry; Buckley, *Captain Thomas Henry Browne, passim*.

⁶⁶ Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training*, 36-41.

⁶⁷ David Gates, *The British Light Infantry Arm c.1790-1815; its creation, training and operational role* (London, 1987) 89, 106.

⁶⁸ Sir John Moore, Robert Craufurd, Neil Campbell, Kenneth Mackenzie, William Stewart, Coote Manningham, and Baron Francis de Rottenburg.

⁶⁹ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 127, 'No clearer evidence of the soundness of York's judgement of men could be asked than his selection of Moore for this task.'

⁷⁰ PRO WO/3/31, Commander in Chief to all Officers Commanding Districts at Home and Stations Abroad, and also Regimental Agents, 17th March 1797.

⁷¹ Gates, *British Light Infantry Arm*, 70.

the formation of the regiments that would form the light brigade.⁷² However, even he had to rely upon the assistance of foreigners such as General Jarry during the early stages of development,⁷³ and this continued during the second phase of light infantry development in 1808-9, when Baron de Rottenburg was responsible for training.⁷⁴

When a system for the whole British Army was adopted in 1798, it had merely a translation of a German work on the subject by de Rottenburg.⁷⁵ Despite the developments at Shorncliffe, the subsequent official publications on the subject were reprints of the original work,⁷⁶ and much, including the bugle calls, were taken and used without alteration.⁷⁷ There were of course privately published treatises throughout the period by officers trained at Shorncliffe, relating their views on the instruction of light infantry.⁷⁸ But it was not until 1823, that the system developed under Moore was published.⁷⁹ This was a retrospect by Captain Cross, of the 52nd Regiment of Light Infantry. It was indeed a different system to that of Dundas, and certainly not merely a re-working of de Rottenburg. Even the manual exercise is transformed, disposing completely of aspects of line infantry drill, as being either impractical, or not efficient for the performance of the role of the light infantry,⁸⁰ although essentially still finding its basis in the movements of Dundas. The fact that this system was not published at the height of its use is not unusual, and the reason is the essence of the system of light infantry training, as developed at Shorncliffe, and later Brabourne Lees. The importance of such a training system lay in its flexibility, in a world of rigid linear structures. To write it down would have been to suggest that something which needed to be constantly reactive, was in some way complete.

⁷² JM-CUL, *passim*.

⁷³ PRO WO 3/35/276-7, Calvert to Colonel Manningham, 3rd December 1802.

⁷⁴ Green, *Vicissitudes*, 22.

⁷⁵ *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry* (1798).

⁷⁶ *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry; and Instructions for their Conduct in the Field* (London, 1803); *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry; and Instructions for their Conduct in the Field* (London, 1808).

⁷⁷ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 22nd January 1804.

⁷⁸ Cooper, *A Practical Guide for the Light Infantry Officer*; Neil Campbell, *Instructions for Light Infantry and Riflemen: founded upon the Regulations for the Exercise of Infantry in Close Order, and the Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry* (London, 1813).

⁷⁹ Captain John Cross, *A System of Drill and Manoeuvres, as practised in the 52nd Light Infantry Regiment* (London, 1823).

⁸⁰ For example, the musket position of 'Support Arms' is removed, and the firing position and procedure, is changed completely.

Officers of all light infantry corps were expected to keep a pocket book, and it is in surviving examples of these that the development of the British light infantry system can be seen.⁸¹ References to ‘instead of the method directed by Dundas’ appear in what seems to be a well-rehearsed training regime, as per Cross, alongside practical observations on the performance of the men in training, and in the field. In a similar way, the training regimes of Le Marchant in the light cavalry, must have remained in manuscript form, until directed to be developed at the Weymouth camp in 1795, for publication the following year.⁸² Based upon this evidence it is possible to infer that much of the training given during the period was open to a certain degree of interpretation by those performing it, which suggests that in the Dundas’ systems Britain had achieved a far more flexible regime than critics usually credit.

This section has covered all British light infantry, including the rifle-armed troops, the 5th Battalion, 60th (Rifle) Regiment, and the three battalions of the 95th (Rifle) Regiment. While both light infantry and rifle units received the same training, in drill and manoeuvre, from an early stage in their development there had been an attempt on the part of the 95th ‘to form something different from the rest of the Army’.⁸³ However this desire had led to delays in achieving results, as it had been attempted,

without having sufficiently considered, or seriously determined in what the difference was going to consist, [which] has prevented the regiment from being formed upon any one system. The internal changes which have been made, have occasioned inaccuracy in style, and uncertainty in movement.⁸⁴

Most importantly, the arming of the rifle regiments with a superior weapon, enabled them to operate at a greater distance from the enemy, and with a greater degree of accuracy, allowing them to develop a more flexible role.⁸⁵ Although neither de Rottenburg, nor any of the other systems in print at the time,⁸⁶ make any differentiation in role or training

⁸¹ Examples of these note books can be found in, NAM 6807/161, (I am grateful to Robert Yuill for pointing me in the direction of this reference); and the Block House Museum, Wellington, Ontario, Canada, (I am grateful to Paul Fortier for pointing out this example). The first page of this book is headed, ‘Peculiarities in the drill of the 52d Regt Lt Infantry as ordered by Sir John Moore.’

⁸² Le Marchant, *Le Marchant*, 43-7.

⁸³ JM-CUL, Moore to Dundas, 30th December 1803.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ See for example, Captain Sir John Kincaid, *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade, and random Shots from a Rifleman* (London, 1909); Christopher Hibbert (ed.) *The recollections of Rifleman Harris* (London, 1970).

⁸⁶ For example, General Jarry, *Instructions Concerning the Duties of Light Infantry in the Field*. (1803); Colonel Von Ewald, *A Treatise on the Duties of Light Troops*, (1804).

between light infantry and rifle armed troops, it was this flexibility that was to prove the essence of the difference between rifles and the other units of the Army.

The weapon in use by the other light infantry units at their conception was the standard infantry musket. However, its adaption to a weapon suitable for the purpose intended was completed in 1804, after trials with the 52nd under Moore.⁸⁷ The specification made it clear that it needed to be different from the line infantry weapon,

The Barrel shall be browned, a grooved sight shall be fixed at the breech end of the barrel, and a canvass cover, similar to that used by the Austrian Troops, shall be provided for the purpose of covering and protecting the Butt and the Lock of each Piece.⁸⁸

Despite their weight, which was fourteen ounces heavier than the standard weapon, they were found to be suitable to the purpose intended.⁸⁹ They were capable of normal infantry drill and firing, but they with the addition of the sights they could be aimed at targets with reasonable accuracy. To this end the regiments receiving them were issued with powder horns and a new pattern of pouch, to permit both loose and cartridge loading.⁹⁰ There was also a greater emphasis placed upon the aiming of the piece, with shooting practice at targets performed as often as possible, despite the extra cost to the public of £140 per year.⁹¹ This was to be extended to battlefield tactics, as light regiments were not usually required to give volley fire, instead each man would level upon an individual target, and fire in his own time.⁹² This was the greatest deviation from the system of fire used by the rest of the Army, but one which in theory at least, would prove of great effect.

In movement, the line infantry continued to use the Dundas system throughout the period under discussion. However, from 1803, the units at Shorncliffe experimented with a new style of marching.⁹³ This was to become the standard mode for all light infantry and rifle units, although again the system from which it derives was not published until 1823.⁹⁴

⁸⁷ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 30th January 1804.

⁸⁸ PRO WO 3/152/56, Calvert to RH Crewe, 27th July 1803.

⁸⁹ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 22nd January 1804.

⁹⁰ JM-CUL, Moore to Garde of Piccadilly, 11th December 1803; Moore to Calvert, 22nd June 1804; Moore to Calvert, 16th July 1804; WO 3/152/322, Calvert to Francis Moore, 23rd June 1804.

⁹¹ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 22nd January 1804.

⁹² Cross, *A System of Drill and Manoeuvres*, 68.

⁹³ Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training*, 99-100.

⁹⁴ Cross, *A System of Drill and Manoeuvres*, ii.

These units needed a means of moving swiftly at all times, without causing undue strain on the body, thus the manual states that, ‘stiffness in the knees, pointing of toes, stamping against the ground, flourishing with the feet, and all constrained positions are highly improper’,⁹⁵ referring to the perceived rigidity of the previous system. The notes of an officer of the 52nd Regiment, suggest why the changes were made,

All flourishing of the feet and extreme distress of the knees are expressly prohibited as tending to render the body unsteady. Perhaps one or two handsome active men of a Company might be brought to practice this Parade sort of Marching, with tolerable ease and steadiness, but as this would only render the awkwardness of the other men more glaring, and sacrifice the steadiness of numbers to the gracefulness of a few, it is better to practice them in an easy and steady, though perhaps not elegant, mode of marching. The feet should be brought down without any exertion, or straining on knocking against the ground, which may tend to shake the body.⁹⁶

This method of marching was initially mimicked by,⁹⁷ and was eventually to replace that performed, by the rest of the Army, clearly being of more use when marching greater distances, and over rough terrain. It has continued in use, with only minor modifications, until the present day.

Apart from the differences outlined above, there were other differences which set apart the light troops from the line. First, finances were allocated for the training of light units, above the level of others.⁹⁸ Secondly, live firing at specially developed targets became the norm, although Moore needed all his powers of persuasion to convince Horse Guards, and the War Office that such expenditure was necessary.⁹⁹ Thirdly, an esprit du corps was evolved, which is clear from the many accounts left by the men serving in all ranks of the light regiments.¹⁰⁰ Fourthly, attention was paid to physical fitness beyond that described above, with football, running and even dancing forming part of the training regime.¹⁰¹ Finally, discipline was imposed less through the lash than through a respect for all ranks, a system which extended into the rest of the Army through imitation and popular

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* 8.

⁹⁶ ‘Peculiarities in the Drill of the 52nd’, 2.

⁹⁷ Booth, Charles Booth to Henry Booth, 26th July 1807.

⁹⁸ David Gates, *The British Light Infantry Arm*, 146-8;

⁹⁹ JM-CUL, Moore to Harry Calvert, 22nd January 1804; Moore to Secretary at War, 30th June 1804; Moore to Secretary at War, 13th July 1804; PRO WO 3/152/319, Calvert to Francis Moore, 21st June 1804; *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry* (1808) 12.

¹⁰⁰ JM-CUL, Moore to Dundas, 30th December 1803; Booth, William Booth to Thomas Booth, 18th November 1806; Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training*, 150-3.

¹⁰¹ Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training*, 98-100.

demand.¹⁰² These elements were more in keeping with modern Army training than that of the early nineteenth century.

Even in the performance of the ordinary and mundane, the units trained at Shorncliffe and later Brabourne Lees had a flexibility and swiftness, which made them stand out from those brought up on the traditions of rigid lines and deliberate movements. Other units emulated the timing of the arms drill and marching,¹⁰³ while in battle even greater differences can be observed. Private Green of the 68th Regiment of Light Infantry, writes that during the assault on Flushing in 1809 the 3rd Battalion of the 1st, 5th, and 35th Regiments of Foot received heavy casualties from an artillery barrage, while marching along a road with the 68th. The latter being light infantry were able to take cover, and thus escape injury, a sensible precaution, but not one included in the training of the majority of infantry.¹⁰⁴ It is also of note that such a drift to the flexible light infantry style had been observed during the American War of Independence, and as with that conflict, the developments made in the field of light infantry during the period in question were to count for very little in the Army of the long peace. Regiments who were in the forefront of light infantry training during the early part of the century, would 'run to fat' on garrison duty,¹⁰⁵ and at the threat of war forty years later, the need for light troops, and a suitable system of training would still be apparent.¹⁰⁶

5.5 PROGRESS

Traditionally the training of the rank and file of both horse and foot was broken down into two phases. The first introduced the recruit to the rudiments of the military, the method of marching, for both arms (and horsemanship for the cavalry), the arms drill and firing. Only when perfected in this, would he be permitted to move to the next stage of training, learning to operate within the battalion. The Dundas systems kept faith with this

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 123; J.K. Dinwiddy, 'The Early Nineteenth Century Campaign against Flogging in the Army', in *English Historical Review*, vol. XCVII (1982) 308-31; J.R. Dinwiddy, *Radicalism & Reform in Britain, 1780 - 1850* (London, 1992) 125, 127-32.

¹⁰³ Booth, Charles Booth to Henry Booth, 26th July 1807. 'All the Regiments in Sicily are taught to go through their file manoeuvres in double quick time and imitate this regiment [43rd] in every particular.'

¹⁰⁴ Green, *Vicissitudes*, 31.

¹⁰⁵ Ward, *Faithful*, 145.

¹⁰⁶ Lieutenant Colonel Charles Leslie, *A Treatise on the Employment of Light Troops on Actual Service* (London, 1843) *passim*.

established method of instruction, as indeed has every other manual since. However, beyond this the regulations of 1792 set a precedent by giving instruction in brigade and divisional training. Had war not followed closely upon their issue, such an inclusion might have been wasted, as the role of the peace-time Army scarcely permitted anything beyond battalion drill. Regiments rarely met for training due to the small scale of the peace-time Army, their policing duties, and public opinion against large encampments and manoeuvres.

Once versed in all aspects of training, the recruit, along with the other soldiers of the battalion, would be practised, as often as the above constraints permitted, developing the unquestioning obedience necessary to function within the mode of linear warfare. Houlding suggests that during peacetime, such practice, towards a regular inspection, was so emphasised within the battalion, that the soldier rarely mastered anything more than the rudiments.¹⁰⁷ This was obviously not the case from 1793, when all troops were trained with the expectation that every battalion would sooner or later be involved in active service. Greater troop assemblies were possible in Britain,¹⁰⁸ as numbers increased along with the demands of the Wars. The consent of the populace was also forthcoming, as the acceptance and status of the Army improved. As the policing duties of regular units were taken over by the militia, yeomanry and eventually the Local Militia, regular forces were freed to perfect their active service roles.

At the outbreak of war the satirists made much play of certain commissioned 'gentlemen' who needed a crib sheet or an experienced sergeant, in order to perform the drills,¹⁰⁹ and few doubt that in this there was at least a basis of truth.¹¹⁰ That is not to say that all officers were in this mould. It was shown in Chapter 4 that by the time of this study, many within the commissioned ranks were career soldiers, in an Army increasing in popularity and social status. From this body would come the nucleus of the expanded war-time officer cadre. This core would have, for the first time, a universal system of training in the regulations for infantry and cavalry, which would enable them to move between regiments with greater ease, and which would instruct them at every stage of their career in the handling of their men.

¹⁰⁷ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 162-5.

¹⁰⁸ See for example, Green, *Vicissitudes*, 24.

¹⁰⁹ *The Military Adventures of Johnny Newcombe by An Officer* (London, 1816).

¹¹⁰ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 117.

Entry into the Ordnance as an officer, had long been via a training course at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich,¹¹¹ and their promotion had depended upon seniority. However, the Army only introduced a similar training regime in 1798, with the establishment of the Royal Military College at Great Marlow, and subsequently High Wycombe.¹¹² The college curriculum was broad, including mathematics, French, drawing,¹¹³ and incorporated the works of, and lectures by leading names in military science.¹¹⁴ The establishment of such an officer training centre was a further attempt to centralise control of the military, and indeed an officer passing out from the college would have been moulded to a certain form, which would have influenced his fellow officers. However, the effect of the Royal Military College on the commissioned ranks, during the period under discussion was minimal. Not only were places limited,¹¹⁵ but demand was questionable, since the war-time call for officers was such that commissions were relatively easy to obtain, and a gentleman's time could have been better spent obtaining 'practical' experience with a battalion, than in academic studies. This is in stark contrast to the French officer cadre who often clubbed together to pay for lessons for each other, as their promotion under Napoleon frequently depended upon a better education.¹¹⁶ It is estimated that between twenty and forty percent of graduates from High Wycombe entered the Army as members of the Adjutant General's or Quarter Master General's departments.¹¹⁷

The uniformity of the training given to regiments would enable officers and men to be transferred, either individually or wholesale, between units, without the problems of different systems. However, such transfers were only practical within the commissioned ranks as most soldiers enlisted in one regiment and not for general service. Although

¹¹¹ From 1788 entry into the Ordnance had only been possible following the successful completion of a public examination at Woolwich. W.D. Jones, *Records of the Royal Military Academy* (Woolwich, 1851) 68.

¹¹² PRO WO 40/10/A, Barrack Office to Matthew Lewis, 11th December 1798; Brownrigg to Major General De Lancy, 8th December 1798; General Order, 12th December 1798. Initially the College was at Great Marlow, with a junior department established at High Wycombe the following year.

¹¹³ PRO WO 3/19/418, Calvert to Charles Long, 5th January 1799.

¹¹⁴ Officers on the staff of the college included General Francis Jarry and Major General Le Marchant. PRO WO 3/19/106A, Fawcett to General Jarry, 12th December 1798; WO 3/19/332, Calvert to Major General De Lancy, 25th April 1799.

¹¹⁵ Initially the students of the college were formed into one company one hundred strong. In 1808 this was increased to four companies.

¹¹⁶ Bertraud, 'Napoleon's Officers', 94.

¹¹⁷ Mark Romans, 'Eyes in the Hills: Intelligence and the Events at Alcantara', in C.M. Woolgar (ed.) *Wellington Studies I* (Southampton, 1996) 166.

Houlding doubts whether this 'Army-wide uniformity' would be effective,¹¹⁸ it is clear from the substantial drafts from the militia during the period, that a certain level of actual standardisation had been achieved by the time of this study, and certainly by its close. Obviously there would be differences in the standards of training achieved, which were highlighted by regular inspections as previously shown. This system would also serve in time to address such a problem by creating a uniform standard expected by inspecting generals.

The basic drill and manoeuvres were only parts of the training regime. When soldiers were trained to use their firearms, they did so initially without powder, and only once perfected through repetition, with blank rounds. The expenditure of powder allocated for each man from 1786 was the equivalent of between sixty and one hundred rounds,¹¹⁹ which was pegged at sixty blank and twenty four live annually in 1799.¹²⁰ In 1805, this was more than doubled, permitting the issue of sixty blank and thirty live rounds every six months.¹²¹ Houlding suggests the allocations were sufficient, but such a quantity was only equivalent to two full infantry cartridge boxes annually. This meant that the first time a soldier would fire a substantial amount of powder, would be in a battle. The increase could have been an acknowledgement of the effectiveness achieved by aimed fire within the light infantry corps. However, even this reform was tempered by the emphasis still placed on volley fire, such that soldiers might experience the sensation of live firing, but never be able to assess the effect. Throughout the period, target shooting was only directed for light troops.

The use of close contact weapons, the sword and bayonet, was also of great consequence during the period under examination. Dr. Johnson wrote in 1773, 'It is absurd that our soldiers should have swords, and not be taught to use them.'¹²² Prior to 1796, no method for their use had been established. That year saw the culmination of the trials of Major Le Marchant of the 16th Light Dragoons, who developed a system of sword drill and fighting technique in response to the poor performance of British cavalry in the campaigns in Flanders in 1793-4. During the engagements, not only were they invariably beaten by

¹¹⁸ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 259n.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 143-5.

¹²⁰ GRE-A, 2251/56-7, General Order, 30th March 1799.

¹²¹ PRO WO 3/153/80-1, Harry Calvert to Lieutenant Colonel Neville, BO, 27th April 1805.

¹²² Quoted in R. Glover, *Preparation*, 139.

their opponents, but many of the wounds they sustained, were found to be self inflicted, due to poor swordsmanship.¹²³ His subsequent survey of all able sword fighters,¹²⁴ led him to develop his system, which was put to the test at Weymouth in 1795. The system was published in 1796.¹²⁵ The following year, after extensive tests and reports from those using the new system, together with Birmingham sword makers, Le Marchant was responsible for the adoption of new patterns of cavalry swords, developed specifically to be used within the new drill system.¹²⁶ To ensure all units changed to the new weapons, the Board of Ordnance was instructed to issue new pattern swords on a new for old basis.¹²⁷

Training in the use of the bayonet had also been neglected. It was not until 1804 that Captain Anthony Gordon conducted experiments into its use,¹²⁸ publishing his findings the following year.¹²⁹ This work was extended in experiments during 1815,¹³⁰ which continued with various corps for over three years.¹³¹ It seems inconceivable that an Army for which so much effort had been directed towards the development of drill systems, could have laboured for so long without equivalent systems for the use of their weapons in hand to hand fighting. Glover suggests that this is because all efforts were exerted towards the firing of volleys, which broke the enemy, and consequently 'hand to hand fighting with the bayonet was rare.'¹³² This seems to be correct, for as noted above, even when the issue of ammunition to troops was increased, it was expended in the practise of volley fire. In the development of both the sword and bayonet systems relatively junior officers were instrumental. This would tend to suggest that either those in authority were flexible enough to appreciate the work of enterprising officers of whatever rank, or that they were so out of touch that it took a junior officer to realise what was needed on the ground. Perhaps both could be true, in that it took the junior officers to point out the deficiency, but that the military system was flexible enough to adopt their findings.

¹²³ Le Marchant, *Le Marchant*, 44.

¹²⁴ R.H. Thoumine, *Scientific Soldier: A Life of General Le Marchant, 1766-1812*, (London, 1968) 59.

¹²⁵ *Rules and Regulations ... Sword Exercise* (1796).

¹²⁶ Thoumine, *Scientific Soldier*, 38-45; Le Marchant, *Le Marchant*, 49-51.

¹²⁷ PRO WO 3/17/135-6, Horse Guards Circular to regiments of Heavy and Light Cavalry, 20th April 1797.

¹²⁸ PRO WO 3/152/68, Calvert to Francis Moore, 31st July 1804.

¹²⁹ Captain Anthony Gordon, *Science of the Defence, for the Sword, Bayonet, and Pike, in Close Action* (London, 1805).

¹³⁰ PRO WO 3/370/233, J. Gardiner, Assistant Adjutant General, to Lieutenant Adjutant Faden, Royal Marines, 12th June 1815; WO 3/370/244, J. Gardiner Assistant Adjutant General to Officer Commanding the Brigade of Guards, 13th June 1815.

¹³¹ PRO WO 3/68/7, Calvert to Major General Browne, 17th March 1818.

¹³² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 142.

5.6 EDUCATION

It is not possible to assess the level of literacy within the Army during the period under discussion. Officers were expected to be able to read and write, and a greater emphasis was placed upon this as the period progressed, with ever more technical systems of drill, manoeuvre, and economy. Both Regulations and General Orders were issued to all commissioned ranks, and certainly in Wellington's Peninsular Army they were expected to know the contents of these works.¹³³ Colley suggests a high level of literacy among the commissioned ranks as being indicative of the store by which the upper classes held such training by this time.¹³⁴

This line of argument is perhaps too simplistic. By 1807 the Rules and Regulations had been published in an abridged for the use of NCOs. Furthermore, it was recognised that literacy within the enlisted ranks was a means by which high calibre NCOs could be cultivated.¹³⁵ By 1811 the aim of educating boys within regiments was openly to create potential NCOs, the Circular establishing the recruiting of further boys to regiments pointing to

the Expediency of establishing a Regimental School for the instruction of such of them as discover abilities, in the necessary qualifications of Reading and Writing, with a view to their becoming hereafter, useful and valuable Non Commissioned Officers.¹³⁶

The Regimental Schools referred to were established in every regiment of the Army, during 1811, under the direction of the Duke of York.¹³⁷ They were to cater 'for young soldiers and the children of soldiers'. Each was to have an establishment of a sergeant schoolmaster, suitably qualified to teach reading and writing. Each school was to

¹³³ Petty, 'General Orders', 143.

¹³⁴ Colley, *Britons*, 167-70.

¹³⁵ PRO WO 26/39/351-72, Royal Warrant, 26th April 1805.

¹³⁶ PRO WO 3/585/76, Horse Guards Circular, Calvert to Colonels Commanding Regiments, 17th June 1811.

¹³⁷ PRO WO 4/416/231, Palmerston to George Harrison, 30th August 1811; WO 3/54/471, 'Instructions for the General Management of the Regimental Schools of the Army', 8th December 1811; WO 4/464/85, War Officer Circular No. 79, 27th December 1811; WO 4/213/289, Circular Letter, Palmerston to Colonels of all Regiments, 27th December 1811.

be given a room when in quarters, and an allowance of £10 per year for all expenses. Beyond their formation there is little evidence concerning such schools, and certainly nothing that would suggest if they were able to raise the level of literacy. Clode suggests that it was the influx of greater numbers of Scottish recruits that raised the level of literacy generally, as they had a better system of elementary education than either England or Ireland, and that these men increasingly became NCOs.¹³⁸ While it is surely not possible to discover either a level, or a cause for that level of literacy, all the evidence available confirms that more and more NCOs could read and write, and that this became a criteria for promotion to that rank.

Another area of Army involvement in the basic education of soldiers' children had been in place since 1801. The Asylum School, attached to the Royal Hospital in Chelsea,¹³⁹ was formed under the direction of the Duke of York, and designed to give elementary education to the orphans and children of non-commissioned officers and soldiers. It catered for no more than 1000 boys and girls at its conception,¹⁴⁰ a figure which was raised to 1140 in 1809.¹⁴¹ The school was established along strict military lines, with scarlet uniforms, and drill parades for the pupils, who were divided into companies.¹⁴² They were taken through their evolutions by the senior students who were given ranks, such as lance-corporals, corporals and colour corporals,¹⁴³ which they were often permitted to keep upon enlisting in regular Army service.¹⁴⁴ Such an institution might appear to be an ideal training ground for Army recruits, instilling in them military discipline, together with an education. However, the evidence of the discharge of Asylum pupils, suggests that only one quarter of the boys leaving the school from 1805 to 1819, enlisted in the military,¹⁴⁵ which appears to point to a failure in the system. However by the terms of its establishment, pupils who reached a suitable age to leave were to be,

¹³⁸ PRO WO 4/426/11, Palmerston to Harrison, 3rd August 1812; Palmerston to Harrison, 22nd August 1812; This was certainly the case by 1840, when up to 16% of Scots serving becoming NCOs. Strachan, *Wellington Legacy*, 51.

¹³⁹ PRO WO 40/12/9, General De Lancy to Matthew Lewis, 27th May 1799; De Lancy to Matthew Lewis, 10th December 1799; WO 40/14/15, Vansittart to Secretary at War, 14th September 1801.

¹⁴⁰ PRO WO 26/39/351-72, Royal Warrant, 26th April 1805.

¹⁴¹ PRO WO 26/41/74-5, Royal Warrant, 24th February 1809; WO 4/207/161, Francis Moore to Lieutenant Lugand, Adjutant, Royal Military Asylum, 2nd March 1809.

¹⁴² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 62-3.

¹⁴³ The use of a pseudo-rank structure was also to be found in Eton. Colley, *Britons*, 169.

¹⁴⁴ G.C.T. Bartley, *Schools for the People* (London, 1871) 237.

¹⁴⁵ Linn, 'Military Families'.

disposed of, when the proper age, at the discretion of the Commissioners [of the Asylum] as Apprentices, or Servants, or, if Boys, to their being placed, with their own free consent, in Our Regular Army, as Private Soldiers.¹⁴⁶

Another answer to this is suggested by a visitor to the school in 1819, who remarks that, ‘During the last Wars, the surprising activity of industry and commerce offered employment of the most advantageous description for the talents of every man who could merely read and write.’¹⁴⁷ He continues that many pupils would enter a civilian calling, ‘but the greater part of the boys prefer the profession of arms, and it is worthy of remark that even those who leave the school to enter an apprenticeship to some civil trade, usually finish by returning to military life.’¹⁴⁸ If this was the case, then the Asylum School would have played a small part in raising the level of literacy in the other ranks in the armed forces during the period.

The emphasis placed upon the education of children within the Army structure is significant for several reasons. First, it was developed at a time when a greater emphasis was being placed upon the education of all ranks, but particularly NCOs. Secondly, since the Army were finding it difficult to recruit suitable NCOs, it was sensible to consider their development within the Army. Thirdly, this would also be in keeping with a suggestion by Colley, that education was used to ‘mobilise’ the children in Sunday schools, towards patriotism.¹⁴⁹ The indoctrination within the military education system was obvious, and not lost upon those involved in its instigation. Fourthly, the idea that welfare facilities could, and indeed should be provided by the Army took on greater significance in the light of the New Military Plan. Although the formation of the Asylum School predates this by six years, its provision was limited. The Regimental School system came as part of a host post-Windham reforms mentioned above. It was introduced Army-wide, giving over one hundred children per regiment the opportunity to achieve a level of literacy sufficient to progress through the non-commissioned ranks, or become a more marketable commodity in the field of employment. However, there was never even an inference that these children could progress into the non-commissioned ranks. Such training was not developed until 1847, under Lord Fitzclarence.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ PRO WO 26/39/351-72, Royal Warrant, 26th April 1805.

¹⁴⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 48.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹⁴⁹ Colley, *Britons*, 226-7.

¹⁵⁰ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, 31.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The most significant aspect of the development of the Army during the period under discussion, is the emphasis placed upon training. The Duke of Marlborough had taken months to assimilate his forces prior to the Blenheim campaign, and had stamped on them a typical Marlboroughian system of training. Wellington would not be permitted the extravagance of his own treatise on training. The troops were already proficient in the system developed by Sir David Dundas, and specialists in other areas were working on new manuals for the cavalry, light infantry, and weapons training. By the end of the period, the regular Army, and its non-regular components, would function as a uniformly trained body, with educational services preparing men and boys for positions as future officers and NCOs. The systems adopted would be the model of those used throughout the century. Of overriding significance is that the training of the Army was drawn increasingly under the control of Horse Guards, with the War Office taking little part, except to sanction finances. Despite the subordination of the Commander in Chief to the secretary at War in all other areas, in the training of the forces, the Army hierarchy were given free rein, and York's idea of a uniform, Army-wide system was able to take shape.

CHAPTER 6 SUPPLY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

In Parts I and II the level of control of the army by the civilian administration was examined. Part III will extend this investigation to the area of logistics. It has been established that from 1783, the financing of the army was drawn ever-closer to the authority of government and away from the army hierarchy. This enabled the various ministries to control army policy, as regards both structure and composition, leaving the military to direct only areas of specific martial expertise. This part will therefore consider whether the same dominance of finances resulted in the central civilian control of the logistical system. It will concentrate on the supply of the army with food, clothing, and equipment, both at home and on foreign service, together with the means by which these items were transported to theatres of operation. It will not attempt to quantify the volume of stores produced, nor dwell upon the many relatively minor modifications to specifications. Instead it will focus on the areas of more substantial change, and those that materially affected either the army, the war, or wider historical issues. It will concentrate on the structure of the supply of the army, examining the supply system and the changes which affected it.

The supply of the army was divided into two distinct areas, during the period under discussion. The first was the traditional sphere controlled by the colonel of each regiment, which survived only in matters concerning the supply of most military clothing, and at the beginning of the period in certain areas of food provision. These supplies were the responsibility of the colonels, through their Agents, at all stages from purchase to delivery. The second area was that covered by the increasingly pervading control of the civilian administration, which was responsible for all other supplies through the well established contract system. These items would be purchased and distributed through the Board of Ordnance during peace-time, and in conjunction with the Commissariat during a war. The wars with France were the largest and most expensive Britain had ever fought, and the system of supply was required to function in these exceptional circumstances. How this was achieved is the subject of this chapter.

6.2 COMMISSARIAT AND THE CONTRACT SYSTEM

The preceding chapters have observed an increasing dominance of the civilian over the military administration of the army. They revealed how the Commander in Chief became subordinate to the civilian Secretary at War, nullifying all his independent authority outside the internal organisation of his force. This was particularly evident in areas of army finance, with all decisions concerning expenditure passing through the War Office, for sanction by the Secretary at War. As the supply of arms, clothing and equipment involved the spending of vast quantities of public funds, it should not be surprising that even before the period under discussion, constitutional safeguards existed which ensured that there was a check on this expenditure. In general, as a result of Burke's Pay Office Act, the Secretary at War became the arbiter of all military finance, while in times of war a separate department, the Commissariat, was established under direct Treasury control. Therefore at all times, all expenditure on the supply of the army was processed through civilian departments, thus completing the picture of a constitutional army, dependent upon the civilian administration for everything except its internal organisation.

That the supply structure of the army only included the Commissariat during times of war, would clearly create problems at the outbreak of hostilities, as has been observed with the office of the Commander in Chief. It would take time for its members to assimilate to the state of war, and the duties required of them. The wars with France proved to be no exception. In 1793, the provision of supplies was divided between several agencies. Regimental clothing was the responsibility of the colonel of the corps, and will be discussed later. In Britain, when the men were in barracks, their supplies of food, wood, straw, forage and all other equipment, was arranged by the Barrack Master General, or by the individual Barrack Masters. Only in camps were the troops supplied by the Commissary General, although his authority only extended to Britain.¹ When regiments were on foreign service, their food was supplied by the Commissioners for Victualling, while all other stores were provided by the Commissioners for Transports, co-ordinated on the ground by the local Commissary General, who was directly responsible to the

¹ *18th RCME* (1812) 251.

Treasury.² Every item, except clothing, was provided under contract, or special order from the Treasury, and included in the Extraordinary Account of the army.³ Clearly such a system, made up of so many elements, had the potential to break down under the pressure of the vast war-time requirements.

In 1797, Commissaries were appointed to each military district in Britain. To that date the Commissary General on home service had no direct recourse to any public funds, with all transactions being conducted through bills drawn on the Bank of England. As such an arrangement would have proved impractical for District Commissaries, they were given recourse to cash, and the authority to arrange small local contracts by advertisement. Although overseen by the Comptrollers of Army Accounts, this arrangement was in contradiction of the policy to avoid the necessity for anyone to be a public accountant. In 1798, on the recommendation of the Select Committee on Finance,⁴ this was addressed, and the Commissary General was given control over all the Commissaries in Britain, the superintendence of all supply departments, and of their accounts. He was also required to submit estimates for all expenditure to parliament, although it took until 1806 for all the changes to take effect.⁵ However, it was not until 1809, sixteen years into the wars, that the whole Commissariat, at home and abroad, was brought under a similar control.

The first campaigns in both the Low Countries and the West Indies brought major supply difficulties, and subsequent post-mortems regarding the Commissariat arrangements.⁶ Richard Glover highlights one response to the failure of the Commissariat in the Low Countries, by including Havilland le Mesurier's *A System for the British Commissariat*,⁷ as an appendices of *Peninsular Preparation*. However, le Mesurier's work by no means typifies the structure and organisation of the Commissariat service, or even anything that was achieved during the period under discussion. His short tenure as Commissary General in the Low Countries, was the only time during the wars that the Commissariat of the army on active service worked according to either his suggested

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ 19th RSCF (1797) Appendix B2, 372-3.

⁵ 18th RCME (1812) 251.

⁶ See for example, 19th RSCF (1797) 395; 9th RCME (1809) *passim.*; 18th RCME (1812) 249.

⁷ Havilland le Mesurier, *A System for the British Commissariat* (London, 1796).

model,⁸ or even the less stringent instructions laid down by the Treasury.⁹ The Commissioners of Military Enquiry, who investigated the failings of the Commissariat in the West Indies, recommended the introduction of reforms that they believed would ensure an efficient system.¹⁰ However, the West Indian Commissariat, as with those at other foreign stations, had worked effectively during all periods of peace, and therefore any reform proved to be merely cosmetic, working well at all times except during conflict.¹¹

All commissaries on foreign service reported directly and individually to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury until 1809.¹² In that year, as stated above, the home and foreign Commissariats were brought under the control of a single Commissary in Chief, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon.¹³ He had been the military secretary of the Duke of York since 1795, and was therefore well aware of the intricacies of both the military and Commissariat services. His duties included the provision of bread and forage to troops in Barracks, Cantonments and Quarters; bread, wood, straw and forage to those in encampments; and all stores for the Barrack, Quarter Master General's, Inspector of Army Hospital's and Surgeon General's Departments. In addition he was to act as an exclusive channel of communication with commissaries abroad, and compile reports from information passed to him by his deputies, of the available resources of all the countries in which they operated.¹⁴ He was also responsible for the submission of monthly estimates and annual accounts to the Comptrollers of Army Accounts and the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, to whom he was directly responsible.¹⁵ Therefore, from 1809, a single Commissariat system was in place, which, for the first time, had jurisdiction over the supply of all the British forces, at home and abroad.

All supplies in Britain, except those costing less than five pounds, or those needed in an emergency, were obtained through contracts made in London, after a public

⁸ Also, Havilland le Mesurier, *The British Commissary* (London, 1801).

⁹ RHK-M 3/B4/-, 'Instructions to Commissariat Officers'; 'Additional Instructions to Commissariat Officers', no date.

¹⁰ 9th RCME (1809) 301-47, 358-64.

¹¹ 18th RCME (1812) 302.

¹² *Ibid.*, 278.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 253, 278; He was responsible for all Commissariat arrangements except those in the East Indies and Ireland, both of which had a separate department.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 253.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 254.

advertisement, and allocation to the cheapest reputable bidder.¹⁶ They were of varying composition, depending upon the items to be supplied. For example, contracts for bread, forage and oats were for six months duration and for the supply of individual counties, whereas those for coals, candles and straw, were allocated for twelve months across the whole Barrack Department.¹⁷ Contractors were expected to give securities in case of default, but the Commissioners of Military Enquiry observed that this was very rare.¹⁸ Only in the supply of forage and provisions had any element of profiteering been noted. Prices for oats being fixed at a maximum of £10 per 37 pounds in weight, as certain persons had attempted to influence prices in order to make more money.¹⁹ Similarly it was suggested that bread and forage prices had been affected by the manipulation of weights, particularly at times of high prices.²⁰ Prior to 1810, bread supply had been negotiated at regimental level, with contractors being paid by the paymasters of the corps. After recommendations by the Commissioners of Military Enquiry,²¹ this was changed to a county contract,²² which enabled a more effective check to be made on the whole system by the War Office Accounts Department,²³ thus linking the two areas of civilian army administration.²⁴ However, it was not until 1812, that the Commissary in Chief was finally given authority over the purchase of all 'bread, meat and forage', thus consolidating the army purchase power and enabling supply in bulk and subsequent discount to the public.²⁵ In this way the saving to the public on meat alone was £80,000 in the first year of operation.²⁶ The Commissariat continued to work to these methods to the end of the war, but despite being required to ensure that both the home and foreign Commissariats were performing in the same way, it proved impossible for either Gordon, or Charles Herries who succeeded him, to achieve this on active service.²⁷

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 264; *Appendix 1*, 310, Examination of L.B. Morse; *Appendix 12*, 339, Examination of Joseph Steele.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 264.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 265-6.

²⁰ *10th RCPE* (1811) 1018.

²¹ *6th RCME* (1808) 326.

²² *18th RCME* (1812) 266.

²³ *10th RCPE* (1811) 1018-20, 1022.

²⁴ CUL Percival 46, George III to Percival, 22nd February 1810.

²⁵ PRO WO 4/440/347-9, Merry to Torrens, 7th November 1811; 4/442/7-11.

²⁶ PRO WO 4/442/7-11, Palmerston to Commander in Chief, 27th May 1812; 323-8, Palmerston to Commander in Chief, 12th September 1812; 366-8, Palmerston to Harrison, 30th September 1812.

²⁷ *18th RCME* (1812) 302.

Despite such apparent failure, during the course of the wars the Commissariat developed clear structures for its operation on active service, following the several severe failures during the early campaigns. Upon his appointment, Gordon established a Board of Commissaries that formulated a new system for campaigns,²⁸ but it was stressed that every operation was different and required a different approach.

The mode of procuring the Provisions and Forage, the Labour, Conveyance, &c. required on Foreign Service, must necessarily vary with the circumstances of the Station and Country, and the nature of the Service in which the Troops are employed.²⁹

Brook Watson, the Commissary General in Flanders and Holland, used ‘one great contractor’, Mr. Eckhardt, to supply all his needs,³⁰ while Mr. Crelinger supplied all items required by the army in Elbe during 1805-6.³¹ This was not the system preferred as a mode of supply by the Treasury, who complained vociferously at its continuance.³² Such a system was not practised in the Peninsula, whether as a result of the Treasury objections, or because it was impossible to implement in Portugal and Spain, where the scale of the conflict precluded single contract supply. The Commissary General in Britain stated that ‘the Commissariat [in the Peninsula] is so inadequate to the Duties of the Department with such large Armies’.³³ Local supply systems were developed, particularly under Kennedy as Commissary General. The Commissioners of Military Enquiry described the four methods developed by the Commissariat in the Peninsula, to supply the army. These were, provisions sent from Britain; items by contract; by local purchase; and by requisition.³⁴ Ward suggests that the latter method, requisition or ‘embargo’, was used by the whole army in the early days of the campaign, but was soon restricted to the Commissariat, and then only in exceptional circumstances.³⁵ Any deficiency could always be made up by

²⁸ PRO WO 3/50/86-9, Calvert to Lieutenant General Ross, 13th July 1810; *18th RCME* (1812) 278-9.

²⁹ *18th RCME* (1812) 280.

³⁰ RHK-M 2/B3/-, 131 vouchers and receipts from ‘Mr. Eckhart’, 1795-6; *18th RCME* (1812) 280.

³¹ Ward, *Wellington’s Headquarters*, 81.

³² PRO WO 40/25/16, Brownrigg to Trotter, 4th November 1805; Trotter to More, 5th November 1805; Harrison to Secretary at War, 22nd March 1806; Vansittart to Secretary at War, 24th April 1806; Secretary at War to Harrison, 19th May 1806; Harrison(?) to Vansittart, May 1806; Harrison to Secretary at War, 23rd June 1806.

³³ PP xi (1809) Erskine to Lords Commissioners of His Majesty’s Treasury, 17th October 1808.

³⁴ *18th RCME* (1812) 281.

³⁵ Ward, *Wellington’s Headquarters*, 81-2.

direct supply from Britain.³⁶ Indeed, it was often the only recourse, as in the supply of fresh meat during the early West Indian campaigns.³⁷ It was a system which became increasingly efficient as the wars progressed. In 1809, for example, an order for a large quantity of flour received on 13th June, had been fully loaded by 29th June, and an order for 1.4 million pounds of salt meat received on 13th October, had been loaded onto four ships and was ready to sail by 30th November.³⁸ But despite such efficiency, this method of supply was expensive in both money and time, and was itself only resorted to after other methods had been exhausted. Local purchase could be successful on occasion, as in the acquisition of local beef herds in 1811, when cattle owners chose to sell their cattle rather than lose them to the French.³⁹ However, there was a generally held belief that prices rose by at least fifty per cent whenever the British entered a deal with the local population, despite a ruling that prices should be kept in check by a local magistrate.⁴⁰ Attempts at raising contracts were not always successful. The system of production in Portugal was at little more than subsistence level,⁴¹ and while certain items could be locally produced,⁴² the contract supply of foodstuffs proved almost impossible.

In many cases the Commissariat contracts for provisions had to be awarded to the only merchant offering to supply, and therefore the system did not prove as advantageous to economy as the same system in Britain.⁴³ Under these circumstances in the Peninsula, one house proved most successful in the supply of the army, obtaining a near monopoly by 1809. Henrique Teixeira de Sampaio, and his brother F. Teixeira de Sampaio, were able to supply the army with almost anything they required, through an international network which extended to the Barbary Coast, Morocco, the Greek Islands, several South American

³⁶ NAM, Marsden Papers, 7701/36/24, 84 & 92.

³⁷ GRE-A, 186a, Henry Dundas to General Charles Grey, 6th December 1793; 186b, George Rose to Evan Nepean, 6th December 1793; 186c, Commissioners for Victualling the Navy to George Rose, 29th November 1793.

³⁸ Hall, *British Strategy*, 32-3.

³⁹ RHK-M 1/B1/226, 31st July 1811.

⁴⁰ 18th RCME (1812) 281; William Graham, *Travels Through Portugal and Spain, during the Peninsular War* (London, 1820) 52.

⁴¹ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 80.

⁴² RHK-M 1/B1/1.1, Murray to Kennedy, 1st January 1810; 1/B1/1.2, Colonel Peacock to Kennedy, 30th December 1810; 1/B1/1.3, John Leach to Kennedy, 30th December 1810; 1/B1/1.4, W. MacKenzie to Kennedy, 28th December 1810. Several thousand haversacks were manufactured in Lisbon, as there was a deficiency in their supply from Britain.

⁴³ 18th RCME (1812) 281, 330, *Appendix 10*, Examination of John Murray, 4th November 1811.

states, and the United States of America.⁴⁴ From 1809, they were responsible for the provision of virtually all foodstuffs for the army. Ward has suggested that a smaller operator could not have been able to cope with either the supply of items on such a large scale as was required, or remained solvent amid slow government payments.⁴⁵ Bread was invariably the item in shortest supply to the army, and perhaps the Sampaio's greatest achievement was during the winter of 1812, when, at the instigation of Kennedy, they organised the importing of several thousand tons of grain from the United States of America, alleviating the problem of the supply of this vital commodity.

During 1812 it had become increasingly obvious to Kennedy that there 'was a great risk of the Army experiencing want [of flour] since none could be found on the Lisbon Market', and all his other efforts to procure it had failed.⁴⁶ By December the army's supplies were said to be 'adequate only for five months consumption.'⁴⁷ However, this problem had already been addressed by Kennedy. On 2nd September he had contacted the Sampaio, 'encouraging them to ship for this Port [Lisbon] with all expedition possible as much supplies as they could prudently accomplish to purchase,' and confirming that the British government would pay the highest market price for any grain finding its way to Lisbon.⁴⁸ The Sampaio then wrote to their agents in the United States of America,

in terms the most decisive and unequivocal, animating them to unceasing exertions and assuring them that they not only would receive the highest prices of the Corn Market on the dates of arrivals but that he bound himself to remit the whole proceeds within eight days after the entry of each cargo for all arrivals within six or seven months from the date of his aforementioned letter.⁴⁹

This speculative venture proved a success. Despite Britain being at war with America, the Commissariat in Lisbon purchased flour to the value of more than £100,000.

⁴⁴ RHK-M 4/B2/-, Sampaio to Kennedy, 2nd June 1810; Sampaio to Kennedy, 5th February 1811; Sampaio to Kennedy, 1st August 1811; Sampaio to Kennedy, 7th December 1811; Sampaio to Kennedy, 5th March 1814; Sampaio to Kennedy, 19th March 1814; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 81; G.E. Watson, 'The United States and the Peninsular War, 1808-1812', in *Historical Journal*, XIX (1976) 870-1.

⁴⁵ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 81.

⁴⁶ RHK-M 2/B5/-, Sampaio to Kennedy, 24th July 1819.

⁴⁷ RHK-M 3/B5/-, Pison to Kennedy, 21st December 1812.

⁴⁸ RHK-M 2/B5/-, Sampaio to Kennedy, 24th July 1819.

⁴⁹ RHK-M 2/B5/-, Sampaio to Kennedy, 24th July 1819, referring to (?) Sampaio to Kennedy, 5th September 1812.

Notwithstanding Kennedy ensuring that the army in the Peninsula was fed, he and the Sampaio still received criticism. The influx of such a massive quantity of flour had caused its price to crash on the Lisbon markets, ruining several traders, which was not an acceptable outcome for Britain's oldest ally. However, despite the enquiries into the transaction extending until after the wars, the estimated £131,762 saved in flour costs, together with more than £30,564 through exchange rates, must surely have sweetened the attitudes of the investigating Treasury officials.⁵⁰ Unlike the investigations into the accounting process of the Commissariat discussed in Chapter 3, the passage of time and the distance from the conflict ensured that no official action was taken beyond the initial investigation into the import of grain from America.

The problem of the deficiency in bread supply was also addressed by resort to the use of biscuit as a replacement. As early as 1795 the Commissariat were issuing Ships Biscuit to troops in the Low Countries,⁵¹ in lieu of, or to supplement, the bread ration. This had been done on occasion during both the Seven Years' War and the American War of Independence.⁵² It was also used by the French, but their reliance on local bakers with the skills to produce it, ensured that it was not always readily available.⁵³ Biscuit had long been a transportable alternative to bread for the Royal Navy, being both easy to store, and relatively successful in transportation. The issuing of it in vast quantities to the army was made possible by the introduction of a new industrial process into its production during 1804. It was co-ordinated by the navy's Victualling Office, at a factory in Deptford. Here biscuit for 2040 men each day was produced, which Emsley sees as the first example of a production line.⁵⁴ By the close of the Peninsula campaign, biscuit had become the standard army active service ration, being issued when bread was unavailable, without any reference to the absence of the latter.⁵⁵ This was achieved by the co-ordinated efforts of the Commissariat, who received several thousand tons of biscuit from the Board of Ordnance, but also produced enough for the whole army, by requisitioning local bakeries, and

⁵⁰ RHK-M 2/B5/-, Sampaio to Kennedy, 24th July 1819.

⁵¹ RHK-M 2/B3/-, 'State of the Magazine at Rethen to 1st December 1795'.

⁵² Edward E. Curtis, *The Organization of the British Army in the American Revolution* (London, 1926) 93, 95, 111.

⁵³ Martin Van Creveld, *Supplying War: Logistics from Wallenstein to Patton* (Cambridge, 1977) 49.

⁵⁴ Emsley, *British Society*, 108-9.

⁵⁵ RHK-M 1/B1/123, Murray to Kennedy, 1st April 1811; 1/B1/224, Mr Barron to Murray, 20th July 1811; 3/B6/-, 'Returns to Divisions in the Field - 1810'; RHK-E 53, Pakenham to Kennedy, 20th December 1813; NAM 7512-124, 'State of Supplies with the Seventh Division under the command of General Walker stationed at Ustaritz', 18th December 1813.

developing baking techniques themselves, rather than relying on indigenous skills as did the French.⁵⁶

The Commissariat had developed over the course of the period under discussion, becoming more efficient, despite glaring inadequacies at the beginning of campaigns,⁵⁷ and increasing size of armies.⁵⁸ The consolidation of all Commissary services under one Commissary in Chief, ensured the co-ordination of all services from 1809, and the accountability of the whole to the government, and in particular the Treasury. On active service the system of supply ensured that requisition was rarely used, in complete contrast to the traditionally held view, inspired by Clausewitz, that field armies of the period under discussion, placed little reliance upon supply from the rear.⁵⁹ A rank structure was developed within the Commissariat, running parallel to that of the regular forces, with each officer having an equivalent commissioned rank in the army, with authority over those below him, in both his department and all other forces.⁶⁰ However, despite successes in supply, the logistical arrangements of active service continued to pose problems. By 1815, it had become clear to even the Commissary in Chief, that his department was incapable of the effective supply of the myriad items for which they had become responsible over the course of the wars. After discussions with the Treasury and the Storekeeper General, it was decided that the most effective system would be to pass all items except food and forage through the department of the Storekeeper General.⁶¹ This department, a creation of the wars, had emerged as both an effective and efficient supply organisation during the period under discussion.

⁵⁶ August Ludolf Freidrich Schaumann, *On the Road with Wellington: The diary of a war Commissary in the Peninsular campaigns* (London, 1924) 85-6.

⁵⁷ See also, NAM 8002-78/1, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Lieutenant Lawrence, 28th July 1801; 8002-78/2, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Captain Elphinstone, 31st July 1801.

⁵⁸ *PP* (1809) XI, 185, J. Erskine, Commissary in Chief, to Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 17th October 1808.

⁵⁹ This view is supported by, van Creveld, *Supplying War*, 70-1; John Lynn (ed.) *Feeding Mars: Logistics in Western Warfare from the Middle Ages to the Present* (Boulder, Colorado, 1993) 13.

⁶⁰ RHK-M 3/B5/-, Pipon to Kennedy, 2nd September 1811.

⁶¹ PRO WO 1/856/363, Harrison to Sir Henry Bunbury, 2nd October 1815; WO 1/855/367, Harrison to Bunbury, 4th May 1815; 371-81, Treasury Minute, 25th April 1815; 383-4, Torrens to Harrison, 27th April 1815.

6.3 STORES AND THE STOREKEEPER GENERAL

The emergence of an efficient, flexible and centrally controlled Commissariat occurred at the same time as the supply and storage system of a variety of equipment was also undergoing significant change. To 1797, camp equipment was supplied by each individual regimental colonel, for which he was given the full cost for the full establishment of his corps. At the close of each conflict these stores were sold, and the proceeds became part of the remuneration of the colonel.⁶² Thus he would gain from the number of men below establishment that he had to supply, as well as from the re-sale of the camp equipment. During the crisis of 1787, the government was unsure as to which units would need to be sent overseas in the event of hostilities, and so the Secretary at War ordered a quantity of camp equipment to be issued to whichever regiments were ultimately despatched abroad. The order for equipment was placed with Messrs. Trotter and Co., who had supplied the army since at least 1775.⁶³ The prices that an army-wide order enabled Trotter and Co. to charge were far cheaper than any colonel was able to negotiate. When the crisis passed, the head of the company, John Trotter, suggested that the equipment purchased should be kept by Trotter and Co. on behalf of the government, for use in any future conflict, rather than being sold on to the benefit of the colonels. This idea was accepted by the Secretary at War, and the same equipment was used for both the 1790 Nootka Sound crisis, and the 1792 camp at Bagshot, before being issued to troops at the beginning of the wars in 1793.⁶⁴

At the outbreak of the wars with France, the colonels were also permitted to contract for the supply of their corps with camp equipment, as had been the common practise previously. However, as stated above, the prices Trotter and Co. could charge benefited from substantial discounts obtained through bulk purchases, with which individual colonels could not hope to compete. When their agents submitted bills for the full price of these items, the War Office settled their accounts, based not upon the actual prices paid, but on those available from Trotter and Co..⁶⁵ It was clear that against such discounted prices the colonels could not compete. Therefore, in 1794, the Secretary at War gave Trotter and Co. the order to provide camp equipment exclusively for the whole army,

⁶² *8th RCME* (1809) 152; 241-3, *Appendix 24A*, Fitzpatrick to Harrison, 19th May 1806.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 151; 226-232, *Appendix 23A*, Examination of John Trotter., 22nd June 1807.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 152.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 153.

and to establish the first in a series of countrywide depots.⁶⁶ In this way only the required quantity was purchased and issued, thus saving the public substantial sums of money. Even with such obvious advantages, it is surprising that there was no opposition to the move from among the colonels. They were effectively losing a lucrative aspect of their regiments, which must have had a great deal to do with the diluting of their power through the drastic army augmentation, during the early stages of the wars, for as the Wars progressed, they became a much stronger lobby against change.

Trotter and Co. continued exclusively to supply the army until 1798. Under the arrangements, at the close of each campaign or expedition, all camp equipment was taken back by Trotter and Co. and either stored, repaired, or if unserviceable, sold, and the proceeds returned to the War Office.⁶⁷ In addition, Trotter and Co. began to build up a surplus of stock, which enabled them to supply from their stores, 100,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalry immediately. This they achieved without any order or advance of funds from the War Office, for either goods or storage, and it was only due to war-time inflation that this speculation produced profit.⁶⁸

To 1798 Trotter and Co. were neither under contract to the government, nor governed by any specific price structure. The whole operation functioned as a gentleman's agreement, that their prices would be cheaper than could be obtained from any other supplier, or through any regimental agent.⁶⁹ In 1798, Trotter and Co. made detailed accounts of their supply of the army since 1787. It was discovered that in that time they had made an average profit of 10% from their dealings with the War Office. From these figures, a scale of prices was formulated, allowing the same 10% profit, which was endorsed by both the Secretary at War and the Commander in Chief.⁷⁰ Even with this structure the prices remained below those of any competitor, which was confirmed by two separate unsuccessful attempts to undercut the prices of Trotter and Co., and so take over the supply of the army.⁷¹

⁶⁶ PRO WO 40/25/16, Brownrigg to Francis Moore, 22nd November 1805; *8th RCME* (1809) 153, 155.

⁶⁷ *8th RCME* (1809) 153.

⁶⁸ PRO WO 40/25/16, Trotter to Francis Moore, 5th November 1805; Brownrigg to Francis Moore, 8th November 1805; Brownrigg to Francis Moore, 22nd November 1805; *8th RCME* (1809) 155; 227, *Appendix* 23, Examination of John Trotter, Question 7.

⁶⁹ *8th RCME* (1809) 151; 153; 226-32.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 238-9, *Appendix* 23E, 'Scale of Prices'.

⁷¹ PRO WO 40/25/16, Harrison to Secretary at War, 22nd March 1806; Harrison to Secretary at War, 23rd June 1806; *8th RCME* (1809) 154.

It was not until 1805 that unusual position of Trotter and Co. came under serious scrutiny. In that year, due to pressure from other contractors, the War Office insisted upon the submission of tenders by all interested parties for the supply of tents for the army. Despite no contractor being able to supply at a lower price, Trotter and Co. declined to supply the items on a standard contract, instead offering to provide the equipment at the tendered price, but under the previous, non-contract, system. When the War Office insisted on contract supply, Trotter and Co. permitted their principal clerk, Mr. D.H. Wilson, to contract for the tents with the War Office at the tendered price. Despite the introduction of another middle-man, the army still received tents at prices below those quoted by any other supplier.⁷² Wilson held the contract for two years, being succeeded by an independent contractor, Mr. Maberley, in 1808,⁷³ who obtained the contract on the strength of his pledge to supply tents for the army at 5% below the prices of Trotter and Co. for three years.⁷⁴ This effectively introduced the open contract supply system to the purchase of all army equipment, as for the first time Trotter and Co. were faced with effective competition.

During the course of the wars, through their complete supply regime, Trotter and Co. must have saved the public substantial amount of money. However, there had been a blurring of the demarcation between the stores of Trotter and Co., and those of the Commissary General, the Barrack Master General, and the Transport Board, in the several depots which were run and paid for by Trotter and Co..⁷⁵ Although criticism of this state of affairs was rare,⁷⁶ with the introduction of contract supply for tents under Maberley, the final quirk in the supply system was addressed. It was stated that in future all stores were to be supplied by public contract, following an open advertisement. The whole was also to be placed under the jurisdiction of the newly created public office of Storekeeper General.⁷⁷ Although it was stressed that there was no suggestion of any impropriety on the part of

⁷² *8th RCME* (1809) 155; 243-6, *Appendix 25B*, Comptrollers of Army Accounts to the Right Honourable, the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 13th June 1806; *16th RCME* (1812) 8-9.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 243, *Appendix 25A*, Francis Moore to Peter Grant, Commissioner of Military Enquiry, 19th July 1808.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ See for example, *Ibid.*, 152; 241-3, *Appendix 24A*, Fitzpatrick to Harrison, 19th May 1806.

⁷⁷ PRO WO 4/452/189, 'Instructions from the Right Honourable the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury to John Trotter Jnr. Esq. Storekeeper General of all Military Stores', 19th March 1808.

Trotter and Co.,⁷⁸ it was deemed expedient not to permit a private company to persist with an effective monopoly on the supply of the army at a time of its greatest expansion.⁷⁹

On 8th March 1808, John Trotter, a junior member of the Trotter family, was appointed to the post of Storekeeper General,⁸⁰ a post that he had effectively held for over a year as part of the Trotter and Co.'s business.⁸¹ The Commissioners of Military Enquiry reported that,

the satisfaction which the Lords of His Majesty's Treasury had received from an examination into the conduct and management of the House of Messrs. Trotter, in the supply of Army Stores, had influenced their Lordships to recommend to His Majesty one of the persons concerned in the management of their business to be Storekeeper General under the new Arrangement.⁸²

The new system inevitably cost more than the previous one, with the establishment of a dedicated supply department without the ability to absorb overheads in a wider business organisation, and detailed instructions as to how it was to operate.⁸³ This was in part alleviated by a contraction in the number of depots, and a general streamlining of the system of supply.⁸⁴ The latter included the development of an in-house packing service, which was estimated to save the public £1,000 per year in packing, and £2,500 per year in the 'wharfage, lighterage, and shipping of all other articles'.⁸⁵ With the consolidation of supply in the hands of the Storekeeper General, it also became possible, for the first time, to establish a uniform standard of supply throughout the whole army. This was due in part to the necessity of simplifying and reducing the cost of the system, but it was also in line with what became known as 'Mr. Trotter's Plan'. The aim of this plan was,

to construct the several articles of Camp Necessaries, invariable of the same shape, size and pattern, so that every separate part of each may apply equally to the relative part of every other Article of the same description; any strap will fit any

⁷⁸ *8th RCME* (1809) 159; *Appendix* 23, S4.

⁷⁹ PRO WO 40/29/2, J.M. Leake and J. Erskine, Comptrollers of Army Accounts, to the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, 13th June 1806; Harrison to Secretary at War, 15th June 1808.

⁸⁰ PRO WO 4/452/189, Royal Warrant, 8th March 1808; Harrison to Secretary at War, 15th June 1808.

⁸¹ *8th RCME* (1809) 160.

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ PRO WO 40/29/2, 'Instructions from the Right Honourable Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to John Trotter Jnr. Esq. Storekeeper General of all Military Stores', 19th March 1808.

⁸⁴ *8th RCME* (1809) 162, 250; *11th RCME* (1810) 43, 128.

⁸⁵ *11th RCME* (1810) 42-4

Canteen, the lid of one Camp-Kettle will fit every Camp-Kettle in the Service, the upper half of every Tent-pole will exactly fit the lower half of every other, and the like in endless instances.’⁸⁶

In this way all stores became suitable for issue to any regiment, thus establishing another area of uniformity within the army. As a result,

It became necessary to abolish the distinguishing colour of Regiments in Tents, Knapsacks, flags &c. which being henceforward considered as equally applicable to any Regiment, could not properly carry the particular Mark of one.⁸⁷

This simplification in specification also ensured that further savings could be made through even larger bulk orders.

The system was such a success, that in 1810, the Commissioners of Military Enquiry recommended that it be introduced into the Ordnance.⁸⁸ The suggestion was never acted upon, and the Ordnance supply system continued to be criticised through the Peninsular campaign, due to failures in their operation.⁸⁹ This confidence was further endorsed at the end of the wars, when, as stated above, the Storekeeper General’s department took over the complete responsibility for all army stores, except food and forage.⁹⁰

6.4 CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

The examination of the clothing and equipment supplied to the army, returns the discussion to the issue of the colonels’ profit derived from their corps, first raised in Chapter 3. It was noted above that the Contract System was believed to save the public substantial sums of money, by opening bids to supply the army to tender, camp equipment being removed from this area as a result of intervention of Trotter and Co.. However, an

⁸⁶ *8th RCME* (1809) 157; *11th RCME* (1810) 43.

⁸⁷ *8th RCME* (1809) 157.

⁸⁸ *13th RCME* (1810) 40.

⁸⁹ PRO WO 3/605/170-2, Torrens to Wellington, 19th August 1813; 179-81, Torrens to Sir Thomas Graham, 20th August 1813.

⁹⁰ PRO WO 1/856/363, Harrison to Sir Henry Bunbury, 2nd October 1815; WO 1/855/367, Harrison to Bunbury, 4th May 1815; 371-81, Treasury Minute, 25th April 1815; 383-4, Torrens to Harrison, 27th April 1815.

equivalent system was never extended to cover the supply of the majority of clothing for the army, despite several suggestions that this would save money and avoid corruption.

As outlined in Chapter 3, under the terms of Burke's Pay Office Act, the responsibility for estimating the establishment of regiments, was transferred from the army to the Secretary at War. He therefore also became responsible for the estimates by which the Colonels received their emoluments from the Clothing Fund, which was determined from the number of men on establishment, and was worth about 25% of the pay bill for the corps.⁹¹ However, despite the army losing its ability to estimate its own strength, the colonels did not forfeit any part of their profit. Not only was the money from the Clothing Fund, the so-called 'Off-reckonings' based upon the regimental establishment as opposed to the number of effective men, but any additional expense incurred by the Colonel was covered effectively by the receipt of the pay of the fictitious 'Contingent Man', in the proportion of one to every twenty four soldiers.⁹² This would earn over £900 per year for a colonel of a battalion of 1000 rank and file, above that produced by off-reckoning. In addition, it was accepted that any excess costs, beyond normal wear and tear, were paid for by either the soldier or the public, and were not incurred by the Colonel.⁹³ The profit on his regiment was thus secure.

The stated profits received from a regimental colonelcy varied according to the constituency and agenda of those reporting, but was generally accepted to be in excess of £200 per year. Charles Greenwood, of the largest army agencies Greenwood and Cox, suggested that the profit ranged between five hundred and seven hundred pounds per year in Britain, and when overseas this would be reduced to between two and three hundred pounds.⁹⁴ The return was never constant. It fluctuated not only because of the differences between home and foreign service, but also due to the differences in the charges imposed by those providing the clothing.⁹⁵ However, since most of the work involved in achieving

⁹¹ Turner, 'Army Agency', 28.

⁹² *6th RCME* (1808) 367.

⁹³ *19th RSCF* (1797) *Appendix M4*, 395, 'Memorandum relative to the Allowances made to the Colonels or Commandants of the regular Corps of Foot or Militia, for the Cloathing of the Non-commissioned Officers and Private Men'; ii, 82a, 85b, Losses made good by government, 86a, additional clothing on account of losses in battle.; *7th RCME* (1808) 133, 135, 204.

⁹⁴ *6th RCME* (1808) 381; *Appendix 61*, 'Examination of Charles Greenwood Esq., 12th April 1808; See also, RHK-M, 2/B7/-, 'Profit on a Regiment if the Effectives are equal to the full Establishment', no date.

⁹⁵ *6th RCME* (1808) 369.

the profit was performed by the Agent, as described in Chapter 3, a colonelcy clearly remained a lucrative sinecure.

In 1798 William Windham, as Secretary at War, described to the Finance Committee the system by which clothing was procured for the army, established under Royal Warrant in 1781. It had remained unaltered, even after Burke's Pay Office Act had removed other financial dealings from the army, and placed them under the control of the Secretary at War.⁹⁶ Windham stated,

No contracts are entered into by Government for the supply of the Clothing or Accoutrements of the Army. The Colonel of each Corps makes his own engagements for them with such Tradesmen as he may think fit to employ. The Clothing for the Cavalry is provided once in every two years, for the Infantry every year, according to the Patterns approved by His Majesty, and deposited at the Office of the Comptroller of the Accounts of the Army, after being sealed by the Board of General Officers, appointed annually under His Majesty's Regulations to inspect and examine the Clothing of the Army.

When made up, the Clothing is personally inspected by one of the said General Officers, whose Certificate of its conformity to the Sealed Pattern is necessary for authorizing the Board to pass and allow the Colonel's assignment of the off-reckonings, or sums provided on the establishment of the Corps, for the Clothing of the whole number of Non-commissioned Officers, Trumpeters, or Drummers, and private Men, borne on the said Establishment. ... The surplus, after satisfying every charge ... remains to the use of the Colonel, or his Representatives.⁹⁷

Items of uniform, which had been submitted by the Comander in Chief, were passed by the Clothing Board, and by the addition of the seals of three of their number, became the 'Sealed Patterns', which were lodged at the office of the Comptrollers of Army Accounts. They were the standard to which all regiments and their clothiers had to keep.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ As amended, 23 Geo. III c.50, s.19.

⁹⁷ 35th RSCF (1798) 625; *Appendix G1,667*, William Windham to Charles Abbot, 2nd March 1798.

⁹⁸ See for example, GRE-A, 2251, Orderley Book, 1st May 1799.

Clothing was traditionally issued on the 25th December each year, and therefore all sealed patterns for that issue had to be in place by the first week in the preceding May.⁹⁹ The regimental colonels, or their agents, would then assign the contracts for the clothing to a clothier, who would produce it in time for the issue date.¹⁰⁰ In order for clothing to reach the regiments by the prescribed date, wherever they were serving, regulations were issued requiring them to order clothing in October for home service, including the Channel Islands; July for the West Indies, Gibraltar, Malta and the Ionian Islands; May for the Cape of Good Hope; and February for the troops in the East Indies and North America.¹⁰¹ Prior to 1800, a single Board member would check each order upon completion, before a certificate could be issued which released the clothing to the regiments, and the off-reckonings to the colonels.¹⁰² After this date, the final check was made by two permanent Clothing Inspectors, employed at £1 per day, who would examine the clothing and issue certificates to the regiment, the clothier and the Board. From 1813, they were to be assisted by 'experienced persons' with 'habits of business', and the following year their pay was increased to that of a staff officer. Only after this issue could the clothing and the off-reckonings be released.¹⁰³ This took the responsibility for the sanctioning of funds away from the Generals who made up the Clothing Board, who, as colonels of corps themselves had a vested interest in the clothing of the army, and gave it to independent civilians, answerable only to the Treasury.

In 1793 the Public Accounts Committee recommended that the Clothing Board should be made responsible for all matters relating to the clothing of the army. It was to involve the Board taking the responsibility for the purchase of all items from the individual colonels and instituting a scheme of contract acquisition.¹⁰⁴ This would have resulted in any excess funds remaining in the Paymaster General's Account, rather than being passed on as profit to the colonels, which stressed that they would lose none of their financial advantage.¹⁰⁵ Even with a proposed compensation package for the colonels, nothing

⁹⁹ 6th RCME (1808) 373; *Appendix* 80, 620, Evidence of Mr. William Walmsley, 4th March 1808.

¹⁰⁰ 17th RSCF (1797) ii, 80a-81b, 86b-87a,b.

¹⁰¹ *General Regulations and Orders* (1811) 63.

¹⁰² 6th RCME (1808) 371.

¹⁰³ PRO WO 26/38/126-42, 'Regulations to the Clothing and Half Mounting of the Infantry; and to the Inspection of the Clothing of the Army Personnel', 1801; WO 4/426/230, Palmerston to Harrison, 28th August 1813; 378-9, Palmerston to Harrison, 26th April 1814.

¹⁰⁴ 9th RCPA (1783) 21.

¹⁰⁵ PRO WO 377/1/-, 'Off-Reckonings, Expenses of Regimental Clothing, and the Pay and Emoluments of the Colonel. History from 1737-1813', c.1813.

resulted from the suggestion. Nor did the reiteration of the suggestion by the Finance Committee of 1797,¹⁰⁶ or the Commission of Military Enquiry of 1808,¹⁰⁷ bring about the proposed change. The latter report stopped short of recommending the complete alteration proposed previously, instead suggesting that the Colonels only receive the off-reckonings for the effectives, and an additional amount of pay.¹⁰⁸ This had been the case in Household Regiments from 1780.¹⁰⁹ The indigenous system had the support of many influential figures, not least the Duke of Wellington, who believed that it ‘probably conduced to economy, as it was both the duty and interest of the commanding officer to see that the clothing of the regiment was fairly used by the men.’¹¹⁰ However, those able to exert greatest influence, and add the weight of military experience to their argument, were just the same group who stood to benefit most from maintaining the status quo - the colonels. Wellington himself being a colonel of the 33rd Regiment of Foot.¹¹¹ With such defence, it is not surprising that there was no change to the system of supply, and that the colonels continued to enjoy the full profit on their regiments until 1855.¹¹²

While all reports were at pains to point out that they were not accusing any party of dishonesty, the casual manner in which the clothing of the army was managed ensured that such dishonesty was always possible.¹¹³ Since the amount of money the colonel received was based upon the establishment rather than the effectives, not only was there a financial effect of any dishonesty, but also a material effect upon the strength of the army. For if a colonel chose to gain money through maintaining a low effective strength, his regiment would be consequently weaker, which was a matter of even greater concern during the wars. Due to the problems in recruiting outlined in Chapter 4, any dishonesty would be difficult to trace, as most regiments were regularly below their establishment.

However, it was the factor of economy around which the argument to maintain the system of supply revolved. The Commissioners of Military Enquiry could not conceive

¹⁰⁶ 19th RSCF (1797) 354.

¹⁰⁷ 6th RCME (1808) 367-70, 384-5.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 385-7.

¹⁰⁹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 568.

¹¹⁰ Duke of Wellington’s evidence before the Finance Committee, 15th April 1828, as quoted in Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 108, n.3.

¹¹¹ Army List (1807).

¹¹² Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, II, 570.

¹¹³ 19th RSCF (1797) 355; 6th RCME (1808) 307.

that a new mode of clothing the army could be cheaper and as effective,¹¹⁴ despite the evidence of the previous committees.¹¹⁵ They stated that the price allowed for a complete suit of clothing for a regular army soldier by off-reckonings was £2.5s.11²/₃d.,¹¹⁶ while the actual price for a Marine, who wore identical clothing, was £1.18s.5¹/₂d.,¹¹⁷ and for a Gunner in the Royal Artillery it was £2.5s.7¹/₂d.¹¹⁸ It was suggested by the Commissioners that due to the vast numbers of garments required, and the great variety of styles, a contract system as practised by the Board of Ordnance and the Admiralty would not be viable in the army.¹¹⁹ This seems to be a contradictory argument. By the very nature of a contract system, the greater the number of units produced, the cheaper the unit cost would be, therefore the greater numbers requiring clothing in the army would have served to reduce the cost. The scale of such an operation certainly did not preclude one contractor, John Maberley, from speculating by offering to supply the whole army with their clothing in 1809.¹²⁰ The variety of styles seems also to have been somewhat of an exaggerated problem. By 1808 the clothing of the army was at its most uniform since the outbreak of the wars, with the only major differences being between the different arms. In 1802/3, Clothing Regulations were issued detailing precisely what was to be worn by the army, and the standard to which the Clothing Inspectors and Inspecting Generals were to examine.¹²¹ At the time of the issue of these regulations, sealed patterns were sent to the headquarters of every corps, and it was made clear that the colonels were to be made responsible for the adherence to the standard, upon pain of court martial.¹²² This preoccupation with conformity to the sealed patterns and clothing regulations continued throughout the period under discussion. Colonels were warned that they would be held responsible for any deviation.¹²³ This was reiterated regularly,¹²⁴ and by every set of General Orders from 1811. These stated that,

¹¹⁴ 6th RCME (1808) 387.

¹¹⁵ 9th RCPA (1793) *passim*.; 19th RSCF (1797) *passim*.; 35th RSCF (1798) *passim*.

¹¹⁶ 35th RSCF (1798) 625, *Appendix G*1,667, William Windham to Charles Abbot, 2nd March 1798.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 624.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, *Appendix E*3, 661-664, 'Estimate of Clothing for the Royal Artillery, prepared by Mr. Dickey, Army Clothier'.

¹¹⁹ 6th RCME (1808) 384.

¹²⁰ John Maberley to Cecil Jenkinson, 19th April 1809, as quoted in, Emsley, *British Society*, 150.

¹²¹ PRO WO 26/39/146-90, Royal Warrant, 7th December 1803.

¹²² 6th RCME (1808) 371-3.

¹²³ PRO HO 50/416/-, Horse Guards Circular, 28th April 1810; Horse Guards Circular, 30th April 1810.

¹²⁴ PRO HO 50/416/-, 'Regulation for the Clothing and Appointments of the Army', 22nd April 1810 and 23rd July 1810; 'Regulation for Inspection of Great Coats', 19th March 1806 and 23rd July 1810.

Commanding Officers are responsible that the *Arms, Accoutrements, and Clothing*, and *all other Appointments*, both of Officers and Men of their respective Regiments, are in strict conformity to His Majesty's Regulations.¹²⁵

and,

His Majesty's Warrants, which have been issued at different times, contain the Instructions to be observed regarding the Clothing and Appointments of the Army, and no deviation from the Regulations contained in those several Warrants is to be permitted.¹²⁶

With such rigid uniformity across the whole army, it is difficult to see a problem in supplying by contract. In addition most units completely dismantled and re-tailored their whole clothing issue, therefore any minor regimental modifications could be made by the units themselves.¹²⁷ The objections to the adoption of the contract system can therefore be seen to be unfounded. It appears more likely that the reasons behind the objections were the same as those that prevented the abolition of the agency and purchase systems. That the authorities feared the upheaval that such a change would bring during the wars, or that the vested interest of the colonels proved too great to overcome.¹²⁸

The clothing of the regiments had been supplied made up since 1794, as units on active service found it difficult to make up and issue new clothing.¹²⁹ Since it was impossible to make to measure every item, clothing was usually supplied in four different sizes, numbered one to four. One in thirty would be of the larger size four, while the remaining sizes would be supplied in equal proportions.¹³⁰ It was supplied to the regiments packed in bales by the clothier, and at the expense of the colonel,¹³¹ whose responsibility it

¹²⁵ *General Regulations and Orders* (1811) 90.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 62.

¹²⁷ 6th *RCME* (1808) 374-5, 559, 609; For a detailed account of the issue of clothing at regimental level, see G. A. Stepler, 'Redcoat: The Regimental Coat of the British Infantryman, c. 1808-15', in *Military Illustrated (Past and Present)* (1989) Number 21, 10-13.

¹²⁸ Wilson, *House of Commons*, *passim*. There were seventy eight MPs who were Army Officers in 1808, constituting 12.07% of the Commons.

¹²⁹ PRO WO 26/35/423, General Order, 13th October 1794.

¹³⁰ Keith Raynor, unpublished notes on infantry clothing; This often necessitated even more work for the Regimental tailors, if the proportions of sizes of the men did not correspond. See for example, CUL Moore, Moore to Calvert, 18th August 1804.

¹³¹ 35th *RSCF* (1798) 623-4; 644, *Appendix E3*, 'Estimate of clothing costs by Mr. Dickey, Army Clothier'.

was to ensure delivery. Until 1813, assistance would only be given to the Colonels by the Commissariat in extreme circumstances.¹³² However, in that year the Treasury gave permission that all clothing would be carried on regular supply transport, providing that the additional capacity did not raise the required tonnage for the journey.¹³³ Upon arrival at the corps the bales were cut open, and the clothing was 'shrunk, by being thoroughly wetted with Clean Water', before being issued to the men.¹³⁴ A general officer would then inspect the corps, and report any deficiencies.¹³⁵

There were only minor inroads into the control of the area of supply of clothing by the colonels, with certain items removed completely from their jurisdiction. These had been highlighted by failings in their supply during the early campaigns in the West Indies and the Low Countries.¹³⁶ From 1801, greatcoats were supplied jointly by the colonels and the War Office, and issued free of charge to the men.¹³⁷ In 1808, as a result of the recommendations of the Commissioners of Military Enquiry, the responsibility for supply of greatcoats was removed from the colonels altogether, and their purchase was administered under an open War Office contract,¹³⁸ while their inspection was still performed by the Clothing Inspectors.¹³⁹ The supply of the coats by contract appears to have functioned well, with no complaints as to their quality, although the clothing inspectors did uncover a fraud in their supply during 1808, in which the contractor Messrs. Esdaile attempted to sell coats made of inferior quality cloth to the army. The deception was discovered before any coat reached the forces.¹⁴⁰ During 1809 and 1810, the 41st Regiment stationed in Canada did not receive any coats, which ensured that they were 500 short in a climate in which a greatcoat was indispensable. The problem was only solved by

¹³² RHK-M 1/B1/179, Murray to Kennedy, 12th July 1811; 1/B1/186, Murray to Kennedy, 13th July 1811; 1/B1/219.1, Murray to Kennedy, 27th July 1811; 1/B1/219.2, Lieutenant Colonel Williams to Murray, 26th July 1811; 1/B1/221, Murray to Commissary General, 29th July 1811; 3/B8/-, Murray to Kennedy, 23rd December 1813; 25th December 1813; 28th December 1813; 30th December 1813.

¹³³ PRO WO 4/426/199, Harrison to Palmerston, 29th July 1813; WO 4/426/237, Palmerston to Harrison, 13th September 1813.

¹³⁴ *General Regulations and Orders* (1811) 63.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.* 62-3.

¹³⁶ GRE-A, 278, Henry Dundas to Grey, 22nd April 1794; Emsley, *British Society*, 37-8; Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 68.

¹³⁷ PRO WO 3/33/519, Calvert to Colonels of Regiments, 11th March 1801.

¹³⁸ 6th RCME (1808) 372; 7th RCME (1808) 130; PRO WO 4/206/231-5, 'Circular Relative to the Provision of Great Coats for the Army,' 12th August 1808.

¹³⁹ PRO WO 26/40/40-3, Royal Warrant, 'Regulations for the Inspection of Great Coats', 19th March 1806.

¹⁴⁰ Robert Henderson, "'Not merely an article of comfort": British Infantry Greatcoats during the War of 1812', in *JSAHR* 75 (1997) 29.

the purchase of local cloth and the manufacture of the coats by the regimental tailors and the women of the corps.¹⁴¹ The Commissariat in Spain also struggled to maintain a constant supply, resorting to issues from stock obtained from the Portuguese army during 1811.¹⁴² These examples can be put down to the early teething troubles of the contract system, as by 1812, a substantial stock for issue and replacement was able to be maintained in Commissariat depots in both Spain and Canada.¹⁴³

Another essential item that was not supplied by the colonels was army footwear. Infantry shoes had been supplied by War Office contract since 1749,¹⁴⁴ and continued to be obtained in this way throughout the period under discussion. However, the increased demands of active service resulted in numerous shortages, and consequent hardships for the troops. Each soldier received a pair of shoes annually as part of his clothing allowance, and would be expected to purchase a further pair as a 'necessary', along with any needed due to the previous pairs wearing out. Even in light marching order, the second pair was supposed to be carried,¹⁴⁵ enabling a man to replace his shoes, especially on the march. However, there are so many comments regarding problems with shoes, it would appear that this state of affairs was either unsuccessful, or not adhered to.¹⁴⁶ The main problem for those supplying shoes was one of scale, and this resulted in breakdowns in either quality or the system of distribution. An inspection system as had been imposed upon the supply of clothing was impractical for an item that needed to be replaced so often, through the normal exigencies of the service, and therefore difficulties were noticed at the point of issue, rather than, as was shown with greatcoats, prior to their distribution. However, despite anecdotal evidence to the contrary, there are few examples of footwear of inferior quality. In Egypt, shoes were reported to have fallen apart due to their construction with a clay rather than a leather sole,¹⁴⁷ 'which caused an insufferable heat to the foot in dry weather, and in wet, mixed with water and dissolved away.'¹⁴⁸ Despite the prosecution of

¹⁴¹ *ibid.* 26-7.

¹⁴² RHK-M 1/B1/73, Murray to Kennedy, 12th February 1811.

¹⁴³ RHK-M 3/B8/-, 'Commissariat Memorandum respecting Great Coats', 31st December 1813; Henderson, 'British Infantry Greatcoats', 28.

¹⁴⁴ PRO WO 4/47/69, H. Fox to Captain Levett, 25th January 1749; H. Fox to Earl of Halifax, 25th January 1749; 70, H. Fox to King Gould Esq., 25th January 1749.

¹⁴⁵ P.J. Haythornthwait, 'Uniform and Equipment of the 78th', in *JSAHR* 67 (1989) 233-50.

¹⁴⁶ See for example, Banks, *Sergeant William Lawrence*, 35; Liddle-Hart, *Private Wheeler*, 102.

¹⁴⁷ John H. Thornton, 'Brunel the Bootmaker', *Journal of the British Boot and Shoe Institution*, September 1969, 1-2.

¹⁴⁸ Lady Celia Noble, *The Brunels, Father and Son*, (London, 1838) 28.

the manufacturers of these shoes,¹⁴⁹ similar problems were faced by the forces in the early stages of the Peninsular war. One soldier stated that while retreating to Corunna ‘shoes failed and many were barefoot’,¹⁵⁰ while another recalls that the British soldiers resorted to stealing the boots of the French prisoners, ‘we returned to Colonia, ... taking with us the prisoners, who had walked along barefooted, as we had availed ourselves of their boots.’¹⁵¹ However, while the Egyptian example is clearly one of poor quality footwear, supplied by an unscrupulous contractor, there appears to be very few instances of problems experienced due to the quality of manufacture of shoes. Indeed, a survey of all sources reveals reports of only three, despite containing the details of the processing of several hundred thousand pairs.¹⁵² Even these three examples were part of one defective batch, mistakenly issued after suffering damage during the Corunna campaign.¹⁵³ In each case Boards of Survey were set up at the scene, and reports submitted, as it would be in the interests of the several parties with pecuniary involvement to formalise such proceedings. Therefore it would seem likely that had more such incidents occurred, the proceedings of at least some of the subsequent enquiries would have survived. The inference must be that the shoes supplied to the army were not regularly of an unserviceable quality.

One reason for the failure of shoes referred to in contemporary accounts must be their unsuitability to the terrain over which the army was to operate. Military shoes had never been items produced specifically for the purpose, and were manufactured in the simplest straight-lasting style.¹⁵⁴ Therefore, when subject to the rigours of campaigns over rough terrain, it is not surprising that they gave out. The army had not learned from similar experiences during the American War of Independence.¹⁵⁵ By 1811, the Peninsular army had been issued with spare soles and heels, to enable the repair of their shoes, in an effort

¹⁴⁹ Thornton, ‘Brunel the Bootmaker’, 2.

¹⁵⁰ Liddle-Hart, *Private Wheeler*, 102.

¹⁵¹ Banks, *Sergeant William Lawrence*, 35.

¹⁵² *WD* vii, 49, Wellington to Liverpool, 15th December 1810; vii, Wellington to Liverpool, 31st March 1811; PRO WO 1/847/125, Harrison to Lieutenant Colonel Bunbury, 16th February 1811; 129, Gordon to Harrison, 4th February 1811; 133, John Trotter to Commissary in Chief, 2nd February 1811; WO 3/200/161, Harry Calvert to Thomas Pauquier, 31st December 1811; RHK-M 1/B1/164.2, ‘Proceedings of a Board of Survey held at Monte Rianjo’, 3rd July 1811; RHK-M 1/B1/164.1 Murray to Kennedy, 5th July 1811.

¹⁵³ PRO WO 1/847/125, Harrison to Lieutenant Colonel Bunbury, 16th February 1811; 129, Gordon to Harrison, 4th February 1811; 133, John Trotter to Commissary in Chief, 2nd February 1811; WO 3/200/161, Harry Calvert to Thomas Pauquier, 31st December 1811.

¹⁵⁴ Bennett Cuthbertson, *A System for the Complete Internal Management and Economy of a Battalion of Infantry* (Dublin, 1768) Article XVI.

¹⁵⁵ PRO 30/11/82/81-82, Cornwallis to Balfour, 22nd November 1780, as quoted in R. Arthur Bowler, *Logistics and the Failure of the British Army in America, 1775-1783* (Princeton, 1975) 149.

to alleviate this problem.¹⁵⁶ However, the later stages of the war in Spain saw the introduction of the first specially designed army boot, produced by Marc Brunel. Prompted by his observation of the soldiers returning from the Corunna campaign,¹⁵⁷ Brunel turned his engineering skill to the industrial manufacture of military shoes. His Battersea factory employed twenty-five wounded soldiers, each performing a single task by the use of a machine, which resulted in the production of one hundred pairs of shoes each day, at a unit cost two shillings less than previously paid.¹⁵⁸ The shoes were made by riveting on the soles, (a technique used in the production of army boots till the introduction of the composite sole),¹⁵⁹ which not only strengthened the construction, but also reduced the wear on the sole, since the metal would be in contact with the ground. The government sanctioned the development of Brunel's factory in order to meet the whole army's demands,¹⁶⁰ the first boots being introduced to regiments for test from 1813.¹⁶¹ They were issued to General Lambert's Brigade, which was part of the 6th Division, the General being 'requested to make special reports on the nailed shoes to ascertain the relative advantages of these shoes compared with those already issued to the soldiers.'¹⁶² Evidently these trials were a success since in 1815 the factory was in full production, making boots for other ranks, and perhaps officers, since some are described as being produced with the addition of a lining and binding.¹⁶³ Brunel was negotiating to supply the new French government, when Napoleon escaped from Elba, and production was increased to meet British army demands.¹⁶⁴ Despite each soldier being issued with a pair of the boots as a present for service at Waterloo,¹⁶⁵ 80,000 pairs were left unsold after 1815, which eventually led to Brunel's bankruptcy.¹⁶⁶ It is not clear if the whole army was equipped with the new boots prior to the Waterloo campaign, although it would seem likely. If the figures for the daily production are correct, then the factory could have produced in excess of one million pairs from 1812 to 1815, and as only 80,000 were left unsold after Waterloo, the inference must

¹⁵⁶ *WD* vii, 49, Wellington to Liverpool, 15th December 1810; RHK-M 1/B1/164.1 Murray to Kennedy, 5th July 1811.

¹⁵⁷ Noble, *The Brunels*, 28.

¹⁵⁸ PRO WO 4/427/363, Palmerston to Harrison, 26th July 1815; Phillips, *A Morning's Walk*, 45-8.

¹⁵⁹ Thornton, 'Brunel the Bootmaker', 2.

¹⁶⁰ *ibid.*

¹⁶¹ RHK-M 3/B8/-, Murray to Kennedy, 20th July 1813.

¹⁶² RHK-M 3/B8/-, Murray to Kennedy, 25th December 1813.

¹⁶³ Phillips, *A Morning's Walk*, 49.

¹⁶⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ PRO WO 4/427/363, Palmerston to Harrison, 26th July 1815; 372; Palmerston to Harrison, 12th August 1815; WO 4/452/189, Merry to Storekeeper General, 21st November 1815; *WD*, xiii, 440-1, General Order, 25th September 1815.

be that a substantial number of officers and men, if not the whole of the army was wearing Brunel's boots by the end of the period. This development and change to army footwear had been possible, not only through Brunel's innovation, but due to the purchase power of the contract system.

That the problem of design was alleviated by the end of the war, only partly addresses the question of army footwear. The second problem area identified was that of actual supply, and this can be observed from the earliest years of the war, in particular in the West Indies.¹⁶⁷ Although it was suggested that much of the problem was caused by the government's failure to allocate sufficient funds to footwear,¹⁶⁸ the rate at which shoes wore out ensured a constant demand. These requests were to continue throughout the Peninsular campaign,¹⁶⁹ and are reinforced by references in contemporary dairies to the failure of the shoes to reach the men, such as on the retreat to Corunna when men were barefoot while casks of shoes were destroyed by the Commissariat.¹⁷⁰ This was in part due to the insistence by that department for the submission of a return for every pair of shoes issued, which Colonel Murray, the Quarter Master General in the Peninsular believed caused soldiers to wait up to three days for replacement footwear.¹⁷¹ To alleviate this problem, in March and April 1811, a supply of 500 pairs of shoes was despatched to each divisional Commissary, to be 'distributed to the British Regiments' at the direction of the general commanding the division.¹⁷² Through this measure a soldier would be able to draw a new pair of shoes almost immediately his old ones wore out. In addition, Wellington requested 'that the shoes sent to the army should be of the best quality for wear, and should be made of the largest size',¹⁷³ which as a compromise enabled a stock of footwear to be available, if perhaps on the large side for many of the troops. These improvements to the supply of shoes is borne out by contemporary accounts, as no diarist appears to experience

¹⁶⁶ Thornton, 'Brunel the Bootmaker', 6.

¹⁶⁷ GRE-A, 278, Henry Dundas to Grey, 25th March 1794.

¹⁶⁸ A. Forbes, *A Short History of the Ordnance Service* (London, 1921) I, 156, as quoted in Emsley, *British Society*, 37-8.

¹⁶⁹ See for example, *WD* iv, 378, Wellington to Castlereagh, 31st May 1809; vi, 528, Wellington to Liverpool, 20th October 1810; vii, 423, Wellington to Liverpool, 31st March 1811.

¹⁷⁰ Ruth W. Verner (ed.) *Reminiscences of William Verner (1782 - 1871) 7th Hussars*, (London, 1965) 16.

¹⁷¹ RHK-M 1/B1/129 Reynett to Kennedy, 8th April 1811.

¹⁷² RHK-M 1/B1/117-120 and 122 Murray to Kennedy, 30th March to 1st April 1811; 1/B1/129, 131, 133 & 134 Reynett to Kennedy 8th to 14th April 1811.

¹⁷³ *WD* vii, 423. Wellington to Earl of Liverpool, 31st March 1811.

problems with footwear after this date, and there are no examples of complaints of shortage within the Commissariat papers.

Despite the maintenance of the colonels' involvement in the supply of uniform to the army, the war years saw a steady increase in its quality and uniformity. Through the imposition of high standards, which were rigidly adhered to by the Clothing Inspectors, together with strict new regulations, the army was clothed as never before, in a discernible 'uniform' fashion. Many of the items previously supplied by the colonels, were supplied through contract by the government, thus resulting in both uniformity and economy. In addition, by the improvements in supply, fewer soldiers would experience hardship due to the adverse effects of a campaign on his clothing. While many suppliers made vast profits from their Army business, there is little evidence of profiteering throughout the period under discussion.¹⁷⁴

6.5 WEAPONRY

The final area of supply is that of arms and ammunition, which was the responsibility of the Ordnance Department. While the supply of all other army weapons was able to keep pace with demand, the weapon which caused most problems in the area of supply was the infantry musket, and it is on that which this section will concentrate. In 1793 the standard infantry weapon was the Short Land Pattern musket. It was produced only through contract by the more skilled manufacturers, as the Ordnance specification was considered too high for most journeymen and less skilled craftsmen, the work on the Short Land Pattern being considered as 'more nice than what they have lately been used to.'¹⁷⁵ It had a 42 inch barrel, and had been adopted in 1768.¹⁷⁶

Richard Glover supported his argument that the army was unprepared for war, by listing several areas in which the Ordnance Department failed in its initial supply of small

¹⁷⁴ See also Beverley Lemire, *Dress, Culture and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade before the Factory, 1660-1800* (London, 1997) 11-32.

¹⁷⁵ PRO HO 50/370/59-61, Richmond to Dundas, 11th October 1793.

¹⁷⁶ This section relies extensively upon, R. Glover, *Preparation*, Chapter 2; De Witt Bailey and David Harding, 'From India to Waterloo: The "India Pattern" Musket', in Alan J. Guy (ed.), *The Road to Waterloo: The British Army and the struggle against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, 1793-1815* (London, 1990) 48-57.

arms to the army at the outbreak of war. First, he blamed the inadequate peace-time purchasing policy, which failed to create a stock-pile of weapons sufficient to prosecute the war. Secondly, he pointed to the method of production of the muskets, which did not enable a vast increase in production volume. Thirdly, Glover observed that the Ordnance was in direct competition for the muskets produced. Finally, he accused the administration of interference in the supply of the weapons, which frustrated the efforts of the Ordnance.¹⁷⁷ This is a somewhat questionable use of the available evidence, from which it does not appear that the Ordnance was unprepared for war. In 1793 there were 62,500 muskets in store in Britain,¹⁷⁸ which was more than three times the number of men in the army, all of whom were already fully armed. Production of Ordnance weaponry had actually been reduced due to there being such substantial stores of weapons.¹⁷⁹ This would mean that the army was able to expand to more than three times its number, and still have enough weapons. In Chapter 4, it was established that from a peace-time establishment of 17,013 men in 1793, the army expanded within a year to 27,289.¹⁸⁰ If the subsequent expansion had been along the lines planned in the wake of the American War of Independence,¹⁸¹ the supply of weapons to them would not have been a problem. However, the unforeseen nature of the conflict ensured that the army needed to be expanded beyond previous assessments, and the army estimates for 1794, which included militia and fencibles, revealed that the total of muskets required was 265,000,¹⁸² leaving a deficiency of over 200,000 weapons.

The criticism of the reaction of government and the Ordnance to the problem of lack of weaponry is also unfounded. Although Glover infers that each department conflicted with others in their responses, it is clear that the response was wide-ranging, and far from conflicting. The Duke of Richmond, as Master of the Board of Ordnance, had spent the previous ten years overseeing trials into a new infantry musket,¹⁸³ and lost no time in introducing a number of measures which ultimately alleviated the supply problem. He, along with Pitt, negotiated for the purchase of several thousand muskets either of

¹⁷⁷ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 51.

¹⁷⁸ PRO HO 50/368/289, 'Return of the Small Arms in Force at the Tower and the Out Posts and Places in Great Britain as collected from the Returns last received', February 1793.

¹⁷⁹ Bailey and Harding, 'The "India Pattern" Musket', 48.

¹⁸⁰ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 274, 398.

¹⁸¹ Pimlott, 'Administration of the British Army', 360-1.

¹⁸² Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, iv, 218.

¹⁸³ Bailey and Harding, 'The "India Pattern" Musket', 49.

foreign pattern or manufacture.¹⁸⁴ Far from creating a conflict of interest, these purchases ensured that muskets of some description were available, and despite their diversity, they would have served in an emergency. They certainly proved of a quality sufficient to be offered to foreign powers in 1799,¹⁸⁵ and to several Volunteer corps in 1803.¹⁸⁶

In an effort to stimulate the production of army muskets, in October 1793, Richmond contacted all reputable gun manufacturers, and encouraged them to increase their production of Ordnance weaponry,¹⁸⁷ while establishing contracts with six further producers.¹⁸⁸ This intervention raised the number of muskets produced to between 500 and 1000 per week,¹⁸⁹ enabling the delivery of 31,000 in the first twelve months of the conflict, which was more than had been delivered during the first year of any previous war.¹⁹⁰ However, there were concerns that this was all that could be achieved, as there were conflicting orders from the Irish and East Indian authorities, which diverted the attentions of many of the gun makers.¹⁹¹ Both these customers required a lower standard of finish,¹⁹² and did not delay payments as traditionally was the case with the Ordnance. The former enabled less skilled workmen to complete the muskets, while the latter ensured that such conflicting contracts had to be taken to prevent many manufacturers going out of business through lack of funds. In 1794 it was believed that payment could be delayed as long as six months, while in 1787, the Ordnance admitted that it could often take as long as thirteen months to process payment.¹⁹³ With this in mind, in October 1793, Richmond opened negotiations with the Board of the East India Company with a view to taking over the stocks of muskets in the Company's store in Britain.¹⁹⁴ Although these weapons were considered inferior, they had proved serviceable in protracted conflict in India, and were

¹⁸⁴ SRO GD51/1/626/1, Matthew Lewis to Henry Dundas, 20th October 1794; GD51/1/626/4, Horse Guards to War Office, 21st October 1794; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 53-5; Bailey and Harding, 'The "India Pattern" Musket', 49.

¹⁸⁵ PRO WO 46/25/62-3, R.H. Crew (Secretary to the Ordnance) to the Chevalier d'Almeida, 27th May 1799.

¹⁸⁶ 3rd RSCF (1817) *Appendix* 1, 98-100.

¹⁸⁷ PRO HO 50/370/59-61, Richmond to Dundas, 11th October 1793.

¹⁸⁸ Bailey and Harding, 'The "India Pattern" Musket', 49; Howard L. Blackmore, *British Military Firearms, 1650-1850* (London, 1994) 129.

¹⁸⁹ PRO HO 50/370/59-61, Richmond to Dundas, 11th October 1793.

¹⁹⁰ Bailey and Harding, 'The "India Pattern" Musket', 49.

¹⁹¹ PRO WO 47/2366/-, Ordnance Minutes, 17th April 1795.

¹⁹² PRO HO 50/370/59-61, Richmond to Dundas, 11th October 1793; WO 47/2366/-, Ordnance Minutes, 17th April 1795.

¹⁹³ PRO WO 47/2365/-, Ordnance Minutes, Baker to the Board of Ordnance, June 1794; WO 47/2368/- 13th May 1797.

¹⁹⁴ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 51-2;

thought to be what the army ‘must put up with in an emergency’.¹⁹⁵ By February 1794, the Directors of the Company agreed that all weapons in England, and in the process of manufacture would be sold to the government.¹⁹⁶ Within eight months over 33,000 weapons had been delivered in this way, with further quantities following at various points during the conflict. By 1815, 142,970 small-arms had been delivered in this way.¹⁹⁷ Significantly, by February 1795, the Ordnance Department had begun ordering India Pattern muskets directly from gun manufacturers for the use of the non-regular formations, thus enabling the work to be carried out by the expanding but less-skilled workforce.¹⁹⁸ The intention was to ensure that the army proper received the Short Land Pattern weapon, but even this proved to be beyond the capacity of the industry. In April 1797 all contractors were directed to cease production of all but the India Pattern musket, which enabled over 72,600 complete weapons, and components for over 30,000 more to be delivered by the end of that year.¹⁹⁹ The transfer of production from the Short Land Pattern to the India Pattern proved a great success, and from 1795 to 1815 at least 2,834,485 India Pattern muskets had been produced under Ordnance contract.²⁰⁰ While it was not without its post-war critics, who blamed the inferior quality and mass production of the weapon for a high number of unserviceable muskets during the course of the conflict,²⁰¹ the adoption of a musket of inferior, although obviously serviceable, quality, enabled the army to prosecute the war without fear of arms shortages. In addition it enabled the Ordnance to engage in the supply of arms to other governments.

The first government to benefit from the restructuring of the Ordnance supply system was the Irish. Their establishment had been equipped with similar weapons to those supplied to the East India Company, and so resulted in the same problems of diverted production.²⁰² In 1797, the British and Irish Ordnance Departments agreed that all purchases for both establishments would be conducted by the British,²⁰³ thus removing one competitor from the market. Another state relying upon British armaments was Portugal.

¹⁹⁵ PRO HO 50/370/59-61, Richmond to Dundas, 11th October 1793.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Bailey and Harding, ‘The “India Pattern” Musket’, 52-3.

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.*, 54.

¹⁹⁹ *ibid.*

²⁰⁰ *ibid.*, 56.

²⁰¹ 3rd RSCF (1817) Appendix 1, 98-100.

²⁰² R. Glover, *Preparation*, 52.

²⁰³ PRO HO 50/373/-, Crew to Pelham, 14th April 1797; R. Glover, *Preparation*, *ibid.*

Following the Spanish declaration of war against her in 1795, it became even more essential to procure arms. However, as has been shown, it was not in the best interests of Britain to permit even an ally to divert armament manufacture away from the supply of Ordnance weaponry. The solution was to maintain the control of the market, and to supply the Portuguese directly.²⁰⁴ At first the Ordnance discouraged them from placing independent orders,²⁰⁵ but in 1799 an attempted order for arms was intercepted by the Ordnance, and the Portuguese were informed that they could no longer negotiate for arms in Britain, except through the Ordnance, who offered them a supply of the foreign arms they held in reserve.²⁰⁶ Thus all serious competitors had been removed from the market, and the Ordnance held a monopoly on the purchase and supply of muskets. Only the East India Company were permitted to contract with manufacturers, and they had already shown their willingness to comply with the wants of the army.

It was shown in Sections 6.3 and 6.4 above, that although the office of the Secretary at War assumed control of Army Estimates in 1783, the allocation of money to regiments for supplies, was never able to be geared to the effective strength of the unit, with colonels always receiving the emoluments for the full strength of their corps. Until 1799, this system of assessing the quantity of supplies issued to the regiments was also used in the supply of weaponry. This resulted in extensive supplies of arms, that were not required by a unit with a lower establishment than estimate, being stored, often under conditions which made them unfit for service when returned to the Ordnance.²⁰⁷ From 1799 all requests for arms were submitted through the Adjutant General to the Secretary at War, (the two offices processing returns) who would cause the number required to be checked against the establishment and effectives.²⁰⁸ It is impossible to assess how many weapons this saved the Ordnance. In Chapter 4, it was noted that few regiments were ever able to maintain their effective strength, but all were recruited up to that strength as often as possible. In addition the life of a weapon was estimated to be twelve years,²⁰⁹ therefore most units would have received at most only two full issues of weaponry during the period under discussion, and would also have required a full establishment of muskets on occasion, depending upon

²⁰⁴ PRO WO 46/24/50-1, Crew to the Chevalier d'Almeida, 5th August 1796; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 52-3.

²⁰⁵ PRO WO 46/25/15-18, Cornwallis to Dundas, February 1797; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 53.

²⁰⁶ PRO WO 46/25/62-3, Crew to the Chevalier d'Almeida, 27th June 1799; R. Glover, *Preparation*, 53.

²⁰⁷ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, II, 165-6.

²⁰⁸ *General Regulations and Orders* (1811) 67-8; Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, II, 166-7.

²⁰⁹ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, II, 166.

their ability to recruit and maintain their strength. The savings made could therefore have been minimal, but it did remove a system that was based on unsound principles, to the benefit of the supply of the army as a whole.

With the purchase of arms monopolised by the Ordnance, and their supply to the army based upon actual strengths, the control of the issue of weaponry can be seen to have been put into a state of order since the beginning of the conflict. However, a major development was still to be introduced that would greatly expand the capacity of the Ordnance, and change the supply of arms to the present day. In Chapters 2 and above, referring to the system of agency, it was observed that it was decided to maintain the status quo during the course of the wars, fearing the upheaval caused by change. However, such a change was introduced in the area of the Storekeeper General during 1808, and it had also been introduced within the supply of muskets. As early as 1794, the take-over of arms production by the Board of Ordnance had been advocated. It was suggested that, ‘the only method that can be taken to prevent in future the present complaints is to have a Manufactory of Small Arms upon the Establishment of the Ordnance’.²¹⁰ However, Richmond was wary of implementing the idea, fearing the drawing of trained men away from the existing gun manufacturers, to the detriment of the whole service, and of the ethics of government involvement in business.²¹¹ Ten years later, the scheme was again suggested, with the main argument being the high cost of the weapons on the open market.

In 1793 the government had sanctioned the purchase of muskets at 11s.8d., which by 1796, had risen to 25s., and by 1803, it had reached upwards of 34s.²¹² This, together with the vast number of new weapons required for the Volunteers, prompted the establishment of an Ordnance Office in Birmingham, under the superintendence of an Inspector of Small Arms, Lieutenant Colonel James Miller.²¹³ His task was to ensure the quality of the weapons produced by the manufacturers of the town, and to encourage their increased production. He was patently successful. From April to December 1803, 40,699 muskets were delivered to the Ordnance from Birmingham, while the following year, the

²¹⁰ PRO WO 46/24/91-2, Crew to Hadden, 25th July 1794.

²¹¹ Glover, *Preparation*, 61.

²¹² Glover, *Preparation*, 55, 59.

²¹³ 15th RCME (1812) 329, *Appendix 9*, Also to the Commissioners; 379, *Appendix 9A*, Royal Warrant, 1st April 1804; 379-80, *Appendix 9A*, Colonel Hadden to Crewe, 7th February 1804; 380-1, *Appendix 9C*, ‘Instructions to Lieutenant Colonel Miller, appointed Inspector of Small Arms’, 1st February 1804.

town supplied 167,749 muskets, and by 1809 this had reached 248,366.²¹⁴ However, the most significant intervention in matters previously considered open only to private enterprise was the formation of a 'grand manufactory' for small-arms at the Tower of London, in 1804.²¹⁵ Here muskets were fabricated, repaired, and distributed to the army, with the whole enterprise coming under Miller's jurisdiction.²¹⁶ This measure proved a success, and was developed in 1808, when further arms were required for the Spanish forces, and the Local Militia, by the establishment of a complete factory manufacturing weapons at Lewisham.²¹⁷ With this addition to the capacity of musket production, the Ordnance was able to assure its supply to the army, while enabling the government to pursue a policy of aid through armament, to Spain in 1808-9, and to Prussia, Russia and Sweden in 1813.²¹⁸ Manufacture so increased, that in 1814, the stores the Tower of London armouries were deemed full, and subsequent deliveries were diverted to Chester, Chelmsford, Dover, Edinburgh and Tynemouth for storage.²¹⁹ Typically, in an enquiry into arms supply in 1817, the Board were criticised for having too many weapons in store.²²⁰ The supply of small-arms to the army was further consolidated in 1813, with the establishment at Birmingham of a proofing house, principally for the barrels of small-arms, again under the Inspector.²²¹ During the period under discussion, the production and supply of muskets had moved from a haphazard collection of private contracts, to a monopoly of production by the Ordnance, which now had its own facilities to process every stage of weapon production, thus ensuring it would not have to be a captive of the vagaries of the market in the future.

²¹⁴ *15th RCME* (1812) 383, *Appendix 9F*, Also to the Commissioners of Military Enquiry; This exceeded the arms production of Ely Witney in America, which at its peak during 1812-13 could only produce around 22,000 weapons per year. James A. Houston, *The Sinews of War: Army Logistics 1775-1953* (Washington, DC, 1966) 105-6.

²¹⁵ *15th RCME* (1812) 329; Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, II, 158.

²¹⁶ *15th RCME* (1812) 331.

²¹⁷ *15th RCME* (1812) 333.

²¹⁸ Hall, *British Strategy*, 28.

²¹⁹ Blackmore, *British Firearms*, 140.

²²⁰ *3rd RSCF* (1817) *Appendix 1*, 95, 98-100.

²²¹ 53 Geo. III c.cxv 'An Act to ensure the proper and careful manufacturing of firearms in England; for making provision for proving the barrels of such Fire Arms', 10th July 1813.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The supply system which developed during the course of the period under discussion reveals an ever-increasing control from the central authority of government. The Commissariat, at home and abroad, was united under one head by 1809; weaponry was supplied under a Board of Ordnance monopoly of production, which ensured issue to the army, and enabled the policy of arming British allies; and the Storekeeper General was appointed to oversee the purchase, packing and distribution of stores, despite it resulting in an increase in cost to the public, amid the constant preoccupation with making savings, however small. The traditional control of the purchase power and supply structure of the army was maintained, and in most areas expanded. In only one area did the old system prevail. The Colonels, through their agents, were still permitted to supply all but a few of the items of clothing for the soldier, although even this area was not without inroads of civilian control. Clothing Inspectors had been appointed to impose increasing regulation upon the uniform supply of the regiments. However, despite several reports pointing out savings that could be made to the public, and despite guarantees to the colonels that none of their profit would be lost, most of the colonels' power over clothing was maintained. It was considered inopportune to proceed with such change during the wars, despite just such a change having been accomplished within the Storekeeper General's Department, and within the area of arms supply. This suggests that vested interest had more to do with the decision to maintain the status quo than the fear of disturbance to an established system in time of war. Above all, the structures developed during the period were, in the most part, successful. However, despite the successes, active service conditions still greatly affected the issue of many items. The Commissariat, in particular, found it difficult to maintain a level of efficiency under field service conditions, ultimately relinquishing the supply of all but food and forage to the newly established Storekeeper General's Department. This change occurred too late to assess its effectiveness.

Despite the exception of the colonel's control over his regiment, all other areas were developed along modern administrative lines, with full accounting and accountability, and clear hierarchical structures. By 1815, the army had lost all ability to dictate its own purchasing. It is in this area, above all others already discussed, that the influence and control of the Treasury can be seen.

CHAPTER 7 TRANSPORT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established that the supply of the Army was traditionally based on a haphazard system of checks and balances. It was shown that this system was developed into an effective and centrally controlled organisation, under the direct authority of the civilian administration.

The system by which the goods so supplied were transported to the Army is of equal importance. Despite substantial improvements in the Commissariat arrangements during the course of the Wars, it was found impossible to make such improvements effective under active service conditions. In particular, transport proved to be a constant difficulty, with many problems of supply being directly attributable to failings in this area.

This chapter will examine the transport system. It will explore all areas, not just those relating directly to the supply of food and equipment, but also the means by which men were moved to the theatres of conflict. The chapter will also examine how communication was maintained between those theatres and Britain. It will particularly look for signs of the centralisation of authority in these areas, as has been established in all other aspects of the Army in previous chapters. It will examine the effectiveness of the transport and communication systems, and their ability to function under the pressures of the Wars, observing the effects upon them of a global conflict, through which they were forced to expand beyond any previous expectations.

7.2 SHIPPING

At the outbreak of the Wars there was no co-ordinating body for transport. The movement of both men and supplies was a haphazard affair, which was not assisted by the immediate need for 40,000 tons of shipping.¹ The Navy Board was responsible for the bulk of transport, while individual departments had to hire their own shipping for any other

¹ *Proceedings and Measures of Government on the Finance Reports 1707-8 (1708) 747-8*

duties. For a year this state of affairs persisted, until, due to the 'unparalleled present war',² and to maintain a further check on the public money involved, in July 1794, the Transport Board was formed.³ As with all areas of supply, the control of this single civilian body was kept firmly in the hands of the Treasury. Its aim was 'to consolidate the business, once managed by too many hands, into one direction, for the greater precision and economy'.⁴ It was charged with the task of initiating, organising and maintaining all seaborne military operations, and as a result proved an excellent training ground for the organisation of large expeditions. One captain at least made admiral due to his abilities shown in the Transport Board.⁵ It consisted of three commissioners for general transport, two for prisoners of war, and had a staff of twenty one. By 1797 it had hired 278,216 tons of shipping, at a cost of £4,088,524.3s.5d,⁶ and was maintaining a fleet of 160,000 tons.⁷ Despite its recent formation, and the departmental reforms outlined in previous chapters, it still functioned through the levying of fees on each of its transactions.⁸ Despite suggested reform,⁹ it was maintained in its original form to the end of the period.

The transporting of men and supplies by sea was to be an ever increasing problem to those responsible for the organisation of campaigns. As the size of armies required in the field increased, so too did the need for shipping in ever greater numbers, using a fleet of merchant ships whose owners were more interested in more lucrative tasks and destinations. As early as 1795, the Abercromby-Christian expedition to the West Indies expanded beyond the merchant fleet's capacity to supply ships to transport them,¹⁰ and even with the assistance of shipping brokers, excessively high prices resulted.¹¹ By 1797, the estimated total British merchant shipping capable of travelling to the West Indies, was estimated to be 650,000 tons,¹² and since Grey's expedition was estimated to be around 100,000 men,¹³

² 18th RSCF (1797) 344, 355, *Appendix (A)*, 'Examination of William Harding', 30th June 1797.

³ The best study of the early work of the Transport Board is covered in, Condon, 'Administration of the Transport Service' *passim*.

⁴ *Proceedings and Measures* (1798) 748.

⁵ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 166. The Admiral was Hugh Clobbery Christian, in 1795.

⁶ 18th RSCF (1797) 344.

⁷ PRO WO 1/800/399-407, Transport Board to Huskisson, 25th March 1800. There was 100,000 tons engaged in transporting men, and 60,000 in transporting freight.

⁸ *Ibid.* 348.

⁹ 5th RCNE (1803) 24.

¹⁰ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 184-5.

¹¹ *Proceedings and Measures* (1798) 748; 12th RCME (1810) 337.

¹² J. Creswell, 'British Shipping at the end of the Eighteenth Century', *Mariner's Mirror*, xxv, (1939) 197-207.

¹³ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower* 184

each requiring one and a half to two tons of shipping on voyages of such distances,¹⁴ it is clear that to transport the whole force would have tied up over one third of the total merchant fleet, at a time when the employment of British shipping was at an all-time high.¹⁵ Despite attempts to obtain sufficient vessels, including ships from Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and America,¹⁶ the expedition was only saved by the arrival of the East India Company fleet, which was not committed until the following season, and so was able to transport the force to the West Indies, after a substantial, yet speedy, refit.¹⁷ However, this was not seen as a complete success due to the high costs of employing East India Company ships.¹⁸ A regular transport cost thirteen shillings per ton per month, those on three month contracts thirty shillings per ton per month, while the East India fleet received £20 per man per voyage.¹⁹ This would mean that a 400 ton vessel, with a capacity to carry 200 men, would have cost £260 per month if hired as a regular transport under a contract for a specific task. The same ship would have cost £600 per month if hired on a three monthly contract. An East India ship, contracted to carry two hundred men would have cost £4000 for the same task. Even if the voyage had taken three months to complete, it would still have cost the public twice as much to hire East India shipping.

The conflict between the needs of merchant shipping to ply their trade, and thus make money, and the Army's need to transport men and supplies, would continue throughout the period, often resulting in ships, hardly seaworthy, being used as transports.²⁰ One diarist related,

It was a universal complaint, the description of the Boats that were hired as transports, not only were they wholly unfit for the service, but in many instances they were unsafe, as not being seaworthy. It is only necessary to look back to see the number of brave fellows who were lost, by being exposed to these old crazy unserviceable boats.²¹

¹⁴ PRO ADM 108/30/18, Rupert George to Captain Culverhouse, 14th June 1806; WO 1/806/1, Transport Board to Lieutenant Colonel Bunbury, 2nd January 1810; *Ibid.* 353; O. MacDonagh, *The Inspector General: Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick and the Politics of Social Reform, 1783-1802*, (London, 1981) 162.

¹⁵ Ralph Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade*, (Leicester, 1979) 55n.

¹⁶ Condon, 'Administration of the Transport Service', 68.

¹⁷ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 188.

¹⁸ *Proceedings and Measures* (1798) 748.

¹⁹ PRO WO 1/800/399-407, Transport Board to Huskisson, 25th March 1800.

²⁰ Peter Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer During the Recent Campaign in Portugal and Spain under Lord Viscount Wellington*, (London, 1981) 2.

²¹ Verner *Reminiscences of William Verner* 17

In addition, there was a conflict for manpower between the merchant ships and the navy, with numerous instances of crews being pressed into naval service, resulting in their ships being unable to sail.²²

Occasionally the needs of the Army could coincide with those of a merchant shipper, such as was the case with Edmund Thornton, who contracted to supply meat to the Army, receiving as part-payment a proportion of the outward cargo capacity, and the whole of the capacity on the homeward journey.²³ Similarly, the East India Company were willing to contract for a one way journey to the West Indies during 1795-6, as there was rarely enough cargo for the outward trip.²⁴

In 1794, Grey had suggested that his troops could be sent to the West Indies on board Royal Navy ships, but this was rejected by the Admiralty, due to a perceived discipline problem, and a reluctance to move away from the established system.²⁵ However, such were the demands for transport ships, as the years of conflict progressed, that the use of navy vessels to transport men became a unavoidable,²⁶ and even supplies were transported when necessary.²⁷ Certainly after Trafalgar there would be fewer demands on the fleet, and in addition the greater speed of naval ships would mean a more efficient use of time.

Whatever means of sea transport was used, it would still mean cramped conditions for the officers and men,²⁸ and a diet of ships' biscuit and lime juice.²⁹ The suggestions that

²² *The Times*, 7th January 1794, 3, d. Reported upwards of sixty merchant ships stranded on the Thames, and seven East Indiamen at Gravesend, the crews of which had all been impressed; See also, J.R. Hutchinson, *The Press Gang: Afloat and Ashore*, (London, 1913) 221-2; J. Stevenson, 'The London "Crimp" Riots of 1794,' *International Review of Social History*, xvi (1971); Emsley, *British Society*, 32, 154.

²³ GRE-A, 186, Commissioners Victualling the Navy to George Rose, 29th November 1793.

²⁴ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 186.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 127-8.

²⁶ Liddle Hart, *Letters of Private Wheeler*, 23-4, 45. On 15th July 1809 the 51st Regiment of Light Infantry were transported to Walcheren on board HMS L'Impetueux (74) and HMS Pompey (74), on the lower gun decks, with the armaments removed. On 11th January 1811, the same regiment embarked for Spain on board HMS Revenge (74), HMS Denmark (74), and HMS Vengure (74).

²⁷ See for example, JRUL-M, 8, Captain Digby of the *HMS Cossack*, 5th October 1808, with consignment of musket balls.

²⁸ PRO WO 1/662/175, Sir William Pitt to Matthew Lewis, 17th October 1794; WO 1/897/591, Transport Board (?) to Major General Fox, 'Conditions in prison and in transportation, and transporting of soldiers ...', April 1798; See also for example, Hibbert *Soldier of the 71st*, 38; Buckley, *Journal of Captain Thomas Henry Browne*, 110.

²⁹ Fortescue *History of the British Army* V 393-4

all men should be accommodated in berths with hammocks,³⁰ proved impractical due to the lack of space, for all but those officers unlucky enough to be without their own berths.³¹ Most other ranks were forced to sleep on the floors of lower decks.³² One observer noted of those travelling in Army transports, that,

their Health is often impaired, ... if not actually diseased, yet exposed to Mephitic Exhalations; and where the lads, altho' sometimes latent of Malign Infection - may have actually possess'd their Blood, on Cloathing; for the Man must be destitute of Medical Knowledge, or big with Effrontary, who will advance, that the matter of Infection does not exist, because it has not as yet appeared, where Persons are crowded and lodged in a filthy State without a constant supply of pure Air, and where Morbic - Exhalations arising from the various Excrementitious Discharges of the Human Body being ... rendered more virulent from their long retention, aided by the perpetual influence of successive heated Animal Exhalations and Moisture; the very Instigator of Putridity.³³

Even the quickest of ships could take anything from three to six days, in good conditions, to make the trip from Portsmouth to Lisbon,³⁴ and invariably an expedition would be forced to wait off the English coast, until the whole force was assembled.³⁵ Such confinement could easily become a breeding ground for disease, as occurred in Grey's West Indies fleet, prior to sailing in 1795, when typhus ravaged the expedition on board the ships anchored off Plymouth.³⁶ This state of affairs would change little throughout the period, even with the appointment of Sir Jeremiah Fitzpatrick as 'Inspector of Health for the Land forces with a particular view to their situation when on board transports.'³⁷ The basic requirements of a transport vessel were laid down, and guidelines for their operation introduced.³⁸ However, due to the demand for shipping, many were not up to the standard required, and by 1798

³⁰ MacDonagh, *The Inspector General*, 162-3; Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 353.

³¹ See for example, PRO WO 1/662/175, Sir William Pitt to Matthew Lewis, 17th October 1794. Complaints from officers that 'neither Comfort nor Health has been sufficiently attended to', in their cramped transports; Buckley, *Journal of Captain Thomas Henry Browne*, 11.

³² See for example, Liddle-Hart, *The Letters of Private Wheeler*, 24.

³³ PRO WO 1/897/592-3, Sir J. Fitzpatrick to General Fox, April 1798.

³⁴ Hibbert, *A Soldier of the 71st*, 39; RHK-M, 3/B2/8 'Route by which Commissary General Kennedy travelled from London to Lisbon', 1812.

³⁵ See for example, Verner, *Reminiscences of William Verner*, 11. Verner recalls lying off Portsmouth for six weeks prior to sailing for Spain in 1808; Hibbert, *A Soldier of the 71st*, 104. The 71st also were on board six weeks prior to sailing to America in 1815.

³⁶ Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 138-9.

³⁷ MacDonagh, *The Inspector General*, 160-5; Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 353.

³⁸ Stewart Henderson, *A Letter to the Officers of the Army under orders for, or that may hereafter be sent, to the West Indies, on the Means of Preserving Health, and Preventing that Fatal Disease the Yellow Fever*. (London 1795) 6-7

Fitzpatrick was reporting conditions on board transports contrary to his regulations.³⁹ and throughout the conflict shortages were observed.

The final area of shipping used during the period were the supply ships. These vessels were privately owned, and hired for military purposes by the Transport Board, on behalf of the Board of Ordnance, the Commissary General, or regimental agents. The latter would deliver clothing and equipment to the regiments represented by the agents, and during the Peninsula campaign, at least one would be stationed permanently off the coast, to act as a floating regimental head quarters.⁴⁰ Those ships designated 'Ordnance Transports' were initially used exclusively for the transport of munitions.⁴¹ However, as the demands on shipping increased, it appears that the designation between Ordnance shipping and any other kinds was relaxed, and there is evidence of ordnance transports delivering consignments of new uniforms,⁴² and of munitions and other stores being transported on Royal Navy vessels, providing that this did not conflict with the premier duty of the ships.⁴³ The 1794 Convoy Act, and the 1798 Compulsory Convoy Act forbade any merchant ship to sail without a convoy, and so convoy duty became a substantial part of the navy's role.⁴⁴

The co-ordination of transport by the Transport Board had been successful in many ways. In the American War of Independence the various agencies charged with transport and supply had often competed against each other, thus raising the freight prices even higher.⁴⁵ However, despite massive rises in the price of hiring ships during the Wars, the average price of tonnage by 1798, had not exceeded the average of the previous conflict.⁴⁶ It was only as the demands for shipping elsewhere in the expanding trade empire conflicted with the needs of the Transport Board, that prices began to rise beyond their peak of the

³⁹ PRO WO 1/897/591-604, Sir J. Fitzpatrick to General Fox, April 1798.

⁴⁰ RHK-M, 1/B1/32.2 Captain William MacKenzie to Murray, 12th January 1811; Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 18.

⁴¹ JRUL, Leith, 2, Rear Admiral De Courcey to Leith, 18th September 1808.

⁴² JRUL, Leith, 4, 'Returns of Ordnance Transports', 22nd September 1808; 12, 8th October 1808.

⁴³ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 8, Captain Digby of HMS Cossack, 5th October 1808; *31st RSCF* (1798) 488.

⁴⁴ G.J. Marcus, *A Naval History of England, 2. The Age of Nelson* (London, 1971) 120, 365-6; Patrick Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade, 1689-1815* (Folkestone, 1977)71; J.R. Jones, 'Limitations of British sea power in the French Wars, 1689-1815', in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine (eds), *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Leicester, 1988) 41; see for example, PRO WO 1/813/173, Transport Board to Earl Bathurst, 5th January 1812; Transport Board to Earl Bathurst, 21st January 1812; Transport Board to Earl Bathurst, 27th January 1812; See also, Gerald G. Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic: The Maritime Struggle for North America* (Toronto, Ontario, 1950) 223-36, 247-51. Thank you to Suzanne Phillips for her assistance in tracking the information on this subject.

⁴⁵ *31st RSCF* (1798) 488.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*

early 1780s. In 1799, Henry Dundas was informed by the Transport Board that there were no more available ships to be used, and they felt they 'must tell him that they will not be able to transport another Regiment, as scarcity will increase with the approach of Spring.'⁴⁷ However, the Board maintained a substantial quantity of all types of transport in their employ,⁴⁸ and were able to maintain the regulated rate of nineteen shillings per ton per month until 1806, when the pressure from the shipowners forced it to twenty five shillings.⁴⁹ By 1810 250 shillings per ton could be charged on certain non-military routes,⁵⁰ and therefore the shipowners had to balance the regular income of Army supply, with the risks of the open market. Simon P. Ville has suggested that shipowners chose to tie on average ten percent of their fleet to the Transport Board contracts, the income from which enabled them to diversify and expand.⁵¹ Clearly enough of their number chose this arrangement, as in 1812, the Transport Board were able to exert their control over shipping by cutting the prices they were willing to offer shipowners. From April of that year the maximum rate was reduced from twenty five to twenty one shillings per ton per month, which saved the public £166,615.4s. in twelve months.⁵² Although not publicised as such, it was a flexible maximum.⁵³ Rates were increased whenever the need for shipping outstripped the available fleet.⁵⁴ In this way the demand of the Army for transports for both men and supplies was met, with only occasional shortages, and without conflicting with lucrative trade routes.⁵⁵

The transport of men and supplies had therefore developed from a haphazard free-for-all, into a centrally controlled organisation, the Transport Board. This body was able to supply the massive demand of the military for shipping. It was able to keep prices at a realistic level, despite high shipping rates being available in other areas. This saved the public substantial amounts of money, and the regular income enabled shipowners to diversify into other markets. Without the Transport Board the supply of men and equipment to the theatres of conflict throughout the world, would have been impossible.

⁴⁷ PRO WO 1/800/145, Transport Board to Henry Dundas, 21st July 1799.

⁴⁸ See for example, PRO WO 1/803/75-7, Transport Board to Windham, 14th October 1806; WO 1/803/85, 'Abstract showing the state of the Transport Service, February 6th 1806, and the Amount of Tonnage, on Monthly Pay and Discharged and Engaged between that period and the Date hereoff', 14th October 1806.

⁴⁹ PRO WO 1/803/75-7, Transport Board to Windham, 14th October 1806.

⁵⁰ Simon P. Ville, *English shipowning during the industrial revolution: Michael Henley and Son, London shipowners 1770-1830* (Manchester, 1987) 126.

⁵¹ *Ibid.* 152-3.

⁵² PRO WO 1/813/173, Transport Board to Earl Bathurst, 19th February 1813.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Ville, *English shipowning*, 128.

⁵⁵ PRO WO 1/805/197 Lieutenant Fleetwood to Transport Board 6th October 1809

7.3 TRANSPORT OVERLAND

The developments in the supply of the Army during the Wars has been dealt with in the previous chapter. However, tied closely to this were the problems encountered in transporting those supplies to the troops on the ground. The established mode of land transport of supplies in 1793, was the employment of men with the means of transport, from the areas over which a campaign was to be fought. Richard Glover suggests that this continued until the experiences in the Crimea in 1854, brought about the formation of the Royal Wagon Train.⁵⁶ The first point to be made in the discussion of this area is that the failings of the common system were noted far sooner than during the Crimean war. While ‘wagons of the country’ were easily obtained in the campaigns in the Low Countries,⁵⁷ such transport did not exist in areas such as the West Indies,⁵⁸ or Egypt,⁵⁹ and it was in these areas, and not the Crimea, that the failings of the traditional Army transport system were first addressed, and a corps established to deal with them.⁶⁰

In this development both Egypt and the West Indies were notable in that neither had a substantial and available indigenous system of supply transport. In the West Indian campaigns problems were experienced in the transport of all manner of items, across rough terrain, at a great distance from Britain, and in an area without a substantial local transport system, nor the local inhabitants to operate it. The solutions found were first, to establish depots on the coast which could be supplied from the sea,⁶¹ a method to be made great use of during the Peninsular war. Secondly, to utilise the troops, but in particular the sailors, in the expeditions, to haul the supplies on their backs,⁶² and thirdly to build a road system, by felling trees, linking the various areas of activity.⁶³ In Egypt the main problem was the supply of water in sufficient quantity to maintain an Army on the move, and here too the local system was to prove inadequate.⁶⁴ The difficulties were exacerbated by the general

⁵⁶ R. Glover, *Preparation*, 257. Glover suggests that it was the failure of the Crimean army to obtain ‘wagons of the country’ that precipitated the formation of the Royal Wagon Train.

⁵⁷ RHK-M, 2/B3/-. Details the system of contractors which was organised by the Commissariat through a local businessman, Mr. Eckhart between August 1794 and May 1796. This is supported by AO 1/209/686/-, *passim*. The settled accounts of Mr. Eckhart.

⁵⁸ GRE-A, 2243/57-63, Grey to Henry Dundas, 17th July 1794.

⁵⁹ NAM, 8002-78, 2, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Captain Elphinstone, July 31st 1801.

⁶⁰ Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 49.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

⁶² Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, XII, 355.

⁶³ *Ibid.* 360.

⁶⁴ Fortescue *Army Service Corps* 59-61

lack of horseflesh.⁶⁵ Most were left behind due to the length of the passage, the likelihood of injury to the beasts, and the perceived availability of cheap Arab mounts.⁶⁶ Stop-gap solutions such as the development of staging posts, and the use of camels to escort convoys of troops,⁶⁷ needed precision planning and often ended in failure.⁶⁸ The findings of reports into both campaigns were that the transport system had failed the troops on the ground, and that a solution should be sought.⁶⁹

The solution, or rather the attempt at a solution can be seen in the second point to be examined, that of the formation of an Army corps specifically responsible for transport. As mentioned Glover points to the formation of the Royal Corps of Wagoners in 1855 as the starting point. However, as early as 1794 a 'Corps of Royal Wagoners' was raised, with attending failure.⁷⁰ As Sir James Craig, the Chief of Staff observed, 'A greater set of scoundrels never disgraced an Army. I believe it to be true that half of them if not taken from the hulks have at times visited them.'⁷¹ While another contemporary account states, 'its miserable state became proverbial in the Army; it failed completely in every part, and the only trace remaining of it is a heavy charge on the half pay list for the reduced officers.'⁷² The author went on to recommend the reversion to the traditional system of transport by contract, without reference to those areas of the globe in which such a system had, and would in the future, prove impossible.

That this was the case was further borne out by the re-formation of the Corps of Royal Wagoners, or the Royal Wagon Train, in 1799.⁷³ Whether the Army had learned from its experience, or through necessity was forced to make the system work, is unclear.

⁶⁵ NAM, 8002-78, 1, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Lieutenant Lawrence, July 28th 1801.

⁶⁶ RHK-M, 2/B5/-, 'Proceedings of Board of Claims', 16th October 1801.

⁶⁷ NAM, 8002-78, 4, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Captain Falconer, May 27th 1802.

⁶⁸ Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 60-1.

⁶⁹ Anon., *Facts Relative to the Conduct of the War in the West Indies*, 57-8, 166, 168-9; Lambert (ed.) *House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century*, (Wilmington, Delaware, 1975) vol. c, 2.

⁷⁰ PRO WO 4/291/244-8, George Rose to Evan Nepean, 17th March 1794; HO 50/457/11, Secretary at War to James Poole, 11th March 1794; 12, Lord Moira to Nepean, 24th May 1794; HO 51/147/235, Henry Dundas to Amherst, 5th June 1794.

⁷¹ As quoted in Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 49-50.

⁷² Le Mesurier, *A System for the British Commissariat*, as quoted in, R. Glover, *Preparation*, 273.

⁷³ PRO WO 3/20/82-3, Calvert to Officers Commanding Regiments, 8th August 1799. To recommend 'Men nearly worn out in the Service, or whose appearance does not correspond with the body'; 141, Calvert to Lieutenant Colonel Renington 29th August 1799; 185 Calvert to Major Loughier 2nd September 1799

Whatever the case, the Royal Wagon Train was established, and continued with numerous augmentations,⁷⁴ often running in conjunction with, or alongside local contractors.

The final point which can be made in this area, is that in many cases, the local vehicular transport and the Royal Wagon Train, often proved insufficient, and therefore needed to be augmented by other local means of transportation. In Egypt, the use of camels continued to be a useful addition to the supply train;⁷⁵ while in India, oxen, and even elephants were brought into service.⁷⁶ However, the most significant use of an indigenous transport system was that which augmented the supply of the armies in Portugal and Spain, and which was to become the common pack animal of the British Army for over one hundred years, the mule.

In 1801, the Army in the Peninsula possessed 190 mules,⁷⁷ and by 1808 the commissariat was attempting to increase this figure to 500.⁷⁸ However, in 1811 Wellington decided that even the sturdiest of the local wagons was unsuitable for the rigours of the campaign,⁷⁹ and therefore ordered that the mule would be used exclusively for land transport, at divisional level and below, in the Peninsula.⁸⁰ By July 1810, the total number of mules in service with the Army in Spain had reached 4,025, and by July 1813 there were 7,082 Commissariat mules alone,⁸¹ which would suggest around 15,000 mules for the Army as a whole,⁸² together with an unknown number privately owned by officers and used for their personal baggage.⁸³ The mule, the means of transport of the Portuguese and Spanish

⁷⁴ See for example, PRO WO 4/189/409, Charles Yorke to Lieutenant Colonel Hamilton, 4th June 1803; Following an inspection in October 1812, the Royal Wagon Train was used as an ambulance corps, to the end of the war. NLS, Murray Papers, Gordon to Wellington, 9th October 1812.

⁷⁵ NAM, 8002-78, 4, Lt. T.F. De Havilland to Captain Falconer, May 27th 1802.

⁷⁶ NAM, 713-51, 68, General Orders, 2nd September 1801.

⁷⁷ RHK-M, 4/B1/-, note book entry, 21st August 1801.

⁷⁸ RHK-M, 3/B6/-, Kennedy to the Director General of Supplies, 30th November 1808.

⁷⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Dickson to Major-General Macleod, D.A.G., R.A., 3rd July 1811, as quoted in Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 88.

⁸⁰ RHK-M, 1/B1/100.1, Murray to Kennedy, 1st March 1811; 1/B1/100.2, 'Memorandum Respecting the Public Mules of Regiments', 14th February 1811. Although it is stated by neither document, a pool of mules must have been kept at H.Q. by the Commissary General, which was continually drawn upon by the staff and regiments, see for example RHK-M 1/B1/25. Murray to Kennedy - Cartaxo - 8th January 1811, 'Colonel Murray presents his complements to Mr. Kennedy, and requests he will be so good as furnish to the officer of the 50th Regt., who is the bearer of this note, a mule to convey a soldier of that Regt., to Valada, who is unable to march to Lisbon, to which place he is directed to proceed to attend a Court Martial.'

⁸¹ RHK-M, 2/B4/-, Annual Returns.

⁸² See for example, NAM, 7512-124, 'Daily State of Supplies of the 7th Division, under the Command of General Walker at Ustaritz,' 18th December 1813, in which are listed 246 commissariat mules and 268 regimental mules.

⁸³ See for example, Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 119; Verner, *Reminiscences of William Verner* 14 21-22

peasantry, proved to be effective in the roughest of the Iberian Peninsula's terrain. It was therefore used to carry every kind of impedimenta of the Army, from medicine and armourer's panniers, to tents and clothing; as the Army expanded and developed, so too did its reliance on mule transport.⁸⁴ The mules were organised into *brigades* of an undefined number,⁸⁵ and worked by a local muleteer, controlled by conductors or *Capatresses*.⁸⁶ Beyond the general use of mules had been established an elaborate system of breeding;⁸⁷ purchases;⁸⁸ replacement of worn out, or 'unserviceable' animals with new ones;⁸⁹ and the recovery of those unserviceable mules thought likely to survive, at depots.⁹⁰ Such was the dependence of the commissariat upon mule transport, that in 1829, when the Peninsular accounts were eventually settled, 113 parcels of documents relating to mules were submitted to the Comptrollers of Army Accounts.⁹¹

In addition to the mules, the Army in the Peninsula also made use of bullock carts to ferry goods continually between depots. Initially these were obtained through local purchase or requisition.⁹² However, as the demand for their services increased, the Spaniards refused to supply any more vehicles.⁹³ As a result, in 1811 Wellington ordered the construction of 800 carts of an improved design, to take place at Almeida, Lisbon, Oporto and Vianna, as well as in England.⁹⁴ These carts were to form the core of a new level of transport, directly controlled by the Commissariat, organised very much along military lines, in Grand Divisions of 400, and known as the Commissariat Car Train.⁹⁵ Such was the success of these vehicles that a further 700 were delivered from England in June 1812,⁹⁶ materially

⁸⁴ See for example, RHK-E, 7807-22/24, Murray to Kennedy, 29th May 1811, 'As in the operations ... before Badajoz the want of water is likely to be very much felt by the troops upon duty... thus water must be brought up to them in water casks to be carried on mules'; RHK-M, 1/B1/110, Murray to Kennedy, 13th March 1811, 'The Commissary General will furnish some Mules to go back to where the firing began yesterday to bring up the Knapsacks of four Companies of the 9th Regiment.'

⁸⁵ Ward suggests that the number of mules per Brigade could be anything from twenty to fifty. However, evidence exists of greater numbers, see for example, NAM, 7512-124, 'Daily State of Supplies of the 7th Division, under the Command of General Walker at Ustaritz,' 15th December 1813, refers to a brigade of 62 mules sent to Secóa for biscuit.

⁸⁶ For a copy of the *Standing Orders Concerning Mules*, (Cartaxo, 1812), see NAM 6807/221.

⁸⁷ RHK-M, 2/B6/-, Lord Anglesey to Kennedy, 12th September 1813.

⁸⁸ RHK-M, 4/B1/-, Sampayo to Kennedy, 5th March 1814; Kennedy to Sampayo, 19th March 1814. Mules were also purchased from Regiments returning to England, see for example, RHK-E, 7807-22/38i, 6th December 1813; 7807-22/38ii, 21st December 1813.

⁸⁹ RHK-M, 1/1/75.1, Murray to Kennedy, 14th February 1811, 'replacement mule in exchange for the one said to have become unserviceable'; Reynett to Kennedy, 22nd February 1811.

⁹⁰ RHK-M, 2/B5/-, 'Notes and Accounts', 24th November 1814.

⁹¹ RHK-M, 2/B4/-, *passim*.

⁹² Schauman, *On the Road with Wellington*, 8; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 89.

⁹³ *WD*, vii, 440-1, Wellington to Charles Stuart, 8th April 1811.

⁹⁴ *WD*, viii, 406-7, Wellington to Bissett, Commissary General, 20th November 1811.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ward Wellington's Headquarters* 89

assisting in the supply of the forces to the end of the war. The system of supply was based around a number of depots which were supplied by the cars in a staged relay, and from which the divisions were maintained by means of their mules.⁹⁷ Based on the success of this system, by the end of the conflict various carts had been developed supplies, with various degrees of success.⁹⁸ In addition, experiments into the transporting of men in carts or 'horse bus' were conducted.⁹⁹

The use of inland water transport was also developed during the period, for both transport and the crossing of waterways. Its use as a means of transporting men and supplies was desirable, being cheaper, and for the most part more efficient than either the carts or pack animals employed during any stage of the conflict.¹⁰⁰ During the early campaigns; in the Low countries during 1799, operations were only possible in canalised areas due to the severe lack of wheeled transport to supply the troops,¹⁰¹ and boats were drawn from every source possible.¹⁰² During 1804, Wellesley caused a pool of wicker boats covered with hides to be manufactured, which together with local craft enabled him to cross every unfordable river from Serringaptam to Poona, and so fight through both famine and flood.¹⁰³

The manufacture of boats in India is unusual, for in other locations there are references only to the use of local craft. However, the numbers of craft needed to support an Army was far greater than that normally used by the indigenous population, and so substantial planning was clearly essential. During the Peninsula campaign the British forces, used the various kinds of local vessels to ferry all manner of goods as well as men along the Tagus¹⁰⁴, Mondego¹⁰⁵ and Douro.¹⁰⁶ This was first tried as an 'experiment' in 1809.¹⁰⁷ In

⁹⁷ PRO WO 37/10/29-30, 'Outline of the Arrangements for the Daily Supply of the Army', no date; 31-3, 'General Plan', no date.

⁹⁸ PRO WO 3/43/321, Calvert to Lord Paget, 15th August 1807; WO 1/205/227

⁹⁹ Patrick Crichton, *Observations on a Machine for the Speedy Conveyance of Troops; and report of an experiment for that purpose, begun on Friday, the 1st of June 1804, and continued for the five succeeding days, under the sanction of General Earl Moira.* (Edinburgh, 1804) *passim.*; Schauman, *On the Road with Wellington*, 39; R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, 45; R. Glover, 'The Royal Military Canal', *AQ*, October 1953, 97-105; Christie, *Wars and Revolutions*, 262.

¹⁰⁰ *WD*, v, 194, Wellington to Liverpool, 1st August 1811.

¹⁰¹ Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 55-9.

¹⁰² RHK-M, 4/B1/-, note book entry, 26th August 1801.

¹⁰³ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, 89.

¹⁰⁴ PRO WO 37/6/-, The Diary of Sir George Scovell, 11th April 1809; Schauman, *On the Road with Wellington*, 55; Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 89; RHK-M, 4/B2/- 'Concerning the Passage of the Douro, Mondego, and Tagus'. Undated. The Tagus was navigable by small river boats, or *fragatas*, as far as Abrantes.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid* The Mondego was navigable in winter to Foz-Dão in summer to Raiva

order to utilise the quantity of shipping needed to move cargoes beyond that normally transported by the civilian boatmen, substantial logistical planning, was required, together with a monopolising of all craft, and the expansion of the available fleet. However, it does appear that with the co-ordination of the efforts of the Commissary General's and Quarter Master General's departments enough local craft were made available.¹⁰⁸ In addition intelligence reports were commissioned, outlining the available ferries and crossing places on all rivers in the Peninsula,¹⁰⁹ while regular use was made of bridges of boats.¹¹⁰

In Britain too there was a realisation of the efficacy of the use of inland waterways, for the transporting of men and supplies. The system of military canals were developed as a measure to be used in the event of invasion.¹¹¹ They enabled the movement of large bodies of men to any point on the system, often linking key installations.¹¹² In 1809, the Royal Military Canal opened, linking Shorncliffe Camp with Rye.¹¹³ This particular section was significant in that the private contractors, Hollingsworth, Bough and Dyson were employed to excavate it, rather than the Royal Sappers and Miners, in order that it should be completed on time, since the Ordnance department were dragging their feet.¹¹⁴ In addition to creating a system of military waterways, the construction of the canals assisted in the development of trade in the locality, making it easier to move goods, while generating revenue through tolls for such passage.¹¹⁵

The transporting of men and equipment on the ground was addressed in several ways. Most notable was the sheer diversity of methods used in an active service situation, which reveals a great flexibility. From this flexibility emerged, in particular, the use of the mule as the main means of transporting heavy supplies at divisional level, and which, as a

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*; *WD.*, v, 194, Wellington to Liverpool, 1st August 1811. The Douro, the most important of the rivers had a highly developed system of navigation, with large boats, or *maitrizes*, plying throughout all seasons, to the Vale de Lucaia near Lamego, and smaller boats, or *trafegueiras*, to Quinta dos Carvalhos near St. João-da-Pesqueira, in summer, while in winter, and after the Engineers had improved the bed of the river in 1812, it could be navigated safely to the Portuguese frontier at Barca-de-Alva.

¹⁰⁷ D/Lo/C/18/43/227-32, Stewart to Castlereagh, 6th July 1809.

¹⁰⁸ RHK-M, 2/B8/-, 'Memorandum Concerning Boats on the Douro', 22nd April 1813; RHK-E, 7807-22/3 Murray to Kennedy, 6th November 1811.

¹⁰⁹ JRUL, Leith, 15, 'Intelligence report on Ferries and crossings by J. Eastman', 20th October 1808.

¹¹⁰ See for example, Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 72.

¹¹¹ P.A.L. Vine, *The Royal Military Canal*, (Newton Abbot, 1972) 53.

¹¹² Ian Beckett, Note 989, *JSAHR*, LXIV, (1986) 124; A. M. Carr-Gomm, Note 1168, *JSAHR*, LXIV, Winter 1986, 252.

¹¹³ East Sussex County Record Office, PL/WO//MP/19, 'Plans, diagrams and other memoranda on the Royal Military Canal', 1800-1809; Vine, *Royal Military Canal*, *passim*.

¹¹⁴ Vine, *Royal Military Canal*, 106; R. Glover, *Britain at Bay*, 120.

¹¹⁵ Vine *Royal Military Canal* 111

solution, was to last over 100 years. Inland waterways were also used to great effect, as a means of transporting both men and supplies, and within Britain as a means to link military districts and key installations. But despite the diversity of means of transport used during the Wars, the main mode of moving troops overland was still to march them.

7.4 MARCHING REGIMENTS

The movement of troops on land changed little until the advent of the railway permitted thousands of men to cross continents with greater ease and in reasonable comfort during the late nineteenth century. Prior to this, if an Army was to be moved over land, it had to march. The effectiveness of marching men depends on several factors; the health of the troops; the quality of their clothing and equipment; the terrain over which they must move, the weather; and for a cavalryman, to this list must be added the condition of his mount. It has been shown in the previous chapter that the health of the troops improved, as regular supplies of food became available through an improvement in supply; that their clothes and equipment also improved; (in particular after 1812, a supply of good shoes, designed specifically for the Army was always available). However, no reform could be introduced to alter the weather or terrain over which regiments had to march. Clearly in a war that would become a global conflict, lasting twenty two years, these factors would be completely different from one location to another, and from season to season. Little could be done to affect this, save more thorough planning at head quarters, and better training for the troops to enable them to cope with such conditions.

The first training a soldier would receive throughout the period, was to be taught to march. The method being laid out in Dundas¹¹⁶ was little different from the drills performed throughout the eighteenth century.¹¹⁷ The *Rules and Regulations* of 1792 stated that,

In marching the soldier must maintain, as much as possible, the position of the body. He must be well balanced on his limbs. His arms and hands without stiffness, must be kept steady by his sides, and not suffered to vibrate. He must not be allowed to stoop forward, still less to lean back. His body must be kept square to the front, and thrown rather more forward in marching than when halted, that it may accompany the movement of the leg and thigh, which movement must spring from the haunch.

¹¹⁶ *Rules and Regulations for the Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements, of His Majesty's Forces*, (London, 1792) 6.

¹¹⁷ See for example *New Manual and Platoon Exercise with Explanation* (Dublin 1764) 9

The ham must be stretched, but without stiffening the knee. The toe a little pointed, and kept near the ground, so that the shoe-soles may not be visible to a person in front. The head to be kept well up, straight to the front, and the eyes not suffered to be cast down. The foot, without being drawn back, must be placed flat on the ground.¹¹⁸

This regulation did not change throughout the period. The length of the pace from heel to heel was to be thirty inches, and the soldier was to be able to march at the 'Ordinary Step', of seventy five paces per minute, instinctively, only occasionally being permitted to move more quickly. The faster paces were the 'Quick Step'¹¹⁹, which was 108 paces to the minute, and used for the movement of small bodies of men, and the manoeuvres of battalions, such as column into line, and the 'Quickest Step'¹²⁰, also known as the 'wheeling march', which was 120 paces to the minute, or the equivalent of covering 300 feet in each minute. It was used, as its name suggests, chiefly in the performance of the wheeling manoeuvre. Neither of the quicker paces were to be used to move large bodies for any distance, 'otherwise fatigue must arise to the soldier, and more time will be lost by hurry and inaccuracy, than is attempted to be gained by quickness.'¹²¹

The desired effect of such marching appears to have been the swift forward movement of the battalion of men as a solid body, and all aspects were geared towards the performance of this function. The step is surprisingly long, and requires a great amount of flexibility to perform for any length of time, if the thirty inch pace is to be maintained. It clearly must have been, since great emphasis is placed on the use of the pace stick; the sergeants and officers would march within the body of the unit; and even the slightest individual variance would have caused disorder to the battalion whose function was to act as one.

Line Infantry continued to use this system throughout the period under discussion. However, from 1803 certain regiments had been converted to a Light Infantry role, and experimented with a new style of marching.¹²² This was to become the standard mode for

¹¹⁸ See for example, *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements* (1792) 6; *Rules and Regulations Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements* (1801) 6; *Rules and Regulations ... Manual and Platoon Exercises, Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements* (1806) 6; *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field-Exercise, and Movements* (1815) 6. Despite minor revisions in other areas of the *Regulations*, the details of marching remain the same in all editions, even featuring on the same page.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* 13,

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* 14.

¹²¹ *Ibid.* 14.

¹²² Fuller *Sir John Moore's System of Training* 99-100

all light infantry and rifle units, although the system from which it derives was not published until 1823.¹²³ These units needed a means of moving swiftly at all times, without causing undue strain on the body, and the manual states that, 'stiffness in the knees, pointing of toes, stamping against the ground, flourishing with the feet, and all constrained positions are highly improper'¹²⁴, referring to the perceived rigidity of the previous system. The comments of an officer of the 52nd Light Infantry, suggest why the changes were made,

All flourishing of the feet and extreme distress of the knees are expressly prohibited as tending to render the body unsteady. Perhaps one or two handsome active men of a Company might be brought to practice this Parade sort of Marching, with tolerable ease and steadiness, but as this would only render the awkwardness of the other men more glaring, and sacrifice the steadiness of numbers to the gracefulness of a few, it is better to practice them in an easy and steady, though perhaps not elegant, mode of marching. The feet should be brought down without any exertion, or straining on knocking against the ground, which may tend to shake the body.¹²⁵

This method of marching was initially mimicked by,¹²⁶ and was eventually to replace that performed, by the rest of the Army. It was of more use when marching greater distances and over rough terrain, and was to continue in use, with only minor modifications, until the present day.

During the early campaigns of the Wars, there appears to have been a lack of understanding of the suffering experienced by the troops on the march. Expeditions were landed often at great distances from their objectives,¹²⁷ with fully laden knapsacks,¹²⁸ and with insufficient water to survive, without a victory.¹²⁹ Even with the success of the departments of supply, outlined in the previous chapter, the problem of marching great distances was not one that could be avoided, in a global conflict extending to areas far from the coast. However, its effects could be reduced by making troops ready for such exertions through better training. From 1803, the regime at Shorncliffe Camp encouraged officers to train their men to keep fit through many activities, including marches, and experimented with various methods of conducting a march.¹³⁰ During 1812, the 23rd Regiment in Spain, acclimatised their men to long marches in the Iberian heat by marching them several miles

¹²³ Cross, *A System of Drill and Manoeuvres*, ii.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* 8.

¹²⁵ 'Peculiarities in the Drill of the 52nd Regiment', 2.

¹²⁶ BP, Charles to Henry Booth, 26th July 1807.

¹²⁷ Fortescue, *History of the British Army*, 397.

¹²⁸ Hibbert, *A Soldier of the 71st*, 49-50; Bell, *Soldier's Glory*, 59.

¹²⁹ Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 60-1.

¹³⁰ Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training* 99-100

each day, to keep them in 'good wind'.¹³¹ This practice was to become the standard for the whole Army under Wellington.¹³²

This realisation is also reflected in the load expected to be carried by a soldier. In 1810, an infantryman described his burden,

My knapsack contained two shirts, two pairs of stockings, one pair overalls, two shoe brushes, a shaving box, one pair spare shoes, and a few other articles; my greatcoat and blanket above the knapsack; my canteen with water was strung over my shoulder on one side, my haversack with beef and bread on the other; sixty round of ball cartridge, and the camp-kettle above all.¹³³

This is supported by Private Wheeler, who states that what he carried, 'was load enough for a donkey.'¹³⁴ Through the period equipment lists show a reduction in the heavy burden carried by the troops. The intrenching tools were placed on transport mules,¹³⁵ the cast iron camp kettle were replaced by the same item made in tin,¹³⁶ and other articles, such as great coats, were returned to Regimental stores when not perceived as being needed.¹³⁷ As stated in the previous chapter, the supply of shoes was improved to enable a much speedier issue to troops. However, even with such practical reforms, it would still prove impossible to prevent soldiers loading themselves down with the spoils of war,¹³⁸ or to avoid the privations experienced when an Army was forced into full retreat.¹³⁹

7.5 HORSEFLESH

While infantry regiments could be trained to a level of fitness, it proved increasingly difficult for mounted troops to be maintained. Horses were a constant problem throughout the period, being difficult to transport, and needing constant attention and food, even when their riders were forced to do without. Horses were often not taken with armies travelling great distances, since it was believed they did not travel well, and that local mounts could be

¹³¹ Buckley, *Journal of Captain Thomas Henry Browne*, 151-2.

¹³² Petty, 'General Orders of Wellington', 146.

¹³³ Hibbert, *Soldier of the 71st*, 49-50.

¹³⁴ Liddle Hart, *Letters of Private Wheeler*, 51.

¹³⁵ RHK-M, 1/B1/58, 63.1, 76.1 Murray to Kennedy, 4th, 6th, 17th February 1811.

¹³⁶ RHK-M, 1/B1/86 Murray to Kennedy, 21st February 1811.

¹³⁷ *WD*, viii, 354, Wellington to the Earl of Liverpool, 23rd October 1811.

¹³⁸ See for example, Hibbert, *Soldier of the 71st*, 9-10; Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 64-5.

¹³⁹ See for example, Banks, *Autobiography of Sergeant William Lawrence*, 68-9; Verner, *Reminiscences of William Verner* 15

purchased. During the Grey-Jervis expedition in the first year of the war, dragoons remained dismounted,¹⁴⁰ due to the reluctance to transport horses from England, and the difficulty of obtaining new ones in the colonies.¹⁴¹ The same was the case for the Abercromby-Christian expedition, the horses for which were to be purchased from America.¹⁴² As stated above, the problem of transport was again envisaged in the preparations for the Egyptian campaign in 1801, and therefore few horses, if any, were taken with the expedition.¹⁴³ Reports later in the period were to suggest that sea crossings were not particularly injurious to horses, and so more were to be shipped greater distances.¹⁴⁴ This seems to have had more to do with the necessity of constantly obtaining fresh mounts in the Peninsula, than with a genuine improvement in the condition of transported horses. Problems were still being experienced with horses during the Peninsular campaign. In 1809, the horses of the 14th Light Dragoons had become quite sick on board a transport.¹⁴⁵ This situation was to continue throughout the period.¹⁴⁶

The Peninsula was to prove problematic for mounted troops in every respect. The terrain was rough, the climate harsh, and fodder was difficult to obtain.¹⁴⁷ By 1809, the horses were 'dying by hundreds in the week.'¹⁴⁸ By 1811, there seems to have been little improvement, as the whole of the cavalry mounts were said to be in a sad state, 'being ill provided ... with provisions and forage,' according to the commissary of the cavalry. He stated that 'the whole number of horses ... [were] incapable of performing the review, ... being sick, weak, or lame.'¹⁴⁹ The Corunna retreat had exacerbated the problem, but had brought about several minor reforms, such as the introduction of spare horse shoes and nails, and courses to teach even the officers to shoe their mounts.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁰ GRE-A, 200, 'Return of strength of the several corps composing the army commanded by Grey, embarked at Barbados on the expedition against Martinique,' 1st February 1794.

¹⁴¹ GRE-A, 288, Dundas to Grey, 28th April 1794.

¹⁴² Duffy, *Soldiers, Sugar and Seapower*, 188.

¹⁴³ RHK-M, Box 2/B5, 'Proceedings of Board of Claims', 16th October 1801.

¹⁴⁴ *WD*, iv, 73, Wellesley to General Sir Harry Burrard, 8th August 1808; vi, 606, Wellesley to A. Cochrane Johnstone, 11th November 1810.

¹⁴⁵ Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 17-18. Diary entry for 28th January 1809.

¹⁴⁶ See for example, PRO WO 1/806/17, Woodriss to Bunbury, 24th January 1810; WO 1/813/173, Transport Board to Bathurst, 19th February 1813.

¹⁴⁷ See for example D/Lo/C 17/9/47-50, General Stewart to Moore, 13th September 1808; 68/402-7, Stewart to Castlereagh, 11th December 1811; RHK-M, 1/B1/18, Lieutenant Colonel Durrell-Stewart to Kennedy, 6th January 1811.

¹⁴⁸ *WD*, v, 54, 19th August 1809; Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 80, 110. Hawker states that nine horses starved to death on 4th July 1809, and that by 2nd August 1809, the whole of the Light Dragoons were nearly dismounted.

¹⁴⁹ RHK-M, 1/B1/141, Campbell to Kennedy, 20th April 1811.

¹⁵⁰ RHK-F 26 Murray to Kennedy 27th October 1811. Verner *Reminiscences of William Verner* 16

The effects of the climate, or the harsh campaign are understandable. However the failure of the cavalry to appreciate even the basic rudiments of horse management is unbelievable among troops with centuries of experience in this field. It can be observed repeatedly, such as when the Lifeguards landed at Lisbon in 1812, with horses in such a bad condition that Wellington was forced to insist on the issue of curry combs and brushes by the colonels.¹⁵¹ Such neglect is even more surprising as horses were in such a great demand.

In 1811 there were attempts to improve the condition of the mounted arm of the Peninsula Army. A Depot for Sick and Lame Horses, with attendant veterinary surgeons was established,¹⁵² along the lines pioneered by the French since the outbreak of the Wars.¹⁵³ Remount Depots were also set up,¹⁵⁴ where horses from all sources were collected prior to their distribution to regiments. This would include those imported from the usual sources such as Ireland,¹⁵⁵ and from as far afield as the United States of America¹⁵⁶ and Brazil.¹⁵⁷ Each cavalry regiment was also permitted to appoint its own veterinary surgeon,¹⁵⁸ and a vet was also stationed at Portsmouth to check horses prior to their embarkation for active service.¹⁵⁹ By 1812, all such activity was co-ordinated from three consolidated 'Depots of Cavalry' in England.¹⁶⁰ This enabled all units of the Army to make improvements in the condition of their mounts.

7.6 MAPS

Despite improvements in the means of transport, difficulties were still experienced, often as a result of a lack of local knowledge, and a deficiency in maps. At the outbreak of war the available plans and maps covered few areas outside the familiar battle grounds of

¹⁵¹ *WD*, ix, 589, 1st December 1812, Wellington to Major General Peacocke.

¹⁵² NAM, 6807/221, 'Standing Orders of the Commissariat, 1811'; RHK-M, 1/B1/220.1 Murray to Kennedy, 28th July 1811.

¹⁵³ Elting, *Swords Around the Throne*, xi.

¹⁵⁴ RHK-M, 1/B1/220.1 Murray to Kennedy, 28th July 1811.

¹⁵⁵ D/LO/C/17/24/144-153, Stewart to Castlereagh, 2nd to 25th April 1809.

¹⁵⁶ *WD*, viii, 283, 15th October 1811.

¹⁵⁷ *WD*, ix, 408, 31st May 1813.

¹⁵⁸ Ernest A. Gray, *The Trumpet of Glory: The military career of John Shipp, first veterinary surgeon to join the British Army*, (London, 1985) 14.

¹⁵⁹ PRO WO 4/426/263, Palmerston to Harrison, 18th October 1813.

¹⁶⁰ PRO WO 4/426/24, Palmerston to Harrison, 12th August 1812; 46, Palmerston to Wharton, 9th October 1812; 135, Palmerston to Harrison, 7th April 1813; 141, Palmerston to Harrison, 24th April 1813; 207, Palmerston to Harrison 9th August 1813; 261 Palmerston to Harrison 8th October 1813

the Low Countries and America.¹⁶¹ For the system of transport and communication to function, this situation obviously needed to be remedied.

Admiralty charts were available to the early West Indian expeditions, but more reliable were the captured French maps or private surveys, which revealed inland details as well as those on the coast.¹⁶² It was not until 1808 that reliable British maps of the islands were produced.¹⁶³

By the time of the campaigns in Portugal and Spain, little had improved. The maps which Wellington took to the Peninsula, known as the Lopez Maps, are by modern standards impressionistic, and even by contemporary standards, quite poor.¹⁶⁴ They have no annotations, no scale, and omit the names of several towns.¹⁶⁵ They were clearly of limited use, and were intended to be used with other sources.¹⁶⁶ In addition, ever greater emphasis was placed on reconnaissance. The intelligence papers of Sir James Leith are filled with requests for information about the land over which the Army was to move,¹⁶⁷ and orders to send back sketches,¹⁶⁸ suggesting an absence of reliable maps. Even the coastline was poorly charted, and information was continually sought from the navy.¹⁶⁹ Throughout the campaign reports and memoranda were compiled concerning every possible detail of Portugal and Spain,¹⁷⁰ and these, together with sketch maps,¹⁷¹ were copied and distributed to the commanders of divisions.¹⁷² No opportunity was missed to gain useful information,

¹⁶¹ Similar problems were experienced at the outbreak of the American War of Independence. Douglas William Marshall, 'The British Military Engineers, 1741-1783: A Study of Organisation, Social Origin and Cartography', unpublished PhD thesis (Michigan University, 1976) 198.

¹⁶² GRE-A, 192a, 'Memoire sur la deffense de la Martinique'; Thomas Jeffreys, *The West-Indian Atlas: or a Compendious Description of the West Indies; illustrated with forty correct charts and maps taken from actual surveys ...* (London, 1775); This was often also the case, even with maps of Europe. Marshall, 'British Military Engineers', 202.

¹⁶³ See for example, WP, 15/27,28, Engraved maps of Jamaica, 1808.

¹⁶⁴ Romans, 'Eyes in the hills', 168-9.

¹⁶⁵ WP, 15/31, 'The Lopez Maps, 1770-1800'. Wellington took two copies of these to the Peninsula.

¹⁶⁶ Romans, 'Eyes in the hills', 169.

¹⁶⁷ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 40, 'Request for information on the land around the Tagus and Villa Velha', 24th July 1810; see also CUL Add. 7521, The Papers of Lieutenant General Roche, J.W. Gordon to Roche, 12th July 1808.

¹⁶⁸ JRUL, Leith, 73, Lieutenant-General Hill to Leith, 4th August 1810. Requesting a map of the River Lezera.

¹⁶⁹ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 9, Captain Atkins, HMS Seine to Leith, 5th October 1808. Requesting information on bays and inlets.

¹⁷⁰ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 88, 'Memorandum detailing the positions and defensive structure around Lezene,' 19th August 1810.

¹⁷¹ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 87, 'Map and Description of the Position around St. Domingos', 19th August 1810.

¹⁷² JRUL, Leith, 27, 'Memorandum on the country between the Estrada to Villa Franca (&c)', September 1809

with officers being required to submit an itinerary of each journey they made to the Quartermaster General in the Peninsula, detailing the length of each stage of their journey, together with the nature of the terrain over which they passed.¹⁷³ In addition this information was sent via Lisbon, to the Repository for Military Knowledge in London.¹⁷⁴ It would not be until the end of 1810 that anything of greater accuracy was produced. By this time 'sketching' officers of the Quarter Master General's department had mapped virtually the whole of central Portugal, on a scale of four miles to the inch.¹⁷⁵ This task continued even after the end of the campaign, the finished result being published in 1841.¹⁷⁶

The mapping of Britain was in a no more advanced state at the outbreak of the war. Scotland had been surveyed by William Roy between 1748 and 1755.¹⁷⁷ Following his death in 1790 his mantle had been taken up by the Duke of Richmond, who was responsible for placing the Ordnance Survey on a permanent footing.¹⁷⁸ In conjunction with the development of the defences on the south coast, the areas were surveyed up to 1801, mapping being seen 'as much a part of the defence infrastructure as fortification and shipbuilding.'¹⁷⁹ The emphasis was on the relief and use of the land, concentrating on its military usefulness, a theme common in military works of the day.¹⁸⁰ This was also the essence of several of the lectures given by Jarry at the Royal Military College, Wycombe from 1799.¹⁸¹

The production of maps for use by the Army had been taken over by the Ordnance at home and abroad, thus centralising their making. As a result of the developments during the Wars, detailed maps would continue to be an integral part of any future military campaign. In addition, the Ordnance Survey had become a dedicated and permanent cartography department.

¹⁷³ See for example, RHK-M, 2/B5/-, 'Route by which Sir Robert Kennedy proceeded from Lisbon to Head Quarters', September 1812; Hawker, *Journal of a Regimental Officer*, 126.

¹⁷⁴ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 110.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Atlas containing the principal battles, sieges and affairs of the Peninsular War* (London, 1841).

¹⁷⁷ SRO RH1/2/523, General David Dundas, 'Memorandum regarding General Roy's Survey of Scotland 1747-55', 12th January 1806; Aaron Arrowsmith, *Memoire relative to the construction of the Map of Scotland published in the year 1807* (London, 1807) 7; R.A. Skelton, 'The Military Survey of Scotland, 1747-1755', in *Scottish Geographical Magazine*, 83 (April 1967) 21; Marshall, 'British Military Engineers', 209.

¹⁷⁸ Richard Oliver, 'The Ordnance Survey in the South of England' in Katherine Barker and Roger Kain (eds.), *Maps in History in South West England*, (Exeter, 1991) 119.

¹⁷⁹ Oliver, 'The Ordnance Survey' 120.

¹⁸⁰ See for example, *The Officer's Manual in the Field; or, a Series of Military Plans, Representing the Principal Operations of a Campaign* (London, 1800)

¹⁸¹ R. Glover *Preparation* 199

7.7 COMMUNICATION

While improvements in cartography eased the movement of the Army over the globe, equivalent improvements in the standards of military communication were not forthcoming. By the standards of today, with instant satellite battlefield communications, the dissemination of information within the Army, during the period under discussion, functioned at a snail's pace. However, the speed at which orders and information could be passed was only relative, since little had changed in centuries, and there was no expectation of anything faster. Improvements in this area were concerned with responding to the needs of the moment, rather than an innovative change.

At the outbreak of the conflict, orders issued to the troops through all staff levels, whether from Horse Guards or a local commander, were issued in long-hand. In most cases they were copied, at least for the sender and the recipient, if not more. This practice was that used in previous conflicts,¹⁸² and one which would continue throughout the century.¹⁸³ It involved the employment of numerous clerks and copyists, who maintained the flow of written orders. The administrative staff increased in number as the war progressed. At the outbreak of the war, these tasks had been undertaken by officers, and occasionally N.C.O.s, as the need arose,¹⁸⁴ but in 1804, the post of 'civilian clerk' was introduced.¹⁸⁵ In 1809, the Adjutant General's department and the Quartermaster General's department, each employed seven such clerks,¹⁸⁶ in an Army of 133,922 men.¹⁸⁷ By 1816, within the Army of Occupation, the former had twenty two clerks, and the latter twenty seven,¹⁸⁸ and that for a force of only 30,000 men.¹⁸⁹ Such a proliferation of clerical staff is mirrored in other civilian departments, and Brewer suggests that it is one measure of the developing state.¹⁹⁰ It is another sign of the exerting of control over areas of the military by the civilian authority, for

¹⁸² See for example, GRE-A, 2240, 'Military Orderly Book', General Orders, 9th June 1778.

¹⁸³ See for example, GRE-D, I/9/1, Memorandum, 1854.

¹⁸⁴ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 388.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 389.

¹⁸⁶ *11th RCME (1810) Appendix 14(A)*.

¹⁸⁷ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 398.

¹⁸⁸ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 207.

¹⁸⁹ Thomas Dwight Veve, *The Duke of Wellington and the British Army of Occupation in France, 1815-1818*, (Westport, Connecticut, 1992) 110.

¹⁹⁰ Brewer *Sinews of Power* 69

although these clerks were under the direction of the heads of each department, their appointment and payment was the responsibility of the Secretary at War.¹⁹¹

Communication between commanders and Horse Guards was essentially regular. In Britain, with its developed postal system this was relatively swift and straightforward. However, on active service, this could prove difficult. In Portugal, the local post-office was used as the basis of the Army communications network, but little else, due to its primitive nature,¹⁹² while in Spain from April 1811, the Army had to rely on its own resources.¹⁹³ The communication within the staff was essentially constant. Wellington could be in contact with his commanders hourly,¹⁹⁴ and for this system to function troops, particularly cavalry, were attached to headquarters.¹⁹⁵ As the Army expanded, the numbers of cavalry needed to be engaged in these duties increased to such an extent, that in 1814, one brigade of cavalry had thirteen letter parties and one full troop so employed.¹⁹⁶ The establishment of the Corps of Mounted Guides in 1809, under Sir George Scovell,¹⁹⁷ went only a small way towards alleviating the problem of tying up of cavalry in these duties. In 1813 it had expanded from eight officers and thirty four other ranks, to twelve officers and one hundred and ninety three other ranks,¹⁹⁸ but Cotton still considered this insufficient, in an Army that had come to expect a high level of communication.¹⁹⁹ Experiments in the use of telegraph were tried, and met with reasonable success.²⁰⁰ The initial dictionary for use with the telegraph, was the standard naval signal-book, the *Marine Vocabulary*,²⁰¹ which by 1810 had been given a more military content,²⁰² although the system was dependant upon naval personnel to run it.²⁰³ Despite its limited use,²⁰⁴ the telegraph was clearly developed further, as in 1813

¹⁹¹ Clode, *Military Forces of the Crown*, I, 389.

¹⁹² Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 122.

¹⁹³ WP, 9/1/2/4, General Order, 14th April 1811.

¹⁹⁴ See for example, RHK-M, 3/B7/-, Murray to Kennedy, 9th March 1811, 10am, 11am, 2pm, 4pm, 8pm and 10pm. Regarding the movement of the Commissariat from the advancing French.

¹⁹⁵ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 124.

¹⁹⁶ NLS, Murray Papers, 48/81, Stapleton Cotton to Murray, 8th March 1814.

¹⁹⁷ PRO WO 37/10/5, Murray to Scovell, 26th September 1808; *WD*, iv, 140, iv, 383, 2nd June 1809; iv, 483, 1st July 1809.

¹⁹⁸ WP, 9/1/2/6, General Orders, 23rd April 1813.

¹⁹⁹ WP, 9/1/2/4 General Orders, 18th February 1811. Scovell was given the task of co-ordinating all communications for the army in 1811; *WD*, xiii, 395, General Order, 11th August 1815. He was given the same duty for the army of occupation in 1815.

²⁰⁰ *WD*, vi, 196, 15th June 1810; 215, 20th June 1810; 371, 20th August 1810; 402, 3rd September 1810.

²⁰¹ Home Popham, *Marine Vocabulary* (1800, 1803), as quoted in Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 124.

²⁰² WP, 9/4/1/3-4, Military Telegraph Dictionaries.

²⁰³ WP, 9/1/2/3, General Order, 13th October 1810; *WD*, vi, 525-6, 19th October 1810; vii, 39, 9th December 1810; 60, 22nd December 1810; 68, 24th December 1810; 429, 4th April 1811.

²⁰⁴ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 126-8. Ward can find only four separate periods on which telegraph was used between 1810 and 1814

Murray instructed that a divisional system was to be introduced.²⁰⁵ The signals used in this case were, according to Ward, a clear ancestor of the twentieth century semaphore.²⁰⁶ However, throughout the period the system was never to be as advanced as that established in France, and used to great effect throughout the occupied territories.²⁰⁷

During the course of the war little was done to improve the communication between Britain and her armies. Orders could take as little as six days to reach headquarters in Spain from London,²⁰⁸ while the West Indian orders could take as many months. During the Peninsular campaign, a regular packet was instituted from Lisbon to England, which sailed every Sunday, from 1809.²⁰⁹ However, for much of the communication with Horse Guards and troops along the Iberian coast, the Army headquarters had to rely upon the co-operation of the navy.²¹⁰ Initially the relationship was informal, with individual officers making local arrangements for communication. In November 1808, Captain Hanhian of *H.M.S. Unicorn* wrote to General Leith requesting that 'from time to time I be informed of the movements of the Army that I might position the ships under my command along the coast, for the purpose of keeping up a communication'.²¹¹ The following year the support of the Peninsula Army by the navy was formalised, and Admiral Berkeley was sent to the Tagus with this purpose in mind.²¹² Communications could be held up by various problems, and contemporary gaps in letter series are not uncommon.²¹³ The most common cause of loss or delay was the weather. During October 1808, the westerly gales off the coast of Spain were so strong as to make the landing of all mail at Corunna impossible for two weeks.²¹⁴ Obviously, in a study of the Army at war, the action of the enemy must also be a factor influencing the transmission of orders. In 1804, the *Admiral Alpin* was captured by the French, and the contents of the letters and despatches she was carrying published in *Le Moniteur*.²¹⁵ In order to minimise the damage caused by such a loss, a numerical cipher

²⁰⁵ NLS, Murray, 91/53-56, 18th December 1813; 91/77-99, 12th January 1814.

²⁰⁶ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 128.

²⁰⁷ Elting, *Swords Around A Throne*, 3, 103-6.

²⁰⁸ See for example, RHK-M, 2/B2/-, Colonel Gordon to Kennedy, 2nd April 1812.

²⁰⁹ WP, 9/1/2/2, General Orders, 30th October 1809.

²¹⁰ Captain Brian M. de Toy, 'Wellington's Lifeline: Naval Logistics in the Peninsula.' Paper presented at the 25th Consortium on revolutionary Europe, New Orleans, March 1995.

²¹¹ JRUL, Leith, 19, Captain Hanhian to Leith, 26th November 1808.

²¹² Donald D. Howard, *Admiral Berkeley and the Duke of Wellington: The Winning Combination in the Peninsula* (Naval Institute Press, 1989) 106; de Toy, 'Wellington's Lifeline', 3

²¹³ See for example, JRUL, Leith, 91-105, Numbered Intelligence Reports from Captain Gomm, 9th Foot. Between 21st August 1810 to 8th September 1810 two of the thirteen intelligence reports sent by Gomm had failed to arrive despite being sent in duplicate, and by different means.

²¹⁴ JRUL, Leith, 21. Rear Admiral De Courcey to Leith, 31st October 1808.

²¹⁵ *Letters Intercepted on board the Admiral Alpin, Captured by the French and Inserted by the French Government in the Moniteur* (London 1804)

was introduced for use with certain of the intelligence reports after 1810,²¹⁶ although such codes had been in use for some time for diplomatic despatches.²¹⁷ By 1812, the French also had a military cipher in operation.²¹⁸ Despite the problems of communication experienced by the British, Wellington stated that they were better off than their opponents, ‘The French armies have no communication and one Army no knowledge of the position or circumstances in which the other is placed; whereas I have a knowledge of all that passes on all sides.’²¹⁹ Despite his confidence, communication between Britain and her armies was in no way swift, and so commanders often acted independent of government orders. This meant that political fluctuations at home could often be ignored by the field commander. But, it could also lead to accusations that the commander had overstepped his authority, such as those directed at the Generals in South America and Egypt during 1806,²²⁰ or those who negotiated the Convention of Cintra.²²¹ Thus, as discussed in Chapter 2, making the appointment of trusted Generals to field commands vital.

The conveying of orders to smaller formations, such as battalions, was of equal importance, for it was these units that would put into practice the orders of the commanding generals. This was done either verbally, or musically, with all commands emanated from the commanding officer, and being passed down through the rank structure. In battalion manoeuvres, when one voice would be difficult to hear, the commander would call the first part of an order. This ‘preparatory’ would then be repeated by all other officers in unison. The unit would wait to act upon the second part of the order, ‘the executive’, when shouted by the commander, and emphasised by the majors.²²² Even after repeating men often found it difficult to hear such orders, and often the whisper of the N.C.O.s could be heard in the ranks, ensuring an order was carried out.²²³ Under such circumstances, it was essential to know the voice of those in command, in particular that of the commanding officer. As difficult as hearing the commander’s voice might be under normal circumstances, it would be doubly so under battle-field conditions, despite the *Rules and Regulations* stating that, ‘In the midst of surrounding noises, the eye and the ear of the soldier should be attentive

²¹⁶ JRUL, Leith, 105, Captain Gomm, to Leith, 8th September 1810.

²¹⁷ See for example, JRUL, Wellesley, 5, 13, 15-18, Wellesley to Dundas, June-July 1800; WP, 9/4/1/1 & 9/4/1/2, Diplomatic cipher rolls, 1809.

²¹⁸ WP, 9/4/1/6, Key to the French Military Cipher, n.d.

²¹⁹ WD, v, 43, Wellington to Liverpool, 23rd May 1811.

²²⁰ Derry, *Earl Grey*, 136.

²²¹ GD51/1/743, Lord Melville to David Dundas, 27th September 1808; M. Glover, *Britannia Sickness*, 66.

²²² *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field Exercise and Movements* (1792) 73-4; *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field Exercise and Movements of His Majesty's Forces* (1815) 73-4.

²²³ See for example RP William Booth to Thomas Booth 19th October 1806

only to his own immediate officer.²²⁴ In these circumstances, the commander relied heavily on music to pass his commands. The drum is a centuries old means of conveying orders, and continued in use throughout the course of this study. However, during this period greater emphasis was placed on extended formations, and so the bugle became increasingly popular. Although not a new idea, (the horn being used in medieval armies),²²⁵ and the trumpet by cavalry, it was a departure from what had become the norm within infantry. The system adopted for the Army was that developed by Baron de Rottenburg.²²⁶ The bugle calls were first used by the light infantry units training at Shorncliffe under Moore,²²⁷ and they formed the basis for those used throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.²²⁸ The light infantry units also developed the use of whistle calls in the field.²²⁹ These bear an uncanny resemblance to those traditionally used with dogs by hunters,²³⁰ and perhaps shows something of the mentality of those developing such systems.

Routine information from the Commander of an Army, which needed to be disseminated to the whole of his force, was issued in the form of General Orders. The development of the General Orders of Wellington's Peninsular operation is an obvious milestone in British military administration. The regular issue of edicts via the Adjutant General, enabled the control of the largest Army to take the field in living memory, operating over difficult terrain, in countries allied to Britain, and therefore not open to the abuse which characterised the French campaigns over the same soil. However, such means of control were not new, and had been deployed earlier in the period under discussion, in both the West Indies in 1793-4,²³¹ the Low Countries in 1794-5,²³² North America in 1800,²³³ and Egypt in 1801.²³⁴ The majority of General Orders were copied long-hand, from the commander in chief's office, whether at home or on campaign.²³⁵ Those of the

²²⁴ *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field Exercise and Movements* (1792) 73-4; *Rules and Regulations ... Formations, Field Exercise and Movements* (1815) 73-4.

²²⁵ Gerry Embleton and John Howe, *The Medieval Soldier* (London, 1994) 104.

²²⁶ *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry* (1803); *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry* (1808).

²²⁷ JM-CUL, Moore to Calvert, 22nd January 1804.

²²⁸ *Bugle Calls for the Army*, (London, 1976).

²²⁹ Captain Barber, *Instructions for the Formation and Exercise of Volunteer Sharpshooters* (London, 1804) Plate 1.

²³⁰ John Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: the practice and meaning of medieval hunting* (London, 1988) 160-71.

²³¹ GRE-A, 302, General Orders, 6th May 1794.

²³² See for example, RHK-M 3/B4/-, General Orders, 16th May 1799.

²³³ GD51/616/242, 'Duke of Kent's Regulations for the Forces of Britain in North America', 1st July 1800.

²³⁴ See for example, RHK-M 4/B1/-, General Orders, 26th August 1801.

²³⁵ For home service, see for example, GRE-A, 2251, General Orderly Book, Head Quarters, Arundel, 11th November 1798 to 18th July 1799

Grey-Jervis expedition took this form completely, and differ little from those issued in the Low Countries²³⁶ or the Peninsular.²³⁷ The orders were of a uniform appearance, which continued through all the campaigns covered in this study. Grey's previous military experience had been during the American War of Independence, and his note books reveal a system of General Orders covering the same topics, and taking the same form as those of subsequent campaigns.²³⁸ While it is not suggested that Grey was responsible for the system, it is clear that it was in place prior to the outbreak of war in 1793. A feature which was to develop during the period under discussion, is that several General Orders series were translated into the local language, in the same form as the English version.²³⁹ This would enable a common military discipline to be spread across all forces under British control.

The most significant feature of the issue of General Orders during the period under discussion, is that from 1812, and throughout the advance through Spain, three printing presses were carried with the headquarters, on which updated general orders were issued.²⁴⁰ Prior to this orders had been printed, but only on occasions when headquarters were situated in towns with such facilities.²⁴¹ Another aspect of their issue, is that in 1811, after thirteen years of warfare, the collection from 1808 were considered uniform and constant enough to be published by authority.²⁴² This publication was repeated with little alteration in 1815,²⁴³ and was the basis of future such works well into the nineteenth century.²⁴⁴ The first published set of operating procedures for the Army as a whole, was the *General Regulations and Orders for His Majesty's Forces*, issued in 1786,²⁴⁵ which can be seen to be the origin of the *General Regulation and Orders* of 1807.²⁴⁶ and are little different from the 1811 edition. The 1786 work is, for the most part, a printed form of the General Orders contained in the notebooks of Grey.²⁴⁷ Prior to the appointment of Wellesley to the Peninsular command, General Orders were being issued from Moore's headquarters, which

²³⁶ GRE-A, 2249, 'Military Orderly Book', General Orders 17th September 1794 - 6th September 1796.

²³⁷ See for example, RHK-M, 4/3/-, General Orders, numerous dates; WP, 9/1/2/1 - 9/1/2/8, General Orders, 27th June 1809 - 19th July 1814.

²³⁸ GRE-A, 2240, 'Military Orderly Book', June - July 1778.

²³⁹ See for example, RHK-M, 4/B3/-, 21st September 1809, General Orders in Spanish;

²⁴⁰ Ward, *Wellington's Headquarters*, 89.

²⁴¹ RHK-M, 3/B4/-, General Orders issued at Badajos, 21st September 1809.

²⁴² *General Regulations and Orders* (London, 1811).

²⁴³ *General Regulations and Orders* (London, 1815).

²⁴⁴ See for example, A. Gordon (ed.), *General Orders issued to the Army in the East* (London, 1856).

²⁴⁵ *General Regulations and Orders for His Majesty's Forces* (London, 1786).

²⁴⁶ *General Regulations and Orders relative to the duties in the Field and Cantonments* (London, 1807).

²⁴⁷ GRE-A 2240 'Military Orderly Book' June - July 1778

bear more than a passing resemblance to those issued later by Wellington's office, and those printed in the *Regulations and Orders*, of 1807 and 1811.²⁴⁸ Wellington can be said to be responsible for their tightening up, and ensuring that all troops were aware of their contents, and adhered to them. Through the summer of 1809 General Orders were issued enforcing the reading of all such orders to troops at the earliest opportunity;²⁴⁹ the endorsing of such orders by the officer receiving them;²⁵⁰ a reply to be made to the brigade commander within a week of receipt, informing of compliance;²⁵¹ and the annotating of all weekly returns with a statement as to which General Orders were missing.²⁵² Attempts to tighten up the issue and acknowledgement of General Orders had been attempted before,²⁵³ but never in such a prolonged and concerted manner. Dupin observed,

The general regulations applicable to troops on home service, are extended to the forces serving abroad, a rigorous discipline has enforced the execution of these regulations, and an exactitude and punctuality have thus been maintained, which were formerly altogether unheard of in the English service.²⁵⁴

That Wellington was not the sole author of the *General Regulations and Orders* is clear. However, he was able to refine the use of the General Orders beyond that achieved by previous commanders. Within six months of the death of Sir John Moore, the first series of orders was issued, which was to be repeated annually.²⁵⁵ This was possible due to the distance of the Army from Horse Guards, which enabled Moore to assert his authority upon the whole force, supported by a fast-improving logistical system. The Grey-Jervis expedition at the outbreak of the Wars, was dogged by deficiencies in the supply of men, food and equipment. This resulted in their command being run in terms of subsistence, rather than being able to establish an effective system of General Orders.²⁵⁶ Other campaigns were over too quickly to enable a system to be introduced, whether through success or failure. The early campaign in the Low Countries became one of raids out of the canalised areas, and so the General Orders took on a form akin to garrison duty in Rethin

²⁴⁸ See for example, RHK-M, 2/B7/-, General Orders, 'Regulations for Supplying the Troops in the Field', 12th July 1807; *General Regulations and Orders*, (London, 1811) 161-7.

²⁴⁹ WP, General Orders, 9/1/2/1 4th July 1809.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁵¹ WP, General Orders, 9/1/2/1 13th July 1809.

²⁵² WP, General Orders, 9/1/2/1 11th September 1809.

²⁵³ See for example, GRE-A, 2240, 'Military Orderly Book', 9th June 1778; RHK-M, 4/B3/-, General Order, 16th May 1799.

²⁵⁴ Dupin, *Military Force of Great Britain*, I, 59.

²⁵⁵ NAM, 6807/221-30, Four Ledgers Belonging to Commissary Nathan Jackson.

²⁵⁶ See for example, GRE-A, 186, Henry Dundas to Grey, 6th December 1793; 278, Henry Dundas to Grey, 27th April 1794.

and Osnabruck.²⁵⁷ Although the Egyptian campaign,²⁵⁸ generated detailed General Orders,²⁵⁹ its nature meant that most concerned experiments in supply, and the division of the bounty.²⁶⁰ Clearly the nature of the conflict dictated the form which orders would take.

Another means of disseminating information to the Army was through Standing Orders. Usually for individual units, no other period produced as many versions of such works. The proliferation of Standing Orders during the period under discussion, is clearly what sets it apart from that prior to 1793. Many of the privately produced sets of rules were printed for the consumption of a much wider audience, despite being written for a more specific market. The standing orders of the Experimental Rifle Corps, were merely the operating regulations for an experimental cadre. But, such was the interest in irregular formations, that within a year of the completion of the experiment, these regulations were published,²⁶¹ and formed part of subsequent light infantry training.²⁶² It is possible that in previous generations of officers, ideas as to interior management and economy could be passed down through practice and association. Whereas in a global conflict, many military thinkers and innovators would neither meet nor have time to spend in experimentation, due to the dispersed nature of the conflicts, or their premature exit from the service. In these circumstances it was better to publish such workings and ideas, and so generate debate and development. There was of course a market for military publications of all kinds, stimulated by an interest in the war, and a level of patriotism.²⁶³ This was further fuelled by the expansion, not merely of the regular military forces, but also of the temporary and part-time corps.²⁶⁴ The volunteers in particular lacked any great official direction in their training, especially after the removal of their Inspecting Field Officers by Windham. Printed standing orders and other treatise would therefore be a great asset to an aspiring commander's library. Even regular officers would benefit from such works, since formal training was at a minimum. The form taken by standing orders throughout the period in question, did not alter, and had changed little from those of previous dates.²⁶⁵ Indeed, the previous works

²⁵⁷ RHK-M, 2/B3/-, General Orders, August 1794, 2/B4/-, General Orders, March 1795; Fortescue, *The Army Service Corps*, 57.

²⁵⁸ Fortescue, *Army Service Corps*, 59-66.

²⁵⁹ RHK-M, 4/B1/-, General Orders, 25th December 1800.

²⁶⁰ RHK-M, 2/B5/-, General Orders, 25th September 1801.

²⁶¹ *Regulations for the Rifle Corps formed at Blatchington Barracks, under the command of Colonel Manningham, August 25th 1800* (London, 1801).

²⁶² Gates, *British Light Infantry Arm*, 85.

²⁶³ Colley, *Britons*, 290-319.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁵ See in particular Cuthbertson *Complent Interior Management* (1768)

were republished to meet the renewed demand,²⁶⁶ along with the more up-to-date treatise, thus perpetuating best practice from one conflict to another.

²⁶⁶ Bennett Cuthbertson *Cuthbertson's System for the Interior Economy of a Battalion* (London 1807)

7.8 CONCLUSION

The changes brought about in the transport systems of the Army during the period reveal much about the nature of the British military machine of the time. As with other areas, the underlying principle is one of centralisation, drawing the control for many aspects of the various transport systems to the centre, and in particular the civilian centre. It is most notable that the two departments responsible for the supply and transport of the largest armies Britain had ever put into the field, were the Transport Board and the Commissariat, both civilian, and both ultimately responsible to the Treasury. The Transport Board can be seen to have played a pivotal role in organising the transport of men and supplies to the countries over which the Army campaigned. Theirs was a crucial position, being responsible for a task that could so easily have brought them into conflict with those involved in lucrative foreign trade, on which the maintenance of a strong economy, and so that of the war, depended. The principle of Transport Board operations was its use of private enterprise, and for all it was a major employer of shipping throughout the war, it never entered into ownership of vessels. Instead it relied on a market, in which demand for shipping already outstripped supply. When the market failed to produce enough ships, the Board were able to resort to a reluctant Royal Navy, to transport both men and supplies. It was the central control that would permit such flexibility, without any loss of co-ordination of effort.

The second tier of transport, that organised and maintained by the Commissariat, was also steadily brought under central control, as the period progressed. Traditionally, it was a role fulfilled by the local private contractors in the areas of conflict. However, the scale of the Wars from 1793 would mean that the centralised control of such private enterprise was essential, taking the risk away from individuals, while increasing the level of co-ordination, of the numerous elements, from the Commissary, and ultimately the Treasury. In addition, as with the Transport Board, the central control enabled greater flexibility, permitting the use of diverse indigenous means of transport, when conventional ones were insufficient, but always within a rigid system of supply.

The mode of moving men over land changed little. The manner in which soldiers marched was to come under the scrutiny of central government, with the resulting changes being introduced universally through *Rules and Regulations*. This was to be one of the first

methods by which the powers of the colonels would be eroded, in favour of control from Horse Guards. It was also an area that would see development during, and as a direct result of, active service. The fitness of the men was to become of immense importance, as they were expected to function in extreme conditions. This too was to come under the scrutiny of authority, and a centralised regime imposed.

Inland waterways were of great utility in the transporting of heavy and bulky cargoes, including men. This was taken a stage further in Britain by the development of a system of military canals by the government, primarily for military purposes, but able to fund itself from the use made of it by private traffic. This also developed a certain element of control over civilian boats and their cargoes. Inland waterways were long an area where central government wielded its power within continental Europe, where canals were state owned enterprises. However, in Britain they were a departure from the norm of private canal development, and another sign of the state encroaching on all areas of the military.

The realisation that to fight a global war, a country needed maps and charts was brought home to the authorities at an early stage of the conflict. This was to prove too late for certain areas of campaigning, where there was a reliance upon local reports and sketches. However, this deficiency would stimulate the production of detailed maps of the south of England, (the area of potential invasion), firmly under government control. It encouraged the training of new officers with an awareness of the needs of a global war, who were able to contribute greatly to later campaigns. The resulting centrally controlled body of military map-makers, the Ordnance Survey, was to dominate British cartography from the Wars to the present day.

The methods by which the Army communicated also underwent significant change. As improvements were made, there was a consequent increase in the expectation of the military for improved communication. This was not always possible, and often tied up many people in the task. It was also to bring about the formation of an Army corps dedicated to the performance of this function. Through the employment of civilian clerks, soldiers could be released from their involvement in communication, to martial duties. However, of greater importance here was that in doing so another element of military function was taken over by men reporting to the civilian authority of the Secretary at War, rather than the military hierarchy. The telegraph was used effectively during the period, particularly in Portugal and Spain. However, its use was never on the scale of the French, and the greater reliance was

placed on more traditional forms of communication over land, and via the navy, which were labour intensive, and could so easily be affected by natural factors and enemy action.

On the battle field, the increasing operation of troops in extended formations, brought the adoption of the bugle as the main means of communication. This change was to last for over a century. Away from the field of conflict the traditional method of communicating orders for dissemination to the troops had always been the General Order. While the period saw this repeated, for the first time these orders were officially imposed on the troops, and checks introduced to ensure their adherence. This was possible due to the Army being in a relatively constant form and location for a long period, while engaged in the Peninsula campaign. The final aspect of communication of martial ideas was the proliferation of printed treatise, often in the form of Standing Orders. This reveals a market, beyond the usual military men, interested in the workings of the Army.

In all areas of transport and communication during the period under discussion, a steady move towards greater centralisation can be observed. This reflects the need to co-ordinate the transport and communication systems of an Army, fighting for the first time, a global war. It also reveals evidence of the on-going tightening of civilian control over the military. The area of transport and communication was another area of governmental dominance of the Army, which this thesis has shown to have pervaded all areas of its development through a firm grip on the purse strings.

8.1 The Most Complete Machine?

In 1794, Charles James Fox warned that the Crown in England would know no bounds if continental monarchy triumphed over Revolutionary France.¹ However, when in 1815 the French were finally defeated, it was the British nation that was perceived to be triumphant, and the Crown was merely a symbol of that nation. Twenty three years of war had brought about such significant change to Britain that Fox's prophecy could not come true. Through changes in every area of society, the institutions of the British state had been brought under even greater parliamentary control, sidelining the Crown, and leaving it with only its influence and minimal powers.

The Army, the tool by which European absolute monarchs had dominated their states, had been paramount in the British strategy to defeat France. However, over the course of the Wars the Army had become a tool of the British nation, and not of the Crown. The Wars had touched every Briton in some way, and so were no longer conceptualised as being fought by and on behalf of the Crown. Instead it was the British nation dominated the iconography of victory.² But, of even greater importance, the real control of the British fighting force had passed from the King and his servants, to parliament, the representatives of the British nation. This thesis has shown how this came about.

¹ Christie, *Wars and Revolution in Britain*, 218; Walpole had feared the same would occur had the royal army triumphed in America. Walpole, *Last Journals*, II, 413.

² See Colley, *Britons*, 364-75.

The study of the emerging state, stimulated by Brewer's *Sinews of Power* has been advanced through this thesis. From Burke's Pay Office Act in 1783, increasingly the Army became part of the parliamentary structure, with a central civilian administration and ultimate authority at all levels vested in the civil, rather than the military departments. In particular, control over its financing was tightened and brought under either direct Treasury control or the authority of the Secretary at War. The cost of the Wars was vast, and particularly when compared with those that had been fought before. The parliamentary response was to control all finances directed towards the military, and centrally co-ordinate Army administration. Economy was a constant preoccupation, with savings in the smallest degree encouraged. The financial structures, set in place to fund the prosecution of a century of war, ensured a frugality which was all-pervading, but which never stood in the way of progress or a more efficient system of operation. For example, the co-ordination of the transport services, and the purchase and delivery of stores were brought under the central control of the Transport Board and the Storekeeper General's Department respectively. The improvement in the efficiency of both was deemed to be of more importance than the resulting higher costs to the public.

Such control would not have been possible in previous conflicts, but the Wars with France were unlike any previously fought Wars, in both scale and in purpose. Britain was fighting as much against an ideology as for territorial gain, and this produced an almost universally united political front. The continued prosecution of the Wars ceased to be a partisan issue, with only their financing and mode of execution providing any serious debate. Even Fox accepted that the idea of making peace with Napoleonic France was unrealistic.³ Neither was the increasing control of the Army divisive within parliament. The

³ Christie, *Wars and Revolutions*, 272.

need for the vast cost to Britain, in every kind of resource, to be controlled by central civilian rather than military men, gained a universal political acceptance. It was also aided by an ailing monarch, a disinterested regent, and an office of Commander in Chief emasculated by political assault and scandal.

Nevertheless, despite such extensive civilian control, the Army was permitted, to a great extent, to reform its own internal structures. This was possible for several reasons. Primarily, parliament could now be confident that due to its financial control of the Army it had ultimate authority over change within the military. Secondly, there was a large parliamentary Army lobby which would always be inclined to support the self-determination of the military. Finally, there was also an acceptance by parliament as a whole of the military expertise of high ranking Army officers. The Commander in Chief's authority over the organisation of his troops was never questioned. However, in the hierarchy of the central military command this post was increasingly by-passed. With external campaigns the Commander in the Field would have ultimate military authority, under the Secretary of State for War and Colonies. Administratively the War Office, under the Secretary at War, took precedence over Horse Guards; the office of the Commander in Chief. The Commander in Chief's control was reduced to immediate Army concerns, in which spheres his expertise was acknowledged. In these areas, as this thesis has shown, the reforms were numerous. A uniform fighting force was produced, with which general officers, under the direct authority of parliament, were able to perform with increasing effectiveness throughout the Wars. Single drill systems were introduced in both cavalry and infantry, which were for the first time enforced Army-wide. These uniform drill systems were the first step towards a standardised Army regime which included all aspects of the internal economy and clothing of a regiment. Under the direction of the Duke of

York the British Army moved towards a single 'system' which made it the most uniform British fighting force ever to take the field, and which would be the benchmark of those who followed.

Despite the Commander in Chief's reform of the internal workings of the Army, overall administrative control of this institution shifted, in favour of a powerful office of the Secretary at War. This important change hitherto has failed to be recognised by historians. It was this member of the government who controlled the extensive military bureaucracy on a day to day basis. Surprisingly without a cabinet position from 1809, the office still dominated the Army through its finances and administration. It was the office from which Army estimates emanated; Regiments were financed; and the movements of the troops were ultimately sanctioned. With direct access to the Treasury and the Secretary of State for War and Colonies, to whom he was jointly responsible, the Secretary at War was vital to the administration of the Army. Far from being the 'rather mysterious functionary' described by Fortescue, the Secretary at War was the lynch pin of the Army during the Wars with France. Without the emergence of this key figure, much of the development of the Army would have floundered on the remaining military vested interests. The fear for much of the eighteenth century had been that one man - usually perceived to be the King - would take control of a powerful Army, and so checks and balances had been put in place to prevent just such abuse. At the outbreak of the Wars these proved to be such a hindrance to the effective working of the Army, that one by one they were removed. What resulted was an Army effectively under the control of one man. Not the King, not even one of the King's cabinet ministers, but the Secretary at War.

The Wars also produced extensive reform of the bureaucracy of the state, which extended to the Army itself. Through the Committee on Public Accounts; the Committee on Public Expenditure; the Select Committee on Finance; and the Commission of Military Enquiry, by the end of the conflict the central military bureaucracy was more efficient, despite being vastly expanded due to the pressure of the Wars. Practically all sinecures were removed, and in their place were clearly defined jobs, with established career structures. The taking of fees and gratuities was all but removed, in favour of salaries and superannuation, and the Treasury, through the Secretary at War, had a greater control than ever before of the bureaucratic purse strings of the Army. Changes to Officer entry, promotion and training also enabled the development of a clear 'corps' of high social standing, despite the rank of colonel being maintained as a virtual sinecure. This thesis has shown that the professionalisation of institutions, identified by Brewer, and extended by Colley and Corfield, also played a significant part in the development of the Army. Indeed, patterns of change observed within the Army and its administration, often were forerunners of those observed subsequently in many other professions.

The Wars saw the development of a new way of thinking about the role and composition of the military. In return for the commitment of service, the state was prepared to pay high bounties; improve living conditions; reduce harsh discipline; and increase the pay of the other ranks. The provision of these 'welfare' arrangements exercised a greater influence on recruiting than the notion of men being 'pushed' into service through their worsening domestic conditions. Many of these arrangements predate nineteenth century ideas of the responsibility by the state for welfare provision, as well as those concerning the standing of soldiers in society.

The Army was by no means at the leading edge of innovation during the Wars.

Many of the principles implemented were part of a much wider development of the British state. The bureaucratic reforms formed only one element of a general reform of the administrative structures, and the centralisation of power was merely a reflection of other departments, and of the state itself, which in 1800 implemented the ultimate policy of centralisation in the Act of Union. Technologically the Army was more of a testing ground for external ideas. The production of every item required by the Army enabled manufacturers to experiment in the type of mass production that would become commonplace during the industrial revolution, while the mobilisation of vast quantities of manpower across the globe, was a pre-cursor to the many expeditions within the expanding empire.

However, despite the developments in the control of the Army, other less centralising ideas were also at work, and their effects able to function alongside, and even within, the new structures. The central authority of the Transport Board, functioned only through compliance with the private ship owners, who supplied the vessels. The logistical problems of transport on the ground, was also solved by resort to private contract, despite the overall control of the Commissariat. And, in the supply of almost every item of food, clothing and equipment, market forces were permitted to prevail, despite the ability to control purchasing centrally. Even in the procurement of manpower, the force of the market was dominant, and without recourse to either conscription or the press, the ranks of the Army were filled to a greater or lesser extent by volunteers through the Wars. Such flexibility and policies demonstrated the growing acceptance of *laissez faire* among the ruling elite.

This thesis has been primarily concerned with change. Every chapter has emphasised this as each area of the Army has been examined. In such an environment it would be easy to perceive that all such change was positive and beneficial. Certainly all contemporary evidence would support such a hypothesis. Wellington described his Peninsular Army as his 'most complete machine', while Dupin, the French Officer sent to study the British Army in 1816, concluded that in every respect improvements had been made for the better. By 1812, the Army had commenced a series of victories in Spain which culminated in the defeat of the French in 1814. This thesis has shown that by that date, significant change had taken place in every aspect of the Army, which enabled it to achieve its ultimate victory.

However, there were areas within the Army in which vestiges of the old order were maintained. Army Agency was still inefficient, excessively expensive, open to abuse, the subject of popular criticism, and so tied up in vested interests and influential circles, that allegations of corruption were easily made. Even with the evidence of substantial savings, this system was barely reformed. Similarly, the question of the purchase of Army rank was side-stepped, even though such dated systems had been abolished by law in every other area of public service, and in the civilian administration of the Army itself. It appears that those reforming the Army had too much to lose themselves, and therefore chose to maintain the status quo. These continuities in Army practice, ensure that the study of the Army in this period can not be simplified to one that is a feature of either a 'long' or 'short' eighteenth century. While Burke's Pay Office Act clearly began the reform process in 1783, several aspects of the Army remained unchanged into the nineteenth century. The anomalies of 'old corruption' in the Army remained well beyond the period under

discussion, qualifying contemporary enthusiasm for the otherwise positive reforms that had been made during the Wars with France.

The most important contribution of this thesis to the study of the Army during the Wars with France, has yet to be made. Despite a multitude of works on the subject, at present there is little academic debate. This thesis is written in the hope that it will, through its original suggestions, stimulate discussion at an academic level that will contribute not only to the study of the Army, but to the study of the development of the state.

8.2 Epilogue

The victory for the forces of Britain and her allies on the field of Waterloo marked the zenith of military advancement for many years to come. Despite the experience of the debacle at the outbreak of hostilities in 1793, the demands of peace proved more pressing on the financial commitments of the emerging empire than the continued development of the world's premier fighting force.

There were six destructive influences which conspired to undo those developments which the Wars with France had seen. First, the budgetary constraints which had been prominent, though not dominant, during the Wars, remained. With the removal of the French threat, few could argue for such high taxation and extensive expenditure, and so the Army budget suffered under the pressure for economy, in order to service the national debt resulting from the Wars. Secondly, the deployment of the Army in garrison duties at home and across the expanding empire, resulted in the breakdown in communication, and the

dislocation of uniform systems of training. Regiments were described as having 'gone to fat'⁴ on the relatively easy life of colonial policing. Thirdly, the main function of the forces at home was in the suppression of civil disorder, which destroyed much of the goodwill towards the Army and its soldiery which victory in the Wars had generated. The division of cohesive units to perform such duties served only to disrupt established regimental regimes. Fourthly, the traditional fears of a strong standing Army were still present, together with renewed apprehension of monarchical involvement. Therefore parliament were more comfortable in the reduction of the forces than in their reform. All these factors had been present prior to the Wars with France. The fifth factor emerged along with the empire. The powerful mercantile lobby were strong supporters of a pacific foreign policy, that would not hinder their trade, and therefore saw a strong and expensive Army as the diametric opposite of their aims. Finally, the Army hierarchy were to prove to be their own worst enemies. Wellington and several of his Peninsular lieutenants maintained a strong opposition to change of any kind. This so-called 'Torres Vedras' mentality⁵ ensured that the Army would be seen as a conservative institution, and not the reformed body which it had become by the end of the Wars. As a result of these factors, little was done to advance the reforms which have been the topic of this thesis.

By the outbreak of the Crimean War, although most of the developments of the Wars with France remained in place, this still left the Army almost forty years behind the other major world powers, with America, France, and even Russia reforming their military forces, in the light of the experience of the Wars of 1793 to 1815. By the end of 1854, as had been seen in 1793, the Army had received a shock to its system and the long-awaited

⁴ PRO WO 27/198, Inspection Return of the 68th Regiment of Light Infantry, by Major General Sir George Bingham, November 1829.

⁵ *United Service Gazette*, 8th July 1854.

reforms were begun in earnest. In typical British fashion substantial military change only proved possible during a war, and the Army was forced once again to re-invent the wheel.

APPENDIX 1

REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF MILITARY ENQUIRY

Appointed by Act of 45 GEO. III. Cap. 47.

An Act to appoint Commissioners to enquire and examine into the Public Expenditure, and the Conduct of Public Business, in the MILITARY DEPARTMENTS therein mentioned; and to report such Observations as shall occur to them for correcting or preventing any Abuses and Irregularities, and for the better conducting and managing, the Business of the said Departments.

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------|---|
| 1 | 21st March 1806 | Office of the Barrack Master General.
Arrears of Barrack Office Accounts. |
| 2 | 18th July 1806 | Establishment of the Barrack Office. |
| 3 | 22nd December 1806 | Office of the Barrack Master General - Stores/Supplies. |
| 4 | 3rd March 1807 | Office of the Barrack Master General - Buildings. |
| 5 | 1 st March 1808 | Medical Department. |
| 6 | 25th June 1808 | Office of the Secretary at War.
Establishment of the War Office.
Regimental Accounts.
Agency and Clothing. |
| | Supplement to 5 | Medical Department. |
| 7 | 20 th January 1808 | Office of the Secretary at War.
Department of Foreign Accounts.
Chaplain General. |
| 8 | 20th January 1809 | Office of the Secretary at War.
Miscellaneous Accounts Department. |
| 9 | 14th April 1809 | Army Expenditure in West Indies.
41 Geo. III, cap. 22. |
| 10 | 26th February 1810 | Royal Military College. |
| 11 | 26th February 1810 | Departments of the Adjutant General and the
Quartermaster General. |

- 12 27th February 1810 Office of the Ordnance.
Treasurer of the Ordnance.
- 13 27th February 1810 Master General of the Board of Ordnance.
- 14 27th February 1810 Ordnance.
Estimates.
- 15 23rd July 1812 Ordnance.
Fortifications and Buildings.
Barracks.
Small Gun Department.
Shipping.
- 16 23rd July 1812 Ordnance.
Contracts.
Royal Laboratory.
Inspector of Artillery.
Royal Carriage Department.
- 17 9th January 1812 Ordnance.
Military Accounts.
Field Train Department.
Royal Artillery Drivers.
Deputy Adjutant General Artillery.
Medical Department.
RMA Woolwich.
Trigonometrical Survey of Britain.
- 18 20th March 1812 Office of the Commissariat.
- 19 20th March 1812 Royal Hospital Chelsea.
Commissary General of Musters.
Royal Military Asylum.

APPENDIX 2

KEY OFFICE HOLDERS, 1793-1815.

COMMANDER IN CHIEF

1788	Lord Amherst (Acting)
1793	Lord Amherst
1795	Duke of York
1809	David Dundas
1811	Duke of York (to 1826)

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (AND COLONIES)

1794	Henry Dundas
1801	Lord Hobart
1804	Lord Campden
1805	Viscount Castlereagh
1806	William Windham
1807	Viscount Castlereagh
1809	Lord Liverpool
1812	Lord Bathurst

SECRETARY AT WAR

1783	Sir George Younge
1794	William Windham
1801	Charles Yorke
1803	Charles Bathurst
1804	William Dundas
1806	Colonel Richard Fitzpatrick
1807	General Sir James Murray Pultney
1809	Granville Leveson Gower
1809	Lord Palmerston (to 1828)

PRIMARY

Public Record Office, Kew.

ADM Admiralty Office.

1. Admiralty Secretariat Papers
108. Transport Department Records

AO Audit Office.

1. Audit Office General Correspondence
6. Minutes
11. Establishment and Registers
16. Miscellanea

C Chancery

114. Chancery: Unknown Masters' Exhibits

CO Colonial Office.

5. America and West Indies Original Correspondence
138. Jamaica Entry Books
153. Leeward Islands Entry Books
158. Malta Original Correspondence
318. West Indies Original Correspondence

HO Home Office.

30. Home Office: War and colonial Office Correspondence
50. Home Office: Military Correspondence
51. Home Office: Military Entry Books
100. Home Office: Ireland: Correspondence and Papers

SP State Papers

44. Secretaries of State: State Papers: Entry Books

T Treasury

28. Treasury: Various Out Letter Books
47. Treasury: Victualling Lists

- 64. Treasury: Miscellaneous Records
- 83. Treasury: Royal Military Canal Commission

- WO War Office
 - 1. Secretary at War in Letters
 - 2. War Office Indexes and Correspondence
 - 3. Commander in Chief Out Letters
 - 4. Secretary at War Out Letters
 - 5. Marching Orders
 - 6. Secretary of State Out Letters
 - 7. Departmental Out Letters
 - 8. Ireland Out Letters
 - 9. Accounts
 - 12. General Muster Books and Pay Lists
 - 13. Militia and Volunteers Muster books and pay Lists
 - 17. Monthly Returns
 - 24. Establishments
 - 25. Various Registers
 - 26. *Miscellany Books*
 - 27. Inspection Returns
 - 28. Headquarters Records
 - 30. Miscellanea
 - 31. Commander in Chief Memoranda Papers
 - 34. Amherst Papers
 - 35. Ireland
 - 37. Scovell Papers
 - 40. Selected Unnumbered Papers
 - 43. Secretary at War: Correspondence
 - 44. Ordnance Office In Letters
 - 46. Ordnance Office Out Letters
 - 47. Ordnance Office Minutes
 - 57. Commissariat Department In Letters
 - 58. Commissariat Department Out Letters
 - 59. Commissariat Department Minutes

- 60. Commissariat Department Accounts
- 62. Commissariat Department Miscellanea
- 63. Commissariat Department Ireland
- 68. Militia Records
- 74. Army Purchase Commission Papers
- 78. Maps and Plans
- 80. Murray Papers
- 97. Royal Hospital Chelsea Soldiers' Documents
- 103. War Office and Associated Departments: Submissions for Royal
Approval
- 107. Quartermaster General
- 123. War Office and Associated Departments: Army Circulars,
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- 133. Brownrigg Papers
- 134. Peacocke Papers
- 135. Harry Smith Papers
- 162. Adjutant General

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Lieutenant-General Sir P.K. Roche: copies of letters received, 1808-17 (Add. 7521)

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University of Durham Library.

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A 1st Earl

D General Charles Grey

Baker-Baker Papers

Southampton University Library.

Wellington Papers.

Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh

Register House Papers (RH1)

Miscellaneous Military Papers (GD1)

Cunningham of Thornton Papers (GD21)

Lothian Papers (GD40)

Melville Castle Muniments, Scottish Record Office. Papers of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville. (GD51)

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NAM 8002-78

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NAM 6807/221

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