

**The Rifle Brigade 1800 to c.1870:
A Study of Social, Cultural and Religious Attitudes**

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Summary

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This dissertation analyses the social, cultural and religious outlook of the officers and men of the Rifle Brigade, a regiment of the British army, between 1800 and about 1870, and examines the relationship between that corps and British civilian society.

Chapter 1 outlines the structure and military record of the regiment, describes its links into the wider army, and examines the military and non-military careers of Riflemen, and their social backgrounds. Chapter 2 presents evidence for reforming and conservative professional attitudes, and argues for the importance to them of an ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness. Chapter 3 describes the operation of patronage and the links it created with civilian society, and it analyses the views of merit that underpinned the system. Chapter 4 brings together evidence for the reading of officers and men, and the theatre they saw and performed themselves. It shows how these acted as a channel for a range of information, ideas and attitudes to enter the regiment from civilian society, and so fostered a shared outlook. Chapters 5 and 6 look at the extent and nature of religious belief among Riflemen, taking into account their backgrounds and subsequent careers, and argue both that Christianity coloured attitudes to a range of conduct, and that Riflemen adhered to forms of institutional and cultural religion that should be set beside personal piety. The conclusion highlights the role of the ideal of gentlemanliness in guiding officers and in shaping a culture shared across ranks and across the civilian-military divide. Two appendices are provided. The first describes the method used for the analysis of officers' careers, and the second is a genealogical table showing their interrelation.

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Abbreviations

<i>JSAHR</i>	<i>Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research</i>
NAM	National Army Museum
PRO	Public Record Office
RGJ	Royal Green Jackets Archive, Winchester
<i>USJ</i>	<i>United Service Journal</i>

Introduction

This dissertation is a study of a single regiment of the British army, the Rifle Brigade, between 1800 and 1870. It investigates evidence for the social composition of the regiment, and explores the social, cultural and religious outlook of its officers and men, and describes the relation of the corps to civilian society. This approach offers important insights into how the regiment cohered as a social unit, how its military discipline and morale were sustained, and what influences fashioned its professional development. More broadly, it contributes to an understanding of the integration of the army into the political nation of the nineteenth century, and of the consolidation of common ground in the cultures of diverse sections of British society.

The Duke of Wellington saw the army he commanded as an institution that fostered habits and values identical to those found among the landed ruling classes across Britain.¹ Yet he recognised, too, a distinctly military set of social and professional values and relationships that set the army apart from most of society. Indeed Wellington went as far as to call the army ‘an exotic in England’.² Thus he saw a cultural gulf between, on the one hand, an interrelated military and social élite and the army’s rank and file, and, on the other, the mass of the civilian

¹ For example, Wellington wrote concerning the establishment of a college for the children of officers, ‘The officers of the British Army are composed of the gentry of the Country. It is desirable that they should continue of the class of the Society of the Country. I have always observed the Publick of this Country to be much opposed to any Scheme which might be supposed to have a tendency to render the officers of the Army a distinct military class...’. Nat.Lib. Scotland, MS 1848, 99, Duke of Wellington to Robert Lachlan, late Major 17th Regiment, 2 December 1833.

² Duke of Wellington, ‘Memorandum on the proposed plan for altering the discipline of the army’, 22 April 1829, *Despatches*, vol 5, p.593, cited E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.92-93.

middle and lower classes. A number of modern historians have largely accepted this view of the army's relationship to society. The early and mid-nineteenth century army has been depicted in a number of recent studies as essentially unprofessional, in the sense that although it produced forward-looking and pragmatic reformers, and it may also have been largely efficient in performing its imperial duties, officers nonetheless clung to a patrician and amateur ideology linked to an ideal of political and social leadership by the broadly educated and gentlemanly shared with their social peers at home, while professionalism and meritocracy grew faster in other quarters.³ Perpetuated by nepotistic and socially élitist officer appointments, this ideology resulted in the exclusion of many middle-class groups and their attitudes from most sections of the army, and produced a resistance, or at best a profound ambivalence, among officers toward the modernisation of tactics, weapons, training and promotion. In this way, a depiction of the army as tied to the culture of the landed classes has been repeatedly invoked to account for many of the shortcomings of the service in a string of troubled campaigns from the Crimean War to the 1898 Boer War, and indeed in the First World War.

This analysis describes both the social composition and dynamics of the army, and the relationship between the army and society (stressing their growing cultural disjunction and – not unrelated – the intermittent hostility of civilians to the military). Evidence for the Rifle Brigade from the early and mid-century, however, appears difficult to reconcile with this scheme on both counts.

The social backgrounds of Riflemen were, it emerges, complex and diverse. Many officers were politically and socially well-connected, and the majority were linked to the landed classes. However, a closer look at their civilian families, friends and acquaintances reveals numerous links with disparate regions in Britain and the colonies, a variety of political and

³ Strachan argues that while army reformers appear to have been in step with civilian reform movements and there are important parallels, in the final analysis these were pragmatic and not shaped by theory (such as Benthamism or evangelicalism). He sees them instead as more the product of the outlook of a landed society with relationships based on deference, and of ancient military tradition. H.Strachan, 'The Early Victorian Army and the Nineteenth-Century Revolution in Government', *English Historical Review*, xcv, 1980, pp.782-809. See also H.Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-54* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984), pp.111, 127-128, 139-141, and passim; Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.1-14, 22-29; G.Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Routledge, London, 1977), pp.14-58.

religious affiliations, divergence in wealth and education, and multiple contacts with business and commerce and, particularly, other professions. Even those most clearly of the landed classes were not, it seems, uniform or necessarily narrow in their experience, attitudes or connexions.⁴ When the evidence is brought together an ethos of leadership exclusive to the landed classes becomes difficult to isolate. Likewise, it seems that the rank and file of the Rifle Brigade was far from socially homogeneous in regional or occupational background, and that the men, too, may have brought to the corps a variety of social and cultural attitudes. Further, if the social relationships at work in the regiment are explored, the evidence again points away from an exclusively landed model.⁵ Officers and men, it seems, adopted codes of behaviour that were not fundamentally alien to other sections of the middle and lower classes at home. Patterns of leadership and deference, of patronage and of professional and personal loyalty within and between ranks did, indeed, carry distinctly military traditions (as, for example, in obedience and punishment of the NCO, or the pride of the regiment) and they were the subject of professional jealousy and exclusiveness. However, these patterns can be seen more generally to echo similar behaviour and attitudes common in a variety of middle- and lower-class circles in the early and mid-century. Thus the strategies found in the Rifle Brigade for the interaction of individuals in a hierarchical society were clearly not born of a narrowly military ideology, nor of views exclusive to the landed classes. For example, the close contact, within strict rules, between officers and soldier-servants, or officers and men of similar religious views (to which further reference will be made below), beside the deliberate creation of distance between ranks in

⁴ Ibid., p.34, Harries-Jenkins recognises, 'Individual differences between members of this [landed] group were numerous, and the lack of homogeneity was an important check on the establishment of a military caste. Nevertheless, a number of common interests encouraged the development of a certain uniformity of attitudes'. Ibid., pp. 51-53, he sees officers with landed interests setting the 'tone' of the army. They were its social leaders, and, for example, in encouraging country sports, transferred 'the social philosophy of the landed interest' including a paternalism toward the men based on an 'ideal of often mythical relationships between the landlord and his tenant'. For the predominance of rural backgrounds among high-ranking officers from 1854 to 1914 see Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.10-11.

⁵ Ibid., pp.26-29 Spiers argues that the gentlemanly ethos of officers was not static through the nineteenth century but reflected from the mid-century both current trends in a greater accent on Christian virtues expressed in the noblesse oblige of gentlemen, and pragmatic good sense. Nonetheless he sees strong continuity from a patrician past even in new paternalist initiatives, rather than the adoption of a partly new middle-class culture. In his view neither 'evangelicalism nor the revival of Methodism had made much impact upon the soldier'.

arrangements for messing and quarters, resembles strongly standard domestic arrangements in middle- as well as upper-class homes.⁶ Likewise, ideas of honour, duty, respectability, sacrifice and national character found in civilian culture were reflected in, for example, regimental regulations setting out the proper behaviour of the other ranks with regard to drink and women, the personal example in military and social behaviour to be set by officers, and the place of religion in the regimental calendar, and in the creation of a pantheon of distinguished Riflemen of the past.

Evidence for the Rifle Brigade also shows that Riflemen of all ranks sustained personal relationships and cultural contacts with a range of civilians. One interesting finding is the frequency and personal importance to individuals, of contacts with others inside the regiment, and with others in the army and navy outside it, brought about and sustained by non-military connexions. These included acquaintance with families from a home region, political contacts, kin by blood and marriage, and school fellows. It is clear that military connections in no way precluded a non-military background for the same individual, and the non-military might preoccupy a Rifleman of any rank as much as the military. Furthermore, the reasons given by officers for their initial service and continuing careers included not only, for example, a preference for an active, outdoor life, fulfilment of parental expectations and a sense of patriotism, but also hopes for moral and character improvement, advancement and fortune (despite relatively poor wages) that can only be understood in the context of a civilian society acutely sensitive to birth and rank, and to the claims of service and merit.

What emerges most strikingly is not the isolation of the regiment (or its cultural disjunction with all except the landed interest) but, on the contrary, similarities in outlook and development of ideas with many sections of society. This perspective on civilian-military relations strengthens the argument that the intermittent criticism of the army by both civilians and the army's own reformers (that was a recurring feature of this period) was the product of a changing and complex society challenging elements of its own shared culture.⁷

⁶ See M. Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1979), pp.27-30.

⁷ Anderson argues that contemporary British civilians saw the Crimean War as a test of liberalism (including of representative government and the leadership of the ruling classes) and of national

Although the Rifle Brigade was comparatively inexpensive for purchasing officers,⁸ it was a fashionable regiment, second in status only to the Guards and some cavalry corps. With approximately three-quarters of its officers drawn from the aristocracy and landed gentry, it might be expected that attitudes to the profession found in the Rifle Brigade would epitomise the amateurism and socially exclusive outlook that contemporary commentators and modern historians have ascribed to the officer corps as a whole. And, indeed, it is clear that many Rifle Brigade officers strongly supported gentlemanly traditions of military leadership. However, as a rifle regiment and a light infantry unit, the Rifle Brigade was also in the vanguard of professional change throughout this period. It was proud, too, of other traditions: those of realistic training for battle, military skill and the encouragement of merit even for the other ranks. Thus the Rifle Brigade exemplified apparently contradictory sets of professional attitudes in the army. It therefore provides a particularly good case study for an understanding of the complexity of the outlook of early and mid-nineteenth-century officers.

Further, in important ways the regiment was not divorced from other corps so that findings for it may be reflected elsewhere. Certainly, the Rifle Brigade had special (though not unique) expertise in shooting, skirmishing, rapid movement, scouting and outpost work, but it was nonetheless an infantry unit like the majority of corps in the army, and many of its normal duties resembled those of foot regiments. Though its men tended to be relatively fit and well-educated, the Rifle Brigade drew recruits from across Britain, and in this way, too, it was fairly typical. Also, Rifle Brigade officers regularly exchanged in and out of regiments across the spectrum of the infantry and cavalry, creating a constant flow of mutual experience. And Rifle Brigade officers had a network of kin across the army. Therefore while the regiment cannot be viewed as a simple microcosm of the service, neither the backgrounds of Riflemen nor their professional experience put them outside the main stream of the army.

character. Reaction to the failures of the army amounted to 'a mood of national self-searching'. O.Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War* (Macmillan, London, 1967), p.27 and passim.

⁸ The price of Rifle Brigade commissions reflected that of the line regiments, although it is not known how often over-regulation payments were made. See Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.62-70.

The choice of a single regiment for study has a number of virtues. It has allowed concentration in depth on personal and regimental papers, and has allowed the use of a wide range of evidence, including material on family background and non-military pursuits, that might otherwise have fallen outside the scope of the project. But more fundamentally, the regiment was the primary organisational unit of the British army. Regiments had strong social and professional cohesion and an enduring sense of identity. While there existed traditions of affiliation between corps, for contemporaries these were relatively weak loyalties. A study of professional and social relations that focuses on the essentially personal nature of contacts between members of a single regiment strikes at the heart of the experience of most soldiers. And, indeed, the pragmatic responses to practical problems of organisation and discipline developed at regimental level provided a grounding for general regulations that shaped practice in the wider army. So, while it would undoubtedly be useful to multiply studies of other regiments for comparison, it can be strongly argued that the single regiment is a key field for analysis.

Evidence has been collected for the period between 1800, when the regiment was founded, and c.1870. The early years of the corps coincided with the Napoleonic Wars, a crucial period in the forging of nineteenth-century military thought, and a time of rapid social and economic change. The date at which to end the study was chosen in order to take the regiment into the 'high Victorian' period, when the notion of the Christian gentleman can be said still to have retained its hold on social and political thought. More precisely, the reforms of Edward Cardwell of 1870-71 provide a landmark signalling the radical changes in professional and social outlook (most notably regarding patronage and merit) evolving in the army and beyond.

Material has been arranged thematically so that a description of the Rifle Brigade is offered first. An over-view of its military activities and personnel is given with suggestions for important lines of connection both with other sections of the army and with civilian society. Secondly, the professional outlook and development of the regiment is explored, drawing out the influence of wider political and social thought. Next, the operation of patronage in the regiment

is reviewed, noting how this not only underpinned the appointment of Rifle Brigade officers but also how it contributed to the cohesion of the corps at all ranks, and bolstered professional and social values fostered in the regiment. The final chapters focus more narrowly on two aspects of the cultural outlook of officers and men: their contact with printed matter and theatre, and their religious views. These have been chosen for attention in order to highlight the varied mechanisms for the transfer of contemporary ideas into the army, and the range of views and experience represented in the regiment.

Note on Sources and Methodology

There survives an unusually large amount of evidence for the Rifle Brigade. The core is manuscript material, the bulk of which is divided between the Royal Green Jackets Archive at Winchester and the National Army Museum in London. This includes numerous diaries, journals and letters, mostly written by officers with a few pieces from soldiers in the other ranks.⁹ Of particular value is the bound two-volume collection (over 180 items) of letters, verbal testimonies, extracts from diaries and miscellaneous pieces collected by Sir William Cope, author of *The History of the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (1877). Many of these documents are letters to Cope, or enclosures sent with letters, and the collection represents his research over some twenty-three years to 1886. Cope solicited material from Riflemen and their families, preferring descriptions of 'the valour, the acts, the sufferings and the anecdotes of any (of whatever rank) of the members of that brotherhood',¹⁰ reaching back to the foundation of the corps.

...coming down through the Peninsular and short American wars, we could, I think, collect and embody a chain of personal narrative and anecdote extending unbroken to the present day.¹¹

Where Cope selected for his book the details of campaigns and battles, of uniform and weapons, and amusing or admirable stories, he collected incidentally much more. His papers

⁹ See the bibliography below for a list of the sources used.

¹⁰ W.Cope, *The History of the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1877), p.xv.

¹¹ NAM, 6804-1, Cope MSS, p.1, W.Cope to A.Horsford, 4 February 1863.

include criticisms of tactics and generalship, pleas for employment after retirement, records of embezzlement and suicide, and of brawls and love affairs and insolvency, and also more formal items such as a document written at the establishment of the annual dinner for Rifle Brigade officers.

Besides Cope, a number of other Riflemen and their families preserved relevant documents, and some of this material is still in private hands. Also, the regiment itself, concerned from its early years to foster pride in the unit and to commemorate the dead, accumulated a large, partly uncatalogued, collection of personal documents. In addition, several published biographies, autobiographies and narratives of Riflemen appeared in the early and mid-century. While they vary greatly in length, content and tone, many of these sources have proved rich in information.

Some of the personal manuscript and published material was written at the time of the events described, and some of it was written or revised with hindsight, or in collaboration with others. And, while a few apparently less self-conscious pieces survive (such as the note by Lieutenant Bramston, later crossed out, describing his visit to a prostitute) most of the material was written with particular readers or a wider public in mind. Problems of interpretation and reliability inevitably arise. However, where the purpose or circumstances of writing are known, these have been taken into account, and, indeed, they have often added special interest. For example, Captain Maximilian Hammond's memoirs were published by his Evangelical brother with didactic aims, and they were very successful with a civilian public in the late 1850s. They were also welcomed by Captain Fremantle of Hammond's battalion who distributed several copies among his men after the Indian Mutiny. Thus light is shed on Fremantle's Evangelical sympathies, and a link is established between the regiment and religious thought outside. Likewise, Major William Norcott's aim in keeping a journal during the Crimean War, to amuse his wife and to confide to her his fears and loneliness, reveals something of their relationship and of his experience of those years away from home. And, indeed, the jaunty tone of the published narratives of John Kincaid and Jonathan Leach (that fitted well into a strong popular genre of patriotic and heroic tales from the Napoleonic Wars) generally produces less than

reliable military or social detail, but may indicate the virtues and attitudes with which these officers wished to be attributed.

The second group of material that has proved useful for this study encompasses regimental records including order books, punishment and mess records, regimental newspapers, regimental regulations and professional manuals. The purpose, date and circumstances of publication of these documents are generally clear, although problems of interpretation remain. For instance, it is not certain (though other evidence can make a contribution) how far the regiment adhered to its regulations, nor how much variation there was between battalions, nor how many punishments were 'informal' and so left unrecorded. Yet these records can again provide information on a wide range of issues including the values and morals officially approved by the corps, the off-duty activities of officers and men, and the methods used to foster discipline.

Related material includes lists of the services of officers, notably G.E.Boyle's *Rifle Brigade Century* (1905), service records of individual officers, and attestation, discharge and pension records for the other ranks. This material is supplemented by articles in *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, published annually from 1898, on a range of topics including biographies, obituaries, and lists of the present employment of Riflemen. This group of documents is interesting in particular for information on the civilian activities of Riflemen before, during and after service, and for the pattern of their military careers.

Further pieces on the character and services of the regiment and on individual Riflemen appeared in the contemporary military press, and several Rifle Brigade officers (or ex-Rifle-Brigade officers) contributed to debates on army reform. Likewise, the civilian press in Britain and the colonies carried stories describing the regiment's achievements, or those of its members, including in the face of civil disorder. Social events such as picnics and balls were also occasionally reported, as were duels and brawls. Some of this material sheds light on the attitudes of other sections of the army, and of society, to the Rifle Brigade, and on the reputation of the regiment in the army reform movement of the second and third quarters of the century. There is also evidence relevant to the position of the Rifle Brigade in wider society in

other largely civilian sources such as parliamentary records, school and university registers, and local and family histories.

Thus, the evidence for a social and cultural history of the Rifle Brigade is diverse and survives in considerable quantity (not least because the regiment was large, having between two and four battalions for most of the period, and because as a new corps it was concerned to build up its traditions). In addition, the strong institutional identity of the regiment has meant that the evidence is generally well integrated. Importantly, layers of interconnection between Riflemen, and, particularly, the officers, resulted in a legacy of letters and diaries by separate individuals that refer to the same people, events, institutions and concerns, and highlight similarities in background, experience and outlook. Their survival has made it possible to build up a picture from several sources of political, religious and regional affiliations, the importance of kinship, and attitudes to social and military rank.

The primary aims behind the sifting and analysis of data were to understand the motives, outlook and social rules of individuals in the regiment, and to explain how these may have related to their social, political and economic situations inside and outside the regiment. The basic strategy adopted was to describe the actions and outlook of individuals (noting the military, social and cultural context) and then to suggest explanations to account for the evidence. Some statistical work was done for the initial profile of the regiment, where available information on military careers is virtually complete and suitable for such an approach. (This was possible for officers only.) However, in general the material used was fragmentary. Further, although collected piecemeal as found, it could not be collected in a strictly random fashion, or with controlled sampling, where survival has depended on, for example, the wishes and efforts of Riflemen's families or on accident. Because of the individual and personal nature of much of the evidence, and the overall aim of understanding the social location and outlook of Riflemen, it was more useful to take an ethnographic rather than statistical approach in most of the analysis. Material was collated into thematic categories emerging from it (such as views of professionalism or attitudes to other regiments). It was decided whether each piece appeared idiosyncratic (though it might still be of interest) or whether it was complemented by other

evidence to give it a measure of typicality across time, persons or groups. The data was further integrated by cross-referencing between categories (for example finding evidence for family connections in the regiment or beyond in evidence for religious views or the operation of patronage). And finally patterns noted in this analytic process were used to guide judgements on the central questions of the research.

Chapter 1: The Profile of the Regiment

The Rifle Brigade of the nineteenth century performed tasks as a discrete unit (divided into semi-independent battalions and companies), and one framework for its history comprises movements, campaigns and tactics: military deployment and effectiveness. However, the Rifle Brigade was always a sub-section of the larger British army, so that its activities were part of a greater, co-ordinated whole. Further, while the regiment can be seen as a permanently instituted corps with a strong institutional identity, it was not only an organisation. It was also a group of individuals who varied in personality and biography. And it was not a fixed group over time. Its personnel was continually changing through retirements, deaths and transfers outward, and through infusions of young soldiers and new appointments inward. In addition, each man who served in the regiment was considered in some sense a Rifleman for life, so that large sections of the regiment in its widest sense (men, and indeed associated women, who might identify with it) were away from the serving regiment at any given time. Thus the core of the Rifle Brigade shaded, through its members, into the wider army, and, more extensively, into civilian society. Finally, Riflemen, both serving and retired, can be viewed not only as soldiers, but as men with other identities (husbands, Anglicans, Liberals, Anglo-Irish, Scots, the newly rich, the landed, the sons of craftsmen or labourers and so on) whose experiences and outlook were part of a broader nineteenth-century British history and culture.

It is the task of this preliminary chapter to give an outline of these various facets of the history of the Rifle Brigade in the early and mid-nineteenth century: to describe briefly its

movements and size and its military activities, and to begin to establish the relationship between the regiment and the rest of the army and civilian society. This will involve not only a skeleton military history of the regiment (expanded in Chapter 2), but an overview of the individuals who joined the regiment. Evidence will therefore be presented for the military but also non-military career patterns of Riflemen, and for their family backgrounds. This general profile is important to the interpretation of more narrowly focused evidence presented in following chapters.

1.1 The Military Record, Movements and Size of the Rifle Brigade

The main military actions and movements of the Rifle Brigade in this period (described in a number of published works) are summarised in Tables 1 to 4.¹

The regiment was first split into two battalions in 1805. These were augmented in 1825 and formally divided into service and depot companies. The 3rd Battalion was raised in 1815 and disbanded in 1818, then raised again in 1855; the 4th Battalion was raised for the first time in 1857. All four were in existence to 1870 and beyond.

In the fifteen years after 1800 the Rifle Brigade was usually fractured, with some companies stationed at home and others deployed in a variety of locations abroad. The whole regiment was in England together for only three of these fifteen years: from 1802 to 1804. And while one section or another of the 1st Battalion was otherwise continually engaged abroad, the

¹ See W.Cope, *History of the Rifle Brigade (the Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1877); W.Verner, *History and Campaigns of the Rifle Brigade 1809-1813*, 2 vols (John Bale, Sons and Danielsson, London, 1912); A.Bryant, *Jackets of Green: A Study of the History, Philosophy and Character of the Rifle Brigade* (Collins, London, 1972). The Rifle Corps was made a permanent body and put into the line as the 95th (Rifle) Regiment in 1802. On Wellington's recommendation, as a mark of distinction, it was taken out of the line in 1816 and renamed The Rifle Brigade. In 1862 it became The Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade, and in 1881 The Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own). After several further changes it was amalgamated with the 43rd and 52nd Regiments, and in 1968 was redesignated the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets. The regiment is here called the Rifle Brigade throughout the period 1800 to 1870 to avoid confusion.

entire 2nd Battalion was only in England in one further year, 1805, and, likewise, the entire 3rd Battalion was only together in England in 1809.

This pattern of frequent movement with lengthy spells abroad was continued after 1815. Table 3 shows the locations of the regiment (all sections excluding depot companies) during all or part of each year from 1815 to 1870. Table 4 shows the number of years spent by each battalion in different locations across the world. These indicate a regiment more frequently stationed abroad than in Britain and Ireland, with particularly long service in British North America, India and the Mediterranean. Although the regiment normally kept a depot in England or Wales (from 1855 its regimental head-quarters was at Winchester), for 31 years (over half the years between 1815 and 1870) no service unit of the regiment was in mainland Britain ~~including~~^{or} Ireland (See Table 3). Thus service in the Rifle Brigade meant for most Riflemen long periods posted overseas.

The movements of the regiment were in many cases determined by the outbreak of disturbances and wars, or by strategic concerns (for example, the move to Canada in 1861 followed the 'Trent' affair and fears of clashes with the United States,² and the years of service in India began with the 1857 Mutiny). However, the Rifle Brigade also undertook lengthy garrison duties, and it can be seen not only to have acted as a specialist rifle regiment and task force, but also to have performed many of the colonial duties of a line regiment. (Although it did not spend many consecutive years in the most unpopular and unhealthy stations such as the West Indies,³ nonetheless both the 2nd and 3rd Battalions stayed over a decade in India and the 1st and 2nd Battalions served long spells in Canada.) Indeed the normal duties of the Rifle

² Cope, *History*, pp.456-457.

³ G.Boyle, *The Rifle Brigade Century: An Alphabetical List of the Officers of the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own) From 1800 to 1905* (William Clowes, London, 1905) and Tables 7 and 8 below indicate that a number of Rifle Brigade officers nonetheless served also in Indian Army regiments, and in British regiments serving in India, Africa and the West Indies. Moreover, commissions in these regiments were not only used as vehicles for quick transfers and promotions. For example, Loftus Jones died at St. Vincent in 1853 as Colonel of the 3rd West India Regiment. Also, Major Edmund Poe exchanged into the 50th Regiment in 1820 when it was about to be stationed there (he died in Jamaica 2 years later); and Lieutenant Richard Freer was Barrackmaster at Tobago for 7 years (dying there in 1832). See H.Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-1854* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984), pp.184-196 for the rotation of troops in the colonies between 1818 and 1837, for the West India Regiments, and for the suspicions of the military press that more fashionable regiments had fewer postings to tropical and very distant countries.

Brigade were similar to those of other infantry regiments. It was called on numerous occasions to police the civilian community, for example facing rioters in Glasgow in 1819, and at Tralee in 1826. It confronted Chartist demonstrators at Birmingham in 1839, and supporters of O'Connell in Ireland in 1844.⁴ It also assisted on several occasions in putting out fires in towns at home and in the colonies; and it undertook labouring tasks like, for example, the construction of barracks at King Williamstown near Bloemfontein.⁵

The service pattern of the Rifle Brigade resembled in many respects that of a group of other corps of high professional reputation. These regiments (which included the Highland regiments, the 43rd and 52nd Light Infantry, the 60th Regiment, and also a number of cavalry units such as the 17th Lancers and 7th Hussars) were both frequently stationed abroad and often used for active service. (See Table 5). They were all at least moderately fashionable units,⁶ despite their long absences from home and dangerous involvement in colonial wars. They formed a second tier in a social and military hierarchy in the army (although they still attracted a high proportion of officers of aristocratic birth and influential naval and military connections). They stood below the Guards regiments, the Life Guards and Household Cavalry and those cavalry regiments⁷ that were rarely posted beyond Ireland, but above the mass of foot

⁴ See A. Babington, *Military Intervention in Britain From the Gordon Riots to the Gibraltar Incident* (Routledge, London, 1990), pp.46-114. Cope, *History*, pp.218-219 cites an address from the officers of the Rifle Brigade to the Duke of Wellington in which they promise to follow his example, 'whether its exertions shall be for some time confined to the humbler, less inspiring, but not less imperative duty of protecting our fellow-citizens against the criminal attempts of flatigious and designing men in our native country, or whether our better fortune shall again direct us to the more enviable and spirit-stirring occupations of foreign war...'. The regiment was also liable to perform police duties abroad. For example, a detachment of the 2nd Battalion was sent to quell disturbances at the Bruce Mines, Mina Bay, Canada, *ibid.*, pp.262-265.

⁵ Cope, *History*, p. 466 for the role of the Rifle Brigade in saving lives and property in a fire at Quebec in 1866. *Ibid.*, p.261 cites an article by Col. Evelyn, *Journal of the Royal United Service Institute*, vol xiv, p.103, 'They built a town, they built barracks, they built houses for their officers, some of "wattle-and-daub" some of bricks and roofed with various materials. They also made an aquaduct some three or four miles long to supply the camp with water, and for the purpose of irrigation. When they left they had more than half built permanent barracks of stone. That was all done by one battalion, without neglecting any of its military duties... We had a daily parade, inspected arms, and saw that the men were in proper order, and then dismissed them to their working parties'.

⁶ Their officer lists include the kinsmen of many eminent landed, military, naval and political families. The officer corps of the 43rd Regiment in 1840, for example, resembles that of the Rifle Brigade in social composition, with interrelated members of the Talbot, Spencer, Paget, Lindsay, Lennox, Egerton and Gore families. See Hart, *Army List* and Appendix 2 below.

⁷ Cavalry units in general were more fashionable than infantry, and cavalry officers were sometimes regarded by Rifle Brigade officers and others as snobs. For example, Lieutenant Bramston noted that

regiments. The Rifle Brigade had a high profile during the Peninsular War, assisting in many actions. It produced in this period several distinguished officers (some of whom continued their links with the corps for many years), and it was frequently mentioned favourably in Wellington's despatches. This contributed to the popularity of the regiment from this period at all ranks: there were generally few difficulties with recruitment (although there were, nonetheless, occasional problems, as, for example, in 1850 when only 114 of a required 160 men could be raised by recruiting parties operating in England, Newry and Glasgow).⁸

The size of the Rifle Brigade varied over the period 1800 to 1870: 929 individual combatant officers were appointed to the regular battalions of the regiment between 1800 and 1870. (See Appendix 1). However, with intermittent expansions and reductions in the number of battalions and the number of companies in each, the number of officers and men in the regiment at any one time varied markedly, with peaks in the 1810s and 1860s. (See Figure 1 for the number of officers)⁹ A further factor in the variable size of the officer corps was a changing number on leave, sick or seconded for special duties. For instance, the monthly return for officers of the service unit of the 2nd Battalion (split between Quebec and Montreal on the creation of a reserve) for June 1847, which was not untypical, shows nineteen officers present, but nine absent with leave, three who had not joined since their appointment, and one acting as ADC to the Governor-General at Montreal.¹⁰

Each battalion normally had between 600 and 1000 other ranks¹¹ (split equally between a depot and a service unit), although this number again varied according to the proportion of men surviving disease, climatic extremes or battle, and the number fit for service.¹² There were

he was given a message by an ADC of General Scarlett. The officer then, 'swaggered out without a word with any of us - a regular cavalry trick'. RGJ, Bramston Diary, 5 October 1854.

⁸ Cope, *History*, p.267.

⁹ In 1838 twenty-four, and in 1839 twelve, officers were attached to the Rifle Brigade for duty in Canada during the Papineau Rebellions. These are not counted here as Rifle Brigade officers. See Hart, *Army List*, 1839; and also M.Mann, *A Particular Duty: The Canadian Rebellions 1837-1839* (Michael Russell, Salisbury, 1986), p.72.

¹⁰ PRO, WO/17/1551.

¹¹ The theoretical size of a battalion of the line was 950. However, there were exceptions. For example, the 1st and 2nd Battalions each had 2,000 men by the end of the Crimean War. Cope, *History*, p.343.

¹² Charles Woodford's company, for example, on 19 January 1855 (following the rigours of the first winter in the Crimea), had been reduced from the 100 men who embarked to just one sergeant and eight men fit for duty.

also, for example, a few cases of desertion and dismissal. (The total number of individuals in the other ranks has not been calculated.)

In addition to the combatant other ranks, the regiment included an array of supporting enlisted men, including schoolmasters, pioneers, soldier-servants, bandsmen and buglers.¹³ The Rifle Brigade and its officers also employed (often temporarily) civilian mess servants, personal domestic servants, grooms and stable boys, and it employed, housed and fed many of the wives and children of the other ranks. Their number varied according to the location of the battalion and whether it was stationary, in transit or in the field. (In India, for example, the numbers of mess and personal servants sharply increased.) Records of the number of civilians attached to the regiment and employed by it have not been found.¹⁴

1.2 Links into the Wider Army

The Rifle Brigade was from its foundation closely integrated with other sections of the army. It was originally formed from detachments of officers and men from fifteen existing infantry regiments (see Table 6) and, as will be shown in Chapter 2, its founding members borrowed from other units in creating its regulations and traditions. The regiment's chain of command, size and mixture of combatant and non-combatant personnel corresponded with other British infantry regiments of the period in most respects. Likewise recruiting was by standard procedures, and officer promotion was through the purchase system.

The Rifle Brigade was frequently stationed alongside other infantry and cavalry regiments (and often units of artillery) at home and abroad, and it was normally deployed in

¹³ Non-combatant personnel did, however, become involved in action on occasion. For example, Samuel Shaw, a Rifle Brigade pioneer, won the Victoria Cross in 1858 at Nawabgunge for taking on an Indian Ghazee in hand-to-hand combat. Although wounded, Shaw managed to kill the man with his serrated sword. Cope, *History*, p.391. Pioneers were active private soldiers who assisted the Quartermaster. In the field they were often occupied setting up camp and obtaining firewood. See C.Manningham, *Standing Regulations for the Rifle Brigade Late 95th (Rifle) Regiment, Formed at Blatchington Barracks August 25 1800 (1801)* (T.Egerton, London, 1819), p.42.

¹⁴ Huyshe, *In Memoriam George Lightfoot Huyshe* (privately printed, London, 1874), p. 22, describes the appointment and private payment of personal servants during the Ashanti expedition of 1873.

action in conjunction with other troops (sometimes including, for example, sappers and engineers, and irregulars and native soldiers). Most famously it served with the 43rd and 52nd Regiments as the Light Division in the Peninsular War, and the links between these three (maintained in part by mutual mess rights)¹⁵ continued to 1870 and beyond. But there were many instances of close alliance with other regiments too. Detachments from numerous British regiments were posted to Ireland simultaneously throughout this period, with large stations at Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Templemore, Curragh and Newbridge; and separate regiments mixed socially and were called on to act in concert when disturbances arose. For example, in 1822 the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade combined with the 11th Foot and 6th Dragoons to oppose about a thousand Irish near Carrigamanus. Again, the Rifle Brigade was engaged with the 4th Dragoon Guards when it quelled the riots in Birmingham in 1839.¹⁶ And in the 1st Kaffir War it fought with the 6th, 73rd, 45th and 91st Regiments, and with the Cape Mounted Rifles. In the 2nd Kaffir War it was brigaded with the 74th Regiment, artillery and the Cape Corps, and it fought in that conflict alongside the 12th Lancers, the 91st, 43rd, 60th and 73rd Regiments, and Lakeman's Volunteers, together with an assortment of African units (mounted burghers, and Dutch and English levies).¹⁷ And likewise in India, during and immediately after the Mutiny, the Rifle Brigade combined on numerous occasions with several British and Indian regiments: it fought beside the 88th at Cawnpore,¹⁸ and with Hodson's Horse and the 7th Hussars at Nawabgunge.¹⁹

¹⁵ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 22 November, 1842, Rule 23, states that officers of the 43rd and 52nd Regiments should be considered members of the mess because of friendships and union on service in the past.

¹⁶ Cope, *History*, p.236.

¹⁷ Cope, *History*, pp.249, 257; RGJ, T. Bramston to his mother, 11 July 1852, 19 September 1852, 9 January 1853, 15 April 1853.

¹⁸ Cope, *History*, pp.400-403, 430.

¹⁹ Cope, *History*, pp.286-393, 414, 417, 420. The Rifle Brigade marched for twelve months with the 7th Hussars and they were together for almost two years. *Ibid.*, p.408, 'it had been a joke with these Hussars when they were on advanced guard with the Riflemen (and they had been on many): on the part of the troopers "that they could not get rid of these little fellows"; on the part of the Riflemen that they "marched the horsemen down" and "could not make them march fast enough"'. RGJ, Folio 1, p.22, a song called 'The Mango Trees' lamenting their dead was written by the men of the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade and 7th Hussars after almost two years in the field together in India. NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, 21 February 1859, records that he rose at 6.00 a.m. to see off the 7th Hussars. The band played Auld Lang Syne and the men cheered each troop as it passed. Sir William Russell wheeled round the leading troop into a semi-circle and they gave three cheers for the 2nd

In short, there were strong similarities in organisation between the Rifle Brigade and other British regiments, and frequent and prolonged contacts with other units.²⁰ Further, the regiment was often under the command of senior officers schooled in other corps,²¹ and it was called on to co-ordinate with other units in garrison duties and in action. This meant that both officers and men were continually exposed to methods and thinking (military and non-military) current in other parts of the army.

These connections between regiments were reinforced by the transfer of personnel. Few soldiers of the other ranks in the nineteenth century were given the opportunity to serve in more than one unit (and it is likely that these men therefore provided important continuity of method and tradition in regiments). However, there were periodic transfers of private soldiers and NCOs between the Rifle Brigade and other corps, and these are sufficiently numerous to be worth noting. For example in 1854 the 1st Battalion received men from several other corps,²² and in 1857, when the regiment was brought up to strength after the Crimean War, it again received drafts from line regiments.²³ And, again, in 1866 the 3rd Battalion took in volunteers from the 34th, 51st, 47th and 98th Regiments.²⁴

There was some movement, too, out of the Rifle Brigade. For example, seven sergeants of the 1st and 2nd Battalions spent three years from 1836 attached to the Persian army.²⁵ And in April 1858 200 men from the same battalions joined with 200 Sikhs to form the Camel Corps

Battalion of the Rifle Brigade. Fremantle walked with them for some distance, then 'said goodbye to everyone as they came up'.

²⁰ This runs counter to the view that British regiments in the nineteenth century were typically in-turned and isolated from one another. See M.Trustram, *Women of the Regiment: Marriage and the Victorian Army* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984), pp.11-14, 17-18; Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.180; G.Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Routledge, London, 1977), pp.200, 217.

²¹ Not only many general officers commanding the Rifle Brigade in combination with other units in the field, but, for example, the Colonels-in-Chief Coote Manningham, David Dundas, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Seaton and Edward Blakeney had never served in the Rifle Brigade. The only exception in the period to 1870 was Sir George Brown. (Although of the fifteen Colonels Commandant of Rifle Brigade battalions, seven had been appointed to the regiment at some stage in their careers, all had seen service in at least two units.)

²² RGJ, Bramston Diary, 25 August 1854, Bramston thought these new men inferior recruits.

²³ Cope, *History*, p.346.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.466. Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.55-56.

²⁵ Cope, *History*, p.234. See R.MacDonald, *Personal Narrative of Military Travel and Adventure From Turkey to Persia*, 8th edn (Edinburgh, 1859).

in India which saw action alongside squadrons of carabinieri, irregular cavalry and detachments of the 37th Regiment. (The Camel Corps was disbanded in June 1860 and these Riflemen returned to their original battalions.)²⁶ In 1850, 165 NCOs and men of the 1st Battalion were given a free discharge on agreeing to settle in South Africa, and a number of them joined veteran units there.²⁷ Likewise, some men remaining in Canada in the 1830s, 1850s and 1870s, when the battalion returned home, joined local garrison and militia regiments.²⁸

Furthermore, there were occasional transfers across regiments with the commissioning of other ranks soldiers.²⁹ Two combatant officers serving in the Rifle Brigade had been commissioned from NCO rank in other regiments: Joseph Ashton, who joined the Rifle Brigade as 2nd Lieutenant in 1855, had been a sergeant-major in the Coldstream Guards; and James Whybrow, who joined the Rifle Brigade as a captain in 1876, had risen from the ranks in the 20th Regiment, and also served as an officer in the 58th Regiment.³⁰ Similarly, a few Rifle Brigade NCOs took combatant commissions in other units. These included Sergeant Demon who distinguished himself in action during the Peninsular War;³¹ Colour-Sergeant Johnson who became a captain in the 41st Regiment and Provost-Marshal of the army (he died at Balaclava

²⁶ Cope, *History*, pp.429-450.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.265; see Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.191-196.

²⁸ Frank Jones, 'Hamilton's Last British Army Garrison: Rifle Brigade Quelled U.S. Threat', *The Hamilton Spectator*, 17 December 1958 notes that about seventy Rifle Brigade other ranks settled in Hamilton. And George Robinson, for example, joined the 13th Battalion Volunteer Militia there. Two Rifle Brigade officers served in the Royal Canadian Rifle Regiment, established in 1840 for veterans of the British army, though no evidence has been found for Riflemen of the other ranks joining.

²⁹ In one case at least a mess servant also worked in more than one regiment: Mr Compain, formerly engaged by the 66th Regiment, was employed by the Rifle Brigade, and he agreed to go with the unit to Canada. RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 9 July 1842.

³⁰ Eight Rifle Brigade NCOs obtained Rifle Brigade combatant commissions: John Brett, Emmanuel Jeames, Christopher Johnston, Charles Knott, Peter MacDonald, George Rogers, James Singer and Joseph Wilkinson. With the exception of Wilkinson (2nd Lieutenant in 1839) all were commissioned in the 1850s or 1860s. (The original regiment of Alexander Heywood, promoted 2nd Lieutenant from Sergeant in 1854 is not known.) This excludes six volunteers who served with the Rifle Brigade ranks (but probably messed with the officers) and were later commissioned into the Rifle Brigade: Nugent Daly (2nd Lieutenant 1814), Walter Firman (2nd Lieutenant 1812), William Hamilton (2nd Lieutenant 1811), Archibald Stewart (2nd Lieutenant 1808), Allen Stewart (2nd Lieutenant 1812), and Nicholas Travers (2nd Lieutenant 1807). See Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*.

³¹ C.Hibbert (ed), *The Recollections of Rifleman Harris as told to Henry Curling* (Military Book Society, London, 1970), originally published as H.Curling (ed), *Recollections of Rifleman Harris* (London, 1848), pp.168-170.

in 1855); and Colour-Sergeant William Mansel who was made Ensign in the 12th Foot in 1859.³²

It was more usual, if still rare, for NCOs to be promoted to quarter-master, and for several Riflemen this was a route to movement to other sections of the army.³³ (See Figure 2).

It is clear, however, that a much higher proportion of officers than men served in regiments additional to the Rifle Brigade, and their career patterns are important to an assessment of the integration of the Rifle Brigade with the rest of the army. A study of the military careers of Rifle Brigade officers (see Appendix 1) reveals that of the 929 officers who were appointed to the regiment, 377, less than half, were appointed to the Rifle Brigade only.³⁴ 276 officers were in one other regiment as well as the Rifle Brigade at some time in their careers, and the remaining 276, about a third of the officers, served in two or more other units.³⁵ (See Figure 3). Between them they served in, or were colonels of, 203 separate corps beside the

³² Cope, *History*, pp.192,234, 398, 403, 413. This excludes six volunteers in other regiments commissioned into the Rifle Brigade: James Berkley (volunteer in the 79th Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant 1812), James Church (volunteer in the 68th Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant 1813), Charles Douglas (volunteer in the 29th Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant 1800), William Haggup (volunteer in the 7th Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant 1810), James Prendergast (volunteer in the 56th Regiment, 2nd Lieutenant 1800), and John Stewart (volunteer in the 79th Highlanders, 2nd Lieutenant 1800). See Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*.

³³ Two Rifle Brigade Paymasters, John Bailey and Thomas Gough, began their careers in the ranks of other regiments. Bailey was commissioned from Sergeant in the 29th Regiment, and was Paymaster of the 31st Regiment and of the 3rd Regiment, before becoming Paymaster of the Rifle Brigade in 1876. Gough served as Sergeant-Major in the Corps of Military Labourers at Barbadoes before taking appointments as Quarter-Master in the Rifle Brigade (1846) and Paymaster of the Rifle Brigade (1855). Appointments to Paymaster were more rare for ex-NCOs than those to Quarter-Master: only five such appointments were made among men serving in this period, whereas eighteen Rifle Brigade Paymasters began their careers as commissioned officers. (The careers of Paymasters Angus MacDonald, John MacKenzie and Hugh Mitchell remain obscure.) Some Riflemen were appointed Paymaster in other regiments. Colour-Sergeant Piper, still serving as an NCO in the Rifle Brigade in 1858, later became Paymaster of the 63rd Regiment. And four Rifle Brigade combatant officers who began their careers as commissioned officers became Paymasters elsewhere: Frederick Aldrich, William Campbell, Edward Coxen and Thomas Drury. See Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*, pp.188-191.

³⁴ The ex-sergeants Ashton and Whybrow are included as having had Rifle Brigade commissions only. Other sergeants, quarter-masters and paymasters are excluded unless they also served in the Rifle Brigade regular battalions as combatant officers. Thirteen Rifle Brigade officers were only ever on half-pay of the regiment. Ten others transferred in and out within a single day. 104 officers (including this ten) were in the regiment for less than a year.

³⁵ This excludes the Colonels-in-Chief and Colonels Commandant of the regiment who did not serve as regimental officers in the Rifle Brigade. George Brown is therefore included. Likewise, the Duke of Connaught's career is included only to 1870. This is because the very large number of regiments with which these senior officers were connected would distort the overall picture of service in multiple regiments. Nonetheless, their broad military connexions and responsibilities should be noted.

Rifle Brigade (and 133 officers had periods unattached to a regiment). (See Tables 7 and 8). These corps included all the numbered line regiments to the 104th with the exception, for no apparent reason, of the 46th Regiment.

More officers left the Rifle Brigade to serve in other units than came into the regiment from outside, and there was a marked increase in the rate of movement outward in the period between 1815 and 1834. Nonetheless it is clear that there was a constant flow in both directions. (See Figures 4 and 5).

The additional regiments of Rifle Brigade officers were varied. They included Household Cavalry and Guards regiments, line, rifle and ranger units, and light and heavy cavalry; Irish, Scottish, colonial, Indian and foreign regiments; garrison, veteran, invalid and recruiting corps.³⁶ Seventy-three (about one in thirteen of all Rifle Brigade officers) served in at least one cavalry regiment, and transfers occurred throughout the period. (See Figure 5). In addition, one officer served in the Artillery and Engineers, while several were in the Marines and the Royal Navy.³⁷

Although the most popular units were the Grenadier and Coldstream Guards, and light infantry and rifle corps, and the bulk of transfers were with line regiments, it is evident that movement within the army produced experience in a wide range of corps.³⁸ Furthermore, the length of service in these various units, compared with time spent in the Rifle Brigade (see

³⁶ For the function, service, traditions and origins of these regiments see D. Ascoli, *A Companion to the British Army 1660-1983* (Harrap, London, 1983); C.M. Clode, *The Military Forces of the Crown: their Administration and Government* (John Murray, London, 1869); J.B.M. Frederick, *Lineage Book of British Land Forces 1660-1978*, 2 vols (Microfilm Academic Publishers, Yorkshire, 1984); A.S. White, 'Garrison, Reserve and Veteran Battalions and Companies', *JSAHR*, xxxviii, December 1960, pp.156-167; Hart, *Army List*.

³⁷ Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught was first commissioned into the Royal Engineers and after five months transferred into the Royal Artillery where he remained for fifteen months. Two officers, Matthew Cadoux (senior) and Orlando Felix, served in the Marines. And seven officers, Thomas Perronet Thompson, Herbert Mildmay, Lucius Cary, Alan Pennington, John Bligh, Nicholas Travers and Henry Lascelles were all midshipmen in the Royal Navy. (In addition, one Rifle Brigade Paymaster, Thomas Ratcliffe, had spent three years from 1860-1863 as a paymaster in the Royal Artillery.)

³⁸ There were also occasionally officers from different regiments temporarily attached to the Rifle Brigade, as we have seen for the Papineau Rebellions. For another example in 1859 at the Battle of Cawnpore, Lieutenant Pemberton of the 60th Regiment was attached as an interpreter. Cope, *History*, pp.352, 357.

Figures 6 and 7),³⁹ suggests that Rifle Brigade officers did not use other regiments (including the less fashionable ones) solely for quick promotions and exchanges.⁴⁰ Although this evidently did occur, the Rifle Brigade, too, was used in a similar way.

While the Rifle Brigade service of individuals came at different points in their careers (602 of the 928 officers had their first appointment in the Rifle Brigade), nonetheless at any one time the officers of the regiment included several men of broader military experience. Thus, for example, if the careers of the lieutenant-colonels, majors, captains and 1st lieutenants serving in the regiment in 1840 are examined, fourteen of the forty-eight (almost one in three) had spent over two years in one or more other regiments. (See Table 9).

It is apparent that the Rifle Brigade had contacts in a large number of other corps at any one time, through the movement of its officers.⁴¹ For example, again, if all the officers who had served in the regiment before 15 June 1840 are traced,⁴² sixty-four were serving in or were colonels of fifty-three separate regiments at that date. (See Table 10). The officers were fairly evenly distributed between these, the largest concentration being only three officers in the Grenadier Guards. The impression of a network of Riflemen across the army is confirmed by officer diaries and letters which repeatedly refer to ex-Rifle Brigade officers encountered serving in other regiments.⁴³ And, as will be shown below, this network of links between the

³⁹ It should be noted that the numbers in Figures 6 and 7 cannot be directly compared. Figure 7 includes all 924 Rifle Brigade officers, where Figure 6 includes only the 590 officers who served in the most popular other regiments.

⁴⁰ Of the 378 officers serving 0 to 5 years in the most popular other regiments, only 148 served one year or less.

⁴¹ The regiment also had extensive contacts through staff work. For example, George Lightfoot Huyshe was (while still in the Rifle Brigade) on the staff of Major-General Sir Garnet Wolseley during the Ashanti expedition. He served on the staff alongside officers from nineteen other regiments, including the Engineers and Artillery. Huyshe, *In Memoriam*, p.16.

⁴² Eighty-eight officers were connected with the regiment (as serving officers, colonels or colonels commandant, or on half-pay). Thirteen officers were in other regiments and yet to enter the Rifle Brigade. 630 were dead or had not yet entered the army. 134 were retired, had resigned were unattached, or had extra-regimental appointments only.

⁴³ For example, RGJ, Russell Diary, 14 March 1856, 'Spencer, formerly Rifle Brigade, now 48th, called'. This was also true of links kept with officers of other regiment. An officer who had served with George Huyshe (they had soldiered together in the 83rd Regiment for nine years, and Huyshe had been his subaltern) wrote that although he had only seen Huyshe once since he joined the Rifle Brigade, he 'traced his career at the "Red River", staff college etc., and hoped that he would have come home safely and been well rewarded for his services in Ashantee'. P.C.Browne to General G.Huyshe, 28 March 1874, cited Huyshe, *In Memoriam*, p.69.

Rifle Brigade and other regiments was further extended through various family, school and regional connections.

1.3 Military and Non-Military Careers of Officers

Appointment to a regiment (even if an individual never actually joined it: changing career immediately, serving only on half-pay of the unit, or using the promotion merely to sell out) conferred on an officer life-long association, to some degree at least, with that unit and with the army. However, service in the army in many cases constituted only a fraction of an individual's active career. So, while 300 of the 833 Rifle Brigade officers whose death dates are known had careers in the regular army of twenty years or more, 378 had careers of between only five and fifteen years (and 131 had careers of less than five years). (See Figures 8 and 9). A large proportion of Rifle Brigade officers thus had short military careers; and this was true throughout the period to 1870. (See Figure 10).

Most officers entered the army as young men, between the ages of seventeen and twenty-two, so that many were still under forty years of age when they left the service. Some of these died young, but many had long retirements (or long spells on half-pay) in which to pursue other work and interests. Of 566 Rifle Brigade officers who retired from the army or went on half-pay at the end of their service, and whose death dates are known, 446 (or over three quarters of these) had a retirement of over ten years, and 297 (or about half of these) had a retirement of over twenty-five years. A few even had retirements of sixty years or more. (See Figures 10, 11 and 12).

It has proved possible to trace the activities of some Rifle Brigade officers after they left the army, and it is apparent that they were actively involved in many areas of civilian life in the period to 1870 and beyond. Several officers took appointments that were quasi-military during or at the end of their careers. For example: twelve officers were Governors or

Lieutenant-Governors of colonies⁴⁴; Sir Richard Wilbraham was Governor and Commandant of the Royal Victoria Hospital at Netley from 1861 to 1870; Sir Robert Travers was President for the Lord High Commissioner in Cephalonia in 1814; and Edward Rooper was on the commission for settlers losses in Kaffraria in 1850. All of these posts involved contact with the army, but they also drew officers into interaction with civilians.

At least 131 (or about one in seven) Rifle Brigade officers served in the militia or volunteers, and eighteen served in the yeomanry cavalry.⁴⁵ Their auxiliary and irregular units were geographically dispersed. (See Table 11). While this, too, demonstrates continued involvement with the military,⁴⁶ at the same time service in these forces brought Rifle Brigade officers into contact with civilians, and, furthermore, civilians of varied social background. Certainly officers in all branches of the auxiliary forces were predominantly of the landed classes, but in the urban units of the volunteers in particular, they included individuals from sections of the industrial, commercial and professional middle classes that were often absent from regular army regiments.⁴⁷ Indeed, while the Lords Lieutenant were responsible for the general administration of the corps, and for officer appointments (so reinforcing the control of

⁴⁴ Lord Seaton was Lieutenant-Governor of Guernsey, 1821, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, 1828-1836, Governor-General of British North America, 1838-1839, and Lord High Commissioner for the Ionian Islands, 1860; Sir Alexander Cameron was Deputy-Governor of St. Mawes, 1828; George Dundas was Lieutenant-Governor of Prince Edward Island, 1859-1870, and Lieutenant-Governor of the Windward Isles, 1870; Sir George Elder was Lieutenant-Governor of St. John's, Newfoundland, 1826; Sir George Mathew was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Bahamas, 1844-1848; Sir Edward Newdigate was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bermuda, 1888-1892; Marcus Slade was Lieutenant-Governor of Guernsey, 1859-1864; Sir Harry Smith was Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Cape of Good Hope, 1847-1852; Edward Somerset was twice acting Governor of Gibraltar; Brent Spencer was Governor of Cork, 1820; Thomas Perronet Thompson was Governor of Sierra Leone, 1808-1810; Sir Leicester Smyth was Governor of Cape Colony, 1880, High Commissioner for South Africa, 1883-1884, and Governor and Commander-in-Chief at Gibraltar, 1890-1891. See Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*.

⁴⁵ These contacts were made even more extensive by family connexions. For example, William Cuninghame of the Rifle Brigade was the son of Thomas Montgomery Cuninghame, 8th Bart., who corresponded with his son about drill, music and other matters connected with the Ayrshire Royal Rifles (a militia regiment) of which he was Colonel. RGJ, Cuninghame Letters, 1854-1856, letters 20, 42, 49, 53, 65, 70, 85.

⁴⁶ A few Rifle Brigade officers served in the volunteers as regular army officers. For example, Leopold Swaine took a post as Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion Cheshire Volunteers in 1872 because he did not want to travel to India with a small child when the regiment was stationed there. L. V. Swaine, *Camp and Chancery in a Soldier's Life* (John Murray, London, 1926), pp. 68-71.

⁴⁷ See I. F. W. Beckett, *Riflemen Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement 1859-1908* (Ogilby Trust, Aldershot, 1982), pp. 16, 22-23, 26-29, 41-89, 118.

these units by the landed interest), and while some units were highly fashionable,⁴⁸ it was a central aim of the volunteer movement in the 1850s and 1860s to involve at officer rank the non-landed but propertied or regularly-waged middle classes. The 3rd Durham Volunteer Corps, for example, commanded by Lord Adolphus Vane-Tempest of the Rifle Brigade, was an urban unit that mixed together the family of the Marquess of Londonderry with volunteers from Seaham Colliery and local tradesmen.⁴⁹

Furthermore, the small size of many volunteer units and the need for persuasion to obtain obedience (in the absence of any obligation for the men to serve) meant that officers were compelled to develop a relatively relaxed relationship with volunteer other ranks, and had to adapt to their habits and needs. For example, when Leopold Swaine joined the 2nd Battalion of the Cheshire Volunteers as Adjutant in 1872, he immediately came up against the serjeant-major of the unit, a foreman in an apothecary's shop, who had himself been accustomed to command. On asserting his authority on the subject of the serjeant's duties, Swaine received the reply, 'If you are so particular as all that, I won't come at all'. Likewise, when Swaine made the men run long distances to learn outpost duty, they stopped coming to parade. He was told that as agricultural labourers, 'they were already tired out at the end of their day's work', and so he sent out word that he would teach them the duty with less exercise.⁵⁰ Service in the irregulars can thus be properly viewed as a mechanism for the widening of the social experience and social contacts of Rifle Brigade officers both across the civilian divide, and across divisions of occupation, income and social background.

Similarly, several Rifle Brigade officers were active in the police force (in Britain and in the colonies). (See Table 12). Again, these appointments carried connections with the army, but created civilian contacts as well. The Irish constabulary in which Samuel Lawson was an Inspector, was armed and centrally controlled.⁵¹ It was self-consciously military in ethos and

⁴⁸ The Victoria Rifles and Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers, in which Rifle Brigade officers served, were among the most socially exclusive.

⁴⁹ Beckett, *Riflemen Form*, pp.47, 62.

⁵⁰ Swaine, *Camp and Chancery*, pp.68-71.

⁵¹ S.H.Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland 1780-1850* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1988), pp.518-522.

methods, as were the colonial gendarmeries, including the North Borneo and Egyptian forces in which Arthur Harington served. And, indeed, to a lesser extent all British police forces used military models of organisation and discipline, and they co-ordinated, especially in periods of unrest, with regular troops and local auxiliaries.⁵² Yet the police force, in mainland Britain in particular, was closely integrated into civilian society. Senior police officers typically had contacts with a range of groups and individuals including Poor Law and health officials, philanthropists and clergy. And county Chief Constables, appointed by local justices, were normally drawn from the ruling classes and had close social links with the local landed gentry.⁵³ Indeed, it has been argued that senior police officers, through their close relationship with the magistracy, notable landowners, merchants and industrialists, supported and elaborated the use of the police as an arm of local government (through functions like the inspection of nuisances and common lodging houses, and the administration of the Poor Law). Further, it has been suggested that they supported the function of petty and quarter sessions, and of borough and watch committees, in financing and deploying the police, thus bolstering the decentralised administrative and judicial powers of the provincial élite.⁵⁴ This would not only point to Rifle Brigade officers making civilian contacts after retirement, but to a political role in the counties.

The Rifle Brigade produced six county Chief Constables and one Deputy Chief Constable for mainland Britain in this period, and two government Inspectors of Constabulary. Of the latter, John Woodford was particularly notable. He was one of the first three government inspectors appointed in 1856, and only one of five to serve between 1856 and 1880.⁵⁵ His task was to survey the police forces of the northern counties and boroughs. With the other Inspectors-General, he took a double role in lobbying for the professional needs of policemen (including superannuation) and reporting to the Home Office and public on their performance

⁵² For militarism and the mid-Victorian police, for the appointment of army officers and soldiers, and for the coordination of police with regular troops, see C. Steedman, *Policing the Victorian Community: The Formation of English Provincial Police Forces 1856-80* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1984).

⁵³ R. Reiner, *Chief Constables: Bobbies, Bosses or Bureaucrats* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1992), p. 14.

⁵⁴ Steedman, *Policing*, pp. 47-49, 53-55 and passim.

⁵⁵ Palmer, *Police and Protest*, pp. 451-452.

and role in the community.⁵⁶ Only one Rifle Brigade officer appears to have begun his police career at a low officer rank. Daniel Forbes, of whom little more is known, joined the Metropolitan Police Force as an Inspector on its formation in 1829. The Metropolitan Force operated from the beginning a policy of promotion according to merit that opened the officer ranks to constables. Thirteen of the original seventeen superintendents (a step higher than Inspector) were ex-sergeant-majors from the army.⁵⁷ Thus Forbes mixed professionally with, and was answerable to, men who in the army would have been his military subordinates and social inferiors. Further, his job would have included the direct supervision of constables and attention to case work. Inspectors in London and the provinces were generally considered less socially eminent than (and therefore made different social connections from) county Inspectors in Ireland⁵⁸ or senior officers in mainland Britain.

Rifle Brigade officers may have succeeded in obtaining high rank in the mainland police force for several reasons. First, the Rifle Brigade was a well-known regiment, noted for professional competence. Secondly, the approach in the force in the 1850s and 1860s (which took root especially through the ideas of General William Cartwright, Inspector-General for the Midland Region) of attending to the morality and welfare of constables: establishing reading rooms, encouraging education, softening punishment and creating a more elaborate scale of reward and promotion, chimed well with the traditions associated with Sir John Moore that the Rifle Brigade had long favoured. And thirdly, Rifle Brigade officers could call on regimental patronage, while many also had independent social and political connexions that worked to their advantage.

Captain Henry Gore Lindsay, a great-grandson of the 5th Earl of Balcarres, became Chief Constable of Glamorgan in 1867. His regimental associations undoubtedly told in his favour. His predecessor was Charles Frederick Napier who had served in the regiment from 1825 to 1841. And, in addition, Lindsay had served in the Rifle Brigade at the same time as two

⁵⁶ Steedman, *Policing*, pp.38-41.

⁵⁷ Palmer, *Police and Protest*, pp.301-303.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.363. Most officers of all ranks in the Irish Constabulary were ex-officers of the British army, and came from landed, professional or other ruling-class families.

officers who had influential connexions in the police. George Henry Grey (in the Rifle Brigade from 1854 to 1859) was the son of Sir George Grey, who, as Home Secretary, had introduced the important 1856 County and Borough Police Act; and Aubrey Agar Cartwright (in the Rifle Brigade from 1849 until he was killed at Inkerman in 1854) was the son of General William Cartwright, the Inspector-General referred to above. However, Lindsay's social credentials, essential to his role in liaison with the ruling elite of South Wales, were at least as useful:⁵⁹ he was the son-in law of the local magnate the 1st Baron Tredegar.⁶⁰

Thus several Rifle Brigade officers re-entered civilian life after retirement from the army in the role of police officers, mainly in high ranks. They were able to make use of their military skills and contacts, but they also traded on their backgrounds in and existing understanding of civilian ruling-class culture and local power and politics. Once in the force they extended their civilian connexions and experience.

There are parallels between the service of Rifle Brigade officers in the police and prison services. All the officers entering the prison service entered at the high ranks of Deputy-Governor, Governor or Government Inspector. John Groves and Charles Lindham at Millbank Penitentiary were in a particularly prominent institution, one of the few in Britain governed by a state-appointed committee.⁶¹ Groves was Governor at Millbank at the height of the influence there of William Crawford and Whitworth Russell, Inspectors of Prisons in England. They developed systems of prisoner isolation and education (influenced by evangelical principles of repentance and salvation) that were intended to reform prisoners before release or transportation. And John Kincaid of the Rifle Brigade, as Inspector of Prisons in Scotland in the 1850s was likewise an advocate of the separate system. Both he and later Arthur Hill in Ireland acted to link central government to provincial practice through their reports, and their recommendations to local magistrates, chaplains and prison governors.⁶² Again, prison officers

⁵⁹ His connection with Lord Tredegar was noted with some bitterness in *The Police Service Advertiser*, 13 April, 1867, cited Steedman, *Policing*, p.137.

⁶⁰ Lindsay married Hon. Ellen Morgan. Her brother also served in the Rifle Brigade, from 1853-1858, and then served in the 3rd Monmouth Rifle Volunteers for over twenty years.

⁶¹ W. Forsythe, *The Reform of Prisoners 1830-1900* (Croom Helm, London, 1987), pp.16, 37, 98.

⁶² Kincaid wrote 'while undergoing separate confinement they are more respectful in their manner and contented with their treatment, make more progress in their education and are more industrious in

came inevitably into contact with a variety of civilians, including those active in local administration and justice, in the church and in philanthropy (and, indeed, though the separate system they had close contact with the prisoners themselves). Like police officers they formed a part of the broad network of mid- and later-nineteenth-century government.

Many more purely civilian occupations were also chosen by officers on retirement. A few, including William Douglas and Francis Glasse, made careers in law. Douglas was called to the Bar in 1829. It is not known for how long he practised but he had a long retirement from the army, dying in 1884. Glasse, who went on half-pay in 1818 and died in 1875, was a Deputy Judge Advocate. Others worked in the colonies. George Larcom (who retired from the army in 1864) entered the uncovenanted civil service in Bombay. Richard Leonard became Sheriff of the District of Niagara on his retirement in 1832. Somerville Ramsbottom (retired 1833) entered the Colonial Service and became Collector of Revenues at Gibraltar. Some obtained government posts nearer to home: Arthur Stewart (retired 1839) was Collector of Customs at Cork. Others, like Edward Fryer, President of the London Tramways Company, and Rookes Evelyn Crompton an eminent electrical engineer, developed businesses. Seven Riflemen were ordained.⁶³ A number emigrated: Charles Grey (retired 1837) settled in New South Wales; Dugald MacFarlane (retired on half-pay 1816) went to New Zealand; John Molloy (retired on half-pay 1829) farmed an estate in Western Australia (and died in poverty); Edward Templeton (retired on half-pay 1819) settled in Canada; and James Gairdner (retired in 1826) took over his father's cotton plantation in the United States.

A number managed land in Britain, too, after leaving the army, often as a result of an inheritance. Richard Fowler-Butler, for example, succeeded to the Barton estate in Staffordshire while he was on half-pay. Frederick Playne intended to return with his Canadian wife to manage his family estates in Gloucestershire, but died before he retired. And Josslyn Pennington inherited a title and land from his elder brother, drowned in 1862. The direction of the

their work...the separate system has a tendency to lead them to serious reflection on their past misconduct.' '24th Report of the Inspectors of Prisons, Northern and Scottish District', Parliamentary Papers, 1859, Session 1, vol xi, p.35, cited Forsythe, *The Reform of Prisoners*, p.97.

⁶³ See below, pp.244-248.

Pennington estates was then his primary occupation. Many officers served, too, as Justices of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenants, Sheriffs or Lords Lieutenant.⁶⁴ A few were peers and sat in the House of Lords; and several served at court. The latter included Hercules Pakenham, Neil Douglas, Frederick Wellesley, Claud Bouchier, Francis Howard and the 3rd Earl of Limerick, all ADCs to the King and Queen; and Coote Manningham and John Groves, Crown Equerries. Others, as will be seen below were Members of the House of Commons.⁶⁵

It is clear, moreover, that these activities were not mutually exclusive. Just as civilians might combine interests in estates, business, politics, philanthropy, the arts and so on, so many officers had multiple interests during and after service.⁶⁶ So, for example, Sir William Stewart, the first lieutenant-colonel of the Rifle Brigade, first commissioned in 1786, was elected to parliament in 1795. He served in both capacities for twenty-one years. Likewise, Edward Somerset sat as the Member for Monmouthshire from 1848 to 1859 while rising from Captain to Lieutenant-Colonel in the Rifle Brigade. And Lord Edward Pelham-Clinton sat for North Nottinghamshire from 1865-1868 while he, too, was still serving in the regiment. (See Table 16). Again, Rookes Evelyn Crompton, referred to above, served twelve years in the army before he retired and followed his career as a pioneer of electricity. He founded the firm of Crompton, Parkinson and Co., and became President of the Institute of Electrical Engineers. Nonetheless, he continued his interest in the military and was appointed Major in the Electrical Engineer Volunteers in 1898, and became their Colonel in 1900. That is, Stewart, Somerset and Pelham-Clinton combined political pursuits with military careers, and Crompton combined a scientific and business career with activity in a unit of irregulars.

The evidence for non-military careers suggests that many Rifle Brigade officers were only ever semi-detached from civilian life, and served in the expectation that they would re-enter

⁶⁴ For the participation of the military in local government in the mid- and later nineteenth century see Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.248-259.

⁶⁵ See *ibid.*, pp.218-247 for the participation of the military in the House of Commons.

⁶⁶ In two cases at least there were tensions in combining civilian and military activities. Dugald MacFarlane left the army having lost his father and brother because he was advised by the executors of their wills to devote more time to family business. NAM, 6804-1, Cope Collection, p.423. And Archibald Stewart felt the need to write to the Duke of Wellington to gain his approval 'as Colonel of the Regiment' for his plans to promote the emigration of the distressed Irish. Southampton Univ., WP1/816/4, A.Stewart to Duke of Wellington, 13 April 1825.

in various roles. Particularly officers who made only short careers in the army, but also long-serving officers, typically directed only part of their social, earning and serving energies toward the army. This, as will be argued in the chapters below, has important implications for an assessment of the reception of civilian culture in the regiment. The evidence for the other careers of Rifle Brigade officers points to their integration in numerous ways into the contemporary political nation in its broadest sense. Some were involved directly in local and national politics and government, and many owned or had strong links with land. But further, there are also examples of participation in business and in old and new professions, and of contacts with various sections of the middle classes. This view of the integration of Riflemen into society, stressing continuities between army and civilian experience, is reinforced by a study of their social backgrounds.

1.4 Regional and Family Backgrounds

The officers and men of the Rifle Brigade originated from a variety of regions in Britain. (For the numbers noted as English – including Welsh⁶⁷ – Irish and Scots in 1825 and in 1843, see Table 13).⁶⁸ The proportion of Scottish and Irish officers in the regiment was slightly higher in the early decades of the century, but from about 1840 to 1870 there were constantly around 60% English officers.⁶⁹

The classification of officers in particular by a single region is, however, artificial or inadequate in many cases. Often the families of officers owned land in several counties, and

⁶⁷ There were fewer officers in the Rifle Brigade from Wales than from Scotland or Ireland, but they included men from several leading Welsh families: Hon Frederick Morgan (son of 1st Baron Tredegar), Hon. Edward Vaughan (son of the 4th Earl of Lisburn) and Hon. Thomas Wynn (son of 3rd Baron Newborough).

⁶⁸ The proportion of Irish in the other ranks may have decreased by the 1860s. Swaine, *Camp and Chancery*, pp.23-24, 52, notes that there were few Roman Catholics in the ranks of the 4th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade in the 1860s. And in 1867 the Rifle Brigade was called to replace an Irish Battalion stationed at Weedon when there were fears that Irish soldiers might support the Fenians in Britain.

⁶⁹ The number of Irish and Scottish recruits fell across the army from the mid-century. See A.Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home* (Croom Helm, London, 1977), pp.284-289.

across the national divisions of Britain, and they travelled frequently between sections of their estates and to the scattered houses of kinsmen and friends. Visits among fashionable families in the early and mid-nineteenth century commonly followed a seasonal pattern, with winter trips abroad, the spring in London, and hunting and shooting on country estates in the autumn, all of which maintained far-flung social and family links.

For example, Josslyn and Alan Pennington had mixed regional connections. Josslyn married Constance L'Estrange, a cousin of the Gore-Booth family of Lissadell, County Sligo in Ireland. The Pennington estates, however, were in England and were divided: the family seat was at Ravenglass in Cumberland, and the estate which Josslyn would inherit first, as a second son, was near Pocklington, east of York. The Pennington family also rented a house in Chelsea in London every year. Their cousins the Ramsdens had estates in Yorkshire too, primarily at Huddersfield with a seat at Byram near Ferrybridge. The two families met frequently there and in London.⁷⁰ Nonetheless other Pennington cousins (kinsmen whom Josslyn and Alan used for patronage in their army careers) were Scots, the family of the Earls of Crawford and Balcarres, and all three families stayed together periodically at the hunting estate of the Ramsdens at Ardverickie near Newtonmore in the Highlands.⁷¹ Thus Josslyn and Alan Pennington were Cumbrian, but they had strong roots in Yorkshire, and they also had close Irish and Scottish connexions.

There are many similar examples. James Gairdner, referred to above, was born of Scottish parents and he remained in contact with family in Aberdeen, Roxburgh and Berwickshire. However, his father emigrated to Georgia in the United States where he owned a cotton plantation that his son eventually took over. Gairdner was called on by his father to leave the British army should the Rifle Brigade be sent to serve in a conflict with America: 'it is your nation country, you cannot fight against it'.⁷²

A roll of officers of the 1st Battalion of the Rifle Brigade lists some officers who served before 1868, mostly those serving between 1854 and 1855. (See Table 14). It includes a column

⁷⁰ The Ramsdens owned a house at Hamilton Place in London.

⁷¹ Muncaster Castle, Ardverickie Visiting Book, 1860-1880.

⁷² NAM, 7101-20, Gairdner MSS, J.Gairdner to J.P.Gairdner, 6 November 1814.

of information entitled 'country'. This evidently refers to birth-place, and probably shows up officers who were born of parents travelling or working abroad. However, it contradicts other evidence (including the position of landed estates and seats of the families of officers) for a greater number of Scottish and Irish officers in the regiment in this period. While the evidence from the roll of officers cannot be interpreted easily, it appears to indicate that some seemingly Irish or Scottish officers listed themselves as primarily English. The reasons may have varied: if the list is a strict record of place of birth, these officers may have been born of parents who either lived in England, or, possibly, came to England for a confinement. Or it may be simply that their local identity was subsumed in a stronger one of Englishness. In any case, this roll, the monthly returns for the regiment and evidence for their landed estates suggest that the regional origin of officers was not always simple, nor their regional identities necessarily fixed.

Furthermore (as can be seen in Appendix 2) seemingly separate Rifle Brigade families overlapped and were related to one another many times over. Networks of blood and regional connection can be traced, formed by interconnecting estates, political loyalties, school connections, business, marriage and distant cousinhood. For example, many Riflemen in addition to the Penningtons and Ramsdens had connections with Yorkshire. (Yorkshire was a particularly large county with numerous landed families, but a similar pattern can be traced for many other counties.) Among these were Edward Armytage, Lord Edward Cavendish, Alfred Drummond, Frederick Duncombe, Richard Lane-Fox, Sir Ralph Payne-Gallwey, Sir Reginald Graham, Robert and Thomas Thoroton-Hildyard, Frederick Compton Howard, Henry and Walter Lascelles, William Lister, William Markham, Hon. Edward Monckton, Charles Noble, Hon. Henry Savile, George and Joseph Simmons, Watson Stott, Charles, George and William Smyth, Thomas Perronet Thompson, Richard Meysey-Thompson, Henry Trafford, Thomas Worsley, and Robert Vyner.⁷³ Their families ranged in social standing and wealth from high aristocracy and its branches to lesser gentry and successful merchants. Yet these families

⁷³ Some officers families had become disconnected from their local origins. For example, Leopold Swaine came from a Yorkshire family, but his father was a diplomat, so that Swaine spent much of his youth abroad. His mother was Danish and he was born in London. Swaine, *Camp and Chancery*, pp. 1-10.

formed a network of gentlemanly connexion. They were self-consciously stratified in a social hierarchy (not least in marriage)⁷⁴ but most of them (with the exception, for example, of the Simmons family which, though educated, was in very straightened circumstances) shared responsibilities as leading county families.⁷⁵

They crossed paths in Yorkshire, which had several social centres, over many generations and in various capacities. They were conspicuous in leisure pursuits like hunting and racing. Richard Meysey-Thompson of the Rifle Brigade was a leading figure in the York and Ainslie Hunt.⁷⁶ And Ralph Payne-Gallwey of the regiment was another enthusiastic sportsman: he wrote several books including two on shooting.⁷⁷ As landowners, several individuals from these families took posts in local government and justice. (Reginald Graham of the Rifle Brigade was himself a Justice of the Peace in the West Riding.) And likewise, several of them had kinsmen in church livings in the county. Lieutenant Thomas Worsley was the son-in-law of Rev. James Storin, Rector of Rossington, and a first cousin of Worsley, Rev. Thomas Worsley, was Rector of Scawton (and Master of Downing College, Cambridge). Frederick Duncombe of the regiment was nephew of the Very Rev. Augustus Duncombe, Dean of York; Edward Monckton was brother-in-law of Rev. T. J. Monson, Rector of Kirkby-Under-Dale; and Henry Savile was brother of Rev. Philip Yorke Savile, Rector of Methley.

Again, several of these families contributed to the auxiliary forces in the county. For example, Thomas Ramsden (a cousin of Frederick Ramsden of the Rifle Brigade) was a Lieutenant-Colonel in the Militia at Halifax. Josslyn Pennington was Captain of the 11th

⁷⁴ There is evidence for one family directing the marriage of a Rifle Brigade son. When FitzRoy Fremantle announced to his mother that he wished to marry Julia, daughter of Sir Guy Campbell, Bart. (a major-general and Colonel of the 3rd West India Regiment) she felt the girl so far beneath her son that he might as well have married an actress. NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, 27 March 1862, 26 May 1862.

⁷⁵ J. Gerard, *Country House Life: Family and Servants 1815-1914* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1994), pp.6-7 argues for a culture shared by a range of landed families in rural society from the parish gentry to great landowners.

⁷⁶ Among his publications were, *Reminiscences of the Court, the Camp, The Chase* (E. Arnold, London, 1898), and *The Horse: its origin and development combined with stable practice* (E. Arnold, London, 1911). He also wrote four other books on game birds, fishing, hunting and shooting.

⁷⁷ R. Payne-Gallwey, *The Fowler in Ireland* (Van Voorst, London, 1882) and *Letters to Young Shooters* (Longman, London, 1895). He also wrote other books on sport, various historical works and a short book on ancient and medieval weapons.

Pocklington Company of the 1st Administrative Battalion of the East Yorkshire Volunteers. And among the subscribers to the Huddersfield Volunteers by 1903 were Sir George Armytage, Sir John Ramsden, the Marquess of Ripon, and T.H.Stott, all of whom had kin in the Rifle Brigade.⁷⁸

These multiple, overlapping connexions operated outside as well as inside the county. So, for example, twelve of the Rifle Brigade officers from Yorkshire were at Eton,⁷⁹ and twelve of these families produced Members of Parliament (for both main parties).⁸⁰ Each of these strands of activity beyond the county both cemented county links (including by patronage) and created new connexions outside. This process could also reinforce bonds across social divisions. For example, Josslyn Pennington noted in his diary while he was a subaltern in the 90th Regiment serving in Ireland,

Militia dined. Horrid set of snobs, manufacturers most of them, one sat next me, asked me to see him as H.B. a sort of cousin is in them.⁸¹

Indeed, service in the army was one of several mechanisms for maintaining and extending the contacts of the landed classes amongst themselves and beyond.⁸² Far from isolating officers from their homes or from their civilian families and friends, service in the regiment (and other corps undoubtedly had the same function) was part of a wider system of social interaction and integration.

⁷⁸ R.Berry, *A History of the Formation and Development of the Volunteer Infantry From Its Earliest Times, Illustrated By The Local Records of Huddersfield and Its Vicinity From 1794 to 1874* (Broadbent, Huddersfield, 1903), pp.364,416, 429-433, 538-541; R.Wilson and G.Collinson, *East York Volunteer Infantry, 1859-1908* (Fine Print, Humberside, 1982), p.44.

⁷⁹ Frederick Ramsden, Josslyn Pennington, William Markham, Frederick Duncombe, Ralph Payne-Gallwey, Richard Lane-Fox, Henry Savile, Charles, George and William Smyth, Richard Meysey-Thompson and Robert Vyner were all at Eton.

⁸⁰ The Cavendish, Duncombe, Graham, Howard, Lascelles, Monckton, Payne-Gallwey, Pennington, Savile, Smyth, Thompson and Vyner families all produced Members of the House of Commons in the nineteenth century. The Cavendish, Duncombe, Howard, Lascelles, Vyner and Savile families were also represented in the House of Lords.

⁸¹ Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington Diary, 15 August 1854.

⁸² The spread of regional origins of officers is striking. For example, among the thirty-three English identified in the regiment in 1843 (beside the twenty-one from other parts of Britain) were officers from Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Northamptonshire, Shropshire, Sussex, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Cornwall, London, Cumberland, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Kent, Warwickshire and Lancashire.

Although the evidence is limited, the other ranks may have tended to centre their adult lives more in the regiment, with fewer ties outside. Most came from families that probably did not, indeed could not, maintain many contacts across the country and colonies.⁸³ (Some may have been related to emigrants but no evidence has come to light.) Likewise the other ranks had fewer opportunities to take leave and to return to their original homes while in the army. In addition, their service was frequently long and debilitating, leaving smaller prospect of a later active civilian career. Nonetheless, there is evidence to suggest that some other ranks maintained home regional and family contacts and identities.⁸⁴ For example, Private Fletcher wrote a letter to his brother and sister in 1841 saying that he had met in Malta a mutual friend from home, 'Master Chadwick's son', serving as a marine. And, as will be discussed below, Fletcher asked his brother to send him copies of local newspapers from Leicestershire when his wife could no longer supply them.⁸⁵ Discharge and pension records show, too, that some soldiers returned to family and friends after their service.

A considerable quantity of evidence has been found for the family backgrounds of Rifle Brigade officers. They can be divided into eight broad social groups. The first is of individuals taken to be from aristocratic families. These officers were themselves dukes, marquesses, earls, viscounts or barons in the English peerage, or were the sons, grandsons, brothers or nephews of such noblemen. The second group, those taken to be minor aristocracy, includes others of hereditary title: Irish peers and baronets, and their sons, grandsons, brothers and nephews.⁸⁶ The third group is of the more distant kinsmen of aristocracy of all sorts, including first cousins

⁸³ For examples of seasonal mobility among agricultural labourers, and networks of connexion among family members who had moved to new areas, see K.D.M.Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England 1660-1900* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985), pp. 336-338, 364-365.

⁸⁴ Two men from the north of Ireland, Hannan and Fergusson, supported one another in action during the Crimean War as friends and fellow-countrymen. Cope, *History*, p.315.

⁸⁵ RGJ, Folio 1, p.97, Fletcher to his brother and sister, 14 June 1841.

⁸⁶ This is a slightly wider definition of close kinship than that used by Harries-Jenkins in his study of the interpenetration of the army and peerage in 1838. He looks only at peers, and their sons, brothers and nephews. Also, Irish peers are here listed with baronets where Harries-Jenkins includes Irish with English peers. This has been done to take account of a gradation in prestige, and of the lack of a seat in the House of Lords of many holding Irish peerages. See below, p.39 fn90. Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, p.39.

and grand-nephews who may or may not have been landed in their own right.⁸⁷ The fourth group is of officers who had no close or distant aristocratic kin, but were from families listed in contemporary manuals of landed gentry and leading county families. The fifth group is of officers from families in banking, commerce or industry (which could vary widely in wealth). The sixth group is of officers from professional families (including the sons of army officers with no aristocratic or landed kin); and the seventh group is of other middle-class, or even artisan or labouring-class backgrounds. The final group is of officers whose social origins remain obscure. (Some of these were possibly the protégés of senior officers or the relatives of undistinguished officers in the army or navy, and others may have come from the lesser gentry.)

Table 15 notes the family backgrounds of combatant officers serving in the Rifle Brigade in 1843 as an example of the social mix in the regiment. Fifteen of the seventy-four officers were from the aristocracy, seven were of the minor aristocracy, and five were from the fringes of the aristocracy. Thus a total of about 36.5% of Rifle Brigade officers serving in 1843 were connected to the aristocracy. Five officers were from a banking or trade background, five were from mainly professional families (three of these were the sons of officers), and two (one a promoted NCO and one later a Barrack Master) were probably from other middle-, artisan- or labouring-class groups. Together these make up about 16.2% of the officers. The rest were landed gentry (25.7%) or unknown (21.6%).

Therefore, if those whose backgrounds are unknown are incorporated in the levels below the aristocracy⁸⁸ between 25.7% and 47.3% of the officers serving in 1843 were of the landed gentry (a probable mean of 36.5%), and so between 62.2% and 83.3% came from the landed gentry and aristocracy combined. However, equally, between 16.2% and 37.8% (a probable mean of 27%) did not. These were the banking, commercial professional and middle-class groups. (See Figures 13a and 13b). (If quartermasters, paymasters, surgeons and

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp.39-58 does not include more distant kin among the aristocracy. This has been done here because contemporary documents for the Rifle Brigade indicate that such connexions were often important to the prospects and identity of officers from the cadet branches of prominent families.

⁸⁸ The family connexions of aristocratic officers are normally easy to trace, so that it is unlikely that any of these remain undiscovered in the category of unknown background.

assistant-surgeons were to be included, the number of non-landed backgrounds would slightly increase.)

A similar investigation for other years to 1870 suggests that the proportions of different social categories of officer remained largely constant throughout the period. Thus the officer corps of the regiment can broadly be described as a three-eighths aristocracy, three-eighths landed gentry, and a quarter others.⁸⁹

It is important to note, however, that closer analysis reveals that such classifications are often misleading. A number of officers might be placed under two or, indeed, most of the categories of known background: it was not uncommon to find individual officers who were related to peers, and also to minor aristocracy, whose kin were in the professions and had landed estates, and who had near relatives in the army or navy. Julius Glyn, and, from other years, Charles Talbot and Robert Peel would be examples. It is unclear which of these provided their primary social identity.⁹⁰ Similarly, an officer's money might come from an aristocratic grandparent rather than a parent of lower social rank (Thomas Nesham received an allowance from his grandmother, Lady Graves, that allowed him to stay in the regiment until she died). Or

⁸⁹ This can be compared with the figures of Razzell, 'Social Origins of Officers in the Indian and British Home Army 1758-1962', *British Journal of Sociology*, vol xiv, 1963, pp.248-260. This shows for 1830 21% aristocracy, 32% landed gentry and 47% middle class, and for 1870 18% aristocracy, 32% landed gentry and 50% middle class among officers across the army. See also Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.28-32, 38-46; E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.7-8 for the social status of high ranking officers from 1854 to 1914; also C.B.Otley, 'The Social Origins of British Army Officers', *Sociological Review*, vol 18, No 2, July 1970, pp. 213-239 for the later nineteenth century. The proportion of aristocracy and landed gentry in the Rifle Brigade appears higher than that in most other parts of the army. Direct comparison is hampered by the inclusion here of their grandsons, and of the fringes of the aristocracy, and by the classification of individuals with their most eminent kin except where the family's money came currently or very recently from banking, commerce or trade. However, the predominance of the landed interest in the regiment does indicate a fashionable status. This is confirmed by a study of Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland* (1883) given in Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.29-30, showing that living at that date were six officers who were peers and twenty-three heads of families in the landed gentry who had served or were serving in the Rifle Brigade. A total of sixteen peers and 124 heads of families in the landed gentry had served or were serving in almost a hundred line regiments. (Harries-Jenkins' figures do not apparently make allowance for all the regiments in which an officer served, so that Bateman might record only the single most fashionable among several.)

⁹⁰ It is worth noting that the hierarchy of the ruling classes was far from straightforward. For example, some Irish peers sat in the House of Lords either through their Irish peerages or through additional English titles; and the wealth and political power of families did not always correlate. Also, as Appendix 2 shows, families of graded standing, old and new money, the landed and professional, were intertwined.

most of the money in the officer's family might come from banking (like that of the Drummonds of Cadland, the Glyns or the Barings), or from plantations in the West Indies (like that of Sir George Brown), or from the East India Company (like that of the Boileaus), although branches of the family were also landed or connected by marriage to the aristocracy.

Likewise the close aristocratic relative of an officer might be the first recipient in the family of a peerage, and have earned it through, for example, a legal career (Charles Robinson's father) or naval service (John De Saumarez's father). Thus these officers were both from the aristocracy and from professional backgrounds. And it may not be entirely appropriate to place in separate categories men who came from families that produced officers over several generations because of differences in their wealth and connexions when military traditions may have been of paramount importance to their social identity. Equally, for example, it may not be entirely fitting to place William Norcott under the fringes of the aristocracy because of his kinship with Lord Rossmore when the Norcotts were not wealthy and produced career soldiers over several generations.⁹¹ A further problem of classification, too, is the élite of Scottish society. George Dundas, for example, was heir to the chief of the Dundas family with an ancient seat in the county of Linlithgow. He was in a sense of the aristocracy although he was untitled. He was landed, but socially more eminent than many of the landed gentry with whom he has been classed.

However, these difficulties with precise classification are useful in pointing up the elision of social sets in the regiment. It is significant, too, that the social rank and wealth of officers did not necessarily correlate with regimental rank. In part this is a reflection of the ages of serving officers, but, because of the power of senior officers to make or block appointments and their sensitivity to the wishes of the other regimental officers, it is also an indication of the

⁹¹ Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.39-43, notes the variation across families of the peerage and baronetage in the frequency of sons entering the army and navy. He observes that of the older baronetcies, the Scottish and Irish made a disproportionately large contribution to the army officer corps, and of the other baronetcies those with long military traditions and those whose titles were conferred for military service were best represented. Likewise some peerages made a greater contribution than others, and these, too, were mostly those with long military traditions and those recently ennobled for military service.

operation of a socially flexible concept of merit in promotion.⁹² (This is further examined in Chapters 2 and 3 below.) So, in 1843 the two lieutenant-colonels in the Rifle Brigade were from the landed gentry, while only one of four majors was from the aristocracy. Likewise, in 1863, two of five lieutenant-colonels, and again only two of the eight majors, were from the aristocracy.⁹³ The rest were from an assortment of landed gentry, trading, professional, and other middle- and lower-class backgrounds. It would seem that the shared identity of gentlemen could blur differences of social position and wealth in the regiment where they would be sharply delineated in other contexts. Thus a commoner risen from the ranks could give orders to a nobleman (as an ex-Sergeant, Lieutenant Joseph Wilkinson, could in 1843 to Second Lieutenant Hon. Ernest Fane, Lord Burghersh, son of the Earl of Westmorland), or the Lord of the Manor of a modest but ancient country estate could give orders to the heir of a rich West Indies trader (as Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Irton could to Captain Arthur Lawrence).

Indeed, if the officer corps is viewed in this way, and it is remembered that officers came into close and prolonged contact with one another, what is most striking is the variety of social backgrounds included in the categories of aristocracy and landed gentry, and the smooth integration of the landed with a significant number who were not. The Rifle Brigade over the period to 1870 gave a shared identity, and a shared and equal role in the regiment and in society to a disparate set of officers.⁹⁴ Around three-quarters of them had close kin in the landed classes, and many officers and their families shared specific experiences (such as membership of Parliament, service on a local bench or a public school education) that created strong bonds and common interests. However, the aristocracy and landed gentry of the Rifle Brigade (as in civilian society) were not an entirely homogeneous group. Indeed they cut across several of the

⁹² This may have been more true at regimental level than in the higher ranks of the army where the aristocracy was more dominant. See *ibid.*, pp.50-51, and Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.7-8.

⁹³ Lieutenant-Colonels Lord Alexander Russell (son of the 6th Duke of Bedford) and Percy Hill (nephew of General Rowland Hill, 1st Viscount Hill); Majors Hon. James Stuart (son of 11th Baron Blantyre), and Hon. Leicester Curzon (son of 1st Earl Howe).

⁹⁴ The officer corps certainly did not reflect wider middle- and upper-class society in the proportion of social groups included. Nonetheless, exceptional cases of connexions with under-represented groups can be found. Thus, for example, the Boileau family of the Rifle Brigade was friendly with (and related by marriage to an Anglican branch of) the Quaker family of Gurney in Norfolk. See below, pp.212. And Jonathan Peel who served in the regiment was the son of a successful manufacturer of calico.

important divisions of nineteenth-century society. As we have seen, they included men from different regions of Britain and the colonies. They also included, as will be shown below, a significant number of Evangelicals (some with experience of Nonconformity), and also some Catholics.

Further, both Conservative and Whig-Liberal sympathies (and a few Radical) are represented. Some twenty-eight Rifle Brigade officers serving before 1870 sat as Members of the House of Commons, during or after their service. Seventeen were Conservative (including Sir William Stewart, a supporter of Pitt, William Windham and Lord Grenville); eight were Whig or Liberal;⁹⁵ one was a Liberal-Conservative; one was a Radical; and one, Edward Somerset, sat for each of the two main parties in turn. (See Table 16.) At least forty-one were the sons of Members of Parliament, and many others came from prominent political families,⁹⁶ and from more obscure families with political affiliations. These divisions imply complex differences of political interest among Rifle Brigade officers, including between the interests of the aristocracy and of the gentry (for example over the strength of local government or the power of the House of Lords). And they indicate splits in family tradition and individual opinion in the regiment over the great issues of the period, not least economic theory, religious toleration and electoral reform. There are occasional references in letters and diaries to political events that indicate a lively interest in politics among serving officers. For example, Thomas Bramston (whose father was a Member of Parliament) told his mother in 1852 that the change of ministry at home had 'caused a good deal of excitement in camp' in South Africa during the Kaffir War, and he hoped the elections would go off without such a contest as was anticipated.⁹⁷

Their kin by blood and ^{marriage} money linked Riflemen, too, to new money of various sorts. (See Appendix 2). Several officers were related to bankers. Four members of the Glyn family

⁹⁵ Sir John Villiers Shelley was a strong free trader with radical views. He was in favour of vote by ballot, extension of the suffrage to all rate payers, and triennial parliaments.

⁹⁶ These included the kin of nine Prime Ministers. Hon. Henry Addington was the grandson of 1st Viscount Sidmouth. There were several Rifle Brigade officers related to the 1st Duke of Wellington, including his two sons. The first cousin of Sir George Jenkinson's father was Lord Liverpool. Hon. Sir Charles Grey was the son of 2nd Earl Grey. Hon. Charles North was the nephew of Lord North. Lord Alexander Russell was the half-brother of Lord John Russell. Jonathan Peel was the brother of Sir Robert Peel. Lord Mount Temple was the nephew of Lord Melbourne and step-son of Lord Palmerston.

⁹⁷ RGJ, T. Bramston to his mother, 8 May 1852.

served in the regiment,⁹⁸ as did Francis Baring, 2nd Earl of Northbrook, and Thomas Perronet Thompson was the son of a banker from Hull. There were, again, various cross-connections with these. For example, Humphrey Mildmay, uncle of Henry Mildmay of the regiment, was Director of the Bank of England. He married Anne Baring, daughter of 1st Baron Ashburton. Likewise the Hammonds and Ryders who served in the Rifle Brigade were related to the Glyn several times over. And there were also multiple links in the regiment with commerce and other business. Among the most eminent of such connexions were the Cunards of North America. William Mellish of the Rifle Brigade married Margaret, daughter of Sir Samuel Cunard, a wealthy merchant from Halifax, Nova Scotia, the son of Abraham Cunard the shipping magnate of Philadelphia. Margaret Cunard was also related by marriage to the five Beckwiths who served in the regiment (who were also kin of Judge Haliburton of Nova Scotia). And again, William Swinhoe married into the wealthy Reynolds family of Hamilton, Canada. William Best, Lord Wynford, of the regiment married Caroline, the daughter of Evan Baillie, a merchant. (He was the grandson of Evan Baillie a successful West India trader from Bristol, and grandfather of James Evan Baillie, a Whig Member of Parliament and prominent banker.) Sir William Dyke Acland, 2nd Bart., first cousin of Francis Dyke Acland of the Rifle Brigade, married a daughter of W.H.Smith the newspaper magnate. (Another Smith daughter married the 5th Earl of Harrowby who had further Rifle Brigade connexions.) John Mansel of the regiment married Mildred Guest (niece of Montagu Guest of the Rifle Brigade), granddaughter of Sir Josiah Guest who made his fortune in the Dowlais Iron works. The elder brother of Lord George Hamilton was Lord Claud Hamilton, Member of Parliament and Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway. Walter Lindsay's daughter Frances married the grandson of Sir Samuel Morton Peto, the Baptist and Liberal Member of Parliament whose construction firm built Nelson's Column in London, and, with Thomas Brassey, the Balaclava railway during the Crimean War. Likewise, Henry Wrixon Becher's mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of John O'Neill the actor-manager. And others, like John Boileau, whose family made their money with the East

⁹⁸ Sydney Carr Glyn of the Rifle Brigade, for example, was the son of 1st Baron Wolverton (a partner in the banking firm Glyn, Halifax and Co.) and he was the brother of Hon. George Carr Glyn (a partner in the banking firm Glyn, Mills and Co.).

India Company, and Henry Blundell whose forbears were Liverpool merchants, had shallow commercial roots from the eighteenth century.

It is also clear that a large number of Riflemen had connexions with the professions (in addition to the army and navy). Several (like Charles Bagot and Francis Howard) were the sons of diplomats, or (like Charles Robinson and Frederick Thesiger) lawyers. And at least one (Harry Smith) was the son of a medical doctor. The strongest connexions, however, may have been with the Church.⁹⁹ At least thirty-six officers were the sons of clergy, and 171 (doubtless not an exhaustive list) have been traced, as sons, fathers, brothers, uncles, nephews, grandfathers, grandsons or sons-in-law of clergy, monks and nuns.¹⁰⁰ Some of these kin were of high clerical rank or held wealthy benefices, but others were of modest means.¹⁰¹ For example, Edward Newdigate of the Rifle Brigade married the daughter of Rev. Thomas Garnier, Dean of Lincoln and Chaplain to the House of Commons; and Hon. Gilbert Elliot married the daughter of Rt. Rev. Dr. Ashurst Gilbert, Bishop of Chichester. But Henry Newdigate (brother of Edward) married the daughter of Rev. Arthur Shirley, Vicar of Stinsford, Dorchester, a benefice with a much lower income; and likewise Robert Ward married the daughter of Rev. Henry Ward, Rector of Killinchy, Devon. Indeed, Thomas Perronet Thompson eloped with his bride, the daughter of a York clergyman, because their parents so disapproved of the disparity between their fortunes.

There is little material to point to marriages by Rifle Brigade officers into lesser middle-class families, although there is little evidence all together for the families of less wealthy officers. (For example, it is known that George Simmons married, but nothing has been

⁹⁹ These members of families are particularly easy to trace, however, because of the use of clerical titles in directories of landed families and the aristocracy, school registers and so on.

¹⁰⁰ These included five archbishops, one cardinal, twenty-four bishops, two archdeacons, fifteen deans, fifteen canons, four prebendaries, ninety-one rectors, twenty-one vicars, one Jesuit priest, eight nuns and sixty-three other clergy. These have been traced from a variety of sources including letters, diaries, biographies and memoirs. See Figures 14 and 15 below for examples from the Cooper and Boyle families.

¹⁰¹ At least one clerical father-in-law did not hold a church appointment in his later years. Rev. H. Foulkes, father-in-law of Arthur Dillon of the Rifle Brigade, was Curator of the Tower of London Armouries and a Trustee of the Wallace Collection. Dillon himself became President of the Society of Antiquaries in 1897, was a Trustee of the British Museum, the Wallace Collection and the National Portrait Gallery, and was Curator of the Tower Armouries.

discovered about his wife.) Nonetheless, while the many links into new money and the professions which are documented undoubtedly strengthened connexions with the landed ruling élite, even they could draw officers into extended contacts with non-landed sections of middle-class society. And, as the broader lives and experience of Rifle Brigade officers are examined (and this will be explored further in subsequent chapters) it becomes clear that many officers had further contacts with diverse aspects of civilian culture and society through channels such as travel, philanthropy and reading, and through colleagues, school fellows, servants, acquaintances and friends. Thus the notion of a narrowly landed outlook in the regiment is further undermined.

In part this finding for the Rifle Brigade is a reflection of the nature of contemporary ruling-class society: its varied activities, its geographical dispersion, its reception of cultural influences at many points and its continuous adaptation. However, it also implies a special place for the army not only in furthering the cohesion of the landed classes, but in cementing a broader upper- and middle-class culture evolving in nineteenth-century Britain.

It will be suggested in the chapters which follow that the Rifle Brigade, with other regiments, did indeed, as has often been argued, foster a notion of gentlemanliness that was in tension with professionalism. And its commitment to a gentlemanly approach to the work of officers reflected in part social and political attitudes found among the ruling (including the landed) classes with which the Rifle Brigade had many links. However, as this chapter has begun to show, Rifle Brigade officers varied in their military experience, in their interests and occupations, and in their social backgrounds. Through many routes they were, as a group, in touch with diverse facets of society, and this allowed a degree of cultural eclecticism that affected the professional and social development of the regiment. The following chapters will put forward in more detail evidence for the professional, social and religious outlook of the officers and men of the Rifle Brigade, underlining both the variety that was present, and the strength of links outside the regiment.

Outline of engagements, active service and special tasks of the Rifle Brigade 1800-1870

Sources: *Cope, History of the Rifle Brigade*
Verner, The Rifle Brigade Calendar
Verner, History and Campaigns of the Rifle Brigade
Fortescue, A History of the British Army

1800	On the expedition to Ferrol the corps covered the British advance into Spain and held the heights against enemy attack	1814-1815	A detachment of the 3rd Battalion joined in the expedition to New Orleans
1801	A detachment fought in Nelson's squadron against the Danish fleet at Copenhagen	1819-1820	The 1st Battalion was quartered at Glasgow to quell disturbances
1803-1805	5 companies trained at Shorncliffe under Sir John Moore	1821-1822	The 1st and 2nd Battalions clashed with insurgents in Ireland
1805	5 companies of the 1st Battalion formed the advanced guard on the march to Bremen and Delmenhorst	1826	A depot company from the 2nd Battalion quelled rioting at Tralee
1806	3 companies of the 2nd Battalion assisted in two effective attacks on Monte Video and led the assault on the city	1833	A depot company guarded against smugglers at Hastings
1807	A wing of the 1st Battalion joined a detachment of the 2nd Battalion and fought at Buenos Ayres	1836-1839	A detachment of 1 officer and 8 sergeants was sent to Persia to accompany a consignment of 2,000 rifles sent to the Shah by the Foreign Office, and to instruct Persian troops
1807	Detachments of the 1st and 2nd Battalions joined in the expedition to Denmark and fought at Copenhagen and Kiøge	1839	A detachment of the 1st Battalion stood against Chartist demonstrators at Birmingham, and was sent to Nottingham and Warwick to keep the peace
1808	Companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions fought at Obidos and in the battles of Roleia and Vimiero	1840	A detachment of the 1st Battalion was sent to Monmouth to quell disturbances
1809	The 1st Battalion fought at Cacabelos and El Burgo under Sir John Moore. Companies of the 1st and 2nd Battalions took part in the retreat to Corunna	1842	A detachment of the 1st Battalion was sent to Wicklow to aid the civil power during an election
1809-1813	The 1st Battalion, as part of the Light Division, saw frequent action in the Peninsula, including at Talavera, Barba del Puerco, the Bridge on the Coa and Busaco; then, with detachments of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, at Barrosa, Sabugal, Fuentes d'Onor, Ciudad Rodrigo, Badajos, Vittoria, St Sebastian, the Bridge of Vera and the Nivelle	1843	Depot companies of the 1st Battalion opposed dissidents in Ireland
1809	The 2nd Battalion joined the Walcheren expedition and was at the siege of Flushing	1844-1846	Depot companies of the 1st Battalion opposed agitation associated with Daniel O'Connell's mass meetings in support of electoral reform and the repeal of the union with Ireland
1814	Detachments of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions were on the march to Orthez and at the battles of the Tarbes and Toulouse	1846-1850	The 1st Battalion fought in the 1st Kaffir War
1814	Detachments of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions marched to Antwerp and fought at Merxem	1851-1852	The 1st Battalion fought in the 2nd Kaffir War
1814-1818	Detachments of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Battalions were at Quartre Bras and Waterloo, and were in the occupation of Paris	1853	The 2nd Battalion joined the camp at Chobham
		1854-1856	The 1st and 2nd Battalions were in the Crimean War, fighting at Alma, Balaclava, Sebastopol, Inkerman and the Redan
		1857	The 1st Battalion suppressed riots in Edinburgh then Glasgow
		1857-1859	The 2nd and 3rd Battalions fought in the Indian Mutiny, seeing action several times, including at the Battles of Cawnpore, Lucknow and Nawabgunge, and the capture of Birwah. Drafts were sent to the Camel Corps.
		1864	The 3rd Battalion was involved in a punitive expedition against tribesmen on the Afghan border with India
		1866	The 4th Battalion opposed a Fenian raid in Canada

Stations of the Rifle Brigade 1800 - 1870

Sources: *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1890, vol 1, pp 36-38
National Army Museum, 'Regimental Location Lists' compiled from Hart, *Army List*

Rifle Corps and 95th Rifles, 1800 - 1815

Year	Name	Stations	Year	Name	Stations
1800	Rifle Corps	England (3 companies on Ferrol Expedition)	1814	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies Spain, France, England 1 company England, Holland
1801	Rifle Corps	England (1 company to Copenhagen with Lord Nelson)			2nd Battalion 6 companies Spain, France, England 1 company England, Holland
1802	Rifle Corps	England			3rd Battalion 5 companies Spain, France, England, New Orleans 2 companies England, Holland
1803-4	95th Rifles	England	1815	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies England, Belgium, France 1 company Holland, Belgium, France
1805	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 5 companies England 5 companies England, Germany			2nd Battalion 5 companies England, Belgium, France 1 company Holland, Belgium, France
		2nd Battalion England			3rd Battalion 5 companies New Orleans, England, Belgium, France, England 2 companies Holland, Belgium, France, England
1806	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 5 companies England, South America 5 companies Germany, England			
		2nd Battalion 7 companies England 3 companies England, South America			
1807	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 5 companies South America 5 companies England, Denmark, England			
		2nd Battalion 2 companies England 5 companies England, Denmark, England 3 companies South America			
1808	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 5 companies South America, England, Portugal 2 companies England, Portugal, Spain 3 companies England, Sweden, Portugal			
		2nd Battalion 2 companies England, Portugal, Spain 4 companies England, Portugal, Spain 4 companies England, Spain			
1809	95th Rifles	1st Battalion Spain, England, Portugal, Spain			
		2nd Battalion Spain, England, Holland, England			
		3rd Battalion England			
1810	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies Spain			
		2nd Battalion 2 companies England, Spain 1 company England, Portugal			
		3rd Battalion 5 companies England, Spain			
1811	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies Spain			
		2nd Battalion 3 companies Spain 1 company England, Portugal, Spain			
		3rd Battalion 5 companies Spain			
1812	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies Spain			
		2nd Battalion 4 companies Spain 2 companies England, Portugal, Spain			
		3rd Battalion 5 companies Spain			
1813	95th Rifles	1st Battalion 6 companies Spain			
		2nd Battalion 6 companies Spain			
		3rd Battalion 5 companies Spain			

1st Battalion Rifle Brigade 1816 - 1870 (excluding depot companies)			
1815 - 1818	France	1846 - 1850	Cape (1st Kaffir War)
1818 - 1819	England	1850 - 1851	England
1819 - 1825	Ireland	1852 - 1853	Cape (2nd Kaffir War)
1825 - 1836	Nova Scotia & New Brunswick	1854 - 1856	Crimea (Russian War)
1836 - 1840	England	1856 - 1861	England
1841 - 1843	Malta	1862 - 1870	Canada
1843 - 1846	Corfu		

2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade 1816 - 1870 (excluding depot companies)			
1815 - 1818	France	1843 - 1846	Nova Scotia
1818 - 1819	England	1846 - 1852	Canada
1820 - 1826	Ireland	1852 - 1854	England
1826 - 1832	Malta	1854 - 1856	Crimea (Russian War)
1832 - 1834	Corfu	1856 - 1857	England
1834 - 1837	Cephalonia	1857	Ireland
1837 - 1842	Ireland	1857 - 1867	India
1842 - 1843	Bermuda	1867 - 1870	England

3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade 1816 - 1870 (excluding depot companies)			
1815 - 1816	England	April 1855	Raised a second time
1816 - 1818	Ireland	1855 - 1857	England
December 1818	Disbanded	1857 - 1870	India

4th Battalion Rifle Brigade 1857 - 1870 (excluding depot companies)			
September 1857	Raised	1864 - 1865	Gibraltar
1857 - 1859	England	1865 - 1867	Canada
1859 - 1864	Malta	1867 - 1870	England

Stations of the Rifle Brigade 1815 - 1870, by year (excluding depot companies)

Sources: *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1890, vol 1, pp36-38

National Army Museum, 'Regimental Location Lists' compiled from Hart, *Army List*

England	Ireland	Canada	India	Malta	Cape	France	Corfu	Crimea	Cephalonia	Gibraltar	Bermuda	England	Ireland	Canada	India	Malta	Cape	France	Corfu	Crimea	Cephalonia	Gibraltar	Bermuda		
1815	✓					✓						1846		✓			✓		✓						
1816	✓					✓						1847		✓			✓								
1817	✓					✓						1848		✓			✓								
1818	✓					✓						1849		✓			✓								
1819	✓											1850	✓				✓								
1820												1851	✓												
1821	✓											1852	✓				✓								
1822	✓											1853	✓				✓								
1823	✓											1854	✓									✓			
1824	✓											1855	✓								✓				
1825	✓	✓										1856	✓								✓				
1826	✓	✓			✓							1857	✓	✓		✓	✓								
1827		✓			✓							1858	✓			✓	✓								
1828		✓			✓							1859	✓			✓	✓								
1829		✓			✓							1860	✓			✓	✓								
1830		✓			✓							1861	✓			✓	✓								
1831		✓			✓							1862			✓	✓	✓								
1832		✓			✓							1863			✓	✓	✓								
1833		✓			✓							1864			✓	✓	✓						✓		
1834		✓			✓							1865			✓	✓	✓					✓			
1835		✓			✓							1866			✓	✓	✓								
1836	✓		✓									1867	✓		✓	✓	✓								
1837	✓		✓									1868	✓		✓	✓	✓								
1838	✓		✓									1869	✓		✓	✓	✓								
1839	✓		✓									1870	✓		✓	✓	✓								
1840	✓		✓									Total of full or part years													
1841	✓		✓									25	18	31	14	18	7	4	7	3	4	2	2		
1842	✓		✓																						
1843			✓																						
1844			✓																						
1845			✓																						

Table 3

The total number of years served by the four battalions of the Rifle Brigade in Ireland, mainland Britain and abroad between 1815 and 1870 (excluding depot companies)

Sources: *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1890, vol 1, pp 36-38
National Army Museum, 'Regimental Location Lists' compiled from Hart, *Army List*

Location	1st Battalion	2nd Battalion	3rd Battalion	4th Battalion
England, Scotland, Wales	14	7	4	5
Ireland	6	12	2	-
Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Canada	18	9	-	2
India	-	10	13	-
Malta	3	6	-	5
Cape	6	-	-	-
France	3	3	-	-
Corfu	3	2	-	-
Crimea	2	2	-	-
Cephalonia	-	3	-	-
Gibraltar	-	-	-	1
Bermuda	-	1	-	-
Total	55	55	19	13

The total number of years served by the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Rifle Brigade in various locations, compared with the service of various highland, cavalry, Guards and foot regiments 1820 - 1870, excluding depot companies

Sources: D Henderson, *Highland Soldier*, pp 307-309

National Army Museum, 'Regimental Location Lists' compiled from Hart, *Army List Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1890, vol 1, pp 36 - 38

	Mainland Britain	Ireland	British North America	India	Malta	Cape	Greek Islands	Crimea	Gibraltar	West Indies	Channel Islands	Portugal	Australia & New Zealand	British Guyana	Total Years in Britain (including Ireland)	Total Years Abroad
Rifle Brigade: 1st Battalion	12	6	18	-	3	6	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	32
Rifle Brigade: 2nd Battalion	5	12	9	10	6	-	5	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	17	33
42nd Regiment: (The Black Watch)	8	8	1	11	7	-	3	2	6	4	-	-	-	-	16	34
79th Regiment: (Cameron Highlanders)	7	6	14	13	-	-	-	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	13	37
92nd Regiment: (Gordon Highlanders)	7	13	-	6	4	-	2	1	6	11	-	-	-	-	20	30
43rd Regiment	4	13	10	10	-	2	-	-	6	-	1	1	3	-	17	33
1st Dragoon Guards	28	8	5	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	36	14
4th Dragoon Guards	29	19	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	48	2
Coldstream Guards	41	5	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	9
Grenadier Guards	40	6	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	46	4
17th Regiment	10	10	9	14	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	5	-	20	30
60th Regiment: 1st Battalion	9	6	7	15	3	-	4	-	4	-	-	2	-	-	15	35
52nd Regiment: 1st Battalion	6	11	13	12	2	-	-	-	2	2	-	1	-	1	17	33

Table 5

Detachments forming the Experimental Corps of Riflemen, April 1800

Source: W Cope, *History of the Rifle Brigade*, p2

	Lieutenant-Colonel	Captain	Lieutenant	Ensign	Sergeant	Drummer	Rank and File
1st Foot		1	1	1	2	1	32
21st Foot			1	1	2	1	32
23rd Foot					2	1	32
25th Foot			1		2		32
27th Foot		1	1	1	2	1	32
29th Foot			1	1	2	1	32
49th Foot		1	1	1	2	1	32
55th Foot			1		2	1	32
67th Foot	1		1				
69th Foot		1	1		2	1	32
71st Foot		1			2	1	32
72nd Foot		1		1	2	1	32
79th Foot			1	1	2	1	32
85th Foot					1		27
92nd Foot			1	1	2	1	32
Total	1	6	11	8	27	12	443
Wanting to complete					1	1	5
Establishment	1	6	11	8	28	13	448

Table 6

Rifle Brigade officers serving in other units (by number)

Note: The numbers show individual officers so that an officer serving twice in one unit is counted only once

No of officers	Regiment	No of officers	Regiment	No of officers	Regiment	No of officers	Regiment	No of officers	Regiment	No of officers	Regiment
29	Grenadier Guards	11	Scots Guards	7	42nd Regiment	4	28th Regiment	2	25th Light Dragoons	1	York Chasseurs
		11	48th Regiment	7	73rd Regiment	4	38th Regiment	2	12th Regiment	1	Sir Vere Hunt's Recruiting Corps
26	60th Regiment	11	57th Regiment	7	75th Regiment	4	49th Regiment	2	65th Regiment	1	Major-General Cuyler's Regiment of Foot
		11	71st Regiment	7	79th Regiment	4	55th Regiment	2	74th Regiment	1	Kingston's Levy
25	43rd Regiment			7	81st Regiment	4	56th Regiment	2	122nd Regiment	1	Count de Meuron's Regiment
		10	5th Regiment	7	2nd West India Regiment	4	61st Regiment	2	6th West India Regiment	1	Froberg's Levy
23	Coldstream Guards	10	63rd Regiment	7	Royal Navy	4	72nd Regiment	2	5th Garrison Battalion	1	Capt Coleman's Independent Company of Foot
						4	76th Regiment	2	York Rangers	1	Chasseurs Britannique
21	4th Regiment	9	Royal Horse Guards	6	1st Dragoons	4	98th Regiment	2	Bourbon Regiment	1	Royal Kelso Regiment
		9	14th Light Dragoons	6	17th Regiment	4	104th Regiment	2	Royal African Corps	1	McDonnell's Regiment
20	52nd Regiment	9	6th Regiment	6	27th Regiment	4	7th West India Regiment	2	Canadian Royal Rifle Regiment	1	Major-General Nicoll's Regiment
		9	23rd Regiment	6	29th Regiment	4	2nd Garrison Battalion	1	New South Wales Regiment	1	Cape Mounted Rifles
18	1st Regiment	9	62nd Regiment	6	34th Regiment	4	3rd Garrison Battalion	1	22nd Light Dragoons	1	Cape Regiment
		9	77th Regiment	6	35th Regiment	4	2nd Veteran Battalion	1	23rd Light Dragoons	1	1st Ceylon Regiment
17	7th Regiment	9	84th Regiment	6	45th Regiment	4	Madras Army	2	27th Light Dragoons	1	2nd Ceylon Regiment
17	8th Regiment	9	86th Regiment	6	58th Regiment	4		1	102nd Regiment	1	New South Wales Veterans
				6	88th Regiment	3		1	103rd Regiment	1	Sicilian Regiment
						3	8th Light Dragoons	1	106th Regiment	1	British German Legion
16	69th Regiment	8	14th Regiment	5	7th Dragoon Guards	3	16th Light Dragoons	1	112th Regiment	1	Royal Artillery
16	92nd Regiment	8	16th Regiment	5	7th Light Dragoons	3	24th Light Dragoons	1	115th Regiment	1	Royal Engineers
		8	36th Regiment	5	15th Light Dragoons	3	19th Regiment	1	116th Regiment	1	Royal Marines
15	3rd Regiment	8	40th Regiment	5	31st Regiment	3	30th Regiment	1	118th Regiment	1	British Legion of Spain
15	47th Regiment	8	51st Regiment	5	37th Regiment	3	32nd Regiment	1	128th Regiment	1	2nd British Italian Legion
15	68th Regiment	8	59th Regiment	5	44th Regiment	3	78th Regiment	1	132nd Regiment	1	3rd British Italian Legion
15	90th Regiment	8	66th Regiment	5	54th Regiment	3	91st Regiment	1	1st West India Regiment	1	4th British Italian Legion
		8	70th Regiment	5	64th Regiment	3	94th Regiment	1	4th West India Regiment	1	70th Bengal Light Infantry
		8	82nd Regiment	5	83rd Regiment	3	101st Regiment	1	8th West India Regiment	1	Bengal Native Infantry
14	9th Regiment	8	95th Regiment	5	87th Regiment	3	3rd West India Regiment	1	7th Garrison Battalion	1	
14	15th Regiment	8	96th Regiment	5	89th Regiment	3	West India Rangers	1	11th Garrison Battalion	1	
14	41st Regiment	8	97th Regiment	5	93rd Regiment	3	6th Garrison Battalion	1	4th Veteran Battalion	1	
		8	99th Regiment	5	4th Garrison Battalion	3	9th Garrison Battalion	1	10th Veteran Battalion	1	
		8	100th Regiment	5	8th Garrison Battalion	3	3rd Veteran Battalion	1	Army Depot, Isle of Wight	1	
13	10th Regiment	7	10th Light Dragoons	5	Independent Companies (various)	3	Cape Corps Infantry	1	48th Brigade Depot (Guildford)	1	
13	20th Regiment	7	2nd Regiment	4	2nd Life Guards	2	Corsican Rangers	1	Corps of Invalids	1	
13	25th Regiment	7	11th Regiment	4	4th Dragoons	2		1			
13	50th Regiment	7	13th Regiment	4	11th Light Dragoons	2	2nd Dragoon Guards	1			
13	53rd Regiment	7	24th Regiment	4	17th Light Dragoons	2	4th Dragoon Guards	1			
13	67th Regiment	7	26th Regiment	4	18th Regiment	2	2nd Dragoons	1			
		7	33rd Regiment	4	22nd Regiment	2	6th Dragoons	1			
12	21st Regiment	7	39th Regiment	4		2	5th Dragoons	1			
12	80th Regiment	7		4		2	9th Light Dragoons	1			
12	85th Regiment	7		4		2		1			
12	89th Regiment	7		4		2		1			

Table 8

The time spent previously in other regiments by officers serving in the Rifle Brigade in 1840

Source: Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*

Officer	Regiment	Time Served	Officer	Regiment	Time Served
Lieutenant-Colonel George Brown	43rd Light Infantry	5 years	Captain John Henderson	4th Light Dragoons	7 years
	3rd Garrison Battalion	1 year			
	85th Light Infantry	2 years	Captain Charles Du Pre Egerton	70th Regiment	3 years
	Unattached	1 year			
Lieutenant-Colonel John Hope	26th Regiment	4 months	Captain Arthur Lawrence	23rd Fusiliers	3 years
	21st Fusiliers	2 years			
Major George Milne Stevenson	37th Regiment	5 years	Lieutenant Frederick Belson	7th Dragoon Guards	13 years
	42nd Highlanders	5 years	Lieutenant Wilmot Bradford	80th Regiment	3 years
Major Edwin Kelly	28th Regiment	2 years	Lieutenant Hon Edward Monckton	50th Regiment	4 years
	13th Regiment	17 years			
Major George Buller	23rd Fusiliers	2 years	Lieutenant Arthur Murray	15th Hussars	3 years
	63rd Regiments	3 years	Lieutenant Robert Reynard	17th Lancers	4 years
Captain William Sullivan	28th Regiment	2 years			

Table 9

The Regiments of ex-Rifle Brigade officers on 15 June 1840

Number of ex-Rifle Brigade officers	Regiments in which ex-Rifle Brigade officers were serving on 15 June 1840	Total number of Regiments
1	1st Dragoons, 2nd Dragoon Guards, 14th Light Dragoons, 15th Light Dragoons, 25th Light Dragoons, 2nd Regiment, 7th Regiment, 13th Regiment, 15th Regiment, 23rd Regiment, 24th Regiment, 25th Regiment, 26th Regiment, 36th Regiment, 37th Regiment, 41st Regiment, 43rd Regiment, 44th Regiment, 45th Regiment, 47th Regiment, 52nd Regiment, 55th Regiment, 63rd Regiment, 66th Regiment, 68th Regiment, 71st Regiment, 73rd Regiment, 79th Regiment, 80th Regiment, 81st Regiment, 86th Regiment, 88th Regiment, 89th Regiment, 90th Regiment, 92nd Regiment, 93rd Regiment, 95th Regiment, 96th Regiment, 99th Regiment, 100th Regiment, 104th Regiment, 2nd West India Regiment, British Legion of Spain	43
2	Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, 17th Light Dragoons, 5th Regiment, 10th Regiment, 42nd Regiment, 48th Regiment, 53rd Regiment, 67th Regiment	9
3	Grenadier Guards	1

Involvement of Rifle Brigade officers with auxiliary and irregular units

Source: *Boyle, Rifle Brigade Century*

	Number of officers, before commissioned	Number. of officers, after commissioned	Total number of officers	Number of separate units	Units, with date of beginning or ending service
Militia	49 ^①	52	97 ^②	69	<p>Cornwall Militia (to 1794) (from 1842); Cambridgeshire Militia (to 1799) (to 1800) (to 1809) (from 1836) (from 1852); Sussex Militia (to 1799) (to 1877); West. Essex Militia (to 1799); East. Somerset Militia (to 1799); Armagh Militia (to 1800); Cavan Militia (to 1800); Tyrone Militia (to 1802); Royal Flintshire Militia (to 1807); Royal Perth Militia (to 1808) (to 1809); Hertfordshire Militia (to 1809); Royal West Midland Militia (to 1809); Northumberland Militia (to 1809) (from 1845); Royal East Middlesex Militia (to 1809); 2nd Surrey Militia (to 1809); 1st Lancashire Militia (to 1809); North York Militia (to 1809); West York Militia (to 1809); Royal Denbigh Militia (to 1809); Royal North Lincoln Militia (to 1809); Shropshire Militia (to 1809); Warwickshire Militia (to 1809) (from 1821); 1st Royal Surrey Militia (to 1809) (from 1853); Royal Pembroke Militia (to 1810).; East Kent Militia (to 1813) (from 1865); West Kent Militia (to 1813) (from 1815) (from 1874) (from 1876); South Lincolnshire Militia (to 1813); 2nd Somerset Militia (to 1813) (to 1855); Bedfordshire Militia (from 1820) (to 1855); North Devon Militia (from 1831); Royal Cardigan Rifles Militia (from 1831); 2nd Middlesex Militia (from 1844); 3rd Royal Lancashire Militia (from 1846); 1st West York Rifles Militia (from 1852); Nottinghamshire Militia (from 1852); Essex Rifles Militia (from 1853) (from 1870); Royal Sussex Artillery (from 1853) (to 1855); 3rd King's Own Staffordshire Militia (from 1854) (from 1858); Antrim Rifles Militia (from 1854); Argyll and Bute Militia (from 1854); Royal Sussex Light Infantry Militia (from 1854); Forfar and Kincardine Militia Artillery (from 1854) (to 1862); 4th Middlesex Militia (to 1854); South. Mayo Militia (from 1854) (from 1872); North Yorkshire Rifles Militia (to 1855); 2nd Warwick Militia (to 1855); 2nd Staffordshire Militia (to 1855); 2nd Royal Cheshire Militia (to 1855) (from 1869); Galloway Rifles Militia (from 1855) (to 1855); 3rd Royal Surrey Militia (to 1855); 2nd Derbyshire Rifles Militia (from 1855) (from 1866); Stirlingshire Militia (to 1858); Ayrshire Militia (from 1860) (from 1873); Royal Cumberland Militia (from 1860); 2nd Royal Lancashire Militia (from 1862) (from 1871); 1st Royal Cheshire Militia (from 1864); Royal Wiltshire Militia (from 1864); Northumberland Light Infantry (from 1865); 1st Somerset Militia (from 1868); Kildare Rifles Militia (from 1869); Durham Artillery Militia (from 1870); Royal Limerick Militia (from 1870); East York Militia (from 1871); Royal Tyrone Fusiliers Militia (from 1871); Leicester Militia (from 1872); Highland Borderers Light Infantry Militia (from 1874); Oxfordshire Militia (from 1874); Hampshire Militia (from 1874); 2nd Middlesex Rifles Militia (from 1875)</p>
Volunteers		41	41	50	<p>Victoria Rifle Volunteers (from 1853); 1st Brecknock Rifle Volunteers (from 1859); 1st Sussex Rifle Volunteers (from 1859) (from 1863); Inns of Court Rifle Volunteers (from 1860) (from 1868); 1st Suffolk Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 13th Surrey Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 1st Administrative Battalion Brecknock Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 3rd Administrative Battalion Sussex Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 3rd Monmouth Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 1st Administrative Battalion Monmouth Rifle Vols (from 1860); 11th Corps Glamorganshire Volunteers (from 1860); 3rd Durham Rifle Volunteers (from 1860); 2nd Administrative. Battalion Yorkshire (North Riding) Rifle Volunteers (from 1861); 20th Suffolk Rifle Volunteers (from 1862); 3rd Administrative Battalion Surrey Rifle Volunteers (from 1862); 1st Gloucestershire Artillery Volunteers (from 1863); 1st Derbyshire Rifle Volunteer Corps (from 1863); 1st Administrative Battalion Buckinghamshire Rifle Volunteers (from 1864); 8th Northumberland Rifle Volunteers (from 1864); 1st Administrative Battalion Nottinghamshire Volunteers (from 1865); 43rd Kent Rifle Volunteers (from 1865); 1st Administrative Battalion Leicestershire Rifle Volunteers (from 1869); 1st Administrative Battalion Isle of Wight Volunteers (from 1870); 6th Huntingdonshire Rifle Volunteers (from 1871); 1st Administrative Battalion Lanarkshire Volunteers (from 1871); 1st Administrative Battalion Glamorganshire Volunteers (from 1872); 2nd Battalion Cheshire Volunteers (from 1872); 1st Hampshire Rifle Volunteer</p>

	Number of officers, before commissioned	Number of officers, after commissioned	Total number of officers	Number of separate units	Units, with date of beginning or ending service
Volunteers (continued)					Corps (from 1875); 24th Hampshire Rifle Volunteers (from 1875) (from 1881); 2nd Administrative Battalion Suffolk Rifle Volunteers (from 1876); Adelaide (South Australia) Rifle Volunteers (from 1878); 1st Administrative Battalion Cumberland Rifle Volunteers (from 1878); 7th Middlesex (London Scottish) Rifle Volunteers (1878); 4th Administrative Battalion Hampshire Rifle Volunteers (from 1878) (from 1879); Weald of Kent Administrative Battalion Rifle Volunteers (from 1879); 2nd Lanarkshire Rifle Volunteers (from 1879); 2nd Battalion Essex Rifle Volunteers (from 1880); City of London Rifle Volunteers (from 1881); 2nd Volunteer Battalion South Wales Borderers (from 1881); 1st Volunteer Northamptonshire Regiment (from 1882); 4th Middlesex Rifle Volunteers (from 1887); Manchester Volunteer Infantry Brigade (from 1888); 1st Volunteer Battalion Royal Lancashire Regiment (from 1888); Glasgow Clyde Volunteer Infantry Brigade (from 1888); Birmingham Volunteer Infantry Brigade (from 1888); North Midland Volunteer Infantry Brigade (from 1888); 3rd London Rifle Volunteers (1892); Western Counties Volunteer Infantry Brigade (from 1895); Electrical Engineers Volunteers (from 1898); 2nd Volunteer East Kent Regiment
Fencibles	6	1	7	6	1st Battalion Breadalbane Fencibles (to 1795) (to 1797); Argyle Fencibles (to 1800); Lochabar Fencible Highlanders (to 1800); Oxfordshire Fencible Cavalry (to 1801); Canadian Fencibles (to 1809); New Brunswick Fencibles (half pay from 1829)
Yeomanry Cavalry	-	18	18	16	Whitelsea Troop of Cambridgeshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1831); South Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1846); 1st West York Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1846) (from 1856); Nottinghamshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1848); South Hertfordshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1854) (from 1858); Royal East Kent Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1856); Forfarshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1856); North Shropshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1857); West Somerset Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1858); Yorkshire Hussars Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1858) (from 1863); Dorset Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1859); Lanarkshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1867); Shropshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1872); Westmoreland and Cumberland Yeomanry (from 1884); 7th Battalion Imperial Yeomanry (from 1900); Northamptonshire Yeomanry Cavalry (from 1904)
Total number of units			141		

Total number of officers serving in all auxiliary and irregular units: 152 ^②

- ① Includes 1 surgeon: F Scott, and 2 Paymasters: J Barclay and S Bridge, who served in the militia before joining the regular army.
- ② 4 officers: F Kingscote, E Hinde, J Ridgway and W Swinhoe were in the militia both before and after service in the regular army.
- ③ This figure takes account of officers serving in multiple units. It excludes regular army officers responsible for auxiliary forces: A Barnard, Inspecting Field Officer of Militia, Canada and Nova Scotia, 1808; C J Napier, Inspecting Field Officer of Militia, Ionian Islands, 1818; R Travers, Inspecting Field Officer of Militia, Ionian Islands, 1819; N Douglas, Inspecting Field Officer of Militia, North America, 1833. It includes William Earl of Limerick, ADC to the Queen for Auxiliary Forces, 1887, who also served in the militia and the volunteers.

Rifle Brigade officers serving in the police force and prison service

Sources: Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*
 Burke, *Peerage*
 Walford, *County Families*

Police:			
Name	Date of first army commission	Rank at army retirement	Appointment
Alexander Borthwick	22nd May 1858	Lieutenant - Colonel	Chief Constable of Mid and West Lothian, and of Peebleshire and East Lothian (in addition) 1884 - 1900
Hon. Cuthbert Edwardes	15 February 1856	Major	Deputy Chief Constable of Cheshire c.1882
Daniel Forbes	26 October 1809	Lieutenant	Inspector of Metropolitan Police 1829 - 1852
Arthur Harington	20 February 1867	Captain	Commandant Sabah Constabulary, North Borneo; Chief of Staff of Egyptian Gendarmerie 1883; Divisional Inspector in charge of Assiout Division 1884; Commandant Suez Canal Police, 1890; Commandant Cairo City Police 1891 - 1902
Samuel Humble Lawson	9 May 1812	Lieutenant	Inspector of Constabulary for Co. Sligo c.1832
Hon. Charles Legge	21 February 1860	Lieutenant	Chief Constable of Lancashire 1877 - 1880; HM Inspector of County and Borough Constabulary 1880
Henry Gore Lindsay	25 September 1857	Captain	Chief Constable of Glamorgan 1867 - 1891
Henry Moorsom	24 April 1855	Major	Chief Constable of Lancashire 1880 - 1909
Charles Frederick Napier	9 April 1825	Captain	Chief Constable of Glamorgan 1841 - 1867
Charles Napier	31 January 1794	Lieutenant - General	Organised the police force at Sind, India 1843
John Woodford	28 February 1840	Captain	Chief Constable of Lancashire; Inspector - General of Constabulary for the Northern Region 1856 - 1867
Prisons:			
Name	Date of first army commission	Rank at army retirement	Appointment
John Groves	8 April 1825	Captain	Governor of Millbank Penitentiary 1842 - 1854
Arthur Hill	23 October 1855	Captain	Inspector of HM Prisons, Ireland, 1878 - 1898
Francis Kerr	31 August 1858	Lieutenant	Governor of Military Prison, Malta, to 1884
John Kincaid	27 April 1809	Captain	Inspector of Prisons, Scotland c.1850
John Knox	5 November 1854	Brevet Major	Governor of Cardiff Gaol, 1872; of Kirkdale Prison, 1886; of Hull Prison, 1891
Charles Lindham	8 November 1842	Lieutenant	Deputy - Governor of Millbank Penitentiary c.1860

Regional origin of officers and men 1825 and officers 1843

Source: Univ Southampton, WPI/837/1 and WPI/837/2

Monthly returns of 1st and 2nd Battalions of the Rifle Brigade, 25 January 1825

	Number of each country									
	Officers	Sergeants	1st Battalion Corporals	Buglers	Privates	Officers	Sergeants	2nd Battalion Corporals	Buglers	Privates
English	14	19	14	11	309	16	18	16	6	310
Scottish	10	6	6	-	37	8	3	3	1	46
Irish	9	5	4	1	195	9	9	5	5	170
Foreigners	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	33	30	24	12	541	33	30	24	12	526

Sources: Univ Southampton, WPI/837/1 and WPI/837/2
Burke, *Peerage*
Walford, *County Families*

Number of officers of known regional origin in the Rifle Brigade (combined battalions) in 1843, compared with the number in the 1st and 2nd Battalions in 1825

	1825				1843	
	1st Battalion		2nd Battalion		Combined Battalions	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
English	14	43	16	49	33	61
Scottish	10	30	8	24	9	16
Irish	9	27	9	27	7	13
North America and West Indies	-	-	-	-	4	8
Channel Islands	-	-	-	-	1	2
Total number background known	33	100	33	100	54	100
Background unknown	-	-	-	-	20	-
Total number of Officers	33		33		74	

The 'country' of officers of the 1st Battalion Rifle Brigade (some appointments only) to 1868

Sources: RGJ, 1st Battalion Rifle
Brigade Roll of Officers

Rank	England	Ireland	Scotland	Germany	Jersey	Canada & Nova Scotia	Switzerland	Algiers	France	America	Italy	India
Colonel-in-Chief	2	1	1	1								
Colonel Commandant	2	1	1									
Lieutenant-Colonel	4											
Major	16		1		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Captain	32	3	2									
1st Lieutenant	23	4	4									
2nd Lieutenant	43	7	6			1	1		1		1	3
Total of Country	122	16	15	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	5
% of Total Number of Officers	71.3%	9.3%	8.8%	0.6%	0.6%	1.1%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%	0.6%	1.1%	2.9%

Included in the total of 171 officers listed:

Colonels - in - Chief	1800 - 1868
Colonels Commandant	1809 - 1860
Lieutenant - Colonels	1830 - 1855
Majors	1829 - 1855
Captains	1842 - 1855
1st Lieutenants	1854 - 1855
2nd Lieutenants	1845 - 1855

The family background of combatant officers serving in the Rifle Brigade in 1843

Sources: Hart, *Army List*
 Burke, *Peerage*
 Walford, *County Families*
Annual Obituary; The Times

	Lieutenant- Colonel	Major	Captain	1st Lieutenant	2nd Lieutenant	Total	Names
Aristocracy	-	1	3	5	6	15	Peregrine Baillie-Hamilton; Hon. Percy Barrington; William Beresford; Henry Capel; Hon Richard Charteris; Hon. John de Saumarez; Hon. Ernest Fane; Henry Hardinge; Hon John Jocelyn; William Lord Kilmamock; Hon. Edward Monckton; Lord Alexander Russell; Edward Somerset; William Churchill Spencer; Spencer Stewart
Minor Aristocracy	-	-	2	2	3	7	Robert Craufurd; Charles du Pre Egerton; Richard Fitzherbert; William Burnett Ramsay; Sir Henry Tyrwhitt; Sir William Wake; Henry Webster
Fringes of the Aristocracy	-	-	2	3	-	5	Arthur Murray; William Norcott; Charles Pollen; Robert Walpole; Charles Woodford
Landed Gentry	2	-	3	5	9	19	Robert Baird; Henry Bowles; Henry Bruce; George Buller; Aubrey Cartwright; George Dawson; George Dundas; George Evelyn; William Hale; Maximilian Hannond; Robert Thoroton Hildyard; Richard Irton; William Mellish; John Need; Edward Newdigate; Edward Rooper; John Rooper; Lionel Standish; Henry Waddington
Banking, Commerce & Industry	-	1	2	-	2	5	Henry Beckwith; John Beckwith; Sidney Beckwith; Julius Glyn; Arthur Lawrence
Professionals	-	1	3	-	-	5	George Kirwan Carr; Edward Glegg; Alfred Horsford; Thomas Smith; William Sullivan
Other middle-class, artisan, or labouring-class	-	-	1	1	-	2	George Wilkins; Joseph Wilkinson
Unknown	-	1	6	8	2	16	William Munro Aitchison; Frederick Belson; Wilmot Bradford; Henry Brown; Frederick Elrington; John Esten; William Frankland; John Gibson; John Henderson; A. Lautour; Alexander MacDonnell; Frederick Morrice; Robert Reynard; George Walker; William Warren; Keith Young
Total	2	4	22	24	22	74	

Table 15

Officers who sat as Members of the House of Commons

Sources: Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*
Stenton, *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament*,
Vols 1 & 2

Name	Date of first army commission	Date of death or army retirement	Dates and seats in the House of Commons	Name	Date of first army commission	Date of death or army retirement	Dates and seats in the House of Commons
Conservative				Conservative and Liberal			
Hon Sir William Stewart	1786	1827	1795 - Saltash 1796 - 1816 Wigtonshire	Edward Somerset	1836	1883	1848 - 1859 Monmouthshire 1867 - 1868 Gloucestershire West
Jonathan Peel	1815	1879	1826 - Norwich 1831 - 1868 Huntingdon				
Lord Charles Wellesley	1824	1858	1842 - 1852 Hampshire South 1852 - 1855 Windsor 1855 - 1858 Chiltern Hundred 1868 - 1880 North Wiltshire	Liberal-Conservative			
Sir George Jenkinson	1834	1846	1847 - 1859 Linlithgow	John Hope-Johnstone	1862	1872	1830 - 1847 Dumfriesshire 1857 - 1865 Dumfriesshire
George Dundas	1839	1844	1852 - 1853 Durham City 1854 - 1864 Durham	Whig/Liberal			
Lord Adolphus Vane-Tempest	1843	1859	1869 - 1885 Derbyshire South	Sir John Shelley	1825	1833	1852 - 1865 Westminster
Sir Henry Wilmot	1849	1862	1874 - 1880 Ayr	William Cowper, Lord Mount Temple	1827	1852	1835 - 1868 Hertford 1868 - 1880 Hampshire South
Sir William Cuninghame	1853	1874	1874 - 1885 Monmouthshire 1885 - 1906 South Division Monmouthshire	Hon Augustus Anson	1853	1873	1859 - 1868 Lichfield 1869 - 1874 Bewdley 1865 - 1868 Nottingham
Hon Frederick Morgan	1853	1858	1872 - 1880 Cumberland West 1885 - 1892 Egremont Division	Lord Edward Clinton	1854	1885	1880 - 1885 Shaftesbury
Josslyn Pennington, Lord Muncaster	1853	1860	1880 - 1885 Leitrim 1885 - 1887 Winchester	Hon Sydney Carr Glyn	1855	1872	1869 - 1874 Youghal 1880 - 1885 Wareham
Arthur Tottenham	1854	1861	1885 - 1906 Ince Division	Montagu Guest	1855	1859	1865 - 1868 Sussex East 1880 - 1885 Derbyshire North
Henry Blundell	1855	1889	1886 - 1892 Gainsborough Division	Lord Edward Cavendish	1858	1865	1880 - 1885 Winchester 1886 - 1892 Bedfordshire
Henry Eyre	1855	1858	1886 - 1892 Suffolk South-East	Francis Baring, Earl of Northbrook	1870	1880	
Robert Anstruther	1858	1886	1868 - 1885 Middlesex 1885 - 1906 Ealing Division	Radical			
Lord George Hamilton	1864	1869	1880 - 1885 Enniskillen	Thomas Thompson	1806	1869	1835 - 1837 Hull 1847 - 1852 Bradford 1857 - 1859 Bradford
Lowry Cole, Earl of Enniskillen	1865	1868	1883 - 1885 Leicestershire North				
Hon Montagu Curzon	1865	1903					

The number of combatant officers in the Rifle Brigade, 1800 - 1870

Source: Hart, *Army List*

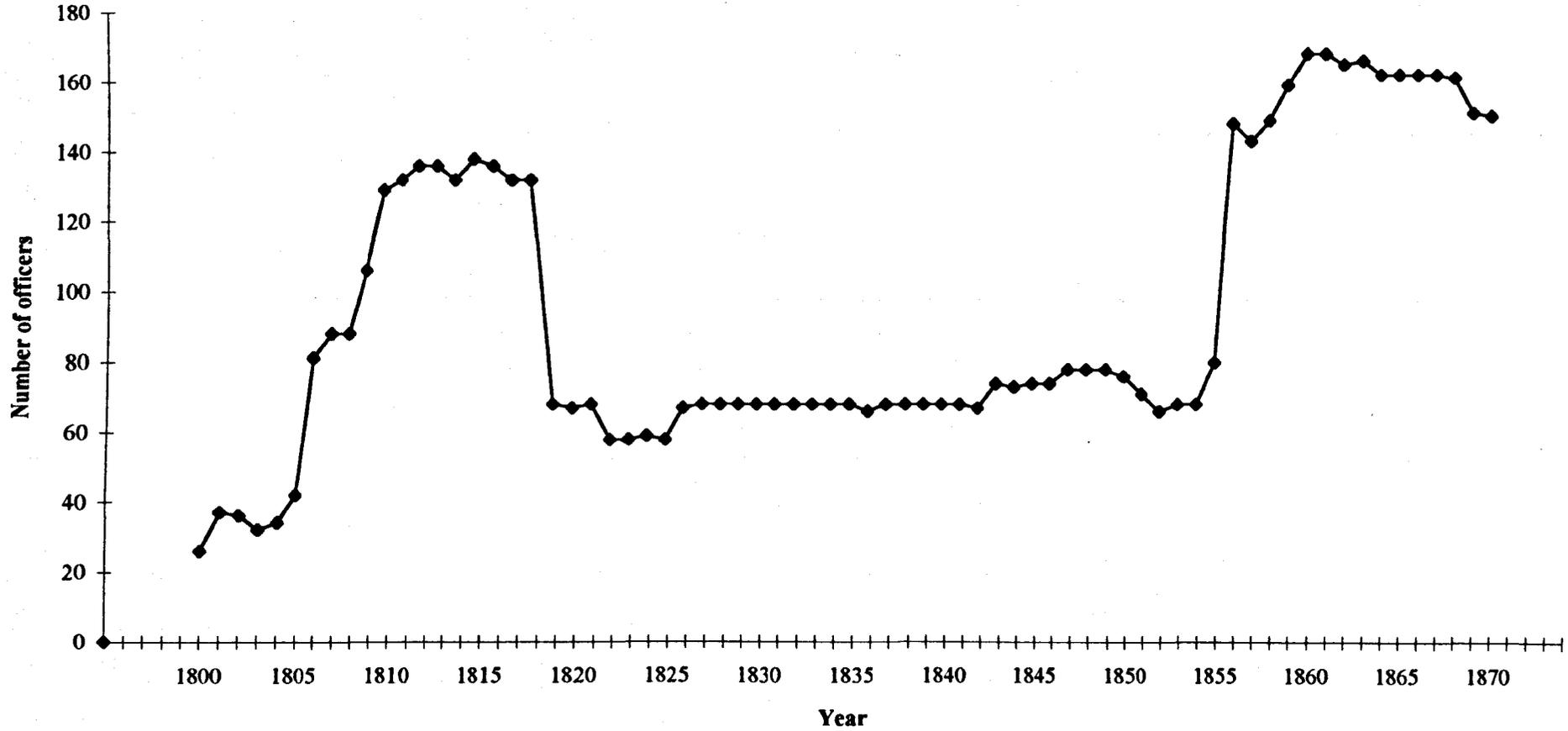


Figure 1

Rifle Brigade Quarter-Masters whose careers began before 1870, showing movements outside the Rifle Brigade

Source: Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*

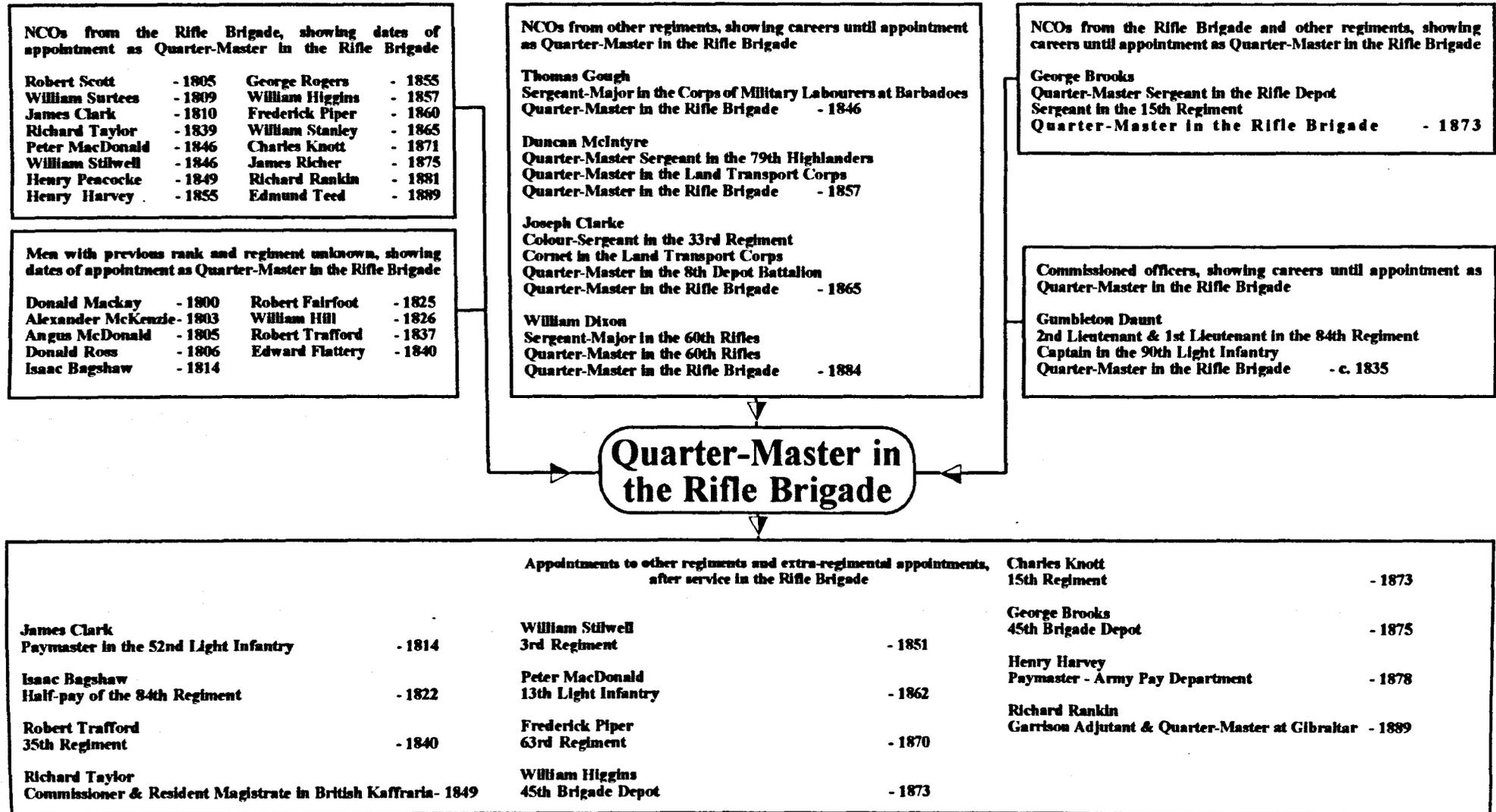


Figure 2

The number of distinct regiments (including the Rifle Brigade) in which Rifle Brigade officers served

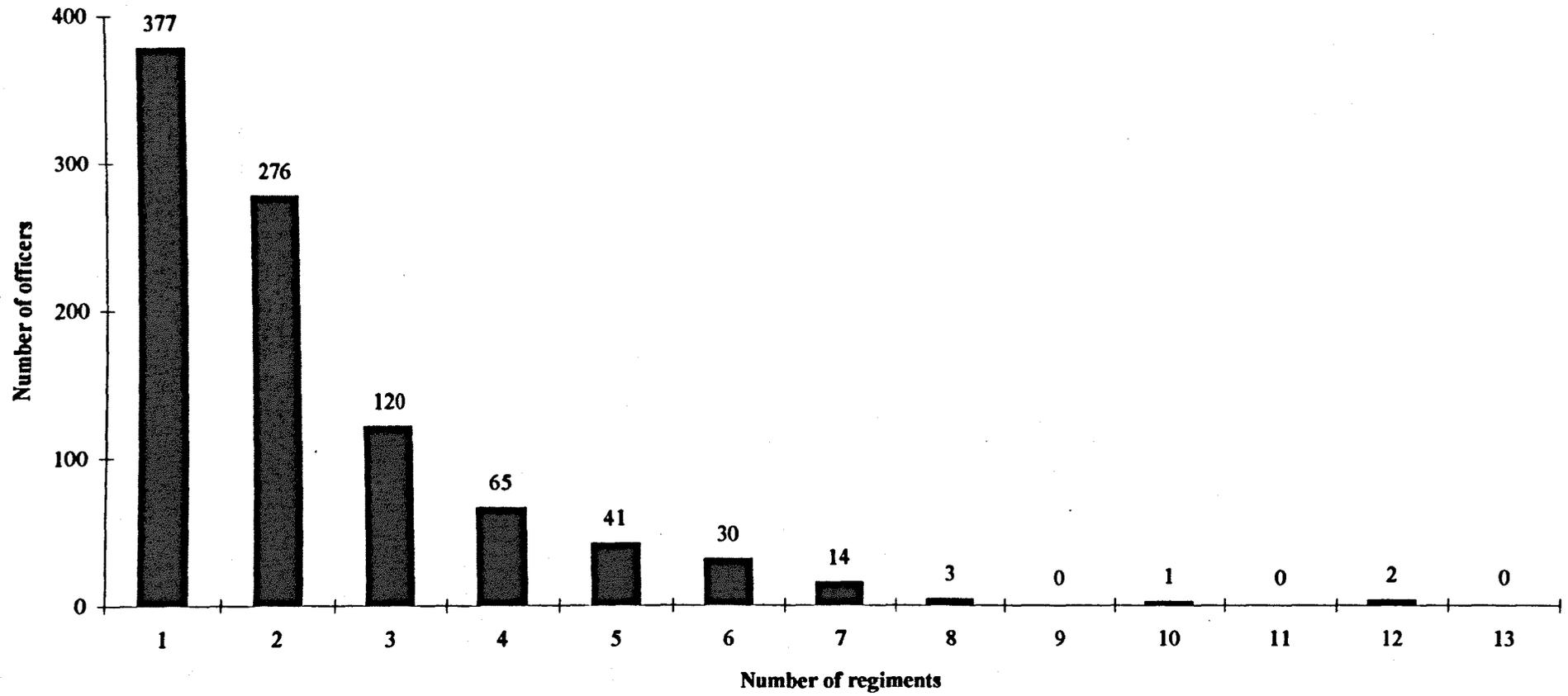


Figure 3

The net rate of transfer of Rifle Brigade officers between regiments

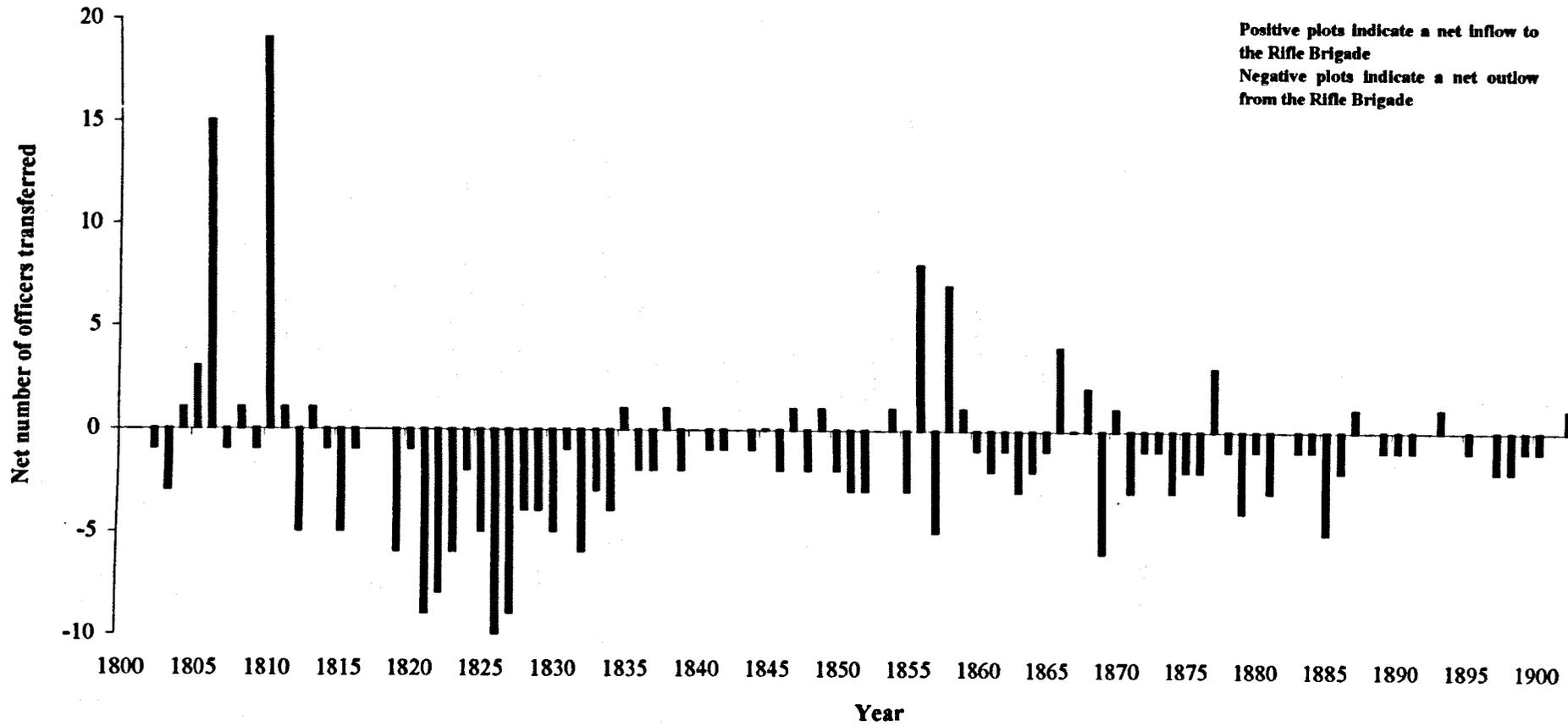


Figure 4

The number of officers transferring between the Rifle Brigade and Cavalry regiments

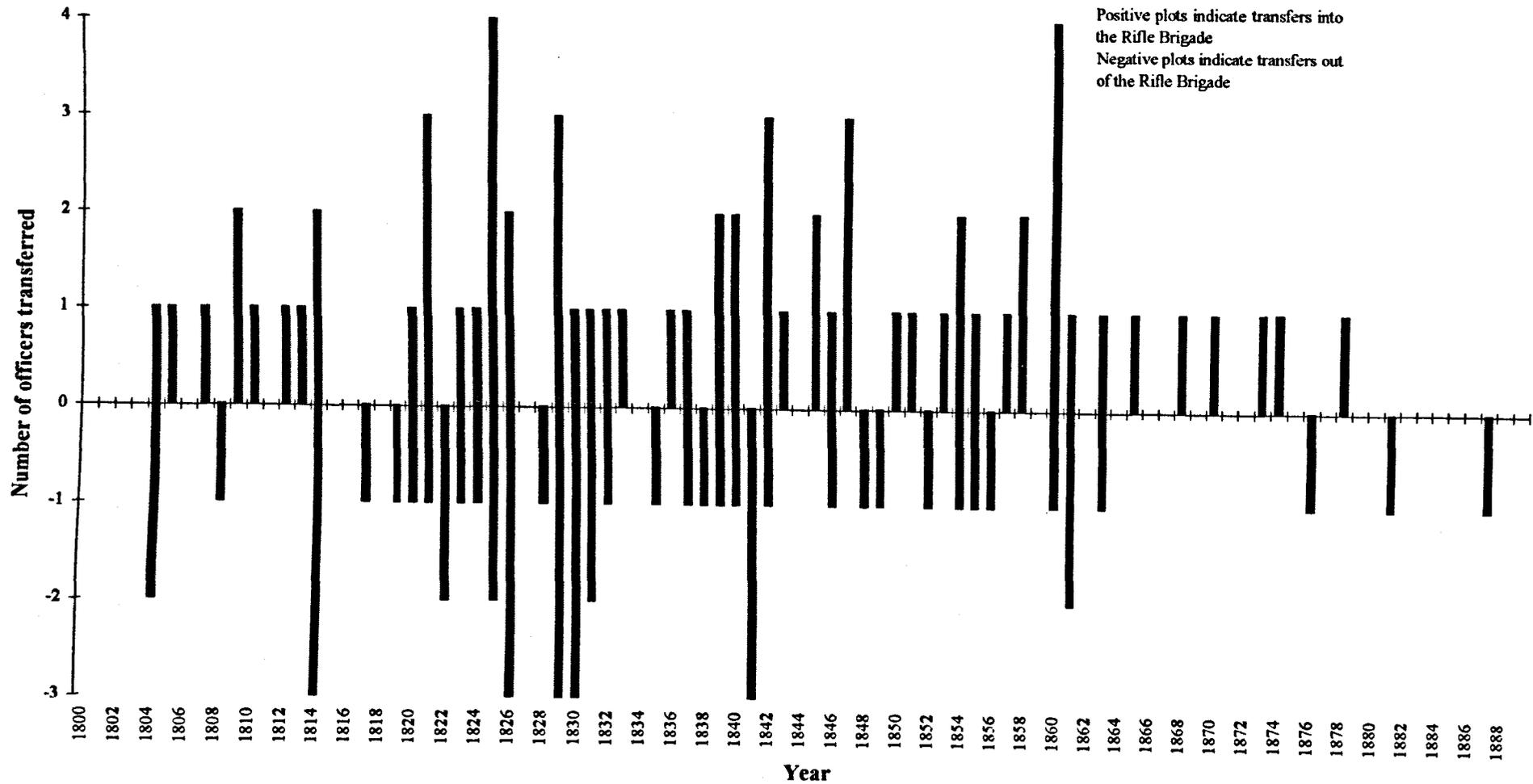


Figure 5

The length of service by Rifle Brigade officers in other regiments

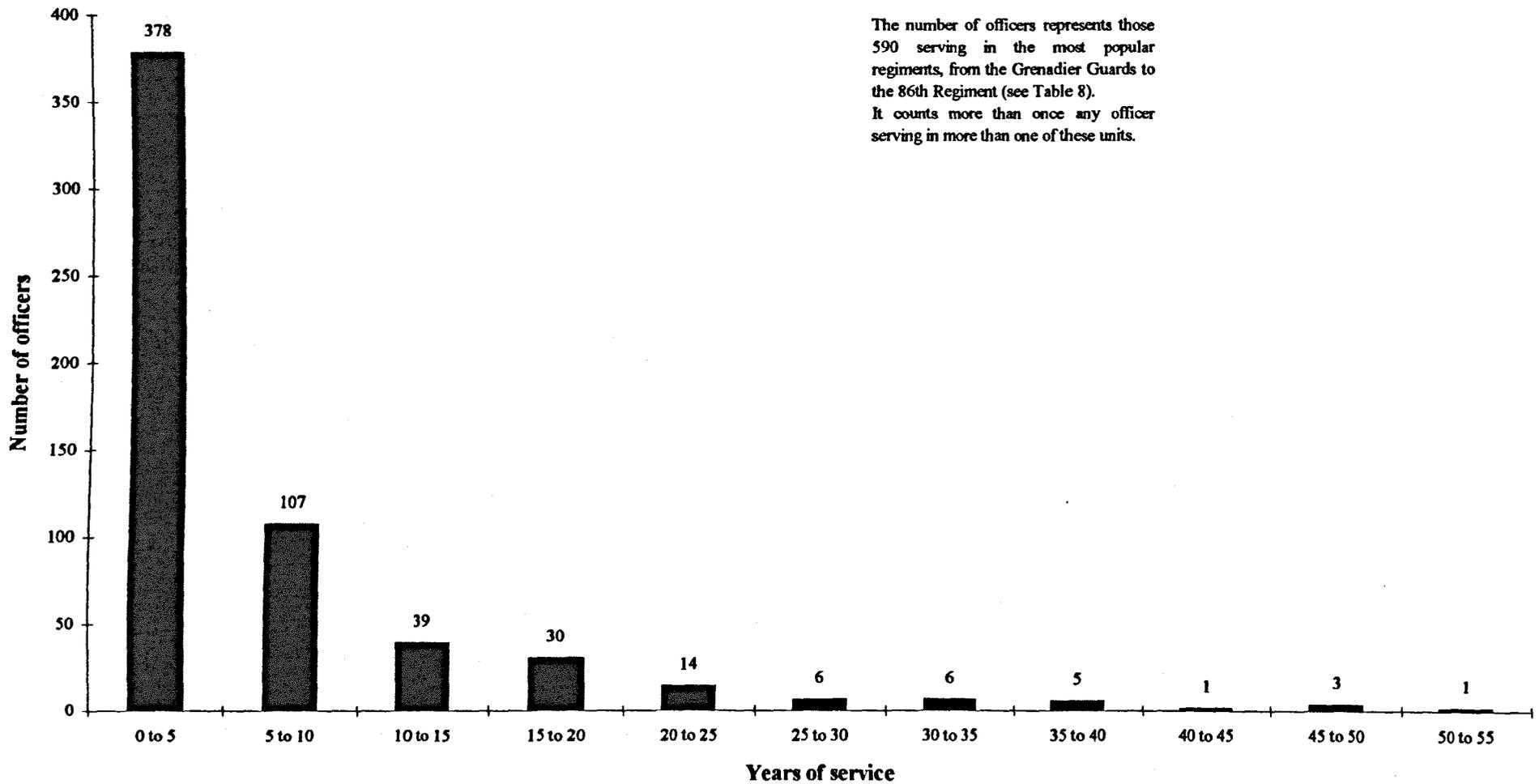


Figure 6

The length of accumulated service in the Rifle Brigade by officers

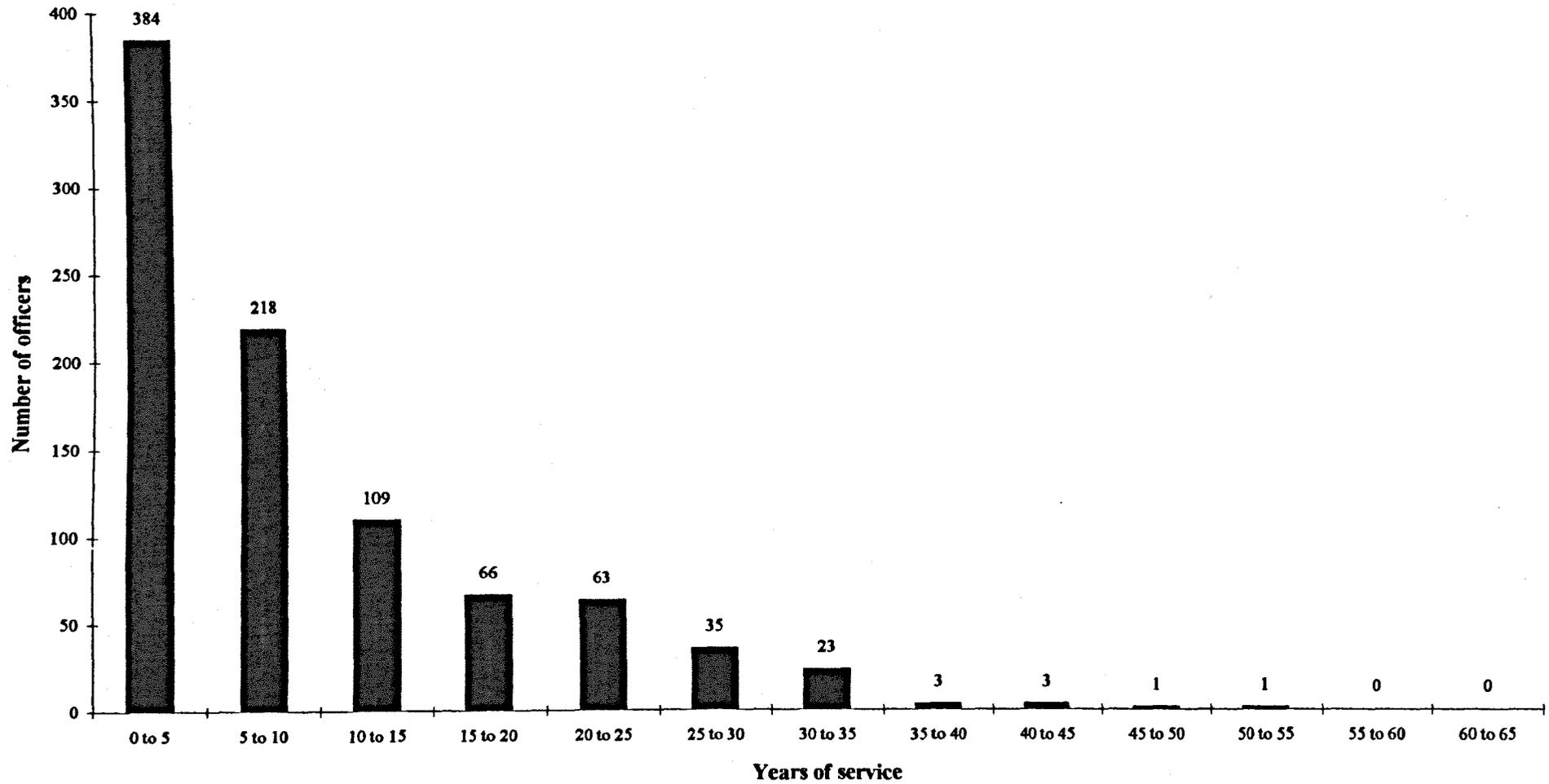


Figure 7

The length of army career of Rifle Brigade officers (cumulative figures)

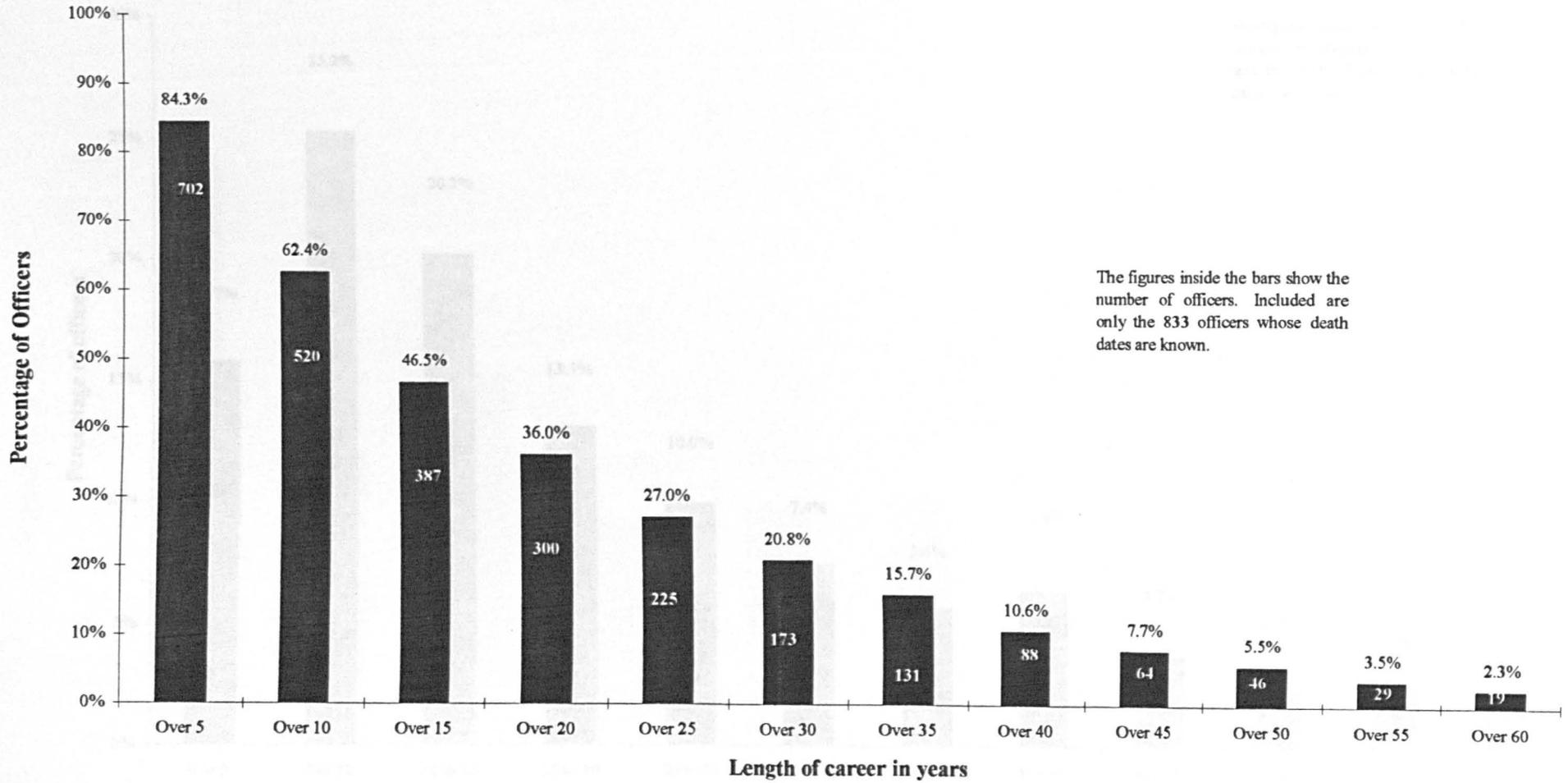


Figure 8

Rifle Brigade officers **The length of army career of Rifle Brigade officers**

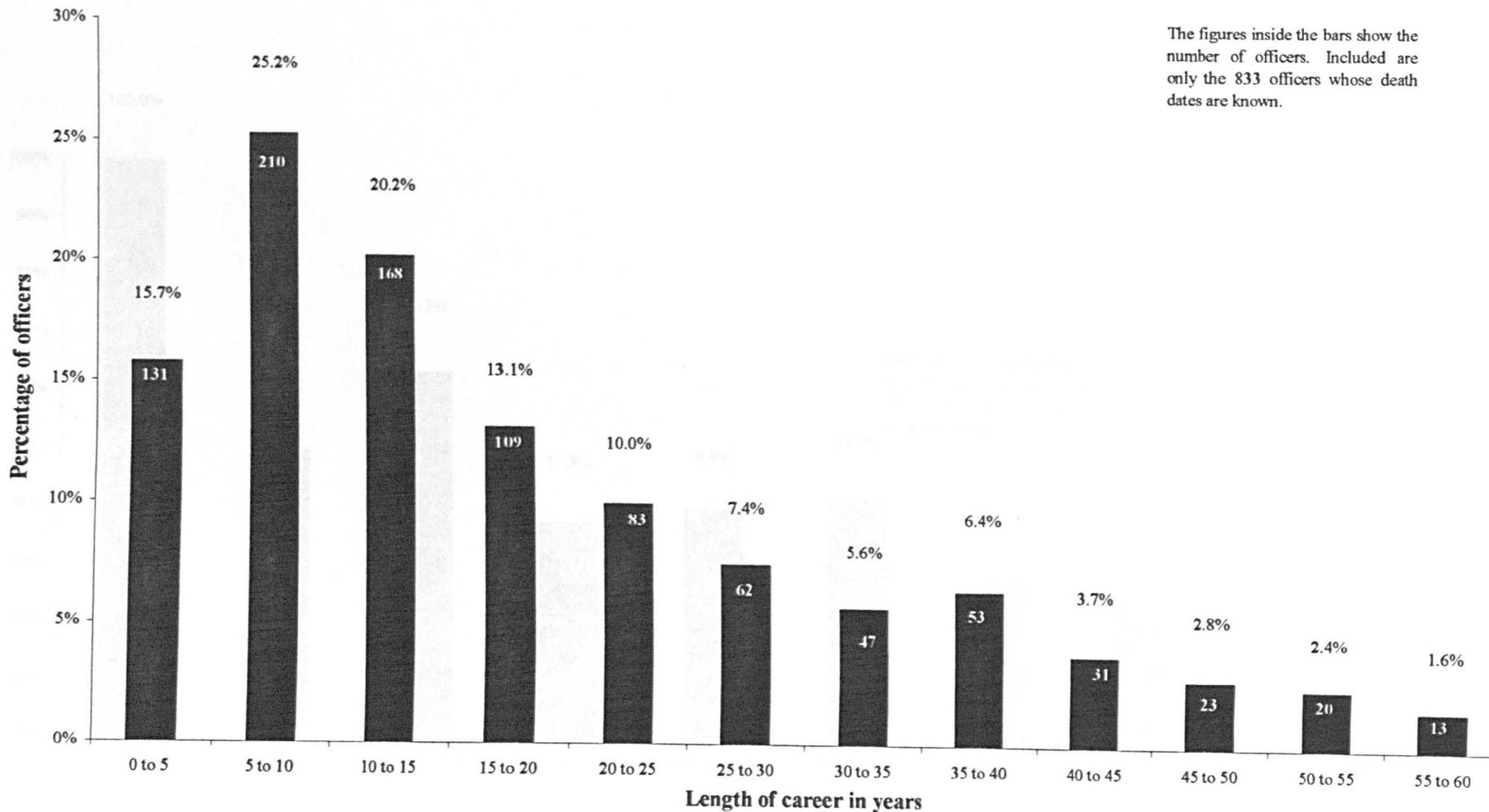


Figure 9

Rifle Brigade officers with a retirement length of at least 20 years, by date of first commission

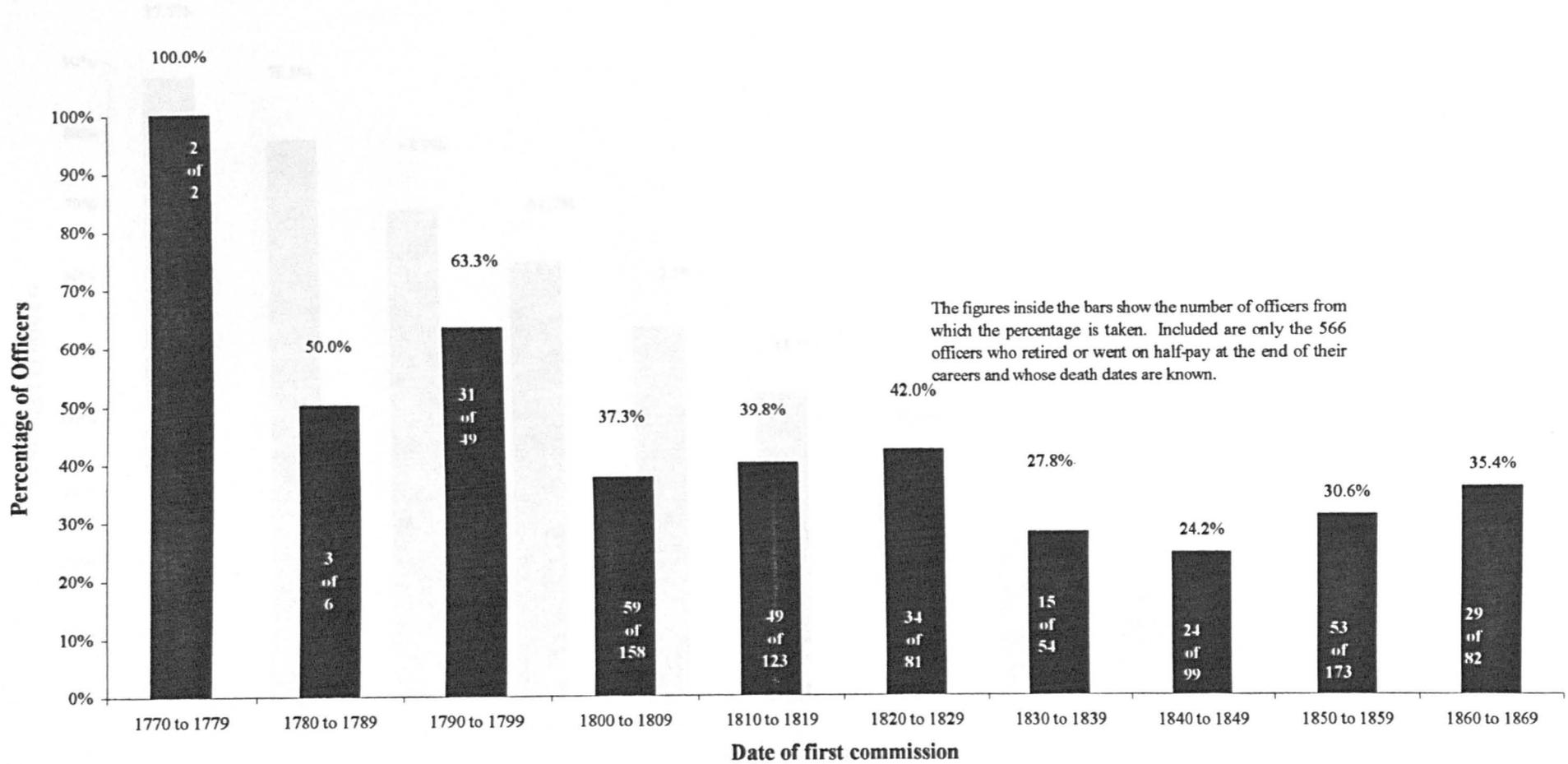


Figure 10

The retirement length of Rifle Brigade officers (cumulative figures)

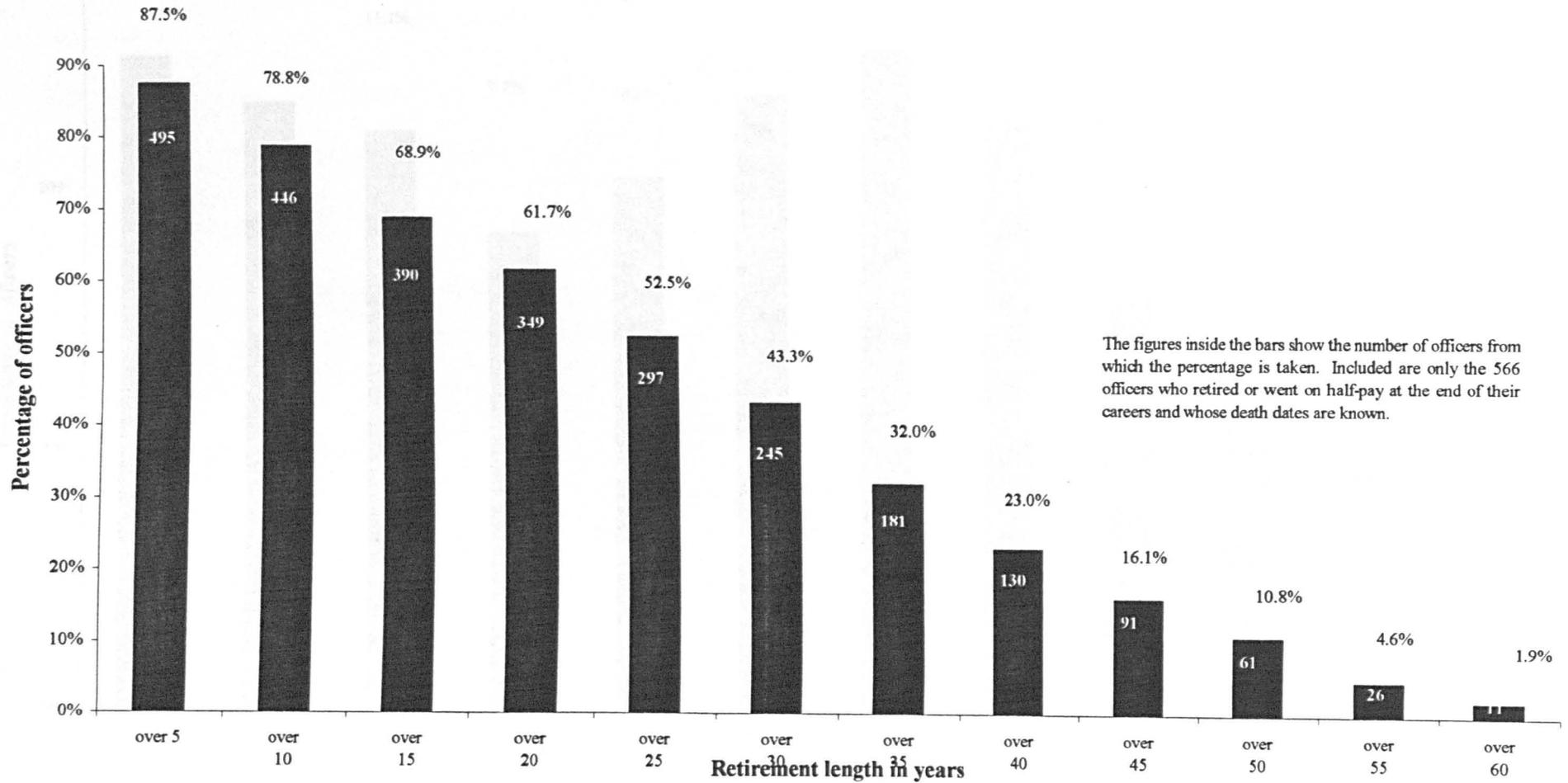


Figure 11

The retirement length of Rifle Brigade officers

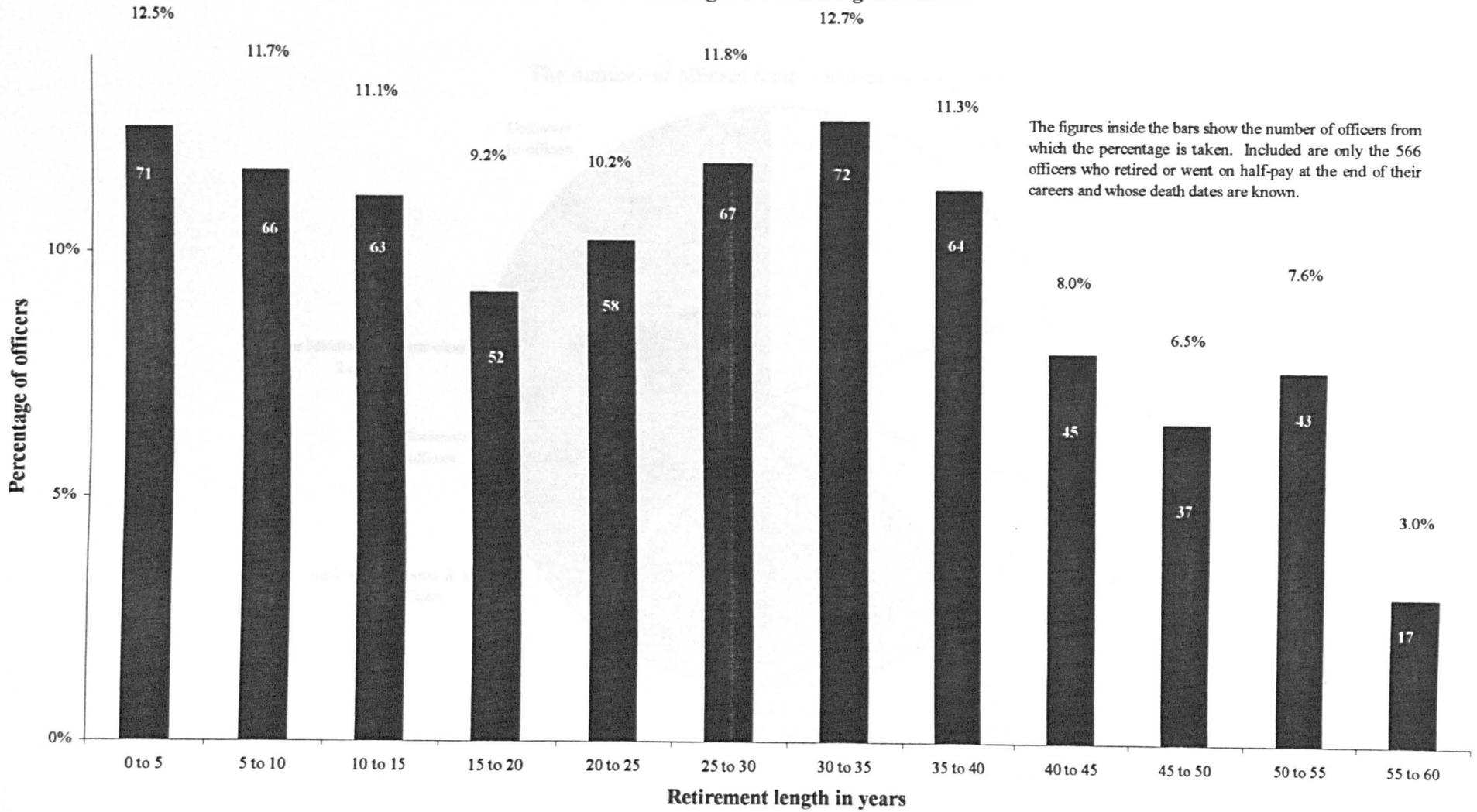
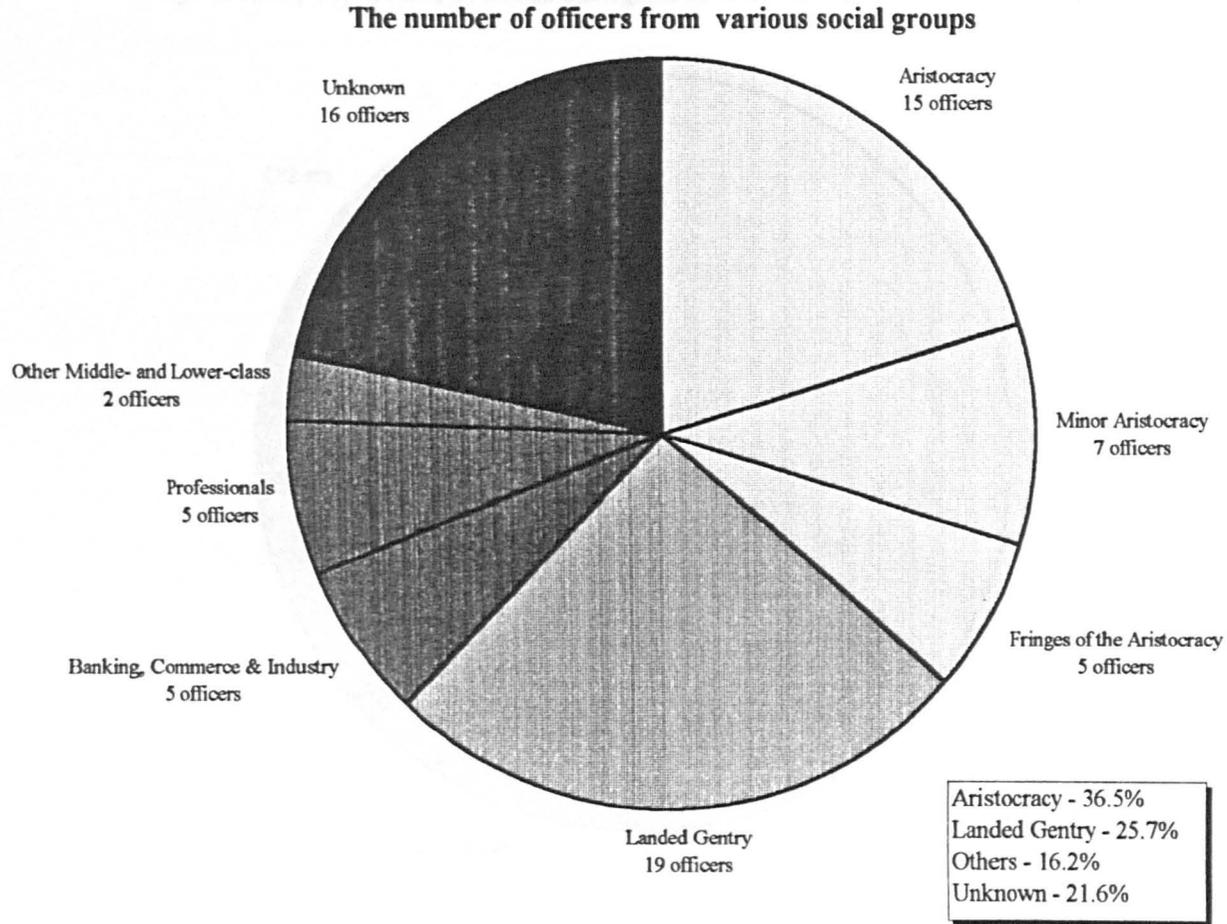


Figure 12

The family backgrounds of officers serving in the Rifle Brigade in 1843 (proportions of social groups)



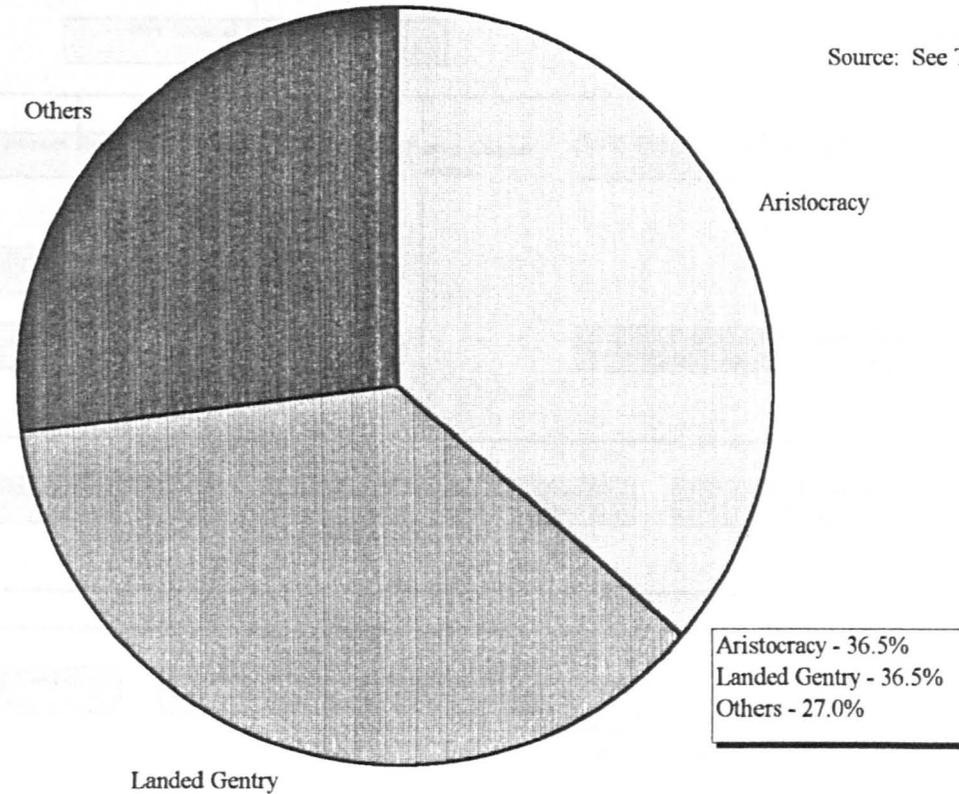
Source: See Table 15

Figure 13a

Select family of Sir Ashley Weston Cooper, 3rd Baronet, and Lovell, Esq.

The family backgrounds of officers serving in the Rifle Brigade in 1843 (probable proportions of social backgrounds)

The probable proportions of social background after distribution of those unknown



Source: See Table 15

Figure 13b

Select family of Sir Astley Paston Cooper, 3rd Baronet, and Lovick Emilius Cooper of the Rifle Brigade, showing military and clerical relatives

Source: Foster, *Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage*

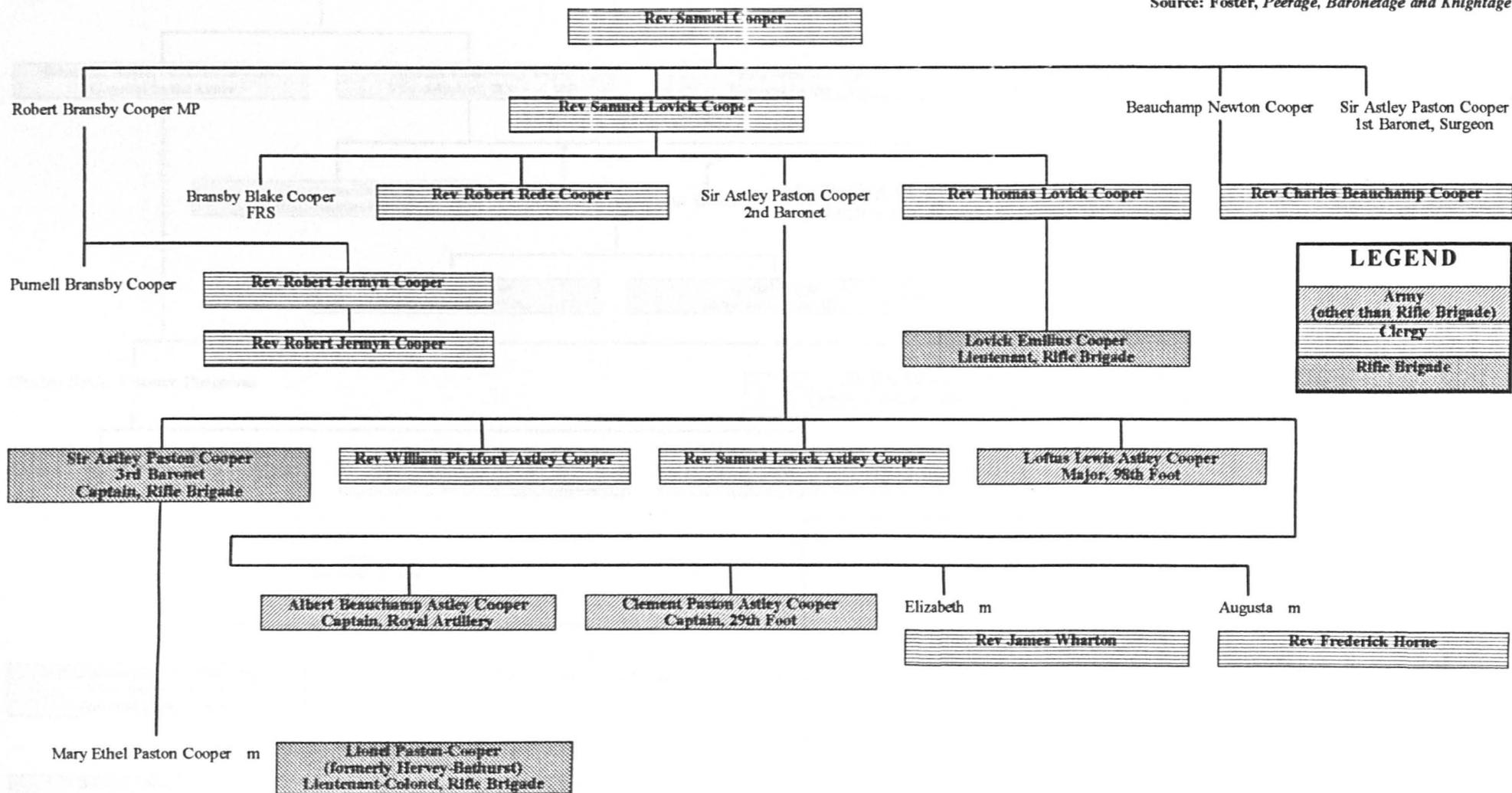


Figure 14

Select family of Colonel Gerald Boyle, showing military, naval and clerical relatives

Source: Foster, *Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage*

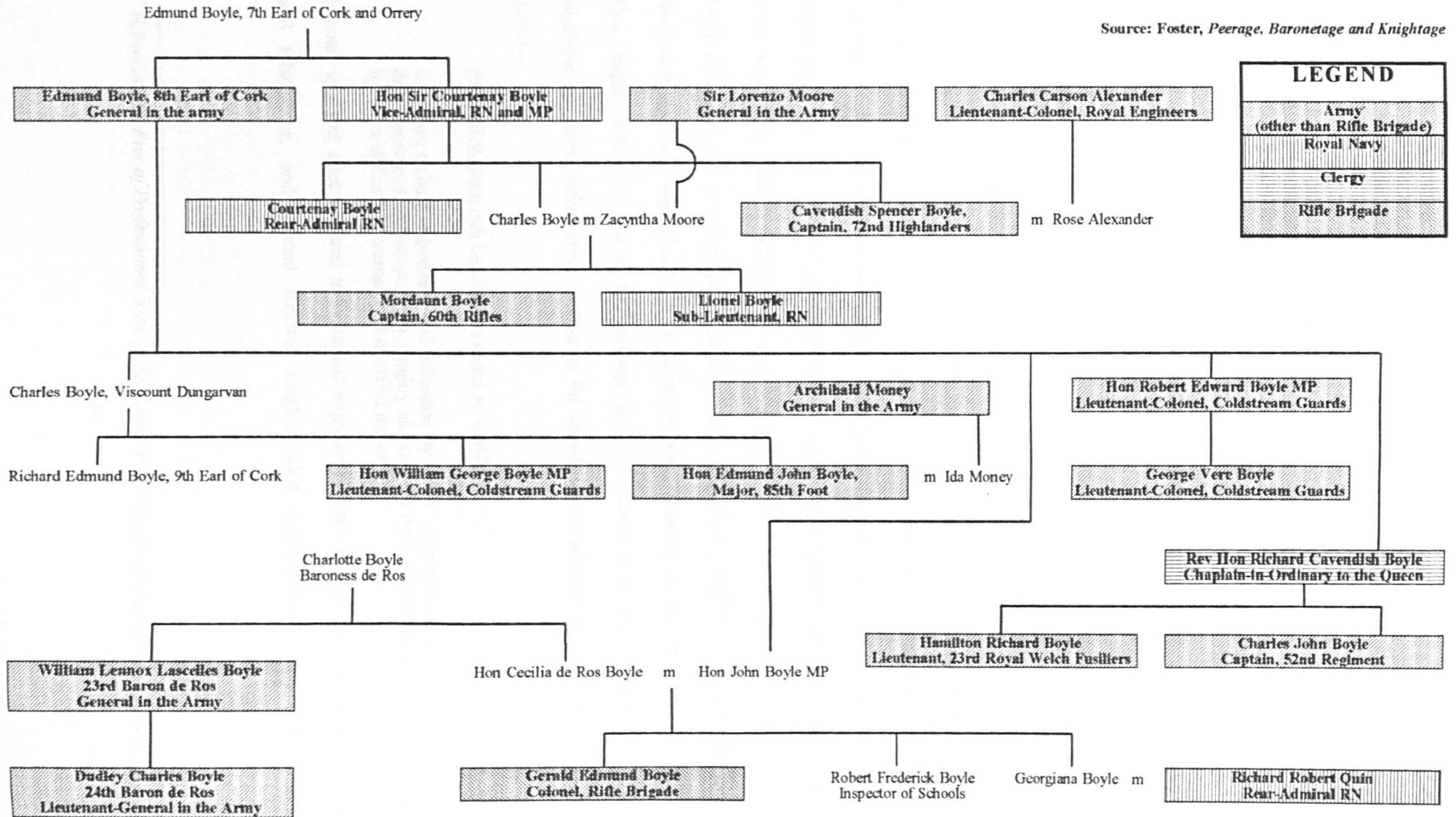


Figure 15

Chapter 2: Gentlemanliness and Attitudes to the Profession

The Rifle Brigade, as one of the more innovative regiments of the early and mid-nineteenth century, can be placed in the forefront of the contemporary movement for army reform. Yet attitudes to the work of the regiment and its organisation that emerge from the evidence suggest that elements within the corps opposed professionalizing changes. It can be shown that some individual Riflemen (and former Riflemen) resisted reform on occasion, but, more importantly, that resistance was also consistently produced by political, religious and social ideologies that pervaded the corps as a whole. Indeed, it is apparent that even the most innovative ideas and experiments in the regiment were coloured by anti-professional models. This chapter will look first at the divisions in the regiment over reform, then at broader ideologies at work, before tracing these in the regimental regulations and in other reforming activity.

Professionalism can be taken to mean an ideal,

based on trained experience and selection by merit...emphasising human capital rather than passive or active property, highly skilled and differentiated labour...and selection by merit defined as trained and certified expertise.¹

It tends to reject dilettante and individualist approaches, and the operation of private interest and inheritance, and instead stresses single-minded specialisation, performance-related

¹ H.Perkin, *The Rise of Professional Society: England Since 1880* (Routledge, London, 1989), p.4.

promotions in well-ordered hierarchies of occupation, pay commensurate with scarce and needed skills, and a high degree of both personal and corporate responsibility for standards.²

It has been convincingly argued by a number of historians that such professionalism was emerging in the British army by the late eighteenth century.³ Its progress owed much to the efforts of individual officers who, though in tune with a wider civilian drive to efficiency and specialisation,⁴ were moved primarily by pragmatic concerns, often at regimental level.⁵ These officers produced pressure over many decades for a range of measures including the introduction of entrance and promotion examinations for officers, the definition and certification of competence in specialist areas of expertise, the greater centralisation of command and uniformity of procedures, the raising of pay to reflect competence and expertise in all ranks, the improved training of men, and a lessening of corporal punishment.⁶ These diverse reforms were gradually made or brought closer despite entrenched resistance from many influential officers (not least the Duke of Wellington and the 2nd Duke of Cambridge)⁷ who, though clear anti-

² See E.Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital 1848-1875* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1975), pp.287-288; and H.Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1969), pp.252-270, 319-323.

³ See M.Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1976), pp. 54-115. Howard sees professional armies, defined as full-time, regularly paid soldiers serving in peace-time and war, developing across Europe from the end of the sixteenth century.

⁴ See O.Macdonagh, *Early Victorian Government 1830-1870* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1977) for a discussion of the forces in society promoting and resisting collective and centralising approaches to reform in a range of areas in society; *ibid.*, p.5 for the importance to the growth of new civilian executive corps of the 'great body of officer-veterans' who became officials between 1815 and 1840. O.Anderson, *A Liberal State at War: English Politics and Economics During the Crimean War* (Macmillan, London, 1967), pp.101-128 argues that failures in the Crimean War produced a shift in attitude among the business and professional classes, 'War was equated with a commercial undertaking or a specialized profession, not with an amateur sport or a moral crusade, and by the same token could be claimed as properly a middle-class and not an aristocratic preserve'.

⁵ H.Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-54* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984) points to the considerable reforming activity of officers within the army before the Crimean War and to the brake on progress imposed by the Duke of Wellington; H.Strachan, 'The Early Victorian Army and the Nineteenth-century Revolution in Government', *English Historical Review*, xcv, 1980, pp.782-809 discusses the balance between the influence of Benthamite theory and an organic process of change in army reform, and the contribution to reform of different civilian individuals and groups in the decade before 1854.

⁶ See G.Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Routledge, London, 1977), pp.103-170, particularly for officer education.

⁷ Both were Commanders-in-Chief: the Duke of Wellington from 1827 to 1828 and again from 1842 to 1852, and the Duke of Cambridge from 1856 to 1895. See E.M.Spier, *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1992), pp.5-10, 14-19, 32-33, 66, 156-158 for Cambridge's opposition to reform from the period of the Cardwellian initiatives to the end of the century. For Wellington's conservatism in army reform see Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, especially

reformers, were also committed to efficiency and were dedicated and knowledgeable soldiers. Their opposition to reform centred on the defence of an antiquated amateur ethos that prized, for officers, traits including all-round intelligence, a broad liberal and classical education, and untutored initiative. This group has been seen as particularly rigid in discouraging the advancement of socially inferior private soldiers and NCOs.⁸

However, despite these rifts in the officer corps over reform issues, it is apparent that both reformers and conservatives alike shared throughout this period a basic commitment to British army traditions, in particular the regimental system with its peculiar loyalties and its reliance on personal authority. And further, even with the later nineteenth-century shift to a public school education as a qualification for commissions (which in some ways made officer selection more meritocratic) officers across the board still continued to share notions of breeding and character and these underpinned evolving professional behaviour.⁹ Thus while individuals and loosely organised sets of officers in the army (in particular those associated with the military journals),¹⁰ pushed for changes intended to alter aspects of the professional outlook and practice of soldiers, they cannot, in this period, be credited with working toward a fully professional organisation. Nascent professionalism was evidently in tension, that is, with counter-currents supporting amateurism. However, at the same time, it would seem that in their views opponents shared important ground.¹¹ Above all, the officer corps was united in its gentlemanly identity.

pp.14-16, 20. Neither was consistently opposed to all reform schemes. *ibid.*, p.131 for the Duke of Cambridge supporting reforms in officer education in 1857-1858.

⁸ Opposition to the commissioning of NCOs was common across the officer corps; and the reforming military press, the Duke of Wellington and the 1839 punishment commission all expressed strong reservations. See E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.2-6; and Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.97-99.

⁹ Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.135-136.

¹⁰ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.6-43.

¹¹ Harries-Jenkins argues that professionalism was essentially forced on a resisting officer corps that was 'closed, inward-looking and monopolistic', but that responded to external civilian pressure to modify its practices (to professionalize) though only to 'the minimum and varying standards that were required to ensure task performance'. The close links between officers and patrician civilian society encouraged both an easy identification with the government of the day (and so susceptibility to pressure to change) and reluctance to change. Harries-Jenkins argues that the professional development of the Victorian army was affected by three factors. The first was the internal structure of the army: aristocratic and upper-middle-class, divorced from 'a growing and vociferous middle class that sought to ensure the rational ordering of all parts of the civil bureaucracy'. The second factor was

The evidence for the Rifle Brigade highlights the difficulties with an account of professional development in the nineteenth century army that seeks to separate reformers from conservatives. The regiment offers a seemingly curious example of a unit that was both in the forefront of professionalizing reform, and, as we have seen, among the corps most fashionable for well-born officers.¹² Yet there do not appear to have been clear reforming and anti-reforming camps in the regiment as might be expected. Despite differences of approach and opinion on individual issues, it seems all Rifle Brigade officers subscribed to gentlemanly values, and, indeed, these guided seemingly opposite views.

The founding regulations of the Rifle Brigade have been seen as precursors of fundamental changes only slowly adopted throughout the British army.¹³ Sir William Cope, the first regimental historian, took this view when he wrote of the Rifle Brigade regulations of 1800,

The germs, if not, indeed, the actual existence of most of the late improvements for the training and advantage of the soldier are found in these orders. The good-conduct medal; the medals for acts of valour in the field; the attention given and the methods adopted to secure accurate shooting, dividing men into classes according to their practice at the target, and instituting a class of Marksmen; the rules for a regimental

the occupational culture of the army. The army was so fragmented by the regimental system that officers had no corporate army identity, and they failed to develop the professional structural characteristics, code of ethics and so on of qualifying associations. Instead they emphasised concepts of social responsibility and sense of community developed 'as part of a more general pre-occupational socialization process' shared with the political élite. Finally it was affected by its operational effectiveness which induced complacency in civilians and soldiers. Harries-Jenkins concludes that commitment to the gentlemanly ideal seriously inhibited professionalization by perpetuating an amateur approach. G.Harries-Jenkins, 'The Development of Professionalism in the Victorian Army', *Armed Forces and Society*, vol 1, No 4, 1975, pp.472-489.

¹² See D.Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1990), pp.276-277 for the changing pattern of the distribution of aristocratic officers across regiments in the nineteenth century. The Rifle Brigade was unusual in remaining socially exclusive while strengthening its reforming reputation, not least through links with Field-Marshal Viscount Wolseley.

¹³ While it is true that the Rifle Brigade helped to spread progressive ideas through the British army by the transfer of officers across regiments, and by promotions to senior positions, parallel reforms in Britain and on the continent lay behind the movement. P.Paret, *Yorck and the Era of Prussian Reform 1807-1815* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1966), p. 219 cites a letter of 4 August 1816 from Henry Hardinge to Sir George Murray which indicates familiarity with the Prussian system. This aimed to excite the feelings and national spirit of the men, to treat them well and to inspire a fear of degradation in demotion, rather than a fear of punishment. 'This system, which is the continuance of the enthusiasm by which the nation rose up in mass during the late war, and which was then very politic, is still worked upon...' For A.H.D.von Bulow and his influence see *ibid.*, pp.80-82; and A.Gat, *The Origins of Military Thought From the Enlightenment to Clausewitz* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1989), pp.79-94. Continental influence on British army reform is further discussed below, pp.67-69.

school, and for periodic examination of its scholars; the institution of a library; the provision for lectures on military subjects, tactics and outpost duties; the encouragement of athletic exercises; these and many other plans, carried out in the British army only after the middle of the nineteenth century, are inculcated in the original standing orders...¹⁴

And, in the reforming spirit of the regulations, a number of Rifle Brigade officers (serving, on half-pay, transferred, promoted to the staff, or retired), most notably Sir Charles Napier, Jonathan Leach and John Kincaid, wrote regularly for the military press.¹⁵ One reference has been found to Sir George Buller, Lieutenant-Colonel of the 1st Battalion, 'toadying' to the leading reforming officer Lord Frederick Fitzclarence.¹⁶ And, in addition, the regiment accepted for commissions, and was chosen by, the relatives of several noted reformers: among its officers at various times were a son of Major-General Robert Craufurd,¹⁷ a nephew of General Rowland Hill,¹⁸ a nephew of Field Marshal Sir Henry Hardinge,¹⁹ a son of Prince Albert,²⁰ and a brother of Viscount Howick, later 3rd Earl Grey.²¹ Further, the Duke of York was an early supporter of the regiment,²² and its Colonels-in-Chief included (with the first, Major-General

¹⁴ W.Cope, *History of the Rifle Brigade (the Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1877), pp.6-7.

¹⁵ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp. 26-29, 49.

¹⁶ RGJ, Bramston Diary, 24 January 1852. Buller served in the Rifle Brigade from 1825 to 1854, and was Colonel Commandant of the 1st Battalion from 1860 to 1884.

¹⁷ Also named Robert Craufurd, he served in the Rifle Brigade from 1836 to 1849.

¹⁸ Percy Hill served in the Rifle Brigade from 1855 to 1868.

¹⁹ Also named Henry Hardinge, he served in the Rifle Brigade from 1840 to 1861.

²⁰ 'The Queen's Inspection of the Rifle Brigade', *The Times*, 23 August 1880 referred to 'the exceptional relations which the corps bears and has borne toward the Royal Family'. The Duke of Connaught served in the regiment from 1869 to 1874 and was Colonel-in-Chief from 1880 to 1942. For his stand against the abolition of the post of Commander-in-Chief and his ambivalent views on reform see N.Frankland, *Witness of a Century: The Life and Times of Prince Arthur Duke of Connaught 1850-1942* (Shephard Walwyn, London, 1993), pp.182-183, 186-187, 229-230, 245; and Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, p.31.

²¹ Hon.Sir Charles Grey served in the Rifle Brigade from 1820 to 1823. He was Colonel of the 3rd Buffs and of the 71st Highland Light Infantry, and was Private Secretary to Prince Albert from 1846 to 1861. He supported the reforming ideas of the prince, and the initiatives of his own brother Lord Howick (Whig Secretary of State for War and the Colonies from 1846 to 1852). For Howick and army reform see P.Burroughs, 'An Unreformed Army? 1815-1868', in D.Chandler (ed), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the British Army* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994), pp.171, 174-178.

²² He was instrumental in the foundation of the regiment. Also, the Rifle Brigade officers, Lieutenant John Stilwell and Lieutenant John Molloy, were rumoured to be illegitimate sons of the Duke of York. E.F.Du Cane, 'The Peninsula and Waterloo: memories of an Old Rifleman', *Cornhill Magazine*, vol 3 New Series, December 1897, pp.750-758.

Coote Manningham) several senior figures connected with reform: Field-Marshal Sir Edward Blakeney, Prince Albert and General Sir John Colborne (Lord Seaton).²³

Nonetheless, a number of Rifle Brigade officers from junior through senior ranks took up anti-reform positions. For example, Lieutenant Thomas Bramston,²⁴ and Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith,²⁵ both opposed the abolition of purchase in the mid-century, and Lieutenant-Colonel Hon. Augustus Anson²⁶ was active in parliamentary opposition to the measure. Likewise, Bramston, again, thought the camp for combined exercises at Chobham worthless.²⁷ Furthermore, officers might support reform on one issue, but oppose it on another.²⁸ General Sir George Brown made a notable swing from a position of sympathy for the reform movement in his early years to a strongly conservative stance by the outbreak of the Crimean War. And even the Duke of Wellington,²⁹ most conservative of all on army reform,³⁰ came to a limited support for short enlistment.³¹

These officers did not apparently carry opposing social, political or professional outlooks. Certainly there was no clear split among them according to social background. Those officers who supported individual reforms were not necessarily middle- rather than upper-

²³ Blakeney was enthusiastic about the potential for reform by commanding officers at regimental level, Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.34. Prince Albert was involved in various aspects of army reform, notably as a supporter of and adviser to both Henry Hardinge and Lord Howick, *ibid.*, pp. 35-36, 38, 120, 157, 164-166, 170-171, 216-218, 220. Lord Seaton supported a range of reforming ideas: in 1841 he advocated the unification of military departments under the Commander-in-Chief and of the civil departments under a minister of war; he also supported the 1847 Short Enlistment Act, and was close to Henry Hardinge in planning the camp at Chobham in 1853, *ibid.*, pp. 41, 70-73, 166-169, 254.

²⁴ Bramston thought many officers would resign if purchase was abolished, RGJ, Bramston to his father, undated 1854.

²⁵ RGJ, Special Letters 2, Smith to 'Tom', 7 March 1860.

²⁶ The Hon Augustus Anson (who served in the Rifle Brigade 1853-1856) was the third son of the leading Whig the 1st Earl of Lichfield. He served as a Liberal Member of Parliament from 1858 to 1868, and opposed the abolition of purchase in the House of Commons on the grounds that it would lead to the end of the political subordination of the army. Cannadine, *Decline and Fall*, p.278; Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.234-235.

²⁷ RGJ, Bramston to his mother, August 1853.

²⁸ Even radical reformers like Colonel Firebrace, who wrote in the 1840s on, among other subjects, technical education for officers, could contribute a piece on the importance to officers of a 'liberal and polished' education in the classics. Colonel Firebrace, 'Hints for the Military Student', *USJ*, 1847, part 4, vol 38, pp.74-86.

²⁹ Four members of the Wellesley family served in the Rifle Brigade. See Appendix 2.

³⁰ Howard, *Studies in War and Peace* (Temple Smith, London, 1959), pp.61-63.

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp.70-74.

class,³² and they were not necessarily from industrial, commercial or professional rather than landed backgrounds.³³ (This is perhaps unsurprising when it is noted that several in the wider army reform movement were well-born, or had very wealthy, or socially or politically eminent kinsmen, including peers and royalty.)³⁴ And, likewise, they had no defining regional origins or party political affiliations.³⁵ Rather, it emerges that support for reforms was largely a matter of individual sympathy and might vary according to different issues. Such support did not divide these officers from the rest, but arose rather from a shared set of gentlemanly social and political values that combined conservative and progressive elements. The main aim of this chapter is to explore this complex gentlemanly outlook in the regiment.

2.1 The Ideal of Gentlemanliness

'Gentleman' was a socio-economic label and a laudatory term for the virtuous and well-mannered that was understood across British society.³⁶ Upper- or middle-class birth and at

³² This runs counter to the argument given by Cannadine that 'the administrative apparatus of the State', including the old professions, was a 'bastion of territorial power and control' dominated by 'grandees and gentry' until the 1870s, when reforms (pushed by middle-class men) in selection and recruitment, and greater professionalism, sent 'the old, amateur, gentlemanly ethos' into retreat. Men from the public schools and graduates from Oxford and Cambridge consequently swamped the aristocracy, although the newcomers preserved much of the old style and tone in the professions. Technological change and the decline of great landed estates lay behind a decline in the number of patrician officers in the early twentieth-century army. Cannadine, *Decline and Fall*, pp.236-239, 264-280. See Paret, *Yorck*, for the parallel case of Prussia where after 1807 the officer corps received an increased number from the bourgeoisie. These did not, however, 'coalesce into a force for liberalization. Even in an age dominated by the aristocracy, progress and the bourgeoisie need not be identical. In the Prussian army the dilution of the nobility in the long run was less a process of democratization than one of upward social mobility'.

³³ For example, Sir Charles Napier was from a military family, John Kincaid from modest landed gentry, Sir George Buller from more substantial gentry, and Hon.Sir William Stewart and Hon.Sir Charles Grey were from the aristocracy.

³⁴ See Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.29-33, 90-92, 137-138, 155-156, 163-164, 231, 234 for the reforming activities of the Duke of York and Lord Frederick Fitzclarence.

³⁵ Hon.Sir William Stewart, John Kincaid and Sir George Brown were Scots, Sir George Buller was from Cornwall, Arthur Lawrence had roots in Liverpool and the West Indies, and Sir William Norcott was Anglo-Irish. (For the experiments in reform of Lawrence and Norcott see below pp.101-105.) Similarly, the Stewarts (kin of the Earls of Galloway) were Tories, and the family of Hon.Sir Charles Grey was Whig.

³⁶ See P.Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal* (AndréDeutsch, London, 1982), pp.9-14 and passim.

least moderate wealth, whether in land, trade, finance, professional fees or manufacture, were crudely definitive, but a number of other attributes singly or in combination could achieve the all-important acceptance by other gentlemen. These included distant kin of gentlemanly rank, education, social graces,³⁷ moral conduct, and position (including a commission in the armed services).³⁸ Gentlemanliness could, by this view, encompass values from several sources and allow variations in interpretation and accomplishment. This flexible definition acted by the early nineteenth century as a broad umbrella, allowing individuals from widely different social backgrounds (and gentlemen recognised further gradations within their ranks) to claim gentlemanly status. Gentlemanliness could, by this view, encompass values from several sources and allow variations in interpretation and accomplishment.

The flexibility of the ideal of gentlemanliness reflected adherence in broad upper- and middle-class society to a compound of potentially conflicting ideals relating to the organisation of society.³⁹ Landed property was still highly respected and was linked to political power;

³⁷ Lieutenant James Gairdner of the Rifle Brigade admired the manners and conversation of the French, and thought the English upper classes should imitate them. 'In England the morning occupations of the two sexes are entirely different and even in the Higher ranks the two sexes rarely meet before dinner and if they do it is only in short visits of ceremony...The conversation of the men when left to themselves turns on dry political or other such subjects and even these are treated in a manner less delicate and elegant than that of which their nature is susceptible, and with which they would be and are treated in the presence of women. The women left to themselves not having those motives to please which actuate them in their intercourse with the other sex, their conversation is reserved and partakes of that littleness to which women are subject from the confined nature of their life. The young persons of both sexes not being brought up in the habitual intercourse with each other are shy, diffident and awkward'. NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Diary, vol 3, 30 October 1815.

³⁸ Although there was important continuity in the central ideas of gentlemanliness over several centuries, general shifts in emphasis can be traced. Nonetheless, the Rifle Brigade evidence shows the difficulty in mapping out a rigid chronology. For example, the early to mid-nineteenth century saw in general an increasing delicacy (or decreasing openness) in upper- and middle-class culture regarding sexual matters. Yet in 1815 Gairdner criticised the French for their lack of constancy in devotion and the indecency in their conversation, 'we all know that too much familiarity and knowledge on these subjects blunts the feelings', *ibid.*; while thirty-five years later (when gentlemanly society was generally more decorous) Sir George Brown (a Rifleman of Gairdner's generation) received news of a mutual acquaintance, Stuart Wortley of the Grenadier Guards, from Lord Airey, then Assistant Adjutant General (staying in Canada) which showed no disapproval of licentiousness. 'He left me to rejoin some very agreeable acquaintances he had made in the States - Ladies - who played skittles and drank Brandy "smashers" with him all day, and allowed him the privilege of sleeping with them at night'. Nat.Lib.Scotland, MS 1848, 18-23, R.Airey to G.Brown, 31 October 1849.

³⁹ M.J.Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit 1850-1980* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1981), pp.28-40 discusses the reactions of Victorian intellectuals and the professional and upper middle classes more broadly to capitalist values associated with business and industry. Their shared views included an affirmation of gentlemanly ideals of unacquisitive morality and cultured education.

industrialisation was gathering pace and the associated values of self-help, individual energy, and the market also coloured contemporary conceptions of hierarchy; and, finally, the ideal of professionalism was being rapidly forged in response to the challenges of a growing population and economy at home, and the acquisition of new colonies abroad.⁴⁰ While specific social groups were most closely identified with particular sets of values associated with these approaches, it was characteristic of early and mid-nineteenth-century culture that they overlapped and intermingled and found expression together in an ideal of gentlemanliness.⁴¹ (For example, the emerging profession of engineering, primarily an urban and middle-class occupation, was typical. Engineers in this period began to codify professional standards, and in so doing used the language and values of gentlemanliness. It became essential for acceptance in the profession that engineers conduct themselves as gentlemen. As a body they aspired to refined education, tastes, habits and morals, and disapproved of laziness and indiscipline. However, gentlemanliness did not for them necessarily entail belonging to the landed gentry: it was sufficient to endorse the values of an idealized upper class, even if many of the more successful acquired land and became 'gentrified'.⁴²)

Kenelm Digby elaborated a code of gentlemanliness that could ease the reception of the middle classes into the broadened ruling class of the early and mid-nineteenth century. His influential *Broad Stone of Honour: or Rules for the Gentlemen of England* (1823) set out for

⁴⁰ E.Hughes, 'The Professions in the Eighteenth Century', in D.A.Baugh (ed), *Aristocratic Government and Society in Eighteenth-Century England: The Foundations of Stability* (Franklin Watts, New York, 1975), pp.184-200 links the rise of new professions and pressure for professional jobs to 'a basic social revolution...between the Restoration and the accession of George III' in which the rise of conglomerated estates put pressure on landless gentry and freeholders to find professional work for status and income. Likewise, D.Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy: Grandeur and Decline in Modern Britain* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1994), pp.10-15, 21-25 points to the amalgamation of vast aristocratic estates between 1780 and 1820 which put increased pressure on the smaller landed gentry dwarfed by giant neighbours throughout Britain, while at the same time the increased size of landed families created more patrician individuals seeking jobs.

⁴¹ See A.Briggs, *The Age of Improvement 1783-1867*, 2nd ed, (Longman, London, 1979), pp.397-398 for a discussion contrasting the standard Victorian values of business including 'self-help, character, thrift, punctuality and duty', with 'the values of the country', and the desire of many successful businessmen to combine the two.

⁴² R.A.Buchanan, 'Gentlemen Engineers: The Making of a Profession', *Victorian Studies*, vol 26, No 4, 1983, pp.407-429.

'youth of gentle breeding' a medley of examples from 'chivalry and ancient wisdom', and 'in like manner, ensamples and doctrines out of modern history' to form a manual,

wherein they should be taught the lessons which belong to gentle education, those of piety and heroism, of loyalty, generosity and honour; whereby they might be taught, as servants of a British monarch to emulate the virtues of their famous ancestors, and as Christian gentlemen, to whom Europe is a common country, to follow the example of those worthies of Christendom who were patrons of the Church, the defenders of the poor and the glories of their times...Here then are new motives, here is additional inducement, an influence to which none but the base and unmanly can be insensible. Guided by these examples, youth may learn that the object of its pride and happiness is to be obtained by virtue; that the image which is beheld with all the rapture of imagination is to be approached in the discharge of duty...⁴³

Digby reassured his readers,

the rank which you have to support, requires not so much an inheritance, or the acquisition of wealth and property, as of elevated virtue and spotless fame. These are essential to the enjoyment of its advantages, and without these, it will be neither honourable to yourself nor profitable to your country...⁴⁴

Digby voiced a new emphasis in the period on character and reputation, developed through deeds, that made room for new claims to gentlemanly status. He encouraged a feeling of equality with the wealthy and well-born among individuals who were socially and financially inferior, if they could claim equality in service, manners, sentiment and virtue. These were, however, more difficult to test.

This new attention to feeling and conduct for men of gentlemanly rank demanded shared standards (defined and policed by gentlemen themselves), and it called for energy and confidence. The attributes of earnest, courageous and honourable character by which a gentleman was to be judged had acquired, by the early nineteenth century, the blanket label of 'manly'.⁴⁵

⁴³ K.Digby, *The Broad Stone of Honour: or Rules for the Gentlemen of England* (1822) (Rivington, London, 1823), pp.x-xiii, xlix; see M.Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1981), pp.56-66.

⁴⁴ Digby, *Broad Stone*, p.3.

⁴⁵ There are many references to manliness in the material connected with the Rifle Brigade. For example, in reply to complaints from George Brown his commanding officer acknowledged, 'the very manly and handsome manner in which you express your feelings', Nat.Lib.Scotland, MS 2836, 88-89, Thornton to Brown, 2 November 1819. Also a poem by Lieutenant Robert Vans Agnew dedicates the piece to Captain John Anderson (not of the Rifle Brigade), who showed 'a laudable attention to Field Sports/ So long considered favourable/ By British Generals/ To the Formation of a Manly Spirit/ Among their officers', RGJ, Folio 1, p.12, Agnew Poem, 1840. And the magazine of the 2nd Battalion called for contributions to the paper, 'praising all that is noble and manly', RGJ, Folio 1, p.30, *The Skirmisher or Rifle Brigade Gazette*, September 1860, p.1.

Manliness was a term with many applications and shades of meaning in the nineteenth century. It was expressive above all of physical or moral courage (embodied nowhere better than in the armed services). Manliness was close to honour, valour, openness and loyalty. It was overtly physical, proud and unsubmitive, but in accordance with Christian principles (often expressed in chivalric models and in an idealization of home and community) it also allowed for strength in tenderness, gentleness and piety. It was a term that described conduct, virtue, feeling and also physique. Manliness expressed the view that intellectual, physical, emotional and moral characteristics were inseparable, and normally reflected in one another. It also expressed the idea that they were generally developed in harness, and were linked to success in the world – manliness therefore had class implications too. Although there was room for any individual (including women) to develop manly attributes, it was a short step to infer that only gentlemen were really moral and correctly behaved, (and gentlemen were not, by definition, lower-class).

Manliness had a powerful emotional appeal. It provided a system of ethics that was simpler and more clear-cut than that of a religion; but it was nonetheless compelling, and in similar ways. Manliness had comparable regulations, a mystical vision of passionate commitment, and fear of disgrace. It offered the hope of reward and willingness for sacrifice of Christianity, and it was bound up with feelings about gender, family and country. Digby, again, wrote of his notional fortress of honour, that those standing there,

may enjoy a purity of feeling which...is free from the infection of a base world...Observe also the prodigious, formidable strength of every knight who fights in its defence...God sends his blessed angels to encamp about them that fear him; and how safe and happy must be that Christian warrior who is under the conduct and protection of these wise, good and mighty spirits...Nor is it on a bare and barren rock, without means of delight and refreshment, that I invite you to take your stand against an enemy that will besiege but never conquer you. Within the fortress of which I now deliver you the keys you will find scenes of sylvan beauty, of loveliness and grandeur...⁴⁶

In the decades around the turn of the nineteenth century the ideal of gentlemanliness, with its expression in manliness, took on a fresh political and social importance. As the notion of the constancy of relations was undermined in the long period of the Enlightenment,⁴⁷ and as

⁴⁶ Digby, *Broad Stone*, p.xiv.

⁴⁷ J.Powis, *Aristocracy* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1984), pp.90-93.

Britain's internal stability and dominant position in the world appeared under threat in the wars of the eighteenth century, her political and social institutions and leadership came under scrutiny. The ideal of gentlemanliness proved useful both for the defence of the existing order, and for its adaptation to change. It was an amalgam of notions (forged in its basic tenets over several centuries, though reinterpreted, as we have seen, in the light of values associated with rising professionalism and industrialism) that borrowed in particular from the idea of aristocracy and from Christianity.⁴⁸ It fused elements of each into a remarkably versatile and potent ideology to answer contemporary needs.

Core themes in aristocratic ideology were (closely linked) service and inheritance. A medieval model gave one pattern for service. This suggested that lords ruling in relationships with authority resting on deference, custom and contract to the king above and to subordinates below would be most likely to act in the interest of the community as a whole in the exercise of justice and political power.⁴⁹ Thus the aristocracy was able to counter an objection to a conflict of interest in their rule by arguing for self-interest in the responsible exercise of power by the aristocracy, and to argue that it would in practice act for others.⁵⁰ The exercise of leadership through lordship, especially with a base in land, required the fostering over generations of an aristocracy with considerable wealth and protected and heritable privileges. Unlike the

⁴⁸ Gentlemanliness also had an important debt (partly reflected in the idea of aristocracy) to classical ethics and views of the complete man. For the nineteenth-century reception of classical ideas see R.Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Basil Blackwell, London, 1980); for an introduction to the ideas of Aristotle on aristocracy and rule by the best men in society, see R.Mulgan, *Aristotle's Political Theory* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1977), pp.78-101.

⁴⁹ Aristocracy by this line of reasoning involved the surrender of political responsibilities by the masses. Lieutenant Gairdner described the system in early nineteenth-century Britain (modified by the elected parliament) with the example of French democracy in mind. 'Which public in place of what is in England political discussion that is a national comparisson [sic] of the advantages gained to the country at large with the sacrifices made to obtain those advantages...[the people are] content to take the word of government (and that too of a government which like the oracle they can neither contradict nor answer) for actual advantages and future prospects'. NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Diary, vol 3, 8 July 1815.

⁵⁰ D.A.Baugh, 'The Social Basis of Stability', in Baugh (ed), *Aristocratic Government*, p.18 points to the strategy of the eighteenth-century aristocracy securing its preeminent position not by constitutional change but by 'participating in politics and bearing responsibility in government'. They were in this sense a working or serving aristocracy. See also H.J.Habakkuk, 'England's Nobility', in Baugh (ed), *Aristocratic Government*, p.115 which points out that the eighteenth century British aristocracy was a politically effective class in the localities and at the centre, and it therefore 'felt a responsibility for the way thing went'. Above all it was prepared to tax itself heavily during the French wars.

professional who was paid a fee or wage for his labour and skill, the aristocratic or quasi-aristocratic landed gentleman was given a permanent position in society, receiving payment for his own, his ancestors' and his descendants' contribution to society.⁵¹ Most aristocratic houses in Britain traced their foundation to service: to high office in the state or high rank in the army or navy (even if money came into the family by other means) and they proudly recorded their stores of offices and honours in the ensuing generations. Having a recorded history of service and a stock of distinguished and useful deeds provided a mystique for present incumbents that was an important part of aristocratic power. Members of a great family took on the mantle of the achievements of their ancestors when they took on their wealth, titles and responsibilities.

Associated with service and inheritance in the idea of aristocracy was the notion that the character qualities of leadership such as probity and intelligence were also heritable and had been bred into the upper classes.⁵² The aristocracy could claim a right to power as the product of nature on the grounds that talented individuals were natural leaders, and the aristocratic order developed as a result of a process arising from natural laws. It was therefore necessary and inevitable. Nonetheless, notions of inheritance were flexible when families could (if rarely) rise, or (more frequently as in primogeniture) fall from aristocratic status in a few generations. And furthermore, plenty of their number were patently poor leaders by any measure, despite lineage and considerable coaching. Thus aristocracy made more robust claims for groups than for individuals. What was passed on was the institution of a family: its title, seat, wealth, honours and history, its internally hierarchical shape and its values.⁵³ The system was intended

⁵¹ C. MacFarlane, *Life of the Duke of Wellington* (G. Routledge, London, 1852), p. 29 shared this view, 'To sum up, he [Wellington] was a British nobleman serving his king and country with heart and hand; and while British noblemen continue to do thus, may their lands be broad, their mansions wide, and their names honoured!' It was characteristic of this attitude that Nelson was given a posthumous parliamentary grant of £100,000, that was passed to his brother (who spent it on a house and estate in Wiltshire, suitably named Trafalgar) and his descendants received an annual pension of £5,000 per annum, Cannadine, *Aspects*, pp. 13, 17. See A. Yarrington, 'The Commemoration of the Hero 1800-1854: Monuments to the British Victors of the Napoleonic Wars' (PhD dissertation, Cambridge University, 1980), pp. 173-185 for the Parliamentary debate on the size of the grant to be given to Wellington after Waterloo, including suggestions for a palace like Blenheim or a town residence, and on the amount of money as income needed to maintain a suitable style of living.

⁵² See Powis, *Aristocracy*, p. 18 for a series of such arguments from the sixteenth century.

⁵³ L. Namier, *England in the Age of the American Revolution* (Macmillan, London, 1930), p. 22 observes that English aristocratic and therefore political families were 'a compound of "blood", name and estate' but the latter was the most important. 'The name is a weighty symbol, but liable to

to produce not a uniformly able or responsible leadership (every aristocratic gentleman or family would not inherit ideal characteristics) but rather innate, over-all superiority and a permanent set from which suitable leaders could be expected to emerge.

The ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness emerging from the late eighteenth century owed much to the idea of aristocracy in linking service and talent to wealth and heritable social position. However, as we have seen in Digby, it was at the same time also infused with religious ideas of virtue and authority.

While Christians in Britain held diverse theological views that had differing motivations (some sought first a means to personal salvation, others looked to the advent of the Second Coming, or to individual and national flourishing in this life) the understanding of God's law and purpose and the definition of right behaviour took on, in the current political, economic and social climate at the turn of the century and in subsequent decades, a renewed urgency for all reflective Christians. In 1832 Thomas Arnold thus demanded a degree of reform 'deep, searching and universal' that must,

extend to Church and State, to army, navy, law, trade and education, to our political and social institutions, to our habits, principles and practice, both as citizens and men.⁵⁴

This desire to kindle a broad regeneration of society arose, as we have seen, in the context of a society questioning aristocratic social hierarchy and of a ruling-class culture which extolled the benefits, godliness and permanence of the authority of property and the heritability of duty. These arguments could be given a Christian as well as a political foundation.

One strand of Christian tradition (opposed to both asceticism and the model of communal life of the early church), describing society on earth as like a family or series of families with father figures in ascending order of authority reflecting the relationship of God to man, or as a Great Chain of Being, or as an organic body arranged in a natural order applicable

variations; descent traced in the male line only is like a river without its tributaries; the estate, with all that it implies, is, in the long run, the most potent factor in securing continuity through identification, the "taking up" of an inheritance. The owner of an ancestral estate...in his thoughts and feelings most closely identifies himself and is identified by others, with his predecessors.'

⁵⁴ T. Arnold, *Miscellaneous Works* (1845), cited J.R. de S. Honey, *Tom Brown's Universe: The Development of the Victorian Public School* (Millington, London, 1977), p.3. See N. Vance, *The Sinews of the Spirit: The Ideal of Manliness in Victorian Literature and Religious Thought* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985), pp.68-77.

to all of creation, proved dominant in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe.⁵⁵ Central to it was the thought that each member of the community was dependent on the rest. Although men were socially and financially stratified in this life, each had his allotted role to play, and in the eyes of God was equally capable of achieving salvation. Every station had its duties, and the discharge of these was obedience to God. By this tradition any disobedience to a social superior or any move to social change could be construed as rebellious to God.

It was also a religious response, then, to seek to nominate the ruling classes as moral leaders, to strengthen the links between different ranks by emphasising the traditional in the existing hierarchy, and to seek to provide adherence at all levels to social and moral rules by underlining their divine origin. Nonetheless, Christian ethics were in tension with the idea of aristocracy supporting as it did personal honour, unequal wealth and social deference.⁵⁶ It was not easy to see how to be a good Christian and also an honourable and honoured man, nor how, if all Christians were equal in the eyes of God, to fit self-interest and gain into a rationale for material and social hierarchy.⁵⁷ However, a reassertion of the energetic and the active in gentlemanliness, grounded in the emphasis on service and duty appropriate to station found in aristocracy and Christianity, offered a synthesising and practical solution that took deep root in the early and mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁸ This approach put a redoubled emphasis on the value of

⁵⁵ See A.O.Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1936).

⁵⁶ This problem was not new in the nineteenth century. For example, Bernard de Mandeville's poem *The Fable of the Bees: or Private Vices, Public Benefits* (1714) and his essay *An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour and the Usefulness of Christianity in War* (1732) had pointed to the problem of the incompatibility of Christianity and honour with black humour and relentless logic. De Mandeville's main propositions in *The Fable of the Bees* were that private vices produce public benefits and should be encouraged on that account, and that Christian asceticism and virtue (though laudable in a few exceptional individuals) were very difficult to achieve, were unsocial, and were inappropriate for advanced societies. When the unequal monarchical system of the bees in *The Fable* becomes truly virtuous the economy collapses, no one offers leadership, the bees are all reduced to poverty and the kingdom is invaded, resulting in heavy loss of life. On the other hand honour (which he argued was the opposite system to Christianity) provided an ideal alternative. See P.Gay, *The Enlightenment: An Interpretation: The Science of Freedom* (Norton, New York, 1969), pp.192-194.

⁵⁷ Nonetheless, while the Christian call to equality and the surrender of riches was problematic for many, only a few groups, including the Quakers and early Methodists, argued for radical social change from a religious position. See Powis, *Aristocracy*, p.83.

⁵⁸ For gentlemanliness and the clergy, including Cardinal Newman's definition of a gentleman's character, see Mason, *The English Gentleman*, pp.148-149, 181-187, 219. Evangelical thought was central to the development of a new gentlemanly morality, with the influence of such works as Henry Venn, *Complete Duty of Man* (1763), Hannah More, *Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of*

individual virtue expressed in conduct. And a reassertion of the energetic and the active in both traditions also sanctioned pride in ancestry, community, church or chapel and nation, and so blessed confident building, ceremony and patriotism. By this view, too, privilege, including inherited social position, was natural, necessary and beneficial. It turned wealth, pride and luxury, to be seen as dynamos for progress, into a version of the biblical talents for use and multiplication.

The emphasis in the ideal of gentlemanliness on developing duty, virtue, energy and responsible conduct sat comfortably alongside many of the most forceful social ideas of the age. It was echoed, as we have seen, in professional notions of reward for service, and in self-help, competition and individual effort associated with industrialism, but also in the central role of the family as a microcosm of society and cradle of virtue. It was echoed, too, in political thought, notably the stress on individual responsibility and the rewards of thrift and hard work elaborated in political economy, and in Whig and liberal ideas of civic duty and leadership by the most able.⁵⁹

These varied social and political ideas produced in the first half of the nineteenth century a partial political consensus⁶⁰ (looking for moral and social regeneration) across party, region and class.⁶¹ This appears to have centred on ideas of leadership and to have facilitated

the Great to General Society (1787) and William Roberts, *Portrait of an English Gentleman* (1829). See I.C. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1976).

⁵⁹ O. Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975), pp.21-47, 78 includes the arguments that ideologies like liberalism and movements like Chartism offered a new understanding of old feelings and intuitions previously sited in religion, and that secularization in the nineteenth century arose primarily from the political need to act for the benefit of society, although religion remained coupled to morality.

⁶⁰ D. Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: The Political Representation of Class in Britain, c.1780-1840* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995) argues for a changing use of language with regard to class, and for flexible and evolving middle-class identities corresponding to political notions and circumstances. The association of a social middle with virtue and merit did not mean either that middle-class ideals created the basis for a general consensus in the mid-century, or that the middle class lost distinctive values and became gentrified. Rather the idea of a middle class and their attributes created 'considerable leeway for contemporaries to choose between divergent – even incompatible – representations of their society', and became in the period part of political debate on structures of power in society.

⁶¹ Lieutenant Gairdner commented on this growing homogeneity of culture. 'In England from the frequency of intercourse of the inhabitant of the field with the inhabitant of the city together with the freedom of the press and other causes there is no novelty of any kind which occurs in the one which is

the broadening of the constituency for a notion of regenerated Christian gentlemanliness. Tory calls in the early decades to a Saxon ideology of free-born Englishmen, offering a vision of common national identity and harmony in a hierarchical society were one manifestation of this,⁶² foreshadowing Disraeli's injunction to the Tory aristocracy and landed gentry to reconnect itself to the people by fulfilling its duties at a local level.⁶³ However the Whig approach to government (stressing the doctrine of the responsibility of the landed classes to serve the people, guard their rights and liberties, extend their political privileges and promote their welfare through legislation)⁶⁴ provided a better-defined ideology of social and political leadership and so a more important means for the political expression of broadly shared ideals.

The three decades before 1850 saw a chain of agitations for political rights and relief, including Catholic Emancipation and Chartism, which were part of a long-standing appeal to parliament to connect itself to the people by listening to their views, by acting to protect them from injustice, and by recognising the economic and social power of those with education and property of all sorts.⁶⁵ The Whig party, which was in office for seventeen of the twenty-two

not known to and more or less interests the other. The variations in the character of the nation are in some degree felt throughout the whole.' NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Diary, vol 3, 30 October 1815.

⁶² See G. Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987), pp.228-230.

⁶³ Both Whig and Tory parties, dominated by the landed, continued into the mid-century their traditional commitment first to the notion that ownership of land carried political rights and duties, and second to the view that representation of the people by Parliament should operate primarily through land: men of all classes and interests were considered to be represented through the land on which they lived. The importance of the link between London and the provinces forged by the ruling classes was widely held to underpin the link between rulers and ruled. Lieutenant Gairdner, again, expressed this view in comparing Paris to London. 'The former comprises almost all the upper classes all the members of the government all desirous of large fortune and therefore of great influence, these pay only occasional visits to their estates and even then if they go to stay above a day or two carry their [concerns?] with them - the influential part of London those who from their intellectual acquirements, their wealth and their professional stations give the principal tone to public opinion pass a considerable portion of the year in the country - in which they meet a very large proportion of the population in wise inferior to them in education acquirement [sic] and even wealth whose habitual residence in the country and whose opinions and feelings go a great way to the formation of public opinion.' NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Diary, vol 3, 11 July 1815.

⁶⁴ See D. Southgate, *The Passing of the Whigs 1832-1856* (Macmillan, London, 1962), p.322 and passim.

⁶⁵ P. Mandler, *Aristocratic Government in the Age of Reform: Whigs and Liberals, 1830-1852* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1990) argues for a reassertion of aristocratic power in the 1830s and 1840s, in part the result of a popular rebellion against earlier liberalization that was restricted to extending opportunities for social and economic self-improvement. The Whig aristocracy was able to draw broad popular support (as a series of agitations for rights and liberties occurred) through presenting the ruling classes as responsive to the voice of the people (which could mean wider enfranchisement) and

years from 1830 to 1852, answered by producing a series of legislative acts that included measures to lessen the tensions between church and chapel, and to grant greater (if limited) political responsibility to the middle classes.⁶⁶ In their willingness to respond to public pressure and to serve the people, the Whigs acted from an ideology that supported conduct appropriate to station. Thus they gave the notion of the Christian gentleman a clear political as well as a social identity. They offered a definition centring on the role of the aristocracy, but they nonetheless facilitated a more far-reaching interpretation and so furthered a wider political view of the ideal of gentlemanly leadership.

Likewise emerging liberalism was able to shore up the ideal in the mid-century. While Whiggism aimed to draw together the interests of different social and economic groups under aristocratic leadership, liberalism looked to an élite selected by different criteria. It took the view that there could be substantive deliberation on moral, spiritual and cultural questions: that there existed a best or truest way in each case, and that progress towards a stable, ideal leadership was therefore possible. It took the further step of holding that some individuals are more penetrating judges of these matters than others, and more morally creative. Those less able should therefore defer to superior authority. From this they were able to argue for the flourishing and due social influence of moral and intellectual (not just technical) élites.⁶⁷

Liberalism stressed talent, opportunity and social progress and directly opposed linking social or political authority to heritable wealth and status. Its debt to and influence on professionalism were profound. Nonetheless, in the context of the strongly hierarchical nature of nineteenth-century society, liberal-style talent and moral creativity tended to be the preserve of the educated few. It was a short step to reach paternalist attitudes to inferiors, the fusing of social and political status, and the perpetuation of élite classes as the educated and wealthy provided education and experience for their offspring. Paradoxically, liberalism, like Whiggism,

as willing to protect them with legislation. The Whig aristocracy acted from a coherent definition of what an aristocrat should be and do.

⁶⁶ See R.Brent, *Liberal Anglican Politics: Whiggery, Religion and Reform 1830-1841* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987).

⁶⁷ For the ideas of J.S.Mill's on liberal élitism, see D.F.Thompson, *John Stuart Mill and Representative Government* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1976), pp.77-85 and passim.

underpinned the claims of gentlemanly authority. It helped to perpetuate notions of heredity alongside service even as it provided the means of their destruction. Thus liberalism further encouraged into the mid-century and beyond the identification of both the upper and middle classes with regenerated gentlemanly values.

The ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness, then, can be seen to have grown up beside both the idea of aristocracy and Christian ethics. Further, it was a part of a common contemporary understanding of the organisation of society, and it coloured political developments across parties in the early and mid-nineteenth century. Through its central place in nineteenth-century culture it had a profound influence on the army. Three main areas of evidence can be used to trace its role in the Rifle Brigade: the founding regimental regulations, material concerning the reform issues of punishment, education, training and promotion, and finally (discussed in Chapter 3) relationships of patronage.

2.2 The Rifle Brigade Regulations and Gentlemanliness

When the Rifle Brigade was established in 1800 as the Rifle Corps it was self-consciously styled 'experimental'. The corps was intended to be temporary in the first instance to allow the trial of a specialist unit using innovative tactical organisation.⁶⁸ The founders of the regiment, Major-General (then Colonel) Coote Manningham and Lieutenant-General (then Lieutenant-Colonel) the Hon. Sir William Stewart, were given the opportunity to draw on the recent experience of a number of other units in British and foreign service, to establish the principles and rules of the internal economy of the new corps, its system of training and

⁶⁸ For Wellington's use of light infantry in the Peninsula and at Waterloo see J. Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (Penguin, London, 1987), pp. 148-154. H. Strachan, *From Waterloo to Balaclava: Tactics, Technology, and the British Army 1815-1854* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985) shows how the potential of light infantry and of fire power over shock were gradually understood in the first half of the nineteenth century, and argues that varied colonial experience modified the influence on tactics of Frederickian drill and continental warfare, in the absence of a settled strategic doctrine.

rewards, and its deployment in action.⁶⁹ They placed the regiment in the forefront of the army reform movement of the period, synthesising many of its most progressive features. The resulting guidelines which they produced, together with the training and fighting experience of the regiment in the Napoleonic Wars and particularly in the Peninsula, bound it to the main body of the army in method and ideology. At the same time, however, they provided distinctive emphases on professional matters that continued to influence the Rifle Brigade throughout its subsequent history.⁷⁰ Above all, Manningham and Stewart mapped out details of the professional behaviour and the style of professional relationships they wished to see develop in the corps.

The task of Manningham and Stewart in setting up the Rifle Corps was to bring together, as we have seen,⁷¹ officers and men drawn from fifteen separate infantry regiments. They were to be trained to use rifles and light infantry tactics to the maximum effect. This involved developing proficiency not only in marksmanship, but in the performance of rapid movements in small detached units. Riflemen were expected in addition to the normal manoeuvres and firing of the line, to specialise in the work that had previously been done by auxiliary corps or light infantry companies of foot regiments (sometimes brigaded together). They were required to be able to move and shoot in extended order, often in wooded or mountainous country, to form advanced or rear guards and picquets, to patrol and reconnoitre, to skirmish and to act as sharpshooters.⁷²

These specialist functions made strong demands on officers, NCOs and men. They had to be competent to act, as individuals, or in pairs or small units, independently of the main body

⁶⁹ See J.Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1981); R.Glover, *Peninsular Preparation: The Reform of the British Army 1795-1808* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1963); and D.Gates, *The British Light Infantry Arm c.1790-1815: Its Creation, Training and Operational Role* (Batsford, London, 1987).

⁷⁰ The original regulations were issued to officers throughout the early and mid-century. The RGJ archive holds copies belonging to various officers, including, for example, that belonging to Lieutenant George Rogers, promoted from Sergeant-Major of the 2nd Battalion, who served as an officer in the Rifle Brigade from 1860 to 1865.

⁷¹ See Table 6 above.

⁷² C.Manningham, *Military Lectures Delivered to the Officers of the 95th Rifle Regiment at Shorncliffe Barracks, Kent, in the Spring of 1803* (London, 1803) gives details of the duties expected of the regiment.

of the regiment. They could be detached at considerable distances and were often very near the enemy. Junior as well as senior officers could be called upon to take decisions on their own initiative, and they needed to trust the loyalty of their men. The slow loading, and the relatively high accuracy, of the rifle meant that Riflemen of all ranks also needed to use their judgement in assessing distances, aiming and timing shots, and the weapon needed careful maintenance.⁷³ In addition, although orders were given by verbal command when possible, the regiment answered, too, to a system of bugle calls⁷⁴ which had to be interpreted and could not always be followed up (as was usual in other infantry regiments) with explanations or personal exhortation from officers.⁷⁵ Finally, because of the way it was deployed, the regiment had no standard or banner to carry in battle, and thus an important rallying point available to other units was lacking.

In order to achieve its varied functions, the Rifle Corps engaged in a fundamental revision in thinking about the responsibilities, competence, individual potential, loyalties and courage of both officers and men. This involved attention to the professional and social relations between soldiers of the same and different rank, and a fresh assessment of what made soldiers fight well alone and in groups. In formulating rules for the new regiment, Manningham and Stewart aimed at fostering competence and discipline among private Riflemen, and at obtaining sound, effective leadership from officers. For this, they had to establish a range of technical skills, but they also needed to create a climate of strong cohesion and camaraderie. In order to achieve both these ends they sought to create a regimental community that drew

⁷³ See H.Beaufoy, alias A Corporal of Riflemen, *Scloppetaria: or Considerations on the Nature and Use of Rifled Barrel Guns with Reference to their Forming the Basis of a Permanent National Defence, Agreeable to the Genius of the Country* (T.Egerton, London, 1808), pp.16-18; E.Baker, *Twenty-Three Years Practice and Observation With Rifled Guns* (T.Egerton, London, 1803); Paret, *Yorke*, pp.271-272 for late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century muskets and rifles; and Strachan, *From Waterloo*, pp.20-23, 29-46 for the various patterns of rifle used to 1854.

⁷⁴ An annotated copy belonging to Charles Napier of F.De Rottenburg, *Regulations for the Exercise of Riflemen and Light Infantry; and Instructions for their Conduct in the Field* (1798) (T.Egerton, London, 1801), observes in a note in the margin on page 19 that using a whistle to tell men to fire while advancing is 'very fine for a field day' but in action is 'a great nonsense for several reasons and among others the very good one of it being impossible to hear!'. The Rifle Brigade abandoned this practice. The Light Division also used a telegraph system in the Peninsular War, RGJ, Folio 2, p.10.

⁷⁵ "W", 'A Peep into Regimental Society', *USJ*, vol 1, 1837, pp.466-467, 'In modern armies, where the order of battle is more extended, the practice of haranguing has fallen into disuse...they [the men] have no objection, however, to a word of encouragement from their immediate officer in times of difficulty and danger; and if it is attended with a jocular remark or a flying bit of ridicule at his enemies, John Bull likes it mightily'.

inspiration for its shape from army experience and from broader ideals of social integration and hierarchy, not least those found in the ideal of gentlemanliness.

The foundation and development of the Rifle Brigade can therefore be seen as a combined social and professional enterprise. The virtues prescribed for the regiment by Manningham and Stewart included qualities such as discipline, application and thrift,⁷⁶ and also technical education. These seemingly middle-class and professional (and indeed, for some, Christian) attributes were presented to the regiment as prerequisites not only for military efficiency but (almost synonymous) for gentlemanly conduct.

The founding rules of the regiment were laid down in Coote Manningham's *Regulations for the Rifle Corps* (1800) written in conjunction with William Stewart, followed by a series of lectures delivered by Manningham in 1803 to the officers of the 95th. Although, as will be shown, they contained important innovations, the sections in these works concerning military duties, tactics and training were closely modelled on the *Regulations for the Exercise of Light Infantry; and Instructions for their Conduct on the Field*⁷⁷ composed in 1797 by Baron Francis De Rottenburg,⁷⁸ Lieutenant-Colonel of the (mainly German) 5th Battalion of the 60th Regiment.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ J.Kincaid, 'Anecdotes in the Life of the Late Major Johnstone of the Rifle Brigade', *USJ*, vol 1, 1837, p.355 recalled that Johnstone (who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1806 to 1831), was the son of a landowner of slender means from Dumfriesshire. He taught impoverished subalterns who complained they could not live within their means to make porridge in order to save money and acquire economical habits. Keegan, *The Mask of Command*, p.123 sees the virtues of resistance to temptation, liberation from the bodily need for food, drink and sleep, and apparent indifference to pain and emotional suffering as associated with 'charismatic' (usually religious) leadership rather than social or economic class. Keegan argues that with secular leadership these appear as the military virtues of courage and hardihood.

⁷⁷ This was an official publication translated by William Fawcett, Adjutant-General, and it was made regulation. See Houlding, *Fit For Service*, pp.251-252. It was highly influential for the British light infantry of the period. See Moore to Mackenzie, 30 August 1805, cited J.F.C.Fuller, 'Two Private Letters from Major-General Sir John Moore, K.B.', *JSAHR*, vol 9, 1930, p.165, on Moore's intention to use De Rottenburg's *Regulations* to guide shooting practice at Shorncliffe. It was also used by Colonel Neil Campbell of the Rifle Brigade in his *Instructions for Light Infantry and Cavalry* (1809) used at Shorncliffe in manuscript form.

⁷⁸ Major-General De Rottenburg (1757-1832) was an Austrian born in Poland. He served in the German regiment of De la Marck and the 77th Regiment in the French army, and in 1787 was aide-de-camp to General Baron de Salis Marcellus, and, with the permission of the French government, organized the forces of the King of Naples and the Sicilies. He served under Kosciusko in the Polish army in the war with Russia, then in 1795 joined the Hussar regiment of Count Carl von Hompesch. His unit of Hompesch's Hussars merged with the 60th Regiment of the British army and he became a naturalized British citizen; but he was debarred from becoming colonel of a British regiment or

De Rottenburg's work was written to instruct in light infantry tactics troops fighting for the British.⁸⁰ It was produced in the context of a demand across Europe from the mid-eighteenth century for specialist corps of mounted and infantry light troops, including riflemen. These were used for rapid movements and the duties of 'petite guerre' in support of the main battle-winning efforts of line regiments and heavy cavalry. The British army came to develop its light infantry troops following contact with American rangers and the use of light and irregular troops by Irish and French adversaries.⁸¹ In particular they drew on the experience of continental armies.⁸²

Lieutenant-Colonel Hon. Sir William Stewart had direct knowledge of advanced European military thought, and this fed his ideas for the Rifle Brigade.⁸³ The Rifle Corps regulations began with a statement that,

holding the command of a fortress. He commanded the light troops under William Stewart (including the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade) at the attack on Walcheren and the siege of Flushing. In 1812 at the outbreak of war he commanded the Montreal district and the Upper Province in Canada.

⁷⁹ The 5th Battalion of the 60th or Royal American Regiment (later the Kings Royal Rifle Corps) was formed in 1798 from 900 men drafted from Hompesch's Hussars and Lowenstein's Chasseurs. They were a light battalion armed with continental rifles. See W. Verner, *The First British Rifle Corps* (W.H. Allen, London, 1890), pp.21-29; and L. Butler, *The Annals of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps: Volume 2: The Green Jacket* (John Murray, London, 1923), pp.12-15, 276.

⁸⁰ De Rottenburg trained several British light infantry units himself: he commanded the exercise and instruction of four battalions of light infantry at the Curragh of Kildare in Ireland, and similarly formed and instructed three battalions from the 68th, 85th and 71st Regiments at Brabourne Lees Barracks in Kent, both in 1808. He was among the first to train British troops to aim before firing, see J.F.C. Fuller, *Sir John Moore's System of Training* (Hutchinson, London, 1924), p.190.

⁸¹ Lieutenant-Colonel Henri Bouquet, Sir Ralph Abercromby and Sir John Moore in particular were impressed by the performance of light infantry troops in America and the West Indies, and Lieutenant-Colonel Banastre Tarleton in the 1780s showed the usefulness of light cavalry. P. Paret, 'Colonial Experience and European Military Reform at the End of the Eighteenth Century', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, vol 37, 1964, pp.47-59 argues for a lesser role for Indian and American experience in shaping tactics, and points instead to the importance of technological, social and political changes in Europe, and the experience of commanders in continental wars.

⁸² It seems that only one German officer was commissioned into the Rifle Brigade: Baron Charles Glan (spelt Glau in the 1815 Army List). He entered from the 53rd Regiment as a lieutenant in September 1805, and transferred to a captaincy in the Sicilian Regiment in 1808. He was on the foreign half pay list in 1818. Glan died at Warendorf, Westphalia in 1828. He may have been with the five companies of the 1st Battalion who served under Lord Cathcart at Bremen alongside the Prussians in 1805-6, Cope, *History*, pp.11-13.

⁸³ Manningham had served with the 39th, 45th, 105th and 41st Regiments, and he commanded several light infantry companies under Grey in the West Indies. While much that was most progressive in the regulations may have been contributed by Stewart, Manningham (who according to Cope, *History*, p.6 spent little time with the regiment owing to his duties as Equerry to George III) had knowledge of the strengths of the traditional British line as well as current British use of light infantry.

they are upon the best principles adopted by the best organised corps in European armies, and are intended to open the minds of those to whom they are addressed, to the nature of all military duty in general.⁸⁴

Stewart had seen action against the French in the West Indies in 1794 (serving under Major-General Dundas and General Sir Charles Grey, 1st Earl Grey). On his return from the Caribbean in 1799 he had taken leave of absence to serve with the Austrian and Russian armies. He served briefly under Archduke Charles (who was cautiously encouraging the development of the Austrian light infantry),⁸⁵ and he was with the Austrians in Italy, Suabia and Switzerland. Stewart's contacts with continental officers continued as he served alongside German officers in the British service: De Roll's regiment was with him at Rosetta in 1807, and in August 1812 he had Major Steiger of that corps as an Aide-de-Camp. (Several other Rifle Brigade officers also had experience in the early nineteenth century in corps in the English service dominated by continental officers (see Table 7 above). These included Count de Meuron's Regiment, Baron de Roll's Regiment, the Chasseurs Britanniques and the York Rangers. And, in the advance to Kioge in 1807, companies of the 2nd Battalion fought alongside German troops and were under the command of General Baron Linsingen.)⁸⁶

Nonetheless, Manningham and Stewart were from the beginning moving away from one strain of European military tradition (most developed in the Prussian army before the reforms that followed defeat at Jena in 1806)⁸⁷ that required little from subordinate troops beyond obedience and discipline, instilled through intense practise at drill and severe and frequent punishment. This ideal (associated with the military successes of Frederick II) was linked to the tactics of linear formations that used close order ranks and unaimed, volleyed fire.⁸⁸ This approach had dominated the military theory of the eighteenth century, and it had a profound influence on the British army. Its influence stretched into the nineteenth century particularly

⁸⁴ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.iii.

⁸⁵ See Gat, *The Origins*, pp.95-105.

⁸⁶ Cope, *History*, pp.20-21.

⁸⁷ For the Frederickian system and criticisms of it see Paret, *Yorck*, pp.7-46; also Gat, *The Origins*, pp.54-59, 96, 153-154. See Howard, *War in European Society*, pp.86-87 for the changes in Prussian military organization and the development of patriotism in the troops following Jena.

⁸⁸ Paret, *Yorck*, pp.19-21.

through the system of drill developed by General Sir David Dundas⁸⁹ enshrined in his *Principles of Military Movements* of 1788.⁹⁰ This work became regulation for the British army, with various amendments, in 1792, and it remained standard (although it underwent various revisions) for two decades.⁹¹

In Dundas' system, weight was given to the precise execution of elaborate standard movements by line regiments in order that speed and distance could be accurately predicted by a commander deploying troops in battle. This entailed a need for officers to give clear, complete and competent commands, allowing little room for interpretation or initiative from the men,

The justness of execution, and the confidence of the soldier, can only be in proportion to the firm, decided, and proper manner in which every officer of rank gives his orders. – An officer who cannot thoroughly discipline and exercise the body entrusted to his command, is not fit in time of service to lead it to the enemy...the fate of many depends on his well or ill acquitting himself of his duty: – It is not sufficient to advance with bravery: it is requisite to have that degree of intelligence, which should distinguish every officer according to his station: nor will soldiers ever act with spirit and animation, when they have no reliance on the capacity of those who do conduct them.

In the midst of surrounding noises, the eye and the ear of the soldier should be attentive only to his immediate officer; the loudness of whose commands, instead of creating confusion and unsteadiness, reconcile to the hurry of action.⁹²

Indeed, Dundas went as far as to describe one aim of his regulations as,

to enable the commanding officer of any body of troops, whether great or small, to retain the whole relatively as it were in his hand and management, at every instance, so as to be capable of restraining the bad effects of such ideas of independent and individual exertions as are visionary and hurtful, and of directing them to their true and proper object, those of order, of combined effect, and of regulated obedience...⁹³

Even for light infantry on detached duty Dundas believed,

⁸⁹ Dundas became Colonel-in-Chief of the Rifle Brigade in 1809, after Manningham died, and he held that post until 1820. He was concurrently also Commander-in-Chief of the British Army and Colonel of the 1st Dragoon Guards.

⁹⁰ D.Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry: Illustrated by Manoeuvres of Prussian Troops, and by an Outline of the British Campaigns in Germany, During the War of 1757* (London, 1788).

⁹¹ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, pp.236-248. Dundas and Lieutenant-Colonel William Dalrymple were prominent among those concerned at the tendency following the American War of Independence to reduce the solidity of the line by forming infantry in two instead of three ranks, and by an over-emphasis, as they saw it, on the role of light troops.

⁹² D.Dundas, *Rules and Regulations for the Formation, Field Exercise, and Movements of His Majesty's Forces* (1792) (T.Egerton, London, 1813), pp.73-74.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.v-vi.

The success of any engagement in a wood or strong country depends upon the coolness and presence of mind of the commanding officer, and the silence and obedience of the men, fully as much as upon their bravery.⁹⁴

Manningham and Stewart's *Regulations*, by contrast, aimed at creating an attitude to soldiering in their new corps dependent on the intelligence and feelings of all ranks.⁹⁵ It stated,

The following Regulations are destined for the instruction of officers and Riflemen...For a subject to meet with attention, it is necessary that the principle upon which it is founded should be thoroughly understood...a corps of Riflemen is expected to be one where intelligence is to distinguish every individual, and where both officers and men are liable to act very independently and separately from each other.⁹⁶

They did not thereby see less value than Dundas in drill⁹⁷ or instant and complete obedience,⁹⁸ still the cornerstones of military effectiveness.⁹⁹ Rather they believed these would be undertaken with greater energy and willingness, and so more effectively, by troops animated by an

⁹⁴ Ibid., p.280.

⁹⁵ Paret, *Yorck*, pp.18-19 argues that this new attitude to the other ranks was a phenomenon occurring in armies across Europe in the last decades of the eighteenth century. France was a particularly important influence, but even in Prussia there was discussion of whether the other ranks were capable of motivation through sentiments of honour, loyalty to their corps and, slightly later, patriotism, rather than fear. Ibid., pp.21-23 there had always been a role for light troops including jagers and chasseurs in the Frederickian system, and these traditionally had different (and more lax) disciplinary rules from line regiments. Ibid., pp.21-25, 27-28, Frederick II was ambivalent in his efforts to develop his light infantry and light cavalry, in part the result of judgements on suitable social position.

⁹⁶ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.iii.

⁹⁷ The Rifle Brigade continued to drill its troops rigorously in peacetime. See, for example, RGJ, Wynn Diary, March 1862, in India, 'Drill! Drill! Drill! every morning at about 4.30. I thought we had both of us enough drill at Winchester, but o dear no, not half enough...' Ex-Rifle Brigade officers continued to see its value throughout this period. General Cochrane wrote to Sir George Brown (a former Rifleman), when he was inspecting troops in Dublin in 1853, clearly expecting Brown's approval, 'There is, however, a *lax* system of drill, which seems to be the failure of the day, and which may lead to lacks [sic] which cannot be remedied when the time for *active* operations arrives. - I may be too much wedded to the school of Sir John Moore in which I was *brought* up, but... I would like to know if the celebrated light division would have distinguished itself in the manner it did, had it not been for its remarkable steadiness (produced by drill)...As Harry Smith would observe, or rather to make use of an expression of his, the officers always had their men "well in hand" either together or detached'. Nat.Lib.Scotland MS 1848, 154-156, Cochrane to Brown, 29 October 1853.

⁹⁸ M.Fry and G.Davis, 'Wellington's officers in the D.N.B.', *JSAHR*, vol 33, p.129 cites J.Donaldson, *Recollections*, p.75, describing Lieutenant-Colonel Sir William Stewart as 'a rare combination of a rigid disciplinarian and the soldier's friend'. Stewart continued to value also bravery and physical strength for Riflemen. Harry Smith described Stewart as the bravest man he ever saw. H.Smith, *Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith*, G.C.Moore-Smith (ed) (John Murray, London, 1901), vol.1, pp.170-171 Stewart was keen to obtain Irish recruits not for their independence or intelligence, but because they were, 'perhaps from being less spoiled and more hardy than British soldiers, better calculated for light troops'. W.Stewart, *Cumloden Papers* (privately printed, Edinburgh, 1871), 23, cited Cope, *History*, p.6.

⁹⁹ See Paret, *Yorck*, p.82 for Scharnhorst and Clausewitz agreeing with von Bulow that while there were military advantages in mass armies and open formations, these should not tend to the abolition of 'élite professional forces fighting in close order'. Instead, the two systems ought to be combined.

understanding of their duties, the necessity of obedience, the capacities of officers, and by strong loyalties.¹⁰⁰ These views were already by continental tradition and military logic associated with light infantry and riflemen.

Yet it is clear that Manningham and Stewart were engaging in a debate that had wider implications for all branches of the army. Their overall aim was the essentially conservative one of reinvigorating existing British military practice through a progressive programme of reform. They recognised a military imperative to find a new basis for subordination and obedience (in the development of the individual potential of soldiers of all ranks, and in regenerated military leadership). However, they rejected (for military as well as ideological reasons) both the Frederickian approach to discipline and the egalitarian ethos associated with the French and American armies, both readily available patterns. Instead, they blended recently developed light infantry tactics (and their associated looser discipline) with ideas of gentlemanly conduct and society vigorously alive, as we have seen, in British civilian culture.

Manningham and Stewart developed three main strategies to achieve their ambitions for the new corps: education, rewards and punishments, and contact with the men.

They established a school for the other ranks to underpin discipline with respect for a linked military and social hierarchy, and to encourage individual military excellence.¹⁰¹ The school was to operate six days a week under a full-time school master and an usher, who were

¹⁰⁰ Sir John Moore, too, whose training of light infantry at Shorncliffe from 1803 to 1805 complemented the Rifle Brigade system, admired Dundas and also saw himself as adding to his regulations, not undermining them. He simplified rather than abandoned the linear tactics of Dundas, forming light infantry into two lines and deploying the men in extended order, and he retained volleyed fire (though he made it less hurried, and the men were encouraged to aim). Sir Ralph Abercromby had a similar outlook. See P.Mackesy, 'Abercromby in Egypt: The Regeneration of the Army', in A.Guy (ed), *The Road to Waterloo: The British Army and the Struggle Against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, 1793-1815* (National Army Museum, London, 1990), pp.101-110.

¹⁰¹ Parallel efforts can be found on the continent in the late eighteenth century. See Paret, *Yorck*, pp. 86-87, 108 for L.H. von Boyen (and others of the Prussian army) appealing to the good will and intelligence of the men, through which he intended to educate them to better themselves and so to serve the state more effectively. Boyen administered a garrison school for the children of the rank and file and taught men himself to read and write. Such garrison schools were sufficiently well established by 1798 to need a published reader. *Ibid.*, p.118 for the important position of military reformers in Prussia in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in furthering the civilian movement that aimed to educate and develop the intelligence of the people in order to free their energy for the common good.

to be a sergeant and a corporal 'of ability and character'. The school was to teach up to fifty men at a time.¹⁰² The students (who paid a weekly fee on a scale from 3d for privates to 6d for a sergeant) were to be divided into three classes, 'those who are learning to read', 'those who read and are learning to write', and, 'those who read, write and are learning arithmetic'.¹⁰³ Any sergeants attending for 'instruction in the first principles of geometry, and the deeper rules of arithmetic...will have a table separate for themselves'. Advanced scholars were to be provided with 'books on military subjects and other instructive publications'.

Educational attainments were to be qualifications for promotion, both to NCO ranks and to a commission. Manningham and Stewart were clear in encouraging the men to believe that they could rise in the profession as far as their abilities and achievements warranted.¹⁰⁴

The best generals have sometimes risen from the ranks; and no principle is so false or more unjust than that which in military life checks just ambition or says even to the private soldier, if he actually be a man of merit, 'thus far shall you rise in your profession and no farther'...The Non-commissioned Officers...are to be supported by their officers in every branch of their duty, and are to have the object ever in view of arriving by their merit to the same honourable situations in his Majesty's service themselves.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Manningham *Regulations*, pp.69-72. There was also provision for the education of the children of Riflemen by the sergeant who acted as schoolmaster. This predated the introduction by the Duke of York in 1812 of regimental schools for children across the army. Most regiments only established schools for adult soldiers from the 1820s. See Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.90.

¹⁰³ The Rifle Brigade school system anticipated army certificates of education introduced in 1861 that created three standards of education linked to promotion in the ranks, A.Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899* (Croom Helm, London, 1977), p.94. RGJ Standing Orders of the 2nd Battalion, 1848, p.18 ordered that the men were no longer obliged to attend school (which suggests that for a period it may have been compulsory), instead commanding officers were to encourage the illiterate to learn, particularly as tuition and books were free of charge. The Rifle Brigade regulations' provision for teaching military subjects to NCOs predated the more elaborate experiments by Fitzclarence at the Portsmouth Garrison School established in 1848, Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.91-92.

¹⁰⁴ In 1802 the parents of (then) Private William Surtees, tradesmen, 'interested Mr Beaumont, MP for my native county, to solicit my discharge from the Honourable Colonel Stewart, my then commanding-officer, they paying the regulation sum to the government. The colonel sent for me, and talked with me on the subject, and argued most forcibly in favour of my remaining in the regiment, saying he had intended to promote me the first vacancy; and that he had no doubt whatever of seeing me one day an officer. I own my views were not so sanguine; but his reasoning prevailed...' W.Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (Blackwood, London, 1833) (reprinted Military Book Society, London, 1973), p.43. Beaufoy, *Scloppetaria*, p.207, argued that the English as well as the French ought to open the door to promotion on grounds of merit, and pointed to the light infantry as more likely to allow men of ability to shine than the line: 'their manoeuvres, and their drill, their duties in the field and in action are so ordered, that no individual, if his innate abilities were equal to those of a Marlborough or a Washington, has the smallest opportunity of shewing them'.

¹⁰⁵ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.44, 11.

Thus the *Regulations* deliberately undermined the idea of a static professional pyramid. They offered the possibility of a commission to those of any original social station, and they mapped out steps in education to achieve the goal of advancement. On the one hand this offered a vision of equality of opportunity across ranks, but on the other it served (more powerfully) to reinforce the superiority of the middle- and upper-class officers educated in youth as a matter of course. This superiority was underlined in the way progress was noted: there were to be regular examinations every two months, but officers commanding companies were also encouraged to visit the school and,

occasional premiums, or small, useful presents, as a book, a pen knife etc. will be given to the best scholars.

In order to encourage the other ranks to further develop an enthusiasm for professional self-improvement, and to reinforce the leadership of superior rank, the regulations created, secondly, a number of new layers of merit and promotion to which the men could aspire.¹⁰⁶ They introduced the appointment among private soldiers of the 'chosen man',

In every half-platoon, a soldier of merit will be selected; and upon him the charge of the squad devolves in the absence of both the Noncommissioned Officers in it; as from among these *chosen men*...all Corporals are to be appointed, the best men alone are to be selected for this distinction.¹⁰⁷

And a range of rewards were instituted for the deserving. These included extra furlough time, indulgences from fatigues, special sentinel duties¹⁰⁸ and medals for good conduct,¹⁰⁹

...which may prove of real use as well as honour to such old Soldiers as wear them, and who may have their claims upon Chelsea thereby much supported.¹¹⁰

These awards were intended to give the rewarded men a degree of self-esteem, and to demand respect for them from the others by indicating the trust and approbation of officers. They also

¹⁰⁶ See A. Starkey, 'War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1781', *War and Society*, vol.8, No 1, 1990, p.19 for recommendations in the later eighteenth century by Stephen Adye and Sir John Dalrymple on rewards for the men, including the Order of the Bath; *ibid.*, p.20 for the Waterloo Medal, the first non-regimental medal for the other ranks.

¹⁰⁷ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.5-6.

¹⁰⁸ It was a mark of distinction to be chosen to be posted as sentinel over an individual officer. Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.26-27.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.73-76. The 1836 commission on punishment recommended a system of good conduct awards across the army; at least twenty-three regiments had similar systems by this time, though the Rifle Brigade was an early example, Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.99.

¹¹⁰ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.75.

created an incentive to good conduct by devolving a measure of the more demeaning domestic and military work on those not similarly distinguished. It was a carefully constructed system of graduated honours that created more rungs on the ladder of professional position and underscored the values of the regiment. Desert was measured by a mixture of characteristics and achievements, including independence, willingness for duty, and intelligence (although potentially conflicting traits such as unquestioning obedience, deference and sociability were also prized).

There were, too, special awards for behaviour in action. Brass medals were given for the discharge of duty (including that done under orders) 'with peculiar ability and courage'. Likewise silver medals were instituted for voluntary acts beyond the call of duty (including those taken on the soldier's own initiative).¹¹¹ These would be given either for performing an outstanding deed which benefited the regiment or the army, or which helped in a humane manner,

those peaceable inhabitants of a country where war may be carried on, and who are but too frequently the victims of an undisciplined, drunken and cruel soldiery.¹¹²

Thus military skills, application to duty, initiative, bravery and humanity were all to be admired.¹¹³ Manningham and Stewart called the two medals the first and second 'orders of honour', so recognising in the other ranks a capacity for honour (normally in eighteenth-century armies associated with officers and gentlemen only).¹¹⁴ This again suggested the essential equality in capability of the other ranks, but their inferiority in attainment. Manningham and

¹¹¹ The novelty in the Rifle Brigade system of regimental medals (which was also unusually formal in organization) was in awarding them for reasons additional to bravery. E.C.Joslin, A.R.Litherland and B.T.Simpkin, *British Battles and Medals* (Spink, London, 1988), p.27. It was common practice by the later eighteenth century for colonels to give deserving other ranks soldiers medals to commemorate a particular battle. J.Balmer, *Regimental Medals Handbook 1745-1895* (Langfords, London, 1897) lists various examples of Rifle Brigade regimental medals from the early and mid-nineteenth century, including several brass ones rewarding valour in specific battles from 1801 to 1812, and one silver medal inscribed, 'Reward of Merit. The Gift of the Officers. Awarded to Donald Ross 1810'. *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1891, p.86 listed the names of twenty-eight other ranks men who won the Silver Medal during the Crimean War.

¹¹² Manningham, *Regulations*, p.76.

¹¹³ The other ranks were to aim at 'the most generous conduct in the field', *ibid.*, p.50.

¹¹⁴ Starkey, 'War and Culture', argues for an eighteenth-century idea that the rules and principles of war could only be based ultimately on an aristocratic notion of honour: this gave the standard for justice, disinterestedness and love of humanity; *ibid.*, p.17 for the view that honour provided self-respect and a sense of purpose for officers (other ranks were excluded).

Stewart put an increasing stock of honour beside education as part of the professional ladder starting at the lowest level.

That the other ranks were expected to internalise and perpetuate these values is clearly shown in the mechanism instituted for the awarding of these medals. They were to be given, following nomination by the Commanding Officer, by a unanimous vote taken by a board consisting of five officers and five each of sergeants, corporals and private Riflemen, with the privates voting first. Thus officers had to support a nomination and could veto an award, but the other ranks were, in theory at least, empowered to decide who of their peers was or was not deserving.¹¹⁵ All those receiving indulgences and rewards were entered in a book of merit.

A third strategy, running through the regulations, was that of encouraging officers and men to be personally known to one other, and to develop a strong sense of mutual understanding and comradeship among and between ranks. The regulations laid down that,

A Captain must always pay his own company, when present, because the knowledge of a soldier's accounts, and of the mode in which he spends his subsistence, gives an officer a very great acquaintance with his character...

A full acquaintance of the Soldiers' characters by their Officers, a strong example of good conduct on their parts, and a steady unchangeable mode of authority...is certainly the best plan for maintaining discipline; this mode prevents evil being done, and all preventions are worth ten corrections.¹¹⁶

This was by no means a novel thought in the army: it was standard practice in all regiments for the captain of a company or troop, for example, to inspect accounts, check barrack rooms and food, and the importance of knowing the character and quality of the men was well recognized. However, Manningham and Stewart went further. They encouraged the development of affection between officers and men, and affection among the other ranks.¹¹⁷

The acting Sergeant and Corporal are to be the only Non-commissioned Officers transferable from squad to squad, in the event of a disproportionate number present; but no change is ever to take place of either Officers or Soldiers in their several companies, platoons, or squads, unless when absolutely necessary for the equalisation of the battalion...This attention to retaining the same officers and men together, is on account of the Riflemen being liable to act very independently of each other, and in numerous small detachments in the field, when they will feel the comfort and utility of

¹¹⁵ Manningham *Regulations*, pp.77-78.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.9, 76-77. A memorandum of 1824 from the Commanding Officer Sir George Brown gave more detailed orders on the visiting of barracks, schoolroom and hospital. RGJ, Fitzgerald Notebook.

¹¹⁷ Paret, *Yorck*, pp.91-91 for Decken of the Prussian army looking to inspire in the men love of a commander: a classical ideal.

having their own Officer, Non-commissioned Officer and comrades with them; the service will be benefited by the tie of friendship, which will more naturally subsist between them...Every Corporal, Private, and Bugler, will select a comrade of the rank differing from his own, i.e. front and rear rank, and is never to change him without the permission of his Captain. Comrades are always to have the same birth [sic] in quarters.¹¹⁸

Stewart returned to this theme in a pamphlet published in 1805, *Outline for a Plan for the General Reform of the British Land Forces*,

It is not so much on the mechanical dexterity as on the acquirement of peculiar moral habitudes that the superiority of regular troops depends; discipline is rendered most perfect when authority is softened by feelings of honour and affection. It has invariably been the object of great commanders to mingle authority with lenity, to inspire their troops with their own capacity, to call forth their enthusiasm, and to create one common feeling between the officer and the soldier.¹¹⁹

In the *Regulations*, the men were assumed to be sensitive, and officers were required to command them without tyranny or cruelty.

Every inferior, whether officer or soldier, shall receive the lawful commands of his superior with deference and respect...Every superior in his turn, whether he be an Officer or Non-commissioned Officer, shall give his orders in the language of moderation, and of regard to the feelings of the individual under his command.¹²⁰

Officers were even encouraged to make the routine of regimental life pleasant for the men, 'throwing a degree of variety and recreation into the whole'.¹²¹ Military duties, it was argued, could be made enjoyable, and in this Manningham and Stewart followed De Rottenburg who wrote on the subject of training men to shoot,

to become an expert, a man should find encouragement, and even amusement in this practice.¹²²

But, again the Rifle Brigade regulations went further,

¹¹⁸ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.5, 7. This principle remained important in the regiment, being applied, for example, in the organization of men in barracks and on guard duty in the mid-century. RGJ, Standing Orders of the 2nd Battalion, 1844 and 1851.

¹¹⁹ Cited A.Bryant, *Jackets of Green: A Study of the History, Philosophy, and Character of the Rifle Brigade* (Collins, London, 1972), pp.41-42.

¹²⁰ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.2.

¹²¹ This attitude was shared by Sir John Moore. J.Fuller, 'Two Private Letters' refers to Moore allowing a proportion of each regiment under his command at Shorncliffe in 1805 to help with the local harvest, 'a little relaxation, if managed, will do no harm'. There are examples through the century of Rifle Brigade officers encouraging recreation. For example, the officers of the 1st Battalion in Canada in 1862 paid for the corps to go as tourists to see the Niagara Falls, trusting the men not to desert although the American army was offering a bounty of \$300. F.Jones, 'Hamilton's Last British Army Garrison: Rifle Brigade Quelled U.S. Threat', *The Hamilton Spectator*, 17 December, 1958.

¹²² De Rottenburg, *Regulations*, p.13.

The Captains and other officers of the corps are requested to shew every encouragement to their men, to amuse themselves at the games of cricket, hand or foot ball, leap-frog, quoits, vaulting, running, foot races, etc. etc...Dancing is a most excellent way of passing long evenings; it keeps up good humour and health...¹²³

The underlying aim of all these recommendations was to create a harmonious unit whose professional efficiency was based on co-operation.

It is the Colonel's particular wish that duty should be done with cheerfulness and inclination, and not from mere command and the necessity of obeying...[He] does not hesitate to avow his intentions of rendering all duties as pleasantly light as possible, provided he perceives a general inclination to good conduct, good humour and activity, which will ultimately lead both officers and men with more mutual attachment into the field...¹²⁴

Manningham and Stewart prescribed a regimental regime that valued social relationships for military ends. Through education, rewards and punishments and personal contact they delineated a notion of merit that had two aspects: first, military skills such as shooting, informed initiative, physical fitness and courage, and secondly, seemingly non-military virtues such as kindness, good humour, and respect. Recognition of all these created a set of values that they believed could be shared through the ranks and would guide sentiments of pride and esteem.

It was nonetheless the case that despite the encouragements for self-improvement, and the sharing of values and sentiments across ranks, some of the skills expected of officers were very difficult for most men of the other ranks to acquire. While the duties of officers in the internal economy of the regiment and on the field were technically more complex than those of the men, most of these could be acquired through experience (NCOs sometimes had a better grasp anyway than their officers of matters such as drill commands and even tactical movements)¹²⁵ and by reading a range of official and privately produced manuals, and indeed

¹²³ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.63-64. There are many references in the Rifle Brigade material throughout the period to officers encouraging sports, dancing, singing and playing musical instruments, and to officers and men playing together. For example, RGJ, Bramston Diary, 31 January 1852, 9 March 1852, 14 May 1852; RGJ Russell Diary, 2 April 1856.

¹²⁴ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.29, 64.

¹²⁵ Sergeant John Knox (later a major in the Rifle Brigade) advised Colonel Dalrymple at the battle of the Alma to advance again when he was set to retreat, O.Creagh and E.M.Humphris, *The Victoria Cross 1856-1920* (Hayward and Son, Suffolk, 1985), pp.23-24. Lieutenant Wellesley Pigott thanked Sergeant Richer for all he had done 'to make a man' of him. He hoped he could keep up his teaching, 'I am sure as long as I live I shall never forget my dear old friend who first taught me to soldier and to whom I owe the position I now hold'. RGJ, Folio 2, James Richer MSS, 23, Lieutenant W.Pigott to Sergeant Richer, 1 November 1884.

the Rifle Brigade's own regulations.¹²⁶ The seemingly non-military virtues they required were, however, expressed in an elaborate and subtly changing code of gentlemanly behaviour bound up in the exclusive social customs and fashions of the middle and upper classes, and these were much more difficult to define. They were largely a matter of instinct and style. Where Manningham and Stewart devoted several pages of their *Regulations* to the rewards for merit and punishments for crimes of the other ranks, they wrote only one paragraph for officers.

From the Officers of the regiment, the Colonel expects every example of what is good and great in a Soldier's and a Gentleman's character; the expectation implies a great deal; but it does not imply more than should be looked for in them, either if they feel the regard which is due to their own station, or to his Majesty's service.¹²⁷

The adherence to civilian codes of gentlemanliness by Manningham and Stewart produced important inconsistencies in the professional outlook of the regiment. There was a fundamental tension between their encouragement of the other ranks to aim at commissions, and a reinforcement of the social and cultural code of gentlemanliness that effectively excluded most of them. The professional and militarily meritocratic ideal that formed a part of the regulations was undermined, that is, because the officer corps was exclusive not only according to technical education and qualification, but also according to class-based culture, and, fundamentally, this coloured the notions of education and qualification themselves. When Manningham and Stewart wrote that any NCO deserving promotion should be rewarded, even to the highest rank, it appears that their idea of desert (like that of most contemporary army officers) included a claim to the sentiments and social behaviour of gentlemen.¹²⁸ The ladders of promotion and honours which they put in place for the other ranks were largely inadequate to transfer this to men raised in a variety of labouring and artisan communities in Britain. They also failed to address the need for a private income to keep up with mess customs, presents to the men and their charities, leisure activities and so on: generosity and living in an appropriate style were other aspects of

¹²⁶ Houlding, *Fit For Service*, pp.241-256.

¹²⁷ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.73.

¹²⁸ New Prussian regulations after 1806 specified that knowledge, education, bravery and quickness were to be the only criteria for awarding commissions, and preference was not to be given to the aristocracy. Nonetheless a debate continued over whether the other ranks could display the honour that was still required of officers, and in practice noble officers continued to dominate the service. Paret, *Yorck*, pp.133, 263-266.

gentlemanly conduct. Some men did take the step, and a few of these were accepted and respected by fellow officers¹²⁹ (as we have seen, the qualifications for gentlemanliness always had that degree of elasticity) but as Manningham and Stewart fully expected, for most men their professional position was as permanent as their (related) social position.

Manningham and Stewart nowhere in the *Regulations* declared directly their cultural and ideological debts in organising the new corps, but that their frame of reference was wider than military example is evident from a number of echoes of current political, social and religious debates about service, inheritance, honour, virtue (including duty appropriate to station), and equality and opportunity.¹³⁰

The *Regulations* reveals their acceptance of ideas of lordship and heredity, associated with aristocracy and incorporated in the ideal of gentlemanliness. They supported social deference as a part of military discipline. This was expressed, for example, in the gentlemanly style of command prescribed: after giving details of salutes in the *Regulations* they gave the instruction that a salute or other 'exterior mark of respect' should be returned 'with becoming politeness'.¹³¹ And it was expressed in a non-military, social identity for officers as superior people.

The object to be wished for in an officer's dressing uniformly, and with smartness is, first the inspiring the soldier with respect for his appearance as a man, and for his

¹²⁹ For example, Captain Huyshe of the Rifle Brigade met at Sierra Leone an ex-sergeant of the 83rd Regiment, now Lieutenant Rutherford of 2nd West India Regiment. He wrote, 'He is very little changed, looks scarcely older than I do, though he must be a good deal older, and quite gentlemanly'. They had lunch together. Cited W.Huyshe, *In Memoriam George Lightfoot Huyshe* (privately printed, London, 1874), p.21.

¹³⁰ As a Tory in the early years of the nineteenth century Stewart aligned himself in parliament with support for Anglican ascendancy, rights based on custom, and attacks on Whig libertinism, and these may have influenced his ideas on army reform. See J.Sack, *The Grenvillites 1801-29: Party Politics and Factionalism in the Age of Pitt and Liverpool* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1979). However, it cannot be inferred that Stewart's was a straightforwardly Tory project when as a Grenvillite he was allied with some sections of the Whig party.

¹³¹ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.21. The gentleman ranker 'Long' Thompson wrote in his book, *Life is a Jest: The Testimony of a Wanderer* that of the thirty officers of the Rifle Brigade with whom he came into contact in the late 1860s, all but two 'were regarded by us as being honourable, considerate, soldierly gentlemen. Many possessed the real affection – there is no other name for it – of the men of their respective companies... There seemed to be a feeling in the ranks that the officers, too, looked on us as comrades-in-arms... In the Standing Orders of the Battalion the following was one of the items: 'The salute is a mark of good will and respect between two members of the same honourable profession; it shall be offered first by the junior in rank and returned by the senior.' Cited Bryant, *Jackets of Green*, pp.149-150.

superiority over him as an Officer; both of which must be the case, when the dress, as regulated by His Majesty, is the only one in which an Officer appears before those who are subordinate to him...In the soldier's dressing well and with smartness, the principal object is first cleanliness (and cleanliness is at all times health) and afterwards a certain degree of self-pride, which being well dressed gives every soldier, and which self-pride should be encouraged, for it will in the end make him a better man.¹³²

Further, ideas of lordship and heredity were incorporated in the *Regulations* by creating a contract between officers and men of service and care. This was laid down at the beginning of the second chapter,

To the Colonel as supreme, all ranks are to look for protection and favour, whilst merit and zeal for the good of his Majesty's service in general, and of the regiment in particular, mark their conduct; on the other hand for displeasure, and even severity, should a want of discipline or good order intrude itself in the corps, which he has been entrusted with by his Majesty.¹³³

The idea of contract was reinforced, for example, in the passage,

Irregularities in the hospital will be punished most severely, because every comfort and attention will be given for the recovery of the Soldier, and therefore no abuse of such care shall be pardoned.¹³⁴

And finally (as will be shown in Chapter 3) these ideas of lordship and heredity were reflected in the encouragement of family appointments to the regiment.

Manningham and Stewart also showed traditionally aristocratic thinking in endorsing notions of honour. A regard for personal honour was shown in their injunction to officers to do their duty because it was due to their station, and also in the recognition of honour in the other ranks through regimental medals. And a sense of corporate honour was shown, too, (fitting, like personal honour, with long-standing military tradition) in endowing the regiment with characteristics reminiscent of a great family. It acquired and recorded a distinctive history that claimed institutional honour built on past deeds, calling for strong loyalty and even self-sacrifice. There are several passages in the *Regulations* that underscored this regimental identity and sense of corporate honour. For example, Manningham and Stewart gave the instruction,

Whenever a detachment is on duty from the regiment, the honour of his Majesty's service and of the corps is to be much attended to.¹³⁵

¹³² Manningham, *Regulations*, p.45.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, p.3.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.41.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p.27.

Also, they established a holiday for the 25th August, the foundation day of the corps (to join the birthdays of the king and queen, the Prince of Wales and – because he was Commander-in-Chief – the Duke of York, and Christmas Day, Good Friday and fast days).¹³⁶ And, creating a notion of extended kinship, they desired that,

The Rifle Corps shall be a home of comfort to those who are entitled to feel its benefits.¹³⁷

However, in developing the regulations for the corps, Manningham and Stewart most strongly reflected ideas associated with aristocracy in focusing on the claim to service of legitimate leaders. For example, they stated on the subject of gathering information on ground and on the enemy,

An Officer charged with a commission of this nature must lay his account with experiencing considerable difficulty and fatigue: but by his succeeding in it he will have rendered an essential service to the Army. The success of a great enterprize! the lives of numbers of men! depend frequently upon a general's being acquainted beforehand with some decisive movement the enemy are about to make.¹³⁸

And, further, they wrote,

The colonel directs that the greatest activity, alertness, and precision be at all times shewn by those on duty, whether Officers or Soldiers; and that the Officer who commands the regiment...never relaxes in the smallest degree from the strict rules of service and duty. It is not enough for an Officer or Non-commissioned Officer of his regiment merely to do his duty, he must do more than is always required, he must volunteer his services on many occasions.¹³⁹

And, just as the civilian notion of gentlemanliness had Christian as well as aristocratic roots, so the views of Manningham and Stewart¹⁴⁰ were touched by religious as well as aristocratic ideology. An accent on duty gave a religious and moral base to the military imperatives of energy and discipline, and it supported the social hierarchy of the regiment. Their views on religious worship in the regiment had a strong social and political dimension, and were linked to military duty.

Great attention will be had to a strict observance of Sundays, and of those religious duties which are required of every Officer and Soldier who professes himself to be a

¹³⁶ Ibid., p.31.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p.54.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p.50.

¹³⁹ Ibid., p.25.

¹⁴⁰ Stewart's family had strong religious connexions. His brother was Bishop of Quebec. See below, p.230, fn104.

Christian...the soldier who acknowledges not his Creator is not very likely to care much for the commands of any Officer, or other superior on earth...it was carelessness for religion which contributed to plunge one half of Europe into the miseries which it has lately endured.¹⁴¹

The connection between leadership in the regiment and the ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness, mapped out by Manningham and Stewart, proved a durable approach that coloured professional development in the corps through the mid-century. Continuity occurred in large measure because the ideal itself persisted in nineteenth-century culture (and the corps was constantly fed with civilian ideas) and because it was successful in a military context. Common adherence to a notion of regenerated gentlemanliness was flexible enough to act as the central guide in their profession to officers of any shade of middling or high social rank and any degree of military zeal. Further, the notion of gentlemanliness not only served to bind officers together, it also worked to tie them to the other ranks. This operated through a commitment to meritocracy (defined with the virtues of gentlemanliness in mind), through a renewed sense of the duties and responsibilities of leadership reflected in paternalism and patronage, and, perhaps, (though there is little supporting evidence from their side) through sensitivity to views of justice and propriety acceptable to the men.¹⁴² However, its transmission in the regiment was also ensured by the presence for several decades of long-serving veterans of the Napoleonic

¹⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 49-50. This echoes observations made by Edmund Burke on how the breakdown of discipline in revolutionary armies could reflect the disintegration of the political and social order in civilian society. Burke noted that the revolutionary call to the equality and rights of men 'destroyed the principal of obedience', and this was exacerbated by the French revolutionary ideology that simultaneously destroyed fear of eternal punishment. E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), C.O'Brien (ed) (Harmondsworth, London, 1968), p. 343, discussed in I.Hampsher-Monk, *A History of Modern Political Thought: Major Political Thinkers From Hobbes to Marx* (Blackwell, Oxford, 1992), p.298. It is likely that Manningham and Stewart were concerned about the seduction of their troops by French ideology. Andrew Barnard of the Rifle Brigade had, for example, declared that British soldiers on the continent had become such democrats that the government was afraid to bring them home. A.Barnard to I.Barnard, 15 December 1794, cited A.D.Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters 1778-1824* (Duckworth, London, 1928), p.46.

¹⁴² It may be that reference to notions of gentlemanliness touched on popular nationalist sentiment with which the other ranks, as part of the wider lower classes, might identify. Colley argues this feeling was most alive in urban centres and areas vulnerable to invasion, and it sustained recruiting to volunteer corps at home. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1992), pp. 299-319. The call for Britons to unite to oppose French oppression, military despotism and atheism could entail a conservative political outlook, but it also had the potential to add support for political and social change in its appeal to an idealized national character that transcended class (and so was essentially egalitarian) and in its attention to defining traditional liberties and the virtues of different constitutional and social arrangements. For the exploration of class and nationality in contemporary theatre, see G.Russell, *Theatres of War : Performance, Politics and Society 1793-1815* (Oxford University Press, 1995).

Wars. For example, of the sixty-eight officers serving in 1840, ten had been in the Peninsula, and six of these had been at Waterloo as well. The long careers of these men (their low mortality was partly owing to the regiment seeing action only rarely in the decades after 1815) created a mixture of generations in the regiment that cemented strong traditions in outlook.¹⁴³

The survival of the ideal of gentlemanliness in the Rifle Brigade is shown in an article that appeared in the *Skirmisher* (magazine of the 2nd Battalion) in September 1860 written by a Rifleman under the pseudonym of 'Attached'.¹⁴⁴ It bore the title 'Talent and How to Use It' with the subtitle, 'faber quisque fortunae suae': every man the maker of his own fortune. It was a short essay on the capabilities of individuals and the personal and social reasons for self-improvement. It revealed a conventional commitment to the duty of all individuals to work and a belief in the possibility and justice of advancement through merit. The piece urged Riflemen of all ranks to recognise that,

each one of us has some innate faculty, some secret ability to excel in some particular way...by which we might if we would, greatly benefit our fellow creatures, and at the same time win an honourable name, as well as some more substantial benefits for ourselves...

Individual application to 'physical and mental' improvement would, it argued, lead soldiers to live a useful and successful life, measured in the esteem of others and in material gain.

Nonetheless, the article by 'Attached' went on to argue that while men of all ranks had the potential to rise, and should be encouraged to develop as far as they could,

in each position in life we may find our superior in some respect.

Furthermore, a man,

can afford to be inferior to some, in being superior to most, for though not famous, he will have earned the respect of many of his companions, who, acknowledging his efforts, will accord him a high place in their good opinion, and class him with those who not being winners, deserve praise for running well.

¹⁴³ These direct links with the early years of the regiment persisted into the later nineteenth century. For example, Lieutenant-General Charles de Ainslie gave the speech of thanks from the old Riflemen at the regimental dinner in 1884 recalling that when he joined the corps in 1825 Amos Norcott was his colonel, William Norcott his Adjutant, John Kincaid a subaltern, and Harry Smith his captain. NAM, 6804/2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.230-231, M.Dillon to Cope, 31 May 1884

¹⁴⁴ RGJ, Folio 1, p.30, *The Skirmisher or Rifle Brigade Gazette*, September 1860, p.8.

By encouraging all to develop innate talents, a commitment to basic human equality was implied. However (as in the *Regulations*) the resulting social and professional mobility of soldiers was circumscribed by recognising that most would not change their station in life. This conclusion was only softened by valuing effort in itself, and by the possibility of earning respect at any level.¹⁴⁵ The striving of all ranks to develop their talents, with the aim of helping others, would result, for the author, in an ordering of men in which a talented and virtuous, but (as later passages imply) largely hereditary, élite would facilitate the hard work and cheerfulness of a co-operative but subordinate majority. Despite their unequal positions, all would be duly esteemed by the rest. Rare individuals might markedly alter their station in life (and therefore their military rank), but most would flourish in the position to which they were born.

The article remarked that 'talent is power' and pointed to the wider importance to society of using talents to good ends, translating directly a prescription for the regiment to a prescription for a rural or urban community. It declared that just as many examples from history, not least the reign of Robespierre (invoking the spectre of egalitarianism and revolution) showed the results of the misuse of power, so a look at 'everyday life...around our homes' could give the same lesson.

...in travelling through the picturesque country villages of our beautiful English counties, can we not tell by the scenes which we there meet with, whether the relations of landlord and tenant are happily adjusted? Do we not admire, in the neat cottages with their pretty and well-kept gardens, and their hard-working yet cheerful inmates – the characteristic of most agricultural hamlets – the happy sway which the neighbouring proprietor of the district before us exercises over the hearts and affections of this small population. Does not this picture contrast pleasantly, with the squalor

¹⁴⁵ RGJ, Folio 1, p.30, 'P.Q.', 'Concerning Our Indian Shopkeepers and their Manners', *The Skirmisher*, September 1860, p.1 expressed a similar opinion. It declared that European tradesmen in India (in contrast with the best to be found in London) showed bad taste in needless fear for their dignity by refusing to show a respectful and civil manner toward gentlemen customers. In India a gentleman could not talk with familiarity to his gun-maker or boot-maker 'more as a friend than as a superior' because shopkeepers there were so conscious of their equality and independence of feeling as Britons, which manifested itself in 'an uneasy pertness' and 'a morbid assertion of dignity'. It would indeed be vulgar of the customer 'to be swaggering and overbearing on the strength of his being born a gentleman (thereby showing that he was not one)', but gentlemen customers most probably knew that 'God made you and the shopman'. Shopkeepers ought to be glad that some people were more wealthy than others. A boot vendor in India who refused to take off the boots of his customer, thinking this stand 'very dignified and manly' would not have been lowered by the civility and 'would have been more sensible had he remembered that with the sale of boots, he also incurred the responsibilities and liabilities, such as the above little circumstance, that attend the keeping of those articles'.

and quarrelsome poverty which you may at any time see ruling the homes and people of our manufacturing districts, who, – ground down by the exacting avarice of their employers, thoughtless on every point but that of their own gain, – too often sink into every form of wickedness and crime.

Here was a professional and social ideal that rested on a complex notion of merit. It recognised the value of intellectual and physical ability (by urging their development), but at the same time admired the philanthropy and public duty associated with both the landed ruling classes and the religious and civic-minded middle classes. It encompassed ideas of duty to society according to social station, and paternalism. It ultimately upheld hereditary wealth and privilege as the reward (or price) for engineering a happy and productive community. The pact of co-operation between those wielding power and those subject to it depended by this analysis (as for Manningham and Stewart) on the feeling subsisting between them. It was the task of those with power to create good relationships and this required responsible behaviour: according to the moral qualities of the leadership, a society (or regiment) would develop well or badly.

The idea of merit put forward by ‘Attached’ was a simplified blend of ideas current in shared middle- and ruling-class culture of the period. Only the year before the publication of the article by ‘Attached’, Samuel Smiles had articulated a number of similar ideas in his highly successful book *Self Help*¹⁴⁶ (though without the accent on a rural ideal¹⁴⁷). Smiles offered a guide to men and women of the lower and middle classes aspiring to rise in society. Earnest effort both in the work place and at home would, he believed, bring both money and (closely related) respectability. He preached the efficacy of virtues ‘of common sense and perseverance’ such as frugality, self-denial, thrift, punctuality, orderliness, rising early, useful leisure and prudent marriage – not too young (all virtues commonly admired in the army). However, for

¹⁴⁶ *Self Help* sold 20,000 copies in 1859 and 130,000 more by 1890, J.F.C.Harrison, *The Early Victorians 1832-1851* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1971), pp.132, 139-141. Anderson, *A Liberal State at War*, pp.109-110, 132 points to other influential works for self-improvement, including J.S.Mill, *Essay On Liberty* (1859) and T.Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841).

¹⁴⁷ Smiles aimed at a largely urban readership. Among others, Edward Baines of the *Leeds Mercury* had exposed the myth of a rural idyll by pointing out in the 1840s that current problems of poverty, including of housing and sanitation, were as acute in the countryside as in the cities.

Smiles advancement could not be achieved without attention to morals and manners as well as industry, for,

Truthfulness, integrity, and goodness – qualities that hang not on any man's breath – form the essence of manly character...He who possesses these qualities, united with strength of purpose, carries with him a power which is irresistible. He is strong to do good, strong to resist evil, and strong to bear up under difficulty and misfortune.¹⁴⁸

Again, as for 'Attached', those succeeding in life gained power by degrees, and it was essential for any who wanted success to understand that only through the responsible exercise of power could they achieve respect.¹⁴⁹ The correct methods of exercising power could be learned through cultivating a gentlemanly style of behaviour.

There are many tests by which a gentleman may be known; but there is one that never fails – How does he *exercise power* over those subordinate to him? How does he conduct himself toward women and children; How does the officer treat his men, the employer his servants, the master his pupils, and man in every station those who are weaker than himself? The discretion, forbearance, and kindness with which power in such cases is used, may indeed be regarded as the crucial test...¹⁵⁰

Like 'Attached', Smiles encouraged all ranks in society to develop their talents and to be ambitious, but also pointed out that the hierarchy was (quite properly for him) ordered not only by money and qualifying skills, but by non-material and non-professional attributes. His work aimed to make gentlemanly status (his ultimate social goal) accessible to all: he produced strategies intended to widen further the membership of the gentlemanly classes. It is worth noting, too, that he used many military examples in *Self-Help*, pointing not only to the virtues of officers including Sir Ralph Abercromby, Charles Napier, Henry Hardinge and the Duke of Wellington, but also to the 'noble self-denial', indeed the gentlemanly qualities, of the other ranks.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ S.Smiles, *Self-Help* (1859) revised edition with an introduction by A.Briggs (John Murray, London, 1966), p.362.

¹⁴⁹ A.McLaurin, 'Reworking 'work' in some Victorian writing and visual art', in E.Sigsworth (ed), *In Search of Victorian Values: Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Thought and Society* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1988), pp.31-32 argues that a central aim of Smiles was to show that 'the duty of helping one's self in the highest sense involves the helping of one's neighbours', despite the contradiction with the competitive and combative elements in 'free enterprise'.

¹⁵⁰ Smiles, *Self-Help*, p.379.

¹⁵¹ Smiles praised the 'chivalry...bravery and gentleness' of 'men of all classes' in the Crimean War, and of Brigadier-General James Neill, Major-General Sir Henry Havelock and Lieutenant-General Sir James Outram (as well as the English civilians) in the Indian Mutiny, taking their example to indicate that 'our countrymen are as yet an undegenerate race'. Smiles, *Self-Help*, pp.38-39,44, 51, 233-234, 275-278, 378-379, 380.

In following a line that echoed Smiles, the Rifleman 'Attached' furthered the original aim of Manningham and Stewart of encouraging the development and due promotion of all ranks through education and effort, and thus on one level forwarded a professionalizing view. But at the same time he once again underscored similar anti-professional, gentlemanly attitudes: the interconnection between professional and social status in a traditional hierarchy, and the model of a harmonious community, based on deference and inherited social place, tempered by virtue and honour. Although over half a century of development in Britain (social, economic, political and theological) had given altered resonance to the tensions between professional and gentlemanly merit, the formula employed to reconcile them (in the Rifle Brigade and by civilians like Smiles) was remarkably enduring and static.

2.3 Reform and Gentlemanliness

Despite these important continuities in outlook, details of the discipline, internal economy and military practice of the various battalions of the Rifle Brigade did not remain unchanged in this period. As new military demands were made on the corps and as a succession of officers of diverse character and opinion (often, as we have seen in their career patterns, with wider army experience) guided policy, aspects of its professional work and relationships were continually renegotiated. Developments in punishment, training and equipment can be seen from one angle as responses to military experience, and they owed much to individual initiative. However, taking into account the line of adherence to the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness that can be traced from the regimental regulations to thinking current in the corps in the mid-century, these developments can also be viewed as experiments in applying the ideology of gentlemanliness.

Sir John Moore's training system, developed at Shorncliffe, highlighted early the two main strands in the wider nineteenth-century reform movement that were reflected in the Rifle

Brigade.¹⁵² His aim was to remodel the officer corps of the units under his command first to give them a more zealous attitude to the craft of the profession, and secondly to introduce a more humane approach to the other ranks. For Moore, this double approach was essential to efficiency. Colonel Kenneth Mackenzie, commanding officer of the 52nd Regiment, and assistant to Moore at Shorncliffe, set the tone.

He began by assembling the officers and telling them that the only way of having a regiment in good order was by every individual thoroughly knowing and performing his duty; and that if the officers did not fully understand their duty, it would be quite impossible to expect that the men either could or would perform theirs as they ought. Therefore the best and surest method was to begin by *drilling* the whole of the officers, and when they became perfectly acquainted with the system they could teach the men, and by their zeal, knowledge, and above all good temper and kind treatment of the soldier, make the regiment the best in the service.¹⁵³

Moore took the view that officers should set an example to the men both in technical skill and bravery, and in personal conduct and 'manly' relations with others. When in 1798, for example, he received two anonymous letters from the men of three companies of the Westmeath Militia, alleging that their commanding officer, Lord Westmeath, had arbitrarily withheld their pay, Moore called the men together and instructed them to put their complaints to him in a 'decent, manly manner' through a deputation. In turn he pledged to look into their grievance. On finding the colonel at fault, he ordered that the proceedings of the regimental court martial should be forwarded to the Commander-in-Chief.¹⁵⁴ Again, when he was serving in Corsica in 1795, Moore was dismayed to see that the Viceroy Sir Gilbert Elliot took a mere half hour to confirm a sentence of capital punishment on a soldier convicted of breaking into and robbing a house. Moore noted that his predecessor in command, General Stuart, had asked Moore a number of questions in a similar case, and read the proceedings carefully. Indeed he had invariably waited several days to deliver the sentence.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.79 sees both the encouragement and repression of men in the late eighteenth century army as rooted in the professional nature of army service. Developments creating on the one hand a sense of obligation to the less fortunate, and on the other deference to more professional and able officers were subsequently institutionalised in the reforms in the treatment of the other ranks initiated by Moore and the Duke of York.

¹⁵³ G.Napier, *Passages in the Early Life of General Sir George Napier, Written by Himself* (London, 1884), p.12, cited C.Oman, *Sir John Moore* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1953), p.324.

¹⁵⁴ Moore, J. , *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, J.F.Maurice (ed) (Edward Arnold, London, 1904), vol.1, p.277, 16 March 1798.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.142, 16 March 1795.

Moore not only took the instrumental view that this pattern of behaviour resulted in efficient military performance, nor that it reflected humane justice. He also saw it as proper to officers because they were gentlemen. In 1792 he wrote to his father from Cork,

I have been obliged to punish soldiers twice, since I joined, very severely, for drunkenness upon duty. It is a crime I have often declared I never would pardon. About a week ago a lieutenant of the regiment was guilty of it; he went rioting about the town, and was absent from his guard all night. There may be some excuse for a poor soldier forgetting himself so far; there can be none for an officer.

Moore then called the officers of the regiment together and sent a message to the lieutenant to resign and sell his commission immediately or face a court-martial.

I do not think, that after recent and severe examples made among the men, for the same crime, sentenced by courts-martial consisting of the officers of the regiment, any one of themselves who could be guilty of it must be totally devoid of every feeling and sentiment of a gentleman. I said so to the officers, and had the satisfaction to find they all agreed with me.¹⁵⁶

Further, Moore translated his ideal of gentlemanly behaviour to (or from) civilian society. For example, he believed the same virtues underpinned the authority and harmonious relations of landowners with tenants in Ireland. He told General Earl Cornwallis in 1798 that he believed the country would become quiet and remain so if gentlemen would return to their estates and treat their people with justice rather than harshness and cruelty.¹⁵⁷

I have found only two gentlemen who acted with liberality or manliness; the rest seemed in general to be actuated by the meanest motives. The common people have been so ill-treated by them, and so often deceived, that neither attachment nor confidence any longer exists. They have yielded in this instance to force, are humbled, but irritated to a great degree, and unless the gentlemen change their conduct and manner toward them, or Government steps in with regulations for the protection of the lower from the upper order, the pike will appear again very soon.¹⁵⁸

Moore's commitment to both greater competence among officers and a more humane attitude to the men (which, as has been shown, was part of a wider reform movement in European armies) made a strong impression on many British officers in the early and mid-nineteenth century, and thus he helped to foster adherence to the ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness. His attitudes and training system encouraged both enthusiasm for experiments in a range of technical aspects of soldiering (new equipment, drills and training methods) and

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14, J. Moore to Dr. J. Moore, 17 February 1792.

¹⁵⁷ Oman, *Sir John Moore*, p. 185.

¹⁵⁸ Moore, *Diary*, vol. 1, p. 290, 27 May 1798.

efforts to improve the treatment of the other ranks. General Rowland Hill (who served with Moore in Egypt and Spain), the Napier brothers, Lord Seaton¹⁵⁹ and Field Marshal Sir Henry Hardinge (who was with Moore when he was fatally wounded) were all influenced by him.¹⁶⁰

There is evidence for a similar outlook encouraging technical improvement (a part of the ideal of gentlemanliness) in the Rifle Brigade. One officer is known to have been active as an inventor: Colonel George Miller (who served in the regiment from 1804 to 1826) developed in 1816 a conic shell with detonating powder fixed at the point of the cone. This tip was intended to stick to the sides of ships and set them on fire, although the device failed in tests at Woolwich.¹⁶¹ Likewise, while on the staff of the Eastern District in England under the Earl of Chatham in the summer of 1811, William Stewart took a close interest in the experiments with arms conducted by Major Augustus Frazer of the Royal Artillery.¹⁶² And the regiment also helped in the development of new accoutrements and equipment, including a new back pack.¹⁶³ More importantly, the Rifle Brigade was closely involved in the development of small arms through the period. The regiment used (before 1870) the Baker, Brunswick, Lancaster, Minié,

¹⁵⁹ Lord Seaton wrote on the death of Sir John Moore, 'He was superior by many degrees to everyone I have seen: he had a magnificent mind. A most perfect gentleman. A determined enemy to the corrupt, corruption, and jobs, he never spared where he thought it his duty to inflict.' J.Colborne to Miss Townsend, 9 March 1809, cited G.C.Moore Smith, *The Life of John Colborne, Field-Marshal Lord Seaton* (John Murray, London, 1903), p.109.

¹⁶⁰ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.29, 34, 36-37. The view here that Sir John Moore's influence was strong through the first half of the nineteenth century opposes the argument that Sir Garnet Wolseley 'represented a new spirit in the British army, or rather he symbolized the revival of an older tradition linked with the careers of Sir John Moore and the great Duke of Marlborough'. W.S.Hamer, *The British Army Civil-Military Relations 1885-1905* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1970), pp.21, 26-27.

¹⁶¹ Southampton Univ., WP1/947/5, Burgh to the Duke of Wellington, 10 August 1828. Also, though after his retirement from the army, Sir Thomas Mitchell of the Rifle Brigade pioneered the boomerang propellor for ships.

¹⁶² Stewart, *Cumloden Papers*, p.2.

¹⁶³ Lieutenant Sidney Beckwith wrote to Sir George Brown, 'I will send your knapsack by the railway tomorrow...the man who has been wearing it and has marched out in it says that he has not discerned any difference in it...[but] thinks it is somewhat easier to pack – for this reason – when the kit is placed in the pocket he can close it with ease and by giving it a great *thumping* knock the things well together – this is his idea.' Nat.Lib.Scotland, MS 1848, 157-8, S.Beckwith to G.Brown, 30 October 1853.

long and short Enfield, Whitworth and Snider rifles,¹⁶⁴ and both reported on performance and, in the case of the Minié, carried out formal trials.¹⁶⁵

As a specialist rifle regiment, the Rifle Brigade laid particular emphasis on musketry. It used elaborate and innovative training systems (although constrained by a changing regulation allowance of rounds of ball per man).¹⁶⁶ The regimental regulations stipulated that sergeants were to fire four rounds once a week (without their companies present) and officers should occasionally practise with them. The men were to be divided into three classes according to proficiency, and were to be given targets of graduated difficulty, including moving targets and body shapes, and they were to shoot in varied terrain.¹⁶⁷ Each man was to fire six rounds at least three times a month, and a record was to be kept of performance. Exercises were normally to be done using blank cartridges, but once every third or fourth week they were to practise manoeuvres with powder.¹⁶⁸ These instructions were exceptionally imaginative and were still useful several decades later. The Standing Orders of the 2nd Battalion, accumulated between 1844 and 1852, shows that officers continued to keep a target practice book, and they still set specific levels of attainment for three classes of marksmen, similar to those laid down in the regulations, although safety procedures and practice in 'economy of time in handling and loading ammunition' had been added. The Rifle Brigade also made a direct contribution to the school of musketry at Hythe established in 1853 (intended to disseminate skills in rifle shooting throughout the army).¹⁶⁹ Lieutenant Francis Markham was a Lieutenant-Instructor there in

¹⁶⁴ Cope, *History*, pp.515-517.

¹⁶⁵ RGJ, Folio 2, p.80, Report W.Norcott to R.Airey, 20 February, 1854; RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 2, 21 August 1854, Norcott did further tests on the Minié rifle in the Crimea. Norcott worried that the men were not shooting accurately, hitting the target in only 15 out of 100 shots, although their loading bore out his report. Later they were achieving 90 hits out of 200, and shot very well from the shoulder. Nonetheless the men could still only make 150 shots at one session because the hand and eye became too tired. Norcott took credit for the introduction of the Minié, 'I feel I have saved our Bacon and reputation'.

¹⁶⁶ In the 1830s this stood at 90 per man per annum, plus a ration of blanks. Strachan, *From Waterloo*, p.47.

¹⁶⁷ RGJ, Bramston Diary, 3 February 1852 the corps had target practice on board ship with a 'wonderful machine' evidently invented by Captain Julius Glyn.

¹⁶⁸ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.57-62.

¹⁶⁹ Strachan, *Tactics*, pp.157-158.

1865; Colour-Sergeant John Fisher was a Sergeant-Instructor there in the 1870s;¹⁷⁰ and Colonel Charles Slade became its Commandant in 1890.

The Rifle Brigade had a high opinion of its own shooting. Lieutenant Gordon wrote in his diary in the Crimea in January 1856,

There is a great deal of chaff in the Army at the fact that an 88th officer is appointed to teach the brigade in which the 2nd Battalion is, and a 46th officer the brigade in which our 1st Battalion is - Aiming Drill -I guess our men will be savage.¹⁷¹

The regiment was equally proud of its advanced light infantry skills. After adopting the methods of De Rottenburg, Manningham and Stewart, and Moore in the first decade of the century,¹⁷² it continued to borrow from advanced drills, movements and supporting procedures appearing in subsequent years. In particular, the regiment also used Robert Craufurd's *The Standing Orders of the Light Division*¹⁷³ (which were considered unusually strict though enlightened) and these were again read by officers in the Rifle Brigade over twenty years after their publication.¹⁷⁴

It appears that the regiment continually adapted its practice. While serving in Nova Scotia and Canada from 1844 to 1851 the 2nd Battalion accumulated Standing Orders relating to guard duties and drill. Many of these were intended only to reinforce existing regulations, for instance,

The Regulation for the Army prohibiting officers and soldiers from taking off their clothing or accoutrements while they are on guard must be strictly adhered to.

¹⁷⁰ RGJ, Folio 1, p.11, Pension Certificate of Colour-Sergeant John Fisher.

¹⁷¹ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 3 January 1856.

¹⁷² Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.346-347 for an incident during a clash with American soldiers in 1814, when his disposition of soldiers (in extended order and under cover, with a means of retreat) was changed by an officer of the 85th Regiment. This so infuriated Surtees in its military stupidity that he left in 'a huff'.

¹⁷³ R.Craufurd, *Standing Orders as given out and enforced by the Late Major-General Robert Craufurd, for the use of the Light Division* (1814) (London, 1844). These were republished in 1844 for the use of the army serving in Ireland, A.H. Craufurd, *General Craufurd and His Light Division: With Many Anecdotes, a Paper and letters by Sir John Moore, and also letters from the Right Hon. W. Windham, Duke of Wellington, Lord Londonderry, and Others* (Griffith, Farran, Okeden and Welsh, London, 1891), pp.225-226. Craufurd's son Robert served in the Rifle Brigade from 1836 to 1849, and his great-grandson, also Robert, was put down for a place. RGJ, Noting Book, 1889.

¹⁷⁴ Cope, *History*, p.44. Craufurd, like Moore, influenced many light infantry officers: Sir George Brown always kept a little portrait of Craufurd in his room, Craufurd, *General Craufurd*, p.136.

However, they also included modifications to the drill.¹⁷⁵ For example,

When a company is to take ground for any considerable distance in a diagonal direction, either as a support or to form a line of skirmishers, it should be moved in open column of sections by bringing the leading section to the front, and the remaining sections right or left shoulder forward. This formation is easily preserved even in double time whereas if the company takes ground by the echelon of sections, it requires much care to preserve the covering and distance, and is therefore only suitable when a short distance is to be gained to a flank, and should never be attempted in double time.¹⁷⁶

These were apparently the product of experience, and were recommended in an effort to update and improve the performance of the unit in action. William Norcott, ten years later, serving in the 2nd Battalion (having previously served in the 1st and then the 2nd Reserve Battalions) in turn developed further ideas for rapid movements. He wrote in May 1854 from Varna,

Usual parade. Oh! that I had the Battn. Slow is the word. Find the drill I recommended 6 months ago is *now* being practised. Do in peace what needs to be done in war! The justice of squares as supports has even been forced on the obtuse intellect (military) of Lawrence! It is a Victory! The men know *I* am the father of the child, though he has no such name.¹⁷⁷

Norcott made several references to changes and improvements he wanted to see made,¹⁷⁸ most emphatically the reduction of the weight carried by the troops. He noted that the Light Division, the 7th, 23rd, 33rd, 77th, and 88th were, 'laden to death',¹⁷⁹ and he asked, 'Can it be that these things shall pass unnoticed and unadopted?'¹⁸⁰

While there is evidence, then, for the Rifle Brigade contributing military and technical ideas and experiments, and adopting an open approach to a range of reforms, it should be noted that there is evidence, too, to suggest that, despite these efforts and intentions, Riflemen were

¹⁷⁵ Charles Philip de Ainslie of the Rifle Brigade also served in four separate dragoon regiments. He wrote *The Cavalry Manual* and contributed to the *USJ*. Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.27.

¹⁷⁶ RGJ, Standing Orders of the 2nd Battalion, 18 October 1844.

¹⁷⁷ RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 1, 17 May 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 26 August 1854, Norcott had to march the men over difficult country, and he was proud that only seven fell out, 'I know, I *know* how to march men'.

¹⁷⁸ Other Rifle Brigade officers, too, backed ideas for changes, for example Lieutenant William Cuninghame wanted the regimental uniform changed to grey because he thought it less visible to the enemy, especially at night. RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, W.Cuninghame to his father, 19 January 1855.

¹⁷⁹ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 11 May 1854.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, vol 1, 6 May 1854; *ibid.*, vol 4, 3 March 1855, he received orders from Sir Richard England to harass the enemy at the front, despite the risk of provoking retaliation, and noted, 'are we ever to teach red soldiers outpost duty?'

The views of Major-General Kenneth Mackenzie (previously Colonel of the 52nd Regiment) on punishment indicate one application of the outlook developed at Shorncliffe. Mackenzie held that personal contact with the men was essential for preventing misdemeanours, but that once an offence had been committed, and a case carefully tried, a man should be treated with an unwavering, mechanistic justice in which the personality of the offender, and his personal relationship with his comrades were irrelevant. This expressed a style of leadership that was unbending and untouched by sentiment. Mackenzie issued detailed guidelines on punishment in 1814, and these were evidently used in the Rifle Brigade into the 1820s.¹⁸⁸ Reflecting on the half-yearly lists of courts-martial of the regiments of his division, Mackenzie was particularly worried about,

the system of bringing Soldiers to trial, and then forgiving them the punishment to which they are sentenced.

This, he argued, made NCOs and soldiers think that their comrades ought to have been punished, but had instead been allowed to commit an offence with impunity. It created an encouragement to more crime and so in the long run led to more punishments.

Mackenzie also condemned 'the practice of forgiving in part'. To inflict less than the punishment awarded implied, he argued, either that the sentence of the court-martial had been too severe, in which case it ought not to have been confirmed, or the offender was not being punished as his crime deserved. Further, Mackenzie believed that the reasons assigned for pardons were 'frequently very improper', especially the reason of intercession by an officer commanding the man's company. 'The infliction of punishment must be uniform, and regulated by strict justice', otherwise punishment depended on the good nature or mere caprice of a captain, and any soldier who was punished 'has certainly reason to be dissatisfied'.

Mackenzie objected, too, to the pardoning of men on account of former good character. In his view, a man convicted of theft, or 'what is the same thing' having stolen goods in his possession, or another serious crime, should have no remittance for previous good conduct.

¹⁸⁸ Lieutenant Fitzgerald, who served in the regiment from 1812 to 1825, copied them with George Brown's revised Standing Orders for the 2nd Battalion of 1824. RGJ, Richard Fitzgerald Notebook.

not always fully trained, nor more advanced or professionally competent than other soldiers.¹⁸¹ During the Crimean War, for example, (the then Lieutenant-Colonel) Lawrence confessed that when he saw shells in the air for the first time at the Alma, he took them for a flight of starlings.¹⁸² Likewise, Lieutenant Gordon was taught to take cover by a sergeant of the Sappers because, 'I did not quite understand at first a shell'.¹⁸³ Private Donsworth and his batch of recruits had only a few months training before they were sent East.¹⁸⁴ And Captain Hammond was so badly briefed on the fighting in the trenches that he was killed on his first day out.¹⁸⁵ The intensity, effectiveness and type of training given evidently varied according to the posting of the regiment, the percentage of new recruits, and the zeal and priorities of individual commanding officers; and certainly both officers and men learned many basic skills while in their posts and in action.¹⁸⁶

These experiments and innovations in the more technical aspects of arms, drill, tactics and training were conceived as part of a professional outlook that valued energy, expertise and attention to duty, and that looked to the officer corps for leadership and excellence.¹⁸⁷ They can all be viewed as practical applications of an interpretation of gentlemanliness to which Sir John Moore and other reforming officers, including Manningham and Stewart, consciously subscribed. Similarly, a range of approaches to the treatment of the other ranks (framed again within the ideal of gentlemanliness) were taken in the Rifle Brigade over several decades.

¹⁸¹ Sir George Brown complained that the Rifle Brigade had so little practice at shooting that when they did there were normally accidents involving the loss of fingers or worse. Nat.Lib. Scotland, MSS 2839, f108, Brown to Gardiner, 26 July 1834, cited Strachan, *From Waterloo*, p.47

¹⁸² NAM, 6804/2, Cope MSS, vol 1, p.341, Lawrence to his wife, 22 September 1854.

¹⁸³ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 14 November 1855.

¹⁸⁴ T.J.C.Cook, 'Corporal A.J.Donsworth, Rifle Brigade, 1837-1858' in *JSAHR*, vol 58, 1980, pp.55-58.

¹⁸⁵ This was not every Rifle Brigade officer's experience in the Crimean War: Norcott, 'Took young Musgrave down to see the trenches and give him knowledge of the ground'. RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 4, 3 March 1855.

¹⁸⁶ Not all were interested in the technical aspects of soldiering. For example, Captain Huyshe was an ambitious officer. He attended Staff College, learned German, published on the history of the Ashanti, and became a skilled surveyor. Yet he disliked surveying and found it dull. He hoped only to bring his name forward for responsibility in active fighting. Huyshe, *In Memoriam*, p.19.

¹⁸⁷ Colonel Macdougall, 'The Military Character of General Sir Charles J.Napier', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, vol 4, 1860, 8, p.131 quotes Napier on the imperative of officers studying their profession, 'How else could I command with honour? How answer for the lives of those entrusted to my charge? An ignorant general is a murderer: all brave men confide in the knowledge he pretends to possess, and when the death trial comes their generous blood flows in vain!'

A convicted thief may once have had a good Character in the opinion of those who did not sufficiently know him, but he never could have deserved it.

It was a just principle for him, too, that the same crime should always carry the same sentence, and he noted with disapproval considerable variation in punishments even within the same regiment. Finally, Mackenzie argued that prevention was the proper basis of discipline. Officers should know their men and visit them, and should investigate cases very closely, so that everyone knew that any crime committed would be detected. 'The certainty of Punishment is the effectual method to prevent its frequency.'

These recommendations set up officers as diligent and consistent leaders, administering strict justice once the contract of co-operation and good conduct with the other ranks had been broken. Thus they enacted one interpretation of how a gentlemanly officer should act. Nonetheless, these guidelines differed from the Rifle Brigade regulations which specifically directed that individual cases should be carefully weighed to take into account the previous character of a convicted man.¹⁸⁹ Manningham and Stewart shared the commitment of Mackenzie to strict justice. However, their view of leadership in a regimental community put more emphasis on the personal and social (as in other areas) in deciding punishments.¹⁹⁰ This was a different variation on the gentlemanly ideal of moral and sustainable leadership, involving not only a legalistic scheme, but attention to the psychology of offenders and the relationships between ranks. Officers in the Rifle Brigade following them in subsequent years appear to have felt free to borrow from either or both approaches.

The Rifle Brigade regulations stated that, overall, punishment should aim at bringing 'the bad men into a state of good order'. They distinguished between two types of punishment, private punishments for less serious cases, and (for cases 'under a positive Article of War') public ones. This distinction applied to both officers and men. When officers broke regimental rules or disobeyed orders, disciplinary action was taken informally wherever possible.¹⁹¹ Public

¹⁸⁹ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp. 73, 76-81.

¹⁹⁰ Stewart spoke in a debate in the House of Commons on 5 March 1805 in favour of limiting corporal punishment imposed by courts-martial. However he wanted to see more severity against deserters.

¹⁹¹ See below pp. 284-285.

punishments were rare, and courts-martial were an extreme last resort.¹⁹² While there is evidence for an officer being confined to camp,¹⁹³ and in two cases at least officers were forced to resign,¹⁹⁴ the main tool for the discipline of officers appears to have been the disapproval of other officers or the men.¹⁹⁵

The regulations stated that private punishments for the men (in order to avoid 'the public shame of the Soldier, and the public disgrace of the corps') were to be decided by a company's court-martial, composed of a mixture of NCOs and men according to the rank of the accused, with sentences confirmed by the company's captain. Sergeants were not subject to such courts, but were, in these less serious cases, treated more like commissioned officers,

Sergeants...are in lieu subject to such milder reprimand and punishment as by their Captains may be enforced upon them, such as confinement to quarters, reprimand in private, or in front of the company, or other such reprehension for neglect or irregularity.¹⁹⁶

The careful gradation of punishment suitable to rank was a guiding principle of discipline for Manningham and Stewart. Hence, again, in more serious cases demanding public punishment, sergeants were never to be humiliated by confinement in the black hole, and corporals were never to be confined in the same prison with privates and buglers, 'and they will retain their dress unturned'. Disgrace was, as with officers, a strong weapon. And, while regimental courts-martial had the power to deprive men of their liberty, or food, to fine them, or (within martial law) to inflict corporal punishment,¹⁹⁷ the majority of sentences, public and

¹⁹² Cope, *History*, p.511 stated that no officer serving in the regiment had ever been brought to a court-martial.

¹⁹³ Lieutenant George Legge wandered off from a group while in the bush during the Kaffir War. He was feared captured, and a detachment was sent to find him. He returned to camp unconcerned and, 'the Major stopped his mouth by letting him not leave the camp till he was able to take care of himself'. RGJ, Bramston Diary, 5 April 1852.

¹⁹⁴ See below, pp. 272, 284-285.

¹⁹⁵ Lieutenant George Saunders was severely reprimanded and put under arrest for wilfully going through a picket, and this was to be recorded in the General Orders of 11 January which would be seen in England. Lieutenant Thomas of the 2nd Battalion, meeting him at a theatre and not recognizing him, said, 'I think we'll call Saunders General Order Saunders in future'. Gordon noted Saunders' discomfort. RGJ, Gordon Journal, 12 January 1856. *Ibid.*, 14 November 1854, Gordon wrote, 'I must confess I have been *very* nervous [in the trenches], but my pride makes me look after the men before myself'.

¹⁹⁶ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.77.

¹⁹⁷ B.Harvey, *The Rifle Brigade* (Leo Cooper, London, 1975), p.35 notes that only six Rifle Brigade men were flogged in six years during the Peninsular War. A series of General Orders decreased the maximum number of strokes that courts-martial could award: in 1829 it stood at 500 by district or

private, including extra duties, turned coats, cobbing (beating on the buttocks) and total or partial reduction in rank or privileges, were intended as degrees of humiliation.¹⁹⁸ As with the granting of privileges and medals for good conduct (and these were put alongside punishment, in the same chapter, in the *Regulations*, as aids to discipline) punishments underscored fine gradations in a related professional and social ladder among the other ranks, and played on a sense of pride. Again, the other ranks themselves were drawn into judging cases and imposing sanctions to support the rules and values of the regiment. Thus authority was devolved down through the ranks and each rank had a measure of responsibility for judging equals and subordinates.¹⁹⁹ The professional hierarchy was reinforced by creating a pyramid of authority, and (by using disgrace as a sanction) punishment reflected a scale of honour (which, as we have seen, was a core value of gentlemanliness) related to position.

Officers at regimental level had considerable leeway (despite a gradual standardisation of approach across the army)²⁰⁰ to decide cases²⁰¹. Henry Marshall, Deputy-Inspector-General of Army Hospitals, and a keen advocate of the abolition of flogging, outlined their position in an article for *The United Service Journal* in 1843,

garrison courts-martial, and 300 by regimental court-martial; from 1832 these stood at 300 and 200 lashes; from 1836 general courts-martial could award only 200, district courts-martial 150 and regimental courts-martial 100 only. In 1846 sentences of flogging that could be awarded by all courts-martial were reduced to 50 lashes, and in 1850 the maximum number of lashes was set at 25. From 1867 corporal punishment could only be given for mutiny and violence to superiors, and from 1868 it could only be given to troops on active service. It was finally abolished in 1881. See Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.80-83.

¹⁹⁸ RGJ, Standing Orders of the 2nd Battalion, 14 January 1851 added to these sanctions, 'Officers com^d are requested not to give indulgence to their men untill they have been 3 months out of the Reg^l defaulters book and 2 months out of the Company's defaulters book, and 6 and 4 months respectively for passes' [sic]; *ibid.*, 20 March 1851 told them not to recommend men for promotion 'or any situation that will take them off the duty roster' until six months out of the books after an entry for drunkenness.

¹⁹⁹ Corporals were to be tried by a court consisting of three sergeants and two corporals, with a sergeant-major to assemble the court. Private Riflemen and buglers were to be tried by a corporal, as president, a Chosen Man, and three privates. Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.77-78.

²⁰⁰ For example, the passage in Manningham, *Regulations*, p.77, concerning private and public punishments appeared almost verbatim in the Standing Orders of 1819 of the 79th Regiment. See Henderson, *Highland Soldier*, p.276.

²⁰¹ Indeed there could be variation even across a single regiment. Arthur Lawrence wrote to his Rifle Brigade son, 'I suppose the Colonel [Leopold Swaine] has before him the Standing Orders of the 1st Battalion which I believe we owe to Sir Wm Stewart – one of our Cols Comnt? It is a singular fact that these remarkable orders were unknown in the 2nd Battalion till that distinguished old soldier Sir Benjamin D'Urban [who never served in the regiment] lent me a copy which he highly valued and I never heard of. This was when he inspected the Batt in Quebec in 1847-48'.

Military punishments are regulated by the Mutiny Act, the Articles of War, and the general Regulations of the Army. The Mutiny Act merely enumerates certain crimes which may be punished with death, or such other punishments as a court-martial shall award; while the punishment of all other crimes is left absolutely at the discretion of courts-martial, with the restriction only, that the members are not entitled to adjudge the loss of life or limb as the punishment of any crimes, viz., immorality, misbehaviour, or neglect of duty, either with corporal punishment, imprisonment or pecuniary mulct, or with a slight censure, as to them may seem best. The Sovereign is, however, allowed to regulate this discretion, in any way he may think proper, and to make what regulations he pleases for the direction of the courts-martial. These regulations are called the Articles of War, to which the general Regulations are subsidiary.²⁰²

To direct their judgements in minor cases officers could use any of a number of guidelines on punishment (such as those issued by Manningham and Mackenzie)²⁰³ or, indeed, they could introduce their own experiments. Evidence remains for three other approaches to discipline in the Rifle Brigade, varying in method and rationale, that built on existing ideas within a range of interpretations of gentlemanliness.

Harry Smith set out his views on discipline in a letter to Major-General Sir Benjamin D'Urban in 1834.²⁰⁴ He declared that he 'ever endeavoured to imitate' several officers under whom he served, especially Sir Sydney Beckwith²⁰⁵ and Sir Andrew Barnard, both of the Rifle Brigade, and Sir John Colborne of the 52nd Regiment (secretary to Sir John Moore from 1808-1809, and later, as Lord Seaton, Colonel-in-Chief of the Rifle Brigade),

The leading principle by which these officers of distinction were actuated was that of kindness to their soldiers, and an endeavour to maintain discipline by seeking out the meritorious to reward and commend rather than the guilty to punish.

Smith went on to observe, from his own experience, that severity in punishment was less effective in maintaining discipline than 'a mild administration'. Crime should be prevented if possible,

It ought to be the duty of all officers, in the first place, to endeavour by wise and salutary regulations to render every one under their command happy. Cheerfulness is the mainspring of discipline...

²⁰² H. Marshall, 'A Historical Sketch of Military Punishments, in as far as Regards Non-Commissioned Officers and Private Soldiers', *USJ*, vol.29, part 1, 1843, pp.354-355.

²⁰³ Charles George D'Aguilar, who served in the Rifle Brigade briefly from 1817-1818, wrote, *Observations on the Practice and Forms of Courts-Martial and Courts of Enquiry* (1839), an interpretation of military law authoritative until the 1870s.

²⁰⁴ Smith, *Autobiography*, vol 2, pp.333-335.

²⁰⁵ J.Kincaid, *Random Shots*, pp.166-169 admired the kind manner of Beckwith; also William Surtees believed that Beckwith's 'liberal forbearance won the hearts of the soldiers'. Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.52-53.

Nonetheless, if crimes were committed, punishment should be firm but humane. For acts of disobedience, insubordination or neglect of duty Smith would,

inflict corporal punishment to the utmost of my power, not only to punish the offender but to strike terror into the hearts of the spectators in the ranks.

However, he regarded the sentence of solitary confinement on bread, rice and water, with occasional hard labour or drill, for weeks or even months on end, 'a species of protracted cruelty I am as yet not prepared to inflict'. Smith regarded confinement for a long period as a severe punishment in itself. While he was a commanding officer he made a point of visiting prisoners every Sunday, 'and the surgeon of the week did the same during the week'.

My object was to see that they were in every respect as clean as the meritorious soldier on duty, to ascertain that their rations had been according to the scale hung up with my signature in their cells, duly furnished them, and of a good quality, and by conversation with them and pointing out the impropriety of their conduct to ascertain their character.

Further, in trying to reform the prisoners, he went beyond the Rifle Brigade regulations and the recommendations of Mackenzie. He recalled that he had himself taught many soldiers confined for a long period to read and write, and had improved the knowledge of others by lending them books. This method, he declared, was 'attended by the most beneficial results' in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases, and his leniency was never abused. Above all, this re-established a man in his own good opinion and that of his comrades, and this tended to reduce crime.

Arthur Lawrence, too, in the 1850s gave considerable attention to punishment and developed a variant system of his own. He outlined a scale of punishment for drunkenness in January 1857, six months after he left the command of the Rifle Brigade (after twenty-six years in the regiment, including nine as Lieutenant-Colonel and Colonel), based on his experience and recent practice in the corps.²⁰⁶ He increased the strictness of entering men in the Defaulters' Book from every second instance of drunkenness within four months to every second instance within six months, (but suggested that if other corps unused to this strictness were to imitate his system, they should introduce the change gradually). He set out a table of penalties according to frequency of offence, with three stages of severity, ending in a regimental court-martial.

²⁰⁶ RGJ, Folio 1, A.Lawrence Memorandum, 8 January 1857.

<i>Level of Severity</i>	<i>Offence</i>	<i>Punishment</i>
1	1st offence	Confined to barracks 7 days or under
2	2nd offence longer than 4 or 6 months out of either the company or regimental Defaulters Books	6 days drill and confinement to barracks
	2nd offence within 4 (or 6) months of previous offence	Put in Regimental Defaulters' Book
	2nd time in Regimental Defaulters' Book	Warned for trial for 3 months
3	Next offence within 3 months	Trial
2	Next offence longer than 3 months but within 4 months	Warned again for 3 months
	Next offence longer than 4 months	6 days drill and confined to barracks
1	Next offence longer than 12 months	Confined to barracks

Lawrence noted that this scheme must be applied 'without deviation', even to men who would thereby lose good conduct pay, in order to be just. In practice, however, he did sometimes show leniency,

The only difference I made with regard to men with Good Conduct Pay was this: Supposing a man to have lost his penny by an Entry and in a fit of disgust, he came up again within 4 months, I did not enter him again which would take another penny if he had it, or would keep him out of his first penny for 2 years, but I entered him in the Company Book [a lesser punishment] explaining the reason, but of course inflicting the penalty if he got drunk again.

Also, because men with good conduct pay lost more than others in being entered in the Defaulters' Book, he gave them the 'little advantage' of never being put in a drill squad except for instruction drill.

Lawrence's view that impartiality and regulation were of primary importance was very similar to that of Mackenzie. His formal scale of punishments, however, had the further function of working to reinforce the hierarchy of merit in the regiment (in line with Manningham's regulations). Like Mackenzie, Lawrence did not arbitrarily remit sentences for previous good conduct, but he did take account in sentencing of the official good conduct awards, the loss of extra pay, and the psychology of 'disgust' in reoffending. He also refined the scale of punishments so that a man given to drunkenness had a series of specific targets to regain his good conduct status.

William Norcott took a slightly different approach again during the Crimean War (serving as Major and then Lieutenant-Colonel in the 1st Battalion). He, too, after over thirty years in the Rifle Brigade (with six months in the 52nd Regiment) had long experience of discipline in the corps. In the allocation of punishments he laid special emphasis on his personal relationship with the men, and he (devout himself) was evidently mindful of the Christian foundation of justice. On 26 February 1855 a Rifleman was tried in a court-martial and sentenced to be flogged. Norcott wrote in his diary,

I will pardon him with the hope of the moral effect. I owe it to the Battalion – and I will speak. I have the power to command attention and so much of Irish blood to be eloquent and fluent. To speak is the property of the Irish. Every eloquent preacher extempore is an Irishman. Lord! if we could but practise what we preach! I'll try it. I can do it: my rule has been ever, never to ask of the soldier what I am not prepared to do myself. Now, I won't flog this man – therefore I hope not to be flogged – *but* I

would not get drunk when for a duty (or at *any* time) therefore I hope to flog those who do justly and without pain *to me!*²⁰⁷

Again, six months later, he noted,

An act of mercy in saving two men from being flogged. Logic and eloquence! I had to flog them, but wished to pardon without pardon being a precedent for others, or a sore point for those punished.²⁰⁸

Norcott had a Christian view of punishment in which he did as he would be done by, and likewise he preferred to show mercy. He was clearly aware of the objections to pardoning men after a sentence, but he nonetheless had confidence in his power to persuade them to behave well. He noted in his diary, again, 'The men are bricks and I have their hearts'.²⁰⁹

It seems that Norcott felt able to call on the men as part of a contract by which he, in return, saw to their emotional and physical well-being. He proudly recorded that he visited and gave medicine to the sick,²¹⁰ arranged for them to be housed under cover,²¹¹ provided 'comforts' for the other ranks,²¹² and made efforts to keep up the morale of the men on duty.²¹³ During the worst of the cold weather in February 1855, for example, he visited all 190 Riflemen in the trenches and took them drinks of Curaçao.²¹⁴ The next day the NCO Hicks came on behalf of the men in the advanced trenches to thank him for his 'timely aid'.

I name this to show how soldiers appreciate kindness and the going myself to the front perhaps was in it.²¹⁵

The varying approaches of Smith, Lawrence and Norcott to discipline and punishment were all concerned to provide authority acceptable to their subordinates and therefore sustainable over time. For all three this was to be achieved, in different ways, by consideration

²⁰⁷ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 4, 26 February 1855; *ibid.*, 27 February 1855, Norcott gave the planned speech and was pleased with it.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, vol 6, 4 August 1856.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, vol 1, 17 June 1854.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol 2, 18 August 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 26 August 1854; *ibid.*, vol 3, 29 December 1854; *ibid.*, vol 4, 14 February 1855.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, vol 4, 25 February 1855; *ibid.*, vol 4, 2 March 1855 Norcott 'fought like a Trojan' to get the sick transported to Balaclava, and to procure wine and comforts for them.

²¹² *Ibid.*, vol 4, 10 March 1855.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, vol 4, 10 February 1855 Norcott ordered that the men must keep in groups in the trenches because he feared that if left alone they would burst into tears, 'God help my noble hearts'.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol 4, 20 February 1855; *ibid.*, vol 4, 3 March 1855 Norcott noted that it gave him a warm feeling to help the men when they needed him.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol 4, 21 February 1855; *ibid.*, 23 February 1853 Lord Raglan heard of Norcott's kindness and commended him.

for the feelings of the men, by impartiality, by personal example, by bonds of respect and gratitude, and, in Norcott's case, by reference to Christian justice. These were all, as we have seen, elements associated with the contemporary ideal of gentlemanliness. In making judgements on punishments officers could not simply follow regulations (which were not sufficiently detailed). They were called to improvise. I would argue that how individual officers interpreted proper gentlemanly conduct, expressed in their relationship with the men, determined the methods of discipline they chose. A shared commitment to patriarchal authority, produced by this identification, was particularly important in bridging the different approaches to professional questions that resulted. On the one hand it could sanction an ambition to achieve greater humanity in the treatment of the other ranks and a desire to tie them closer to officers. However, conversely, it could support the view that officers must be strict and unbending, that harsh punishments were not inhumane but necessary, and that it was futile and even detrimental to discipline to undermine the clear division between officers and men by courting their affection. Which approach an officer took, or how he struck a balance between them in sentencing, depended on his temperament and on his social, political and religious instincts. These determined his estimate of the capacities of the other ranks (a father figure had a duty to improve those in his charge only if they could thereby grow in morality, intellect or competence) and his estimate of what they might respond to best (fear, encouragement, loyalty or pride). It was possible, in other words, to favour either a remote style of authority and one with small faith in the efficacy of reforms, or a more personally connected and optimistic outlook expressed in a variety of improving schemes, or a mixture of both, within the contemporary ideology of gentlemanliness.

The attitude of Rifle Brigade officers to the Duke of Wellington is revealing of how the notion of gentlemanliness spanned opinions regarding reform so that apparently opposed approaches could coexist in the regiment (and in the wider army). Sentiment toward the Duke was extraordinarily warm, even among those well disposed to reform.²¹⁶ Kincaid, for instance,

²¹⁶ Field Marshal Sir Henry Hardinge was close to the Duke, and had acted as his second in the duel with Lord Winchelsea, Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp. 36-37.

writing of the attitude of the officers of the Rifle Brigade to him during the Peninsular War, called him, 'the god of our idolatry'²¹⁷ and William Norcott wrote to George Brown that, on hearing the news of the Duke's death,

I am proud to confess it, I immediately burst into tears.²¹⁸

This regard was founded not only on respect for Wellington's victories, and on personal loyalty to him, but also on admiration for his qualities as a gentleman. Kincaid wrote,

Lord Wellington had been adored by every one, as well for his brilliant achievements, as for his noble and manly bearing in all things.²¹⁹

Rifle Brigade officers shared in the military and civilian²²⁰ adulation for him that assigned to him a range of virtues: patience, common sense and ability to improvise, disregard for danger, and capacity for hard work, cool temperament and ability to set aside personal feeling and interest in the pursuit of duty, self-confidence, humanity toward the enemy²²¹ and formal Christian allegiance. He was doubly respected as a man with both aristocratic blood and a record of military merit to justify his elevated position. While Wellington did not aim to kindle love in subordinates beyond his immediate circle of senior officers and aides-de-camp, he was still perceived in the army as mindful of the welfare of his soldiers (of all ranks).²²² Kincaid, for example, wrote of his 'fostering hand' sending reinforcements just as they were needed at

²¹⁷ Kincaid, *Adventures*, p.145.

²¹⁸ Nat.Lib.Scotland., Brown MSS, MS 1848, 73-76 W.Norcott to G.Brown, 21 September 1852; William Norcott wrote in praise of the 'energy and stuff' of the men and officers of the Peninsular War, and especially the 'tops of the trees'. RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 8 August 1854.

²¹⁹ Kincaid, *Adventures*, p.143.

²²⁰ C.Brooks, 'Burying Tom Sayers: Heroism, Class and the Victorian Cemetery' *Victorian Society Annual*, 1989, pp.4-20; I.Pears, 'The Gentleman and the Hero: Wellington and Napoleon in the Nineteenth Century', in R.Porter (ed), *Myths of the English* (Polity Press, Cambridge, 1992), pp.216-236 argues that Wellington was the embodiment of a new model gentleman, and contemporary biographers chose material to stress his personal virtue and his gentlemanly rather than heroic qualities.

²²¹ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.163-166, D.MacFarlane to Cope, 12 June 1878 remembered Wellington as a 'True Hero' and as noble and manly for his 'magnanimous votive for benevolence' in the terms agreed for the occupation of Paris in 1815.

²²² For example, Anon, 'A Word on Professional Clubs', *USJ*, vol 29, part 2, 1843, p.167 wrote of the original aim of the London clubs to provide modestly priced meals for gentlemen (especially for the young). 'The Duke of Wellington has often dined on "the joint" at the United Service; and on one occasion, it is recorded that when he was charged 15d instead of a shilling for it, he bestirred himself till the odd three-pence was struck off. The motive was obvious; he took the trouble of objecting in order to manifest his sanction for the principle.' Howard, *Studies*, p.56 for Wellington's attention to the comfort and well-being of his troops.

Quatre Bras.²²³ Wellington could stand as a model gentlemen because he could be credited with virtue (the vicissitudes of his private life were not yet public knowledge) and a strong sense of duty. This was so notwithstanding his ultra-conservative stance in political as well as military matters, not least his opposition to parliamentary reform in 1832. And in addition he had the social graces and birth of the ruling classes.

Many Rifle Brigade officers leaned toward a paternalist view of their authority. Simmons, for example again, wrote of how officers had to enforce an order to cover the wounds of soldiers to prevent maggots making them worse, and he noted that he regarded the men as like children in their inability to take care of themselves.²²⁴ And much reforming activity in the army sprang from such an outlook. Wellington, too, can be viewed as a paternalist. He shared the view that officers must think for the men and coerce them into actions for their own (or for a greater) good. He thus opposed cruelty to the other ranks,²²⁵ but had, nonetheless, limited faith in projects for nurturing their intelligence and good will. This led him to dictatorial sentiments. Further, he combined this scepticism with a profound caution in meddling with systems that had proved their worth.

Wellington's own emphatic gentlemanliness,²²⁶ the commitment he shared to a notion of gentlemanly leadership that could span different styles and interpretations, provided common ground between officers who shared his conservatism, and those who did not. It is interesting to note that he was only widely and biting criticised in the army when his behaviour could be

²²³ Kincaid, *Adventures*, p.251.

²²⁴ Simmons, *A British Rifle Man*, p.86; also RGJ, *Bramston Diary*, 11 April 1852 described how the men ate prickly pears and filled their throats with thorns; and RGJ, *Somerset Diary*, 3 April 1852 noted that young and old soldiers took a lot of looking after, as it was hard to get them to look after themselves.

²²⁵ MacFarlane, *Life*, pp.269-270 wrote on Wellington's reputation for harshness to his soldiers, 'It is a misfortune with some persons to be severe in their very virtue. A mind of exalted firmness, loving the truth, speaking only the truth, and ready to devote life, health, and personal comfort to the realization of one grand object, can ill sympathise with, or find apology for, the relaxed and qualified obedience which others may pay to its behest...it is an open injustice to deny him the possession of many traits of inward gentleness, which...would make him sympathise with the widow of the fallen warrior, or hail some battered old soldier, of whose broken leg he knew the whole history...there was nothing misanthropic in the Duke's severity. He was as finished a gentleman as a soldier. He had an affable word for everyone, but he had no words to waste'.

²²⁶ Harry Smith always dressed scrupulously for dinner, 'perhaps to imitate the Duke of Wellington who was his pattern in all things'. J.Hasted, *The Gentle Amazon: The Life and Times of Lady Smith* (Museum Press, London, 1952), p.219.

construed as ungentlemanly. This occurred, for example, when he failed to support the claims of officers to a Peninsular War medal. He was then accused of ingratitude to his subordinates, 'who made him what he is', and of illiberality: of ungentlemanly behaviour and selfish instincts.²²⁷ Likewise, he also received strong criticism (though no evidence has come to light of Rifle Brigade opinion) when he compromised his impartiality and incorruptible stance (his gentlemanly independence) by mixing political and military interests as a leading Tory in Parliament.²²⁸

Indeed, it can be convincingly argued that Wellington's personality and his social and political instincts (because they upheld gentlemanliness so strongly) actually assisted the development in the first half of the nineteenth century of paternalist approaches to soldiering and moves for technical advancement, both of which contributed to greater efficiency and, in the long run, professionalism. While many recognised the serious implications of his resistance to reform measures (and the resistance of those either too afraid or in awe of him to oppose his opinion), Wellington was important to reforming officers in endorsing a gentlemanly ethos in the army that could find expression in a range of styles and activities. Wellington's model of gentlemanliness could therefore be a source of inspiration to officers like Hill²²⁹ or Hardinge, or in the Rifle Brigade Brown, Kincaid and Norcott, who initiated and backed important reforms over more than half a century.

The ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness, emerging at the turn of the nineteenth century, with its diverse cultural and theoretical debts, can be placed alongside pragmatic experiment and military experience as a central influence on the development of professional

²²⁷ W. Grattan, *The Duke of Wellington and the Peninsular War Medal* (E. Churton, London, 1845).

²²⁸ Kincaid criticized the Duke only on one occasion in his *Adventures*, for a blanket censure of the Peninsular army for misconduct and inexperience in camp arrangements, when some corps felt themselves innocent, and the Light Division in particular was proud of its efficiency. Kincaid, *Adventures*, pp.143-144. For Wellington's political involvements as Commander-in-Chief, and their effect in compromising the independence of the army from political control, see Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.8.

²²⁹ E. Sidney, *Life of Lord Hill* (J. Murray, London, 1845), p.228 shows the contrasting tenor of the gentlemanliness associated with Hill, 'He was the very picture of an English country gentleman: to the soldiers who came from the rural districts of Old England he represented home...His attention to all their wants and comforts, his visits to the sick in hospital, his vigilant protection of the poor peasantry, his just severity to marauders, his generous treatment of such French prisoners and wounded as fell into his hands, made for him a warm place in the hearts of the soldiery'.

attitudes in the army through the mid-century. It was an ideal shared in various forms with many sections of civilian society. (Indeed, the army, in the production of heroes like Moore and Wellington, provided for the non-military a pattern of excellence in gentlemanly virtue, conduct and leadership.) It was also an ideal that created direct links with civilian society through the operation of patronage across civilian-military lines. The function of patronage in the Rifle Brigade, and the thinking on gentlemanliness that underpinned it, are the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Gentlemanliness and Patronage

The abuse of patronage by those with money and influence was a frequent complaint in debates on the power of the landed classes in the nineteenth century.¹ Certainly, as will be shown, the procedures for obtaining commissions in the army and for securing positions in favoured regiments strongly assisted those who were wealthy and had kin or other connexions in leading civilian, naval or military families.² However, the evidence from the Rifle Brigade for the operation of patronage through the early and mid-century shows that the system supported, too, men from modest backgrounds with few connexions, and that it could also work to help soldiers from the other ranks. It brought into the network of upper-class connexion men from varied backgrounds; far from dividing layers of society in the regiment and beyond, it tended to knit them together. In this way, I would argue, patronage was used to give expression to the ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness. In creating links of attachment and obligation that recognised duty appropriate to station, service, virtue and conduct, as well as inheritance and

¹ This was part of a long-standing debate that focused in the first half of the nineteenth century on sinecures, jobbery and aristocratic irresponsibility, and the consequent political disadvantages of the middle classes. See E.Halévy, *A History of the English People in the Nineteenth Century: England in 1815* (1913) translated by E.I.Watkin and D.A.Barker (Ernest Benn, London, 1924), pp.9-11, 14-20; also N.Gash, *Aristocracy and People: Britain 1815-1865* (Edward Arnold, London, 1979), pp.48-49; and J.M.Bourne, *Patronage and Society in Nineteenth-Century England* (Edward Arnold, London, 1986), pp.16-21.

² For A.H.Layard, John Roebuck and *The Times* on the aristocracy in the army at the time of the Crimean War, see J.Conacher, *Britain and the Crimea, 1855-56: Problems of War and Peace* (Macmillan, London, 1987), pp.17-18, 75-76, 127-128. For the purchase system and the need for a private income, see H.Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-1854* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984), pp. 110-113, 116-118; also E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.11-22; and G.Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Routledge, London, 1977), pp. 12-21.

social position, it was an important instrument for attaching men (and women) of the regiment to these combined values. The material found for the Rifle Brigade suggests that at the centre of patronage in the army was an interpretation of merit that recognised simultaneously the claims of blood; political, regional, regimental and other connexions; money; service of self or kin; ability; and achievement (all elements in the complex and flexible set of values encompassed in the ideal of gentlemanliness). And these qualities were taken into account across the civilian-military divide. For example, a claim to merit – and so to patronage – through the service of kin might be based as well on a connexion with an eminent politician or lawyer, or a landed grandee, as with a senior officer in the regiment or in the wider army. It is the aim of this chapter to show through a series of examples how gentlemanly values guided the operation of patronage in the Rifle Brigade, and to point to the continual balancing of one type of claim against another and their mutual reinforcement. This, it will be suggested, sheds further light on both the professional outlook of officers and men, and ties between the regiment and civilian society.

Patronage can be taken to mean the system (operating in the early and mid-nineteenth century, but with a long tradition) by which career opportunities and sometimes money were given in return for the past services of an individual, or his or her sponsor or kin, or for continuing support and loyalty, or for friendship or family interest including affection.³ A patron acted as adviser and referee, and used what influence he or she had to find suitable vacancies and to forward the interests of a client.⁴ Those giving and receiving patronage became ‘allies’ or ‘friends’ – almost if not actually kin – and the receiver and his family were drawn into the extended circle of connexion of the patron. Nonetheless, the relationship was essentially unequal. Indeed patronage was an accompaniment to notions of deference and of the social

³ Bourne, *Patronage*, pp.3-9.

⁴ H.Perkin, *The Origins of Modern English Society* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1969), p.45 notes that in the late eighteenth century, ‘When a man of rank and property had an appointment to make or influence, whether a Clerk of the Pells or a footman, a bishop or a governess, a colonial governor or workhouse master, an army contractor or a scullery maid, a Treasury agent or an insurance clerk, he looked first, and was expected and actively solicited to look, among his ‘friends’. This was neither surreptitious nor shame-faced, but a matter of pride and principle’.

position of whole families: obligation and debt created an ongoing dependence, as well as opportunities to rise, and so cemented social and professional hierarchy.

For the ruling classes, patronage was a mechanism still linked in the nineteenth century to the demands of primogeniture, and to the operation of party politics at national and local levels. It ensured suitable positions for younger sons, and it provided incentives and rewards for loyal support. However, basic ideas underpinning patronage were also strongly in evidence among the middle and artisan classes, and even the labouring poor. These included the linking of occupation to the finely graduated social status of parents and other relatives, the heritable nature of jobs and businesses, and the creation of duties and ties between master and servant, or employer and employee.⁵ In business and industry and on the land, it was common for workers, managers and proprietors in this period to nominate relatives as partners or assistants; communities, and churches or chapels, as well as blood and marriage ties, created webs of mutual assistance that profoundly affected training and employment opportunities.⁶ These networks of connexion operated at local level and among those of similar standing, but they also worked across social strata and, through the intersection of different networks, across regions too. Patronage in its widest sense took many forms in nineteenth-century Britain, and touched a large proportion of the population.⁷ The blurring of working and personal relationships, and the power of connexion, were a part of the fabric of contemporary culture, and so were entirely familiar to Riflemen of all ranks in their civilian as well as military experience.

The patronage network created by the Rifle Brigade was distinctive in the intensity of friendships it reflected. These were forged through the strong identity of the regiment and its sense of history and community, sometimes in circumstances of danger, and through living

⁵ For lower-class occupations in which children would follow the father, and for opportunities to change trade and to travel using family contacts, see K.D.M.Snell, *Annals of the Labouring Poor 1660-1900* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985), pp.343-345, 364-365.

⁶ For examples of middle-class families and business, see L.Davidoff and C.Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (Hutchinson, London, 1987).

⁷ See Bourne, *Patronage*, pp.15-16, 115-116; see also Perkin, *Origins*, pp.44-51. At least one other ranks Rifleman returned after service to a family business: Sergeant Bourne took over his father's public house in 1860. RGJ, Folio 1, p.30, *The Skirmisher or Rifle Brigade Gazette*, August 1860, p.4.

closely together. However, the shape which patronage in the Rifle Brigade took, and the ways in which it operated generally reflected civilian patterns.

Patronage by civilian and military patrons facilitated employment for Riflemen before, during and after military service. It operated for officers in obtaining first commissions, in promotions, and in the advancement of civilian careers; and it provided preferment and protection for the other ranks. It also assisted the families of Riflemen. Patronage relationships in the regiment (as elsewhere) were established through two main sets of claims: first, kinship, regimental or other connexion and friendship,⁸ and second, service and ability. These claims were seemingly in opposition and there were tensions between them, yet they could carry equal force, and in a competitive arena for army positions there was a tendency to use them in combination. Underlying their interchangeability, it will be argued, was a view of merit which (correlating with the ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness) conflated personal links of family and other personal loyalties with military competence.

In order to explore patronage in the regiment, this chapter will focus at the beginning on how the system operated for officers. Evidence will be cited for the role of, on the one hand, connexion and, on the other, service, talent and achievement, in obtaining first commissions, promotions and civilian jobs (or money). Next it will explore how these claims to be deserving were balanced and combined, and how they were embodied in a notion of merit found in the ideal of gentlemanliness. Finally, material for the other ranks will be presented and compared with the evidence for officers.

3.1 The Operation of Patronage

Rifle Brigade officers, coming from a range of backgrounds, pursuing varied military careers and displaying different personalities, obtained patronage in a number of ways.

⁸Income was a related factor: a claim to assistance could be based on the notion that an individual should live and work in a manner appropriate to his social station. This could create opportunities both for the wealthy and for those in straightened circumstances.

Nonetheless, several general avenues were common, and these can be grouped as family connexion (and women had a place as kin and friends); regional connexion; connexion in the regiment, the broader army, the Horse Guards or the navy; political connexion; connexion with the royal family; long or distinguished service (by the officer himself or his allies); and the officer's own capacity and experience. A series of examples can show how these all created claims by officers for preferment. They were used singly or, most commonly, in combination, and, in particular, family was often interwoven with other claims. Further, military and civilian contacts inside or outside the army could be equally valuable, and patronage in the regiment often worked through linking the corps into other webs of connexion.

An example of a typical pattern of patronage⁹ for the wealthy and well-connected can be found in the military careers of Hon. Josslyn Pennington, later 5th Baron Muncaster, and his younger brother Alan. In the early decades of the century it was possible to obtain a first commission by bringing to a regiment a large number of recruits.¹⁰ (For example, George Simmons – of whom more will be said below – brought one hundred and twenty South Lincolnshire Militia men in lieu of payment.) And a few officers throughout the period also entered without purchase, usually as Sandhurst Cadets. However, first commissions and subsequent promotions were normally bought (except in the Artillery and Engineers) after some vetting, and candidates were assisted by patronage.¹¹ In this the Penningtons were typical.

⁹ See Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.10-12.

¹⁰ Obtaining recruits could also assist promotion. For example, Sir John Moore gave Lieutenant Charles Rowan of the 52nd Regiment three hundred pounds to raise thirty men in order to gain promotion. J. Moore, *The Diary of Sir John Moore*, J. Maurice (ed) (Edward Arnold, London, 1904), vol 2, pp.80-81. Likewise, Colonel Sydney Beckwith asked to be made Colonel Commandant of a battalion of the Rifle Brigade based on his success in raising troops. He claimed to have worked hard and incurred expenses in raising 1,100 militia men for the regiment in a period when recruitment was slow. Southampton Univ., WP1/879/24, S. Beckwith to the Duke of Wellington, 11 January 1827.

¹¹ The correspondence of the Duke of Wellington shows how places in specific regiments were allocated through agreement between the Colonel-in-Chief of a regiment, the regimental commanding officer and the Commander-in-Chief, sometimes with a different patron or chain of patrons introducing the candidate. For example, Southampton Univ., WP1/797/23, Lord FitzRoy Somerset to Colonel A. Norcott, 20 July 1824, 'The Duke will recommend any captain on half pay Norcott should nominate for the vacancy'. It seems that the wishes of other officers in the regiment were, however, consulted too. When Major-General Barnard proposed that Lieutenant-Colonel Felix Calvert succeed Dugald Gilmour as Lieutenant-Colonel of the 2nd Battalion, he noted that although some in the regiment were senior to Calvert, 'the appointment would be acceptable'. Southampton Univ., WP1/776/2, A. Barnard to Lord F. Somerset, 20 November 1823.

Josslyn went to Eton and then in 1852 attended a crammer at Reading, with six other boys, studying for the army entrance examinations.¹² On 14th June he received a telegram from his uncle Charles Ramsden, who had served in several regiments including the Rifle Brigade,¹³ instructing him to go to London. The next day Josslyn went with his uncle and his elder brother Gamel, 4th Baron Muncaster (who, in the absence of a father, controlled Josslyn's career) to the levée of Lord FitzRoy Somerset, the Military Secretary. Josslyn was fifty-third on the list to see him.

At last my name was called. So I walked in and found a rather small looking man stout and about 60 with one arm writing. He said how do you do, asked me how long I had been down on the list, how old I was, what I wanted Infantry or Cavalry, whether or not I was Ms brother and said he would make a note of it.¹⁴

Josslyn had first wanted to be put down for the Coldstream Guards or the Rifle Brigade. However another of his advisers, Lord Strafford¹⁵, father of his aunt, had told him to put himself down for the line, as otherwise he would have to wait longer than he could afford for a place. He was seventeen years old. Six months later, he received a letter informing him that he was to be commissioned into the 90th Light Infantry Regiment.

I started off in haste to Hills, to know where it was, found it was at Dublin, came back relieved...Went to Lord Strafford's to thank him, but he knew nothing about it, but he was glad and told me how to work, at least how he did some sixty years ago.¹⁶

Next, in January 1853, Josslyn had to take the entrance examination.

¹² Entrance examinations were introduced in 1849. They were oral and so neither anonymous nor purely academic. Some cramming was normally needed to pass. Examinations for the promotion of officers were also introduced in 1849, but they were not fully regulated until 1854. See Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.124-126. RGJ, Gordon Diary, 30 November 1855 notes that orders were received for subalterns to be examined periodically to ensure they knew their duties. Gordon was twelve years out of school by this time and was anxious to know how he could revise Euclid, trigonometry and logarithms from the Crimea.

¹³ Charles Ramsden was the son of Sir John Ramsden, 4th Bart.. His sister Frances was mother to Gamel, Josslyn and Alan Pennington. His wife was Harriet, daughter of the 1st Earl of Strafford. Charles served in the 77th Regiment, the 60th Regiment, the 68th Regiment, and twice in the 7th Fusiliers and Rifle Brigade. He was first commissioned in 1821 and retired in 1839.

¹⁴ Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington Diary, 14 June 1852; *ibid.*, 15 June 1852.

¹⁵ Lieutenant-General Sir John Byng, Baron and later 1st Earl of Strafford, had commanded a brigade at Waterloo and served as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland from 1828 to 1831. He became a field-marshal in 1855. His son George Byng, 2nd Earl of Strafford, served in the Rifle Brigade from 1826-1830. The Byng family was prominent in Whig politics, see Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.235-236.

¹⁶ Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington Diary, 24 December 1852

how I shivered with fright as I underwent the various criticisms of the doctor and the measuring sergeant, however I passed both of these awful functionaries, and in my turn proceeded up to the board room where the examinations were going on. I then (*gingerly*)... delivered over my paper of instructions, when he sent me up to Scott the arithmetic master...after a few mistakes I passed him and overcame all the rest, not half so easily as I expected, though. Prosser shook hands with me which means all right and I jumped off into Mr Barton's expectant arms...the greatest joy was yet to come, the approbation of my mother...¹⁷

He paid £450, the regulation price, for the commission and two months later, in March 1853, proceeded to Dublin to join the 90th Regiment. He stayed first with Colonel Dynley,

a man uncle Henry [brother of Charles Ramsden] had written to about me. He clasped me to his breast in the most hospitable manner and introduced me to his daughter.¹⁸

Dynley took him a week later to join the regiment and meet his commanding officer. Josslyn began immediately to use other contacts and to establish new ones,

The first time I put on my uniform I went to St.Patrick's ball, the greatest of the kind in Dublin, was introduced to the L.Lieutenant (St.Germans) who made me a cold bow, then found out young Henry Eliot who had been at Eton with M and also in the Bellerophon with Alan. He introduced me to Lady St.Germans, who I found to be an exceedingly nice person, and she actually talked to me in the presence of the whole hall. I was so puffed up I strutted about...¹⁹

Nonetheless, Josslyn did not give up his hope of joining the Coldstream Guards (or, failing that, the Rifle Brigade). While in the Crimea, he wrote repeatedly to his brother asking him to arrange an exchange.

I wish Lord Strafford would put me into the Coldstream now, lots of vacancies, and I should come home and be jolly, for I am tired of this...I declare I have as much right as anybody to be appointed being here. I would even take an ensigncy...I wish Lord John would make haste.²⁰

He spelt out exactly what needed to be done for him.

You say you have no power to get an appointment for me. It is troubling you, I know, but the way would be this. You must go to London yourself, and apply to the Military Secty [sic] for the exchange, through him to Lord Hardinge, then ask Lord Strafford to back you up.²¹

¹⁷ Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington Diary, 25 July 1854, Summary of events from 1852 to 1853. Colonel G.W.Prosser was Lieutenant-Governor of the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. Mr.Barton was Principal of the crammer at Reading.

¹⁸ Ibid.; Henry Ramsden had served as a captain in the 9th Lancers.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Muncaster Castle, Letters From the Crimea, J.Pennington to G.Pennington, 20 December 1854; *ibid.*, 30 April 1855.

²¹ Ibid., undated [c.April 1855].

In addition, he saw that his brother could do more for him in other ways,

I see you have subscribed to Lord Cardigan's sword, but are put low down in the list, that was bad poor policy.²²

Despite Josslyn's letters his younger brother Alan, who had been serving as a midshipman, obtained a commission in the Rifle Brigade first, transferring from the navy to the army in June 1855, just as he was about to be gazetted to a new ship.²³ Lieutenant-General James Lindsay, a cousin of the Penningtons,²⁴ was behind the exchange. He had applied on Alan's behalf to General the Hon. Sir Charles Grey (who had served in the Rifle Brigade), then private secretary to Prince Albert, Commander-in-Chief of the regiment. Grey replied to Lindsay,

I have shown your note to the Prince who desires me to say that he has much pleasure in offering you a commission without purchase in the Rifle Brigade – for your young relative – I have given notice of HRH's intention to General Yorke...HRH thinks that he may be immediately gazetted.²⁵

It is clear from his brother's success that Josslyn Pennington did have the connexions to enter either the Coldstream Guards or the Rifle Brigade in 1855. However, it seems that his elder brother Lord Muncaster, who controlled access to their patrons and who also controlled his money, deliberately kept him in the line. This may have been in part to ensure promotion opportunities for both the brothers, but he also feared that in the Guards in particular his brother's naturally dissolute character would get him into trouble. Josslyn Pennington had a history of unfortunate love affairs and debt: at Dublin he had fallen in love with a ballet dancer, and he twice got into debt through extravagance, on one occasion spending large amounts over his pay and allowance on hunting.²⁶ The element of personal acquaintance and family control in

²² *Ibid.*, 19 May 1855.

²³ *Ibid.*, 1 June 1855.

²⁴ Lieutenant-General James Lindsay of Balcarres, Co. Fife was the son of Hon. Maria Pennington, daughter of 1st Baron Muncaster, and of James Lindsay, 7th Earl of Balcarres. His first cousin Hugh Lindsay later married the widow of Gamel Pennington, 4th Baron Muncaster, and his nephew Walter Lindsay served in the Rifle Brigade. James Lindsay became Military Secretary to The Duke of Cambridge.

²⁵ Carlisle Record Office, Pennington Papers, C. Grey to J. Lindsay, 16 May 1855. Major-General Sir Charles Yorke was Military Secretary from 1854 to 1860, and Colonel Commandant of the 2nd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade from 1863 to 1880. Prince Albert decided that Alan could forgo the usual examination because of his training on board ship.

²⁶ Muncaster Castle, J. Pennington Diary, 25 December 1854, 'Summary of events from 1852 to 1853'.

the patronage system, in other words, carefully matched his personality and record to his position. Lindsay wrote to Lord Muncaster about Josslyn,

The advantage of getting into the Guards consists of getting into a corps where all are gentlemen, by birth and education – we have our black sheep like other societies though we get rid of them – then again our position being in London throws us in good society – on the other hand young men are not much looked after except in their duties – and their time is their own...of course London presents opportunities for extravagance that other places do not example Dublin and such like...I should recommend him to wait till he gets his company in the line...²⁷

It is not known how Josslyn Pennington eventually got his exchange to the Rifle Brigade (as a captain), but it is likely that Lindsay and Alan finally helped him.

Josslyn Pennington, then, passed an examination and purchased his first commission in the 90th Regiment, paying again to exchange into the Rifle Brigade (the sum he paid that time, which may have been over the regulation price, is not recorded). But he entered the army and progressed only by a series of requests by patrons in addition. He relied on his uncle Charles Ramsden, and on his kinsmen Lord Strafford and James Lindsay, to use the stock of influence they had from their own military careers and social position to put him forward for commissions. And his connexion with his elder brother, Lord Muncaster, an Irish peer, was noted by the Military Secretary, thus fixing his social status and probable income. Once in the army he immediately gained an important social and military introduction, to a woman, through a schoolfellow of one brother and the colleague of another. And he pushed Lord Muncaster to act as a patron himself, by asking him to make direct requests on his behalf. Josslyn wanted his brother both to make clear his service at the seat of war, and to show support for the army by taking a high profile when opportunities, such as the demonstration of approbation for Lord Cardigan, arose. All of these strategies, the use of kin in military and civilian capacities, the appeal to high social position, the use of schoolfellows and friends of friends and kin, and the claim to service in danger and discomfort, combined to give Josslyn Pennington a gentleman's career and steady promotion in good regiments. He was on less solid ground in claiming virtue

²⁷ Carlisle Record Office, Pennington Papers, J.Lindsay to G.Pennington, February 1855.

and steady character, and was not a brilliant military talent, and this limited the enthusiasm of at least one patron, and so his progress.

Josslyn Pennington was typical of many in the Rifle Brigade from the landed classes in the social and military influence of his kin and acquaintances. But other types of connexion could be effective, too, in obtaining patronage. The examples of the MacGregor clan, Peter Macdonald and Louisa Gossett show how other sorts of kinship and regional and regimental connexions could also provide a basis for support.

Sir John Murray MacGregor, chief of the clan, wrote in 1813 to Lieutenant Alexander MacGregor of the Rifle Brigade,

I am glad to hear that MacDonald MacGregor is provided for, and I hope that he will discharge his duty to the satisfaction of the Head of Department to which he belongs, and that he will save every shilling possible; as you all ought to do. Hugh's apathy astonishes, and offends, me. His father has abundance of fire, and he would never own Hugh if he had the least idea that he had not the spirit of a soldier...I should be mortified if I could suppose that any member of my Clan was deficient in that indispensable requisite. He was perhaps apprehensive of impropriety in obtruding the offer of volunteering...Remember us kindly to Dr. MacGregor, who has acquired great credit in the important situation which he fills. I am obliged to you for having taken Hugh MacGregor under your protection... As there are many young namesakes who would be glad to be provided with any decent means of bringing themselves forward, I wish to know whether there would be any openings for them in the Portuguese or Spanish services?...Your friend Captain Donald MacGregor is in the West Indies, and not without some hope of promotion.²⁸

It seems that Sir John co-ordinated the careers of clan members (who themselves made up a distinct web of connexion), and opportunistically called on each to use what influence he had to help the others. Alexander MacGregor was enjoined to use his services to the army to extract a reward, the gift of a commission, that could be given to a kinsman. And all the younger men were expected to make the best use of their opportunities through economy and application. The strategy evidently put clansmen in various occupations, and, building advancement on advancement, scattered them across Britain and the colonies while reinforcing their ties to kin.

By contrast, Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Macdonald had fewer civilian and service connexions than the MacGregors (there is no evidence he maintained links with Scotland) to help his family. He was evidently forced to rely solely on his regimental connexions

²⁸ RGI, Folio 1, p.98, J. MacGregor to A. MacGregor, 8 November 1813.

(strengthened by his long and distinguished service), his need as a gentleman in financial distress, and the character and abilities of his offspring. Macdonald wrote two letters in 1877 to Sir William Cope (who as regimental historian had many contacts in the Rifle Brigade, and as a landowner and cleric had influential civilian friends too) to ask for assistance. Macdonald had risen from the ranks,²⁹ but had evidently made a considerable sum of money during his career, before losing a substantial proportion invested 'with foreign governments'.

It would be a great help if I could find some employment for my eldest son. He left the 69th Regiment about two years ago having served five years, for no other reason than my inability to continue his allowance...Can you think of anything for him? He can get good testimonials from the regiment – also from the rector here...If you know any of your friends wanting a private secretary or someone to look after an estate either at home or in the colonies, I think he would be found fit for such...I also have four daughters at home – they are good at fancy needlework... – if they could dispose of their work direct without going to the shops it might be better. Do you think any of your lady friends would help them in this matter?...My eldest daughter who is twenty-four years of age is anxious to meet with a lady wanting a companion.³⁰

Macdonald's children were educated and cultivated (the offspring of a newly established gentleman) but, because they had no blood relatives of a similar social standing, they needed 'friends' to give them opportunities to make their living and to sustain their position. Macdonald was willing to try 'any genteel avenue' to raise money. He had a property with 'about 17 acres which I rent and send milk to London...'. He thought the grounds might be a source of income from hunting or fishing, but even for this, or to use the house, he needed contacts.

One of my daughters would like to see a few people under 12 to educate with her two younger brothers and sister. The terms for board and education would be 15 shillings a

²⁹ Peter Macdonald was commissioned as Quartermaster in the Rifle Brigade in 1846, from Sergeant-Major of the 1st Battalion. He was appointed Second Lieutenant and Adjutant of the 1st Battalion four months later, and had risen to Captain, on half-pay and unattached, by 1854. He took the local rank of Major, serving with the Turkish contingent, in August 1855, and was appointed Major of the 13th (Depot) Battalion in 1861. He exchanged to the 13th Light Infantry in January 1862, was made Lieutenant-Colonel in 1865, retiring on half-pay in 1868. He retired fully in 1872 and died in the United States of America in 1899. He married the daughter of Quartermaster Richard Taylor of the Rifle Brigade, and his brother Robert served in the ranks of the Rifle Brigade.

³⁰ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.66, P.Macdonald to W.Cope, 4 January 1877. The post of private secretary was a common form of civilian patronage. Hon.Sir William Stewart, for example, appointed Hughes, a gentleman and ex-officer serving in the Rifle Brigade other ranks to be his private secretary until he returned to a full-pay commission. W.Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (1833) (Military Book Society, London, 1973), p.47.

week. I mention this in case you should hear of any of your friends in London wishing to send their children out of town during the prominence of smallpox for instance or for a more lengthened stay. I would also be glad to meet with some quiet people for board and residence.³¹

Macdonald, that is, used a combination of claims (unlike Josslyn Pennington he was strong in those for virtue, service and ability, but weak in a lack of social position and eminent connexions) to put forward his whole family for patronage, and he approached a Rifleman he believed could provide a wide set of civilian connexions. It is not known how far he succeeded.

A third and final example, of family and regimental claims to patronage, in the form of money, and their combination, in this instance, with regional loyalty and service, is the assistance given by Louisa Gossett to the families of retired and elderly Riflemen living in Jersey. She replied to a letter from Sir William Cope asking her to give him information about the services in the Peninsular War of her father, Major John Gossett of the Rifle Brigade,³² and asking her to write to the wife of George Simmons with whom she was still in contact. Louisa Gossett complained of her own poverty, living in Jersey with her mother on £120 a year (she remarked that Peter Macdonalds' family had left the island because life there had become too expensive). She asked nothing for herself, however, but gave news of other regimental connexions on whose behalf she had evidently approached Cope for money in the past. She mentioned a letter in which she had 'pleaded' for a Miss Scott, daughter of Dr. Francis Scott of the Rifle Brigade, and sister of a paymaster of the 85th Regiment. Miss Scott, she wrote,

lives with her brother Henry, and a sad afflicted couple they are – the former lame and the latter did not experience any ill effects of his accident when a boy...[however] now he is blind.

She also sent news of the wife of a Rifleman from the other ranks.

Poor old Mrs Jerome is now in hospital. She had a second slight paralytic seizure last week – I think she will be the next Rifle link disjoined from us. She was my dear father's last legacy of care to me. – He used to read the service to her and her husband every Sunday.

³¹ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.67, P.Macdonald to W.Cope, 11 July 1877.

³² Gossett was first commissioned in 1811 and served in the Rifle Brigade (with only three months on half-pay, in 1819) until 1839. He then became a barrack master in Ireland, retiring in 1869. He died in Jersey in 1870.

Louisa Gossett was, it seems, in touch with entire families from the regiment, also known to Cope, and was in a chain of responsibility for their welfare.³³ The obligations she felt as part of her 'legacy of care', and the opportunities she had for presenting Cope with requests to help other Riflemen, set her up as their patron, though she had little influence or money herself. Her sentiments toward the Riflemen's families were similar to her feelings for direct blood relations with no apparent military link. All were a type of kin.³⁴ She wrote to Cope,

I think there is no greater encouragement to people who, like yourself, try to do some good to their belongings [sic], than to hear that others have succeeded in a similar undertaking, therefore I am sure that you will be pleased to learn that my plan for emigrating my cousins was blessed and prospered – I got £50 *above* the £300 which I wanted, and shipped them all off to New Zealand.³⁵

Thus Louisa Gossett took on the mantle of her father's responsibility for the other ranks, and she felt an additional pull because these Riflemen and their families were her neighbours. Her kinship with her father, and that of Mrs. Scott and Mrs. Jerome with their Rifle Brigade relatives, created claims for them on Cope (as a better connected and wealthier member of the regiment) based on a combination of the service of the Riflemen and their shared regimental identity.

Officers' wives and other female kin and friends appear several times in evidence found for the Rifle Brigade in the operation of patronage. Certainly many requests for assistance were made by women (sometimes widows) on behalf of candidates seeking first commissions or subsequent promotions. The services of a father or husband, or the woman's own property or high social position, could weigh in a candidate's favour. For example, when the Duke of Wellington received a request from Lieutenant John Fitzmaurice of the Rifle

³³ Officers' wives appear to have overseen many aspects of the care of women and children in the regiment. Commitment could last for life. For example, the wife of Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Edward Pelham Clinton, (sister of the Rifle Brigade officer Edmund Craddock Hartopp) remained involved with the families of the regiment after her husband had gone on half-pay. She accompanied him and Lady Harriot Bunbury (wife of Major Thomas Bunbury, still serving) to Portsmouth 'to see the women and children off in the Himalaya'. NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.205-206, E. Clinton to W. Cope, 7 February 1880.

³⁴ William Norcott accorded the wife of Sir Harry Smith a maternal role when she entertained the officers of the regiment before their departure for the Crimea, 'dear, kind, Lady Smith receiving and parting from us her sons'. RGJ, W. Norcott Diary, vol 1, 26 February 1854.

³⁵ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.281, L. Gossett to W. Cope, 11 May 1875.

Brigade for assistance in obtaining the civilian post of Inspector of Fisheries, Lord Fitzroy Somerset noted in the margin of his letter, 'This is Madame de Ronce's friend'.³⁶ Similarly, Lady Smith, wife of General Sir Harry Smith, succeeded in obtaining a commission in the 3rd Regiment for her nephew through pressure on Lord Hardinge.³⁷ And the Duke of Wellington, again, corresponded with the widow of Major-General Henry Mackinnon³⁸ (now Mrs. Prior) who wanted his support in her claim that a bounty pension granted to her son George be continued after he became an ensign in the Rifle Brigade. Wellington agreed to apply on his behalf to the Secretary at War, and wrote to Mrs. Prior, 'If he is unsuccessful the Duke wishes to be credited for having attempted to help them'.³⁹

Again, Lieutenant-General Sir Andrew Barnard received considerable help from his kinswoman Lady Anne Barnard who had extensive social, political and military connexions.⁴⁰ She was the daughter of the 5th Earl of Balcarres, and through her position in Edinburgh society knew as a young woman many prominent Scots including David Hume and Henry Mackenzie. Her house in London was known as a salon and she received among others William Pitt, Edmund Burke, Richard Sheridan and William Windham.⁴¹ She cultivated friendships with several influential men in order to procure patronage, and she communicated frequently with Andrew Barnard to inform him of her efforts to further his army career. She proposed writing in 1812 to Sir Henry Wellesley, brother of the Duke of Wellington, on hearing he had been kind to Andrew.

I like to suppose that I had a little – little share in this and therefore I will write to tell him that I heard this and feel gratitude to him.⁴²

³⁶ Southampton Univ., WP1/649/1, J. Fitzmaurice to Lord F. Somerset, 1 July 1820.

³⁷ J. Hasted, *The Gentle Amazon: The Life and Times of Lady Smith* (Museum Press, London, 1952), p. 209.

³⁸ Mackinnon was killed at the storming of Ciudad Rodrigo in the Peninsular War.

³⁹ Southampton Univ., WP1/802/20, C. Prior to the Duke of Wellington, 31 October 1824; *ibid.*, WP1/806/5 the Duke of Wellington to C. Prior, 6 November 1824; *ibid.*, WP1/806/7, the Duke of Wellington to Lord Palmerston, 7 November 1824; *ibid.*, WP1/805/21, Lord Palmerston to the Duke of Wellington, 26 November 1824.

⁴⁰ Lady Anne Barnard was married to Andrew Barnard, Colonial Secretary at the Cape of Good Hope and a retired army officer. He was the son of Thomas Barnard, Bishop of Limerick, the uncle of Andrew Barnard of the Rifle Brigade.

⁴¹ A. Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters 1778-1824* (Duckworth, London, 1928), p. 14.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 207.

She also corresponded with Sir Henry Torrens, Adjutant-General of the Forces from 1820, and occasionally dined with him.⁴³ 'I heard much of you in praise and kindness.'⁴⁴ Torrens helped Barnard secure a post as ADC to the Prince Regent in 1813,⁴⁵ although Lady Anne claimed a share of the credit.

I have no doubt that to the friendship of kind Torrens you owe not only patting your merits on the back at the Horse Guards but the taking off all edge of Jealousy on female influence that might have been otherwise felt on an interference in military matters, which wou'd *not have been unnatural*...⁴⁶

She was a particular friend of the Prince Regent and also assisted her kinsman in becoming Groom of the Bedchamber and later Equerry.⁴⁷

In addition, it was not impossible for women to act as patrons in their own right. As we have seen, Captain William Nesham was supported financially by an allowance from his grandmother Lady Graves;⁴⁸ he was forced in 1834, on her death when the allowance stopped, to transfer into a cheaper regiment. And many of the family links found in the regiment were forged through marriages. (See Appendix 2).

Wives of officers were encouraged to adopt sentiments toward the regiment that reflected those of their husbands. Shortly before the Duke of Connaught married he wrote to Sir William Norcott from Potsdam,

I am staying here with my future father-in-law and as you can imagine am having "quite a nice time". My future wife has been duly initiated into all the mysteries of the Rifle Brigade and already feels pride in the old Regiment.⁴⁹

⁴³ Andrew Barnard's half-sister Isabella also corresponded with Torrens, *ibid.*, p.190.

⁴⁴ Torrens was known as a 'friend' of Andrew Barnard, and so, for example, he was informed by General Kemp when Barnard was wounded, *ibid.*, p.231. Typically, this connexion was used by Barnard on behalf of others. Charles Beckwith wrote to Barnard thanking him for the help which Torrens had given in securing a Rifle Brigade commission for his brother, *ibid.*, pp.312-314.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.221.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.225.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.14, 282, 287.

⁴⁸ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.232-233, Keeting to W.Cope, undated [c.1875]. Nesham's mother was the daughter of Thomas Graves, 1st Baron Graves of the Royal Navy. Her elder brother was Thomas, 2nd Baron Graves, whose daughter Hon Augusta Graves married Rev.William Towry Law, who in turn had several Rifle Brigade kin.

⁴⁹ RGJ, Special Letters 1, Duke of Connaught to W.Norcott, 14 June 1878; N.Frankland, *Witness of a Century: The Life and Times of Prince Arthur Duke of Connaught 1850-1942* (Shepherd-Walwyn, London, 1993), pp.65-66.

And there is evidence from their side, too, that women identified with the regiment. For example, Lady Macclesfield (mother of Lieutenant the Hon.Cecil Parker) wrote to the Duke of Cambridge to complain that other units were using the music of the Rifle Brigade march.⁵⁰ The wife of George Simmons helped to write her husband's memoirs, and Mrs.Fitzmaurice was particularly eager to see her husband's achievements in print. She wrote an account of his Peninsular War services at the end of her *Recollections of a Rifleman's Wife*,⁵¹ and she corresponded enthusiastically with Sir William Cope as he prepared his *History*. She told him,

It will be a very complete and valuable record for the children of those whose fight is over in this world.⁵²

Family members, then, were involved in many claims to patronage in the Rifle Brigade. However kin operated beside (though often in combination with) other types of connexion, too, including, importantly, political and royal patrons.⁵³

As has been shown, several Rifle Brigade officers came from prominent political families, and several were the kin of politicians active at some time in their careers in military matters at parliamentary level. There was, however, as we have seen, a balance of political party affiliation in the officer corps both overall and in individual battalions across time, and this points away from straightforward political jobbery. No evidence has been found to suggest, in particular, that the Duke of Wellington (who was Colonel-in Chief from 1820 to 1852) granted Rifle Brigade commissions for purely political reasons,⁵⁴ although as Prime Minister

⁵⁰ RGJ, Swaine Letters, letter 6, Duke of Cambridge to Lady Macclesfield, 3 January 1868.

⁵¹ See below, pp.170-171.

⁵² NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.292-293, 28 April [c.1877].

⁵³ Connexions from school, and perhaps also Freemasonry, were used in a similar way. See below, p.229. Several Rifle Brigade officers were Freemasons. For example, Major James Stanley held high rank in the order. And Josslyn Pennington recorded his trepidation at his initiation while he was in the 90th Regiment. Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington Diary, 8 August 1852. Officers and other ranks who were Masons shared lodges and meetings, and there was some jealousy of their camaraderie. Howard, *Reminiscences*, pp.249-253. The Duke of Wellington had become a Mason, but disliked all secret societies in the army. E.Longford, *Wellington: The Years of the Sword* (Panther, London, 1971), pp.301-302.

⁵⁴ The Duke boasted that he had never himself asked for promotion but had always won it through achievement. In 1806 as he sailed to Portugal in a subordinate command he replied to a friend, who urged that he deserved a better post, that he saw his service as a type of contract (in which it was for his superiors to judge his merit). 'I have eaten of the King's salt, and therefore I conceive it to be my duty to serve with unhesitating zeal and cheerfulness when and wherever the King or his Government may think proper to employ me.' Cited J.Keegan, *The Mask of Command* (Penguin, London, 1987), p.163. This, however, was something of an exaggeration. For Wellington seeking patronage early in

and leader of the Tory opposition in the House of Lords he was under constant pressure to reward loyal political supporters and the Whigs were suspicious of his patronage power.⁵⁵ He may well have assisted the kinsmen of his friends and political colleagues. For example, Algernon Greville entered the Rifle Brigade in 1831 while his kinsman and namesake was Private Secretary to the Duke. However, the political value of such an appointment was probably not great. Likewise no evidence has been found to show that, for example, Lord Alexander Russell, half-brother of the Whig Prime Minister and Lieutenant-Colonel of the 1st Battalion from 1858 to 1868 (who left diaries and other papers), came under political pressure over appointments.⁵⁶

Certainly, patrons with both political and military influence were considered particularly powerful for both army and civilian appointments, and political connexions were frequently used. For example, Major-General Sir George Brown received a letter in 1849 from Colonel Richard Airey (who three years later was made Military Secretary to Lord Hardinge, Commander-in Chief),

The res. [reserve] Battalion of the 20th is commanded at London...by a son-in-law of Lord Hardinge's – LtCol Cunningham [sic] – They have been here repeatedly; she carries the Brain Box, and is an agreeable tho' most frightful little woman. I suspect in marrying her, he wished to form an alliance with Lord Hardinge's interest. However, he has got a child for which he deserves some credit.⁵⁷

his career see Longford, *Wellington: The Years of the Sword*, pp.172-174. Also *ibid.*, pp.64, 69-70 for Wellington's view that patronage in politics was a necessary evil, and for support in this opinion from Rev.G.R.Gleig, Chaplain -General to the forces from 1844 to 1875.

⁵⁵ See Bourne, *Patronage*, p.62; also Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.8, 247. Such suspicions were common and abuses undoubtedly occurred. The Whigs were themselves the subject of accusations, not least over patronage in the navy in the 1830s. See D.Southgate, *The Passing of the Whigs 1832-1856* (Macmillan, London, 1962), pp.52-53. And, for example, Sir John Moore believed that in the late eighteenth century Irish Militia commissions had been given for electioneering purposes. Moore, *Diary of Sir John Moore Maurice* (ed), vol 1, p.273. Likewise, Lieutenant-General Lord Rowland Hill was suspected of giving two colonelcies, for court favour and 'bare-faced political apostacy' respectively, when he was Commander-in-Chief. Colonel Firebrace, 'On the Errors and Faults in Our Military System: The Major – Order of the Bath', *USJ*, vol 29, 1843, part 1, p.216.

⁵⁶ Russell did not eschew his political connexions, however. He was ADC from 1840-1841 to Poulett Thompson, Lord Sydenham (a leading Benthamite Whig close to his brother Lord John Russell) when he was Governor-General of Canada.

⁵⁷ Nat.Lib.Scotland, MSS 1848, pp.18-23, R. Airey to G.Brown, 31 October 1849. Arthur Cunynghame rose to the rank of General, serving as Lieutenant-Governor and Commander of the Forces at the Cape of Good Hope. He was Colonel of the 60th Rifles. His eldest son was named Henry Hardinge Samuel Cunynghame.

And Lieutenant John Prendergast Walsh, who took Holy Orders in 1837 was promised by General (later Lord) Rowland Hill that the Conservative government would find a clerical living for him. (However, the government changed and – according to Walsh’s son – the Radical government would not honour the promise.)⁵⁸ Similarly, after Lieutenant-General Sir Charles Gregan-Craufurd, married a Clinton, and became member of Parliament for East Retford in the Duke of Newcastle’s interest, he was able to persuade William Windham (Secretary of State for War and the Colonies from 1806 to 1807) to put his brother Robert forward to be made a colonel.⁵⁹ However, political connexion was only ever one among several claims to army patronage, and it was never as common as (though used in combination with) blood or regimental and other military links, or the claims of service and talent.

The royal family (who were, like politicians, powerful patrons) also had influence in selecting officers. From at least 1887 the regiment kept a formal book of candidates, or Noting Book, listing boys (sometimes put down at birth) from among whom new subalterns were chosen. Details of the applicant’s parentage, and (where large) their actual or expected income, were sometimes recorded, but most attention was given to the names of sponsors. This revealed the nature and extent of their connexions. We have already seen how Prince Albert obtained a commission for Hon. Alan Pennington, and he also secured a commission in the regiment for Leopold Swaine when the Duc de Brabant, heir to the Belgian throne, passed on a request from Swaine’s father, a diplomat.⁶⁰ Similarly, toward the end of the century, the backing of the Duke of Connaught carried considerable weight. For example, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Buller of the Rifle Brigade recommended A.D. Boden for a commission in the regiment in 1888. He was told that it was no use to note a boy if he had ‘no regimental claims’. His only hope then was to be recommended by the Duke of Connaught, Colonel-in Chief of the regiment. Likewise, D. Marjoribanks was told in 1889 that application should be made to the Duke of Connaught, as

⁵⁸ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.235-242, G. Walsh to W. Cope, 27 July 1886. Hill was Commander-in-Chief from 1825-1839. This promise appears to have been made after Walsh retired in October 1833, but before the Whigs came to power under Lord Melbourne in 1835. Walsh was ordained in 1837.

⁵⁹ W. Verner, ‘Some obscure passages in the life of Major-General Robert Craufurd’, *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1917, pp.28-41.

⁶⁰ L. V. Swaine, *Camp and Chancery in a Soldier’s Life* (John Murray, London, 1926), p.9.

not even the recommendation of General Feilden, who was descended from Major-General Coote Manningham (though he had not himself served in the regiment) was alone sufficient.⁶¹

Nonetheless, Rifle Brigade blood was always very important for first appointments in the Rifle Brigade. It is clear that a few families had a permanent 'claim' on the regiment, and had a place reserved for a kinsman.⁶² Charles Hawtree Bruce Norcott, son of Sir William, put down his son (also Charles) at birth. He also put his second son as the 'waiting man' on his brother, in case he did not take up the place.⁶³ When Sir William Norcott contemplated in 1855, after the death of the younger Sydney Beckwith, the possibility of his own death or retirement, he wrote,

It is an old remark the Rifles were never without a Beckwith or a Stewart or a Norcott. The two first have gone out – and mine is a flickering and (at this period too) a most uncertain light!⁶⁴

These blood ties were evidently considered important to the morale and identity of the regiment even at the end of the century. For example, the *Rifle Brigade Chronicle* produced in 1891 a list of all Riflemen then serving whose forbears had served in the regiment.⁶⁵

Connexion, then, (of various sorts) was central in the operation of patronage. However, ability and achievement were also, as we have seen, used toward preferment, even when other claims were strong. They did not stand in opposition to family, military, regimental, political or other connexion, but complemented them. Thus throughout the period parents of future Rifle Brigade officers made efforts to bring their sons to the notice of influential men of their acquaintance to both forge connexions and to impress them with the character and talents of their offspring. For example, Sir William and Lady Cope visited Francis Howard at Sandhurst in the 1860s at the request of his parents and Howard was dismayed that the Copes

⁶¹ RGJ, Noting Book of the Rifle Brigade.

⁶² Among these were the Tryon and Rooper families.

⁶³ RGJ, Special Letters 1, the Duke of Connaught to C.Norcott, 24 March 1898.

⁶⁴ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 3, 8 January 1855.

⁶⁵ 'Roll of Riflemen's Sons Serving in the Regiment', *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1891, pp.87-88. This listed the names of eleven officers and fifty-seven other ranks.

were told by some of the other boys that he was most likely to be found in the punishment cells. He was also sent as a boy to spend weekends with General Sir John Pennefather.⁶⁶

Indeed impressing seniors who could act as patrons was an important route to promotion throughout a military career, and the recognition of talent was always the best hope (especially for access to higher ranks) of all but the most well-connected. (Although all could afford to purchase, it took the Duke of Connaught eight years to rise to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and the eldest son of the 1st Duke of Wellington eleven years, where it took the son of Sir William Cope, who had excellent regimental connexion, thirty years.) For example, in the letter to Alexander MacGregor referred to above, the clan chief also congratulated his kinsman on his promotion into the Portuguese service, and suggested that he seize the opportunity for promotion in the British service too, while his conduct was 'fresh in the memory of your superiors'. This could be achieved, he believed, if he 'got a hint' from either 'the Great Marquis' (Wellington) or Marshal Beresford to the Duke of York, Commander-in-Chief. Likewise, although they were evidently a moderately wealthy family (the letter concerned signatures regarding a copyhold belonging to the son) H.H.Shadwell wrote to his Rifle Brigade son in 1840,

don't forget that without we put our *own* shoulders to the wheel we can never get on in this world...I hope as you have made choice of the Army you will make yourself master of your profession.⁶⁷

Officers seeking promotion always improved their prospects by seeing active service. Sir Charles Napier wrote of the 52nd, 43rd and 95th (Rifle Brigade) trained at Shorncliffe by Sir John Moore and Lieutenant-Colonel Kenneth Mackenzie, that although obscure until then, afterwards their officers were 'skilled to gain authority and public notice without political or family interest, save in a very few cases'.⁶⁸ This, indeed, was one of the main attractions of the

⁶⁶ F.Howard, *Reminiscences 1848-1890* (John Murray, London, 1924), pp. 32-33. Pennefather had commanded a brigade at Alma and a division at Inkerman. Howard obtained his commission in the Rifle Brigade in 1866 mainly through the patronage of the Duke of Cambridge. See below, p.217, fn50 for Gerald Boyle being sent as a boy to stay with a military uncle.

⁶⁷ RGJ, Folio 1, p.80, H.Shadwell to J.Shadwell, 8 June 1840.

⁶⁸ See A.F.Mockler-Ferryman, *The Oxfordshire Light Infantry Chronicle* (Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1898), pp. 157-159 for a list of the military achievements and later careers of officers trained under Sir John Moore.

Rifle Brigade. It became fashionable as a result of its distinguished record in the Peninsular War, but above all the corps gave opportunities for officers, whether well-connected or not, to excel in military skills and to achieve distinction in action. Lieutenant William Cuninghame wrote to his father from the Crimea, for example, to dissuade him from arranging a transfer to a Guards regiment as he wanted to see action and he believed regimental officers in the Rifle Brigade had more individual responsibility, because of the detached nature of their duties.⁶⁹ In the Rifle Brigade, officers (and men) could establish a 'character' in the sense of a laudable reputation for professional and personal behaviour, and, at the same time, they could make social contacts that would give them leverage in their military and social careers, through good formal or informal references. The Rifle Brigade provided the means to advancement, that is, via both aspects of merit recognised in the ideal of gentlemanliness: connexions, and service plus talent.

Talented and long-serving officers had strong claims to preferment and their consistent neglect was always a source of discontent. Henry Havelock had obtained his first commission through connexion. His brother William, an ADC to General Alten, distinguished himself at Waterloo and was offered the opportunity to name a man for a commission in the regiment of his choice. He nominated his brother and put him down for the Rifle Brigade where he already had friends.⁷⁰ In other words, Havelock had benefited from patronage – created in his family through merit – at the start of his career, and he continued to rely on family contacts. Yet he railed at the injustice of his subsequent slow promotion. He had insufficient funds to purchase, although he had ample experience, and he was forced to stand aside while '3 sots and 2 fools' were promoted ahead of him.⁷¹ His close friend and fellow officer of the 13th Regiment, Major

⁶⁹ RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, letter 26, W.Cuninghame to his father, 7 December 1854; *ibid.*, letter 36, W.Cuninghame to his father, 26 January 1855.

⁷⁰ J.C.Pollock, *The Way to Glory: The Life of Havelock of Lucknow* (John Murray, London, 1957), pp.8-10

⁷¹ J.C.Marshman, *Memoirs of Major-General Sir Henry Havelock KCB* (1867) (Longman, Green and Co., London, 1909), p.207. When Henry Havelock had to solicit patronage from the East India Company in 1850 to obtain a military position in the Indian army for his son Joshua, he noted that he supported the powers of the Directors to nominate because they prevented the Secretary of State's office from establishing a monopoly on military commissions. However he wished to see a widening of the constituency electing the Directors. *Ibid.*, pp.206-207.

Broadfoot, advised him that he could bully or shame his superiors into backing his promotion without purchase.

You must indeed *speak up* - they must fear, as well as find you useful, or you will drop from the place it is your duty to occupy.⁷²

3.2 Merit in Patronage and the Ideal of Gentlemanliness

Patronage, then, operated in the Rifle Brigade in response, first, to claims of family (in either military or civilian society, sometimes through women) and of regimental, regional, political, royal and other connexions, and, second, to claims of character, ability and achievement. This contrast in claims did not result, however, in the creation of divided camps of officers with and without family or other connexion who supported and opposed its use. On the contrary, there was support on all sides for the advancement of men with ability. Instead, it led to the mixing of the two sets of notions of merit.

The patronage system drew officers and men into an astute appreciation of the place of every individual in a wider social hierarchy containing multiple webs of patronage,⁷³ and it fostered social ambition as a part of professional ambition. Professional reward was inextricably linked to movement within the civilian as well as military social hierarchy. Crucially, a professional career could confirm education and manners in defining a man as a gentleman by bringing him into the society of the well-born.⁷⁴ (And it could legitimise the privilege of the ruling classes by association with virtue, talent and service.) In desiring to attach themselves to powerful patrons, Riflemen with poor connexions did not reject the view

⁷² Pollock, *Way to Glory*, p.99

⁷³ William Norcott wrote a wry story with illustrations while he was in the Crimea entitled 'The Courtship of the Court Cards' that showed well his awareness of social layers in the officer corps. It begins, 'Major Spade is well known at Court. A direct descendant from that Spade the intimate friend of Firstman Adam (formerly of Eden Gardens) he is collaterally connected with the Axes of Pick as well as the Prong Forks of Dung Hill. He has the honour moreover to be closely allied to the present Sir Clodesley Shovel - who married Miss Tongs the great heiress, and like his ancestor of old is a staunch agriculturalist'. RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 3, 16 January 1855.

⁷⁴ See Bourne, *Patronage*, pp.18-21, 23-24, 87-89.

that skill, industry, education, personal morality and so on, were proper means to advancement. Rather they sought to emphasise the existing connection of those virtues and attainments (which they could claim) with high social status. Deserving individuals could thereby establish for themselves and their kin a commensurate gentlemanly position in the social hierarchy. Thus they underscored the ideology of regenerated gentlemanliness as well as the power of the well-connected.

Three examples, the careers of Hon. William Stewart, Amos Norcott and George Simmons, and their families, can serve to show how it was standard throughout this period to value as deserving both connexion and capacity, and to view these as accompanying gentlemanly social position.

First, the career of Lieutenant-General the Hon. Sir William Stewart offers interesting insights. His background was solidly aristocratic. He was the second son of John, 7th Earl of Galloway; his brothers-in-law were George Spencer Churchill, the 5th Duke of Marlborough, and Lord Spencer Stanley Chichester, second son of the 1st Marquess of Donegall; his brothers married daughters of Lord Elcho and the 1st Earl of Uxbridge; and his wife was a granddaughter of Lord Harewood.⁷⁵ Stewart was first commissioned in 1786 at the age of twelve into the 42nd Highlanders.⁷⁶ No record has been found of how he was nominated for the commission, but he did not join the corps until two years later,⁷⁷ and his appointment was undoubtedly secured through family influence. Stewart gained promotion to Captain of an independent company at the age of seventeen, with only three years experience. And he became Lieutenant-Colonel of the 31st Regiment three years later, effectively skipping the rank of Major.

Such rapid progress was normally only possible in the late eighteenth century for the wealthy and well-connected, through purchase and patronage. And Stewart evidently approved of the use of such privilege. He assisted several of his own kin as soon as this was in his power.

⁷⁵ She was Frances, daughter of Hon. John Douglas (second son of the 14th Earl of Morton) and Frances Lascelles, daughter of the 1st Earl of Harewood.

⁷⁶ The 42nd (The Royal Highland) Regiment was the oldest regular Highland regiment in the British service.

⁷⁷ See W. Stewart, *Cumloden Papers* (privately printed, Edinburgh, 1871).

In 1803 he obtained a commission in the Rifle Brigade for his younger brother, the Hon. James Stewart, and he later arranged for him to act on his staff as his Major of Brigade both in Spain and in Egypt.⁷⁸ A commission in the Rifle Brigade was also found for William Stewart's son Horatio. Furthermore, Horatio Stewart managed to rise within six years to the rank of captain while his father was Colonel Commandant of the 1st Battalion. He achieved this during the 1820s, a period of notoriously slow promotion in the services, and it is likely that he was assisted by his father.

This is not to argue that Stewart was guilty of abusing his position on behalf of his family. Certainly no evidence has been found for him, or for any other Rifleman, to indicate, for example, special treatment for favourites in matters such as duties assigned or extra leave.⁷⁹ Rather, Stewart's actions in helping kinsmen should be seen as a fulfilment, in his turn, of non-military duty in a military context. That is, Stewart was generous to his family because he recognized obligations to them. It was evidently entirely legitimate in his view to fulfil personal or non-military duties by offering military posts in his gift.

Stewart also remembered a wider circle of those who looked to him for support. Among these was Major Smyth, formerly a fellow officer, with whom he had served for three years at St. Domingo. Stewart supported Smyth's application to Colonel Torrens the Adjutant-General, for a transfer to England to educate his children, noting that Smyth had served forty years, and twenty-eight of these abroad. Stewart was godfather to Smyth's son and offered to pay for his first commission.⁸⁰ Stewart also assisted members of his personal household: when he drew up the prize list of the staff of the Light Division in August 1809, he included the names of his servants (listed as 'not soldiers') John England and John Gambay.⁸¹ He may also have favoured Scots above others for appointments in the regiment.⁸²

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.64-65.

⁷⁹ Nonetheless connexions could provide practical advantages that bordered on corruption. For example, David Gordon remarked during the Crimean War that the twenty sacks that lined his hut were procured by Lieutenant John Plumtre Carr Glyn 'who has a friend at court, i.e. the commissariat'. RGJ, Gordon Diary, 18 January 1856. Glyn had many kinsmen in the army and was well connected through Evangelicalism, Liberal politics and banking.

⁸⁰ Stewart, *Cumlocden Papers*, p.131.

⁸¹ RGJ, Folio 2, Prize List of the Staff of the Light Brigade, 29 August 1809. This was for the expedition to the Walcheren. It also lists for prizes, in Stewart's hand, first, his ADC Captain

Further, Stewart had, too, a rigid sense of social place that circumscribed advancement, even for a man of his birth. After the Peninsular War he refused a peerage 'from prudential motives': he felt his income was too low to support the rank. That is, he had been offered a title (a much-coveted instrument of royal patronage) as a reward for his talent and achievements but he subscribed to the conventional view that it was unfitting for any but the most wealthy, whatever their service to the country and whatever their lineage, to aspire to a peerage.⁸³

Despite these views, Stewart's own progress in the army was evidently merited on grounds of ability and application as well as money and connexion. He sought active service and continental training, as we have seen, and he impressed a series of commanding officers.⁸⁴ Indeed it is clear he set great store by military knowledge and experience. The *Regulations* and his *Outline of a Plan*, referred to above, underscored his commitment to promotion for those excelling in military duty. And he showed his backing for military education not only by encouraging serving men and officers to study,⁸⁵ but by sending both his own son, Horatio, and

Montague Wynyard, 2nd Foot Guards, with Wynyard's soldier-servant Edward Carncy, and, second, his Major of Brigade Captain William Percival of the Rifle Brigade with his civilian servant William Greyson.

⁸² See below, p.293. See Bourne, *Patronage*, pp.128-129 for the view that posts in the government and empire were instrumental in binding 'entire Scots communities' to the English in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A speech by Sir Andrew Agnew cited in *The Annual Biography*, vol xii, 1828, pp.308-316 suggests the identification of the people of Galloway with William Stewart's military achievements. The Anglo-Irish may likewise have supported one another. Andrew Barnard received a letter in 1797 from Captain Herbert Evans with whom he had served, hoping that Barnard liked his new commanding officer in the 55th Regiment. 'He is a Countryman if I am not mistaken and as such must have a regard for you, but if he has any discernment whether he be, or not, it should make no difference in the esteem he ought to have for a man of merit. By ye talking of your country [sic], there have been rows in ye north and very considerable disturbances.' Powell, *Barnard Letters*, p.74.

⁸³ Scottish Record Office, GD 46/17/37, Galloway to A.Stewart, 30 September 1811, W.Stewart to A Stewart, 16 October 1811, cited in R. Thorne, *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1790-1820* (Secker and Warburg, London, 1986), vol 5, p.298.

⁸⁴ Not least, Nelson was impressed with him during the expedition to Copenhagen. I.Hamilton, 'Lieut.General The Hon.Sir William Stewart GCB, KTS, of Cumloden, Newton Stewart', *Dispatch: The Journal of the Scottish Military Collectors Society*, No 98, 1982, p.7; RGJ, Special Letters 2, H.Nelson to W.Stewart, 10 October 1801. Also R.Bryant, *Jackets of Green: A Study of the History, Philosophy, and Character of the Rifle Brigade* (Collins, London, 1972), p.30 cites a letter from Nelson to Lord St.Vincent describing Stewart as an 'excellent and indefatigable young man and the rising hope of our army'.

⁸⁵ Stewart was noted for his attention to teaching young officers in the field. Stewart, *Cumloden Papers*, pp.138-139 cites a letter from one, 'I question if a twelvemonth at any military college in Europe could afford so valuable instruction as one hour in the company of General Stewart on a perilous outlying picket...'

the son of Major Smyth as cadets to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst.⁸⁶ Stewart was, in other words, committed to professional education, and so at least on one level to promotion for military capacity. Yet, as we have seen, he perpetuated a system of appointment and promotion by patronage, and he was sensitive to the proprieties of social place.⁸⁷ Because he subscribed to the ideal of gentlemanliness these were not in opposition, but aspects of the same notion of merit.

It has already been shown that the Rifle Brigade was shot through at all ranks with family ties. It was common for soldiers throughout the army in the early and mid-nineteenth century to serve alongside relatives. High-ranking officers often appointed family members to serve as Aides-de-Camp in this period, and this pattern was followed not only by Stewart, but by other officers of the Rifle Brigade. Amos Norcott (one of the original officers of the Rifle Brigade), whose career offers a second example of the linking of connexion and capacity in patronage, served on the staff of his uncle Major-General Robert Cuninghame, 1st Baron Rossmore, in India. When Norcott became seriously ill and returned to England in 1800 to recover his health, he was immediately taken onto the staff of another kinsman, General Thomas Murray.⁸⁸ Murray had known Norcott from infancy, and acted as his guardian (after

⁸⁶ In supporting Sandhurst Stewart aligned himself with the spread of continental-style military education to Britain. Sandhurst cadets at this time were taught by General Francois Jarry, a French officer who had served on the staff of Frederick II, and had been the first Governor of the Kriegsschule in Berlin, and by Denis Le Marchant. Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, pp.123-124 cites Le Marchant (troubled in his career by his own lack of connexion) as aiming to 'replace the power of nepotism which for so long had stifled talent'. Nonetheless, Le Marchant stressed gentlemanly behaviour and good manners for officers, and believed in the propriety of the separation of social ranks. R.Thoumine, *Scientific Soldier: A Life of General Le Marchant 1766-1812* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1968), pp.111, 165-166, 183-184. Le Marchant and Stewart were 'allies' in the patronage sense. Le Marchant's son Carey served as ADC to Stewart in Spain, *ibid.*, p.198.

⁸⁷ Stewart was related through forbears and siblings, and by marriage, to several families that provided Rifle Brigade officers in this and following generations. These included the D'Aguilar, Dashwood, Lascelles, Graham and Greville families. (See Appendix 2). Even after he became a general officer Stewart continued to have a hand in appointments and promotions in the regiment. He was made Colonel of the 3rd Battalion in 1812 and Colonel of the 1st Battalion in 1818. He continued to correspond with the Duke of Wellington, Lord Palmerston and Lord FitzRoy Somerset on Rifle Brigade business, particularly regarding dress and appointments. Stewart, *Cumloeden Papers*, p.129.

⁸⁸ Murray may have been related both to Lord Rossmore's wife, and to Norcott's mother with whom he corresponded regularly. RGJ, Letter Book of General Murray, T.Murray to A.Norcott, 8 February 1803. Amos Norcott was also ADC to General Sir Thomas Graham and to General Ramsay, though why they chose him is not known. NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 1, p.431, Memoir of the Late Major-General Sir Amos Norcott, and RGJ, Folio 2, p.65, Statement of the Services of Major-General A.G.R.Norcott.

Norcott's father's death) until he came of age.⁸⁹ He was exceptionally kind to Norcott at this time, even doing his work for him for him when Norcott was absent and ill. Indeed, Murray consequently found himself censured by the Duke of York.⁹⁰

When Amos Norcott's son William became a brigadier some fifty years later, he was required to nominate staff officers in his turn. He was still expected in the mid-century to perpetuate a similar sort of patronage: Lieutenant Cuninghame of the Rifle Brigade (no relation to Lord Rossmore) wrote to his father that he had hopes of serving on Norcott's new staff in the Crimea,

Perhaps he and I being great allies, he might (just might) take me as his ADC, and then there is no end to the brilliant *dreams* one might weave out of that.

However, he could not be certain of the appointment as 'possibly he may have some relation or friend he may wish to take first'. Cuninghame's mother urged him to ask William Norcott for the favour, but Cuninghame replied, 'that's impossible!!'.⁹¹ From the large number of written requests to officers for appointments that survive it is clear many with more tenuous claims were not so reticent. However establishing a patronage relationship was a personal as much as a professional matter and was therefore delicate. (William Norcott's sons were still very young at this date and so could not be considered, but in 1879, when he was Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, he appointed his eldest son Charles to be his orderly officer. He served in that capacity for five years.)⁹²

Yet, despite this record of the use of patronage, when William Norcott (who purchased none of his regimental steps) sought appointment to a field command, he found his contacts were inadequate and he put himself forward primarily on the grounds of merit. He pointed to his twenty-two years of service in the regiment (declaring his grievance at being being frequently

⁸⁹ RGJ, Letter Book of General Murray, T.Murray to Colonel Brownrigg, 13 March 1801.

⁹⁰ *ibid.*, T.Murray to Colonel Wynyard, 1 February 1801; *ibid.*, T.Murray to Major Addenbrooke, 27 February 1801; *ibid.*, T.Murray to Major Addenbrooke, 28 February 1801; *ibid.*, T.Murray to Colonel Brownrigg, 13 March 1801. Murray was concerned (when he asked him to mediate with the Horse Guards) that Lord Rossmore, too, would disapprove of the help he gave Norcott, 'and I hope never to have any embarrassments that your friendship and protection should blush at acknowledging me'.

⁹¹ RGJ, Cuninghame Letters, letter 75, W.Cuninghame to his mother, 17 August 1855.

⁹² RGJ, Folio 2, Record of the Services of Major Charles Hawtree Norcott, 1884; RGJ, Folio 2, p.72, Statement of the Services of Major-General Norcott, 1874.

passed over because he could not afford to purchase), his experience in action, and the report he had written on the Minié rifle.⁹³ He recognized the practicalities of obtaining preferment outside the Rifle Brigade where his name was less influential, and he approached first Major-General James Estcourt (because, he noted, they were at Sandhurst together), then Lieutenant-General Sir George Brown, and finally, when these proved too slow, he bombarded Lord Raglan (who commanded the army in the East but barely knew Norcott) with requests until the latter replied that Norcott could look on him as a 'friend' who hoped to see him advance.⁹⁴

Norcott's diary makes clear his anger in finding his experience and ability overlooked. However, he was not only led to manipulate the patronage system of necessity, he positively endorsed it by fostering linked non-military ambitions. Norcott wanted above all to bring his family honour. He believed that his promotion would reflect well on them in civilian life and bring them money and career opportunities. (In this he echoed his father Amos writing to the Duke of Wellington in 1819 asking for a knighthood 'to help my family materially in the world'.)⁹⁵ William Norcott even betrayed an ultimate ambition of sitting in parliament on the strength of his military achievements, which would have represented a significant social advance and an increase in influence.⁹⁶

Likewise, Major George Simmons (a third example) was single-minded in his cultivation of patrons in the regiments in which he served to help his own career and that of his kin and to establish at the same time his claim to gentlemanliness. Simmons first trained as a surgeon in the South Lincolnshire Militia. It appears that he decided to join the regular army in 1809 after experiencing a sense of humiliation in not being able to afford to attend medical

⁹³ When he was assigned the duties of a general officer in the trenches of the Crimea Norcott was delighted to have authority over men who had purchased over him. 'By my promotion I become the senior of all Colonels of the Division – all those *my* seniors, but who entered the army long after me, and get on by purchase.' RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 6, 5 July 1855.

⁹⁴ RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 3, 25 November 1854; *ibid.*, vol 4, 23 February 1855; *ibid.*, vol 4, 4 March 1855; *ibid.*, vol 4, 6 March 1855; *ibid.*, vol 4, 12 March 1855. Estcourt arranged for him to be put in staff quarters when he was ill, thus acknowledging the connexion. *Ibid.*, vol 3, 21 November 1854. Norcott's desire for recognition was evidently transparent. Lord Alexander Russell wrote, 'PDE [parade] for the new distinction of medals. Norcott made a most ridiculous spectacle as usual'. RGJ, Russell Diary, 19 September 1855.

⁹⁵ Southampton Univ., WP1/615/10, A.Norcott to the Duke of Wellington, 27 January 1819.

⁹⁶ RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 4, 12 March 1855.

lectures. While in the militia he was befriended by his commanding officer, Colonel Humphrey Waldo Sibthorp,⁹⁷ who thought highly of his talents and character. Sibthorp was Simmons' first patron.

Sibthorp tried to persuade Simmons that his best interests would be served by staying in the militia and above all in medicine. He offered to help him financially so that he could finish his training (although he urged him to keep this a secret and only to tell his fellow militia officers that Sibthorp had pressed him to stay and he had therefore given way), but even when Simmons insisted on leaving Sibthorp sent him money.

I must convince you I am no *professing* mind, and shall exert myself to my utmost strength to extract...the stump of necessity which caused you all this intolerable anguish. I will beg your acceptance of 20 guineas which will help to drive the wind from your purse...I shall...be ready to repeat the Dole...⁹⁸

Sibthorp spelt out to Simmons his worries about a regular army career for him. He was afraid that he might be killed, but in any case he worried that a man like him, however able, without money or connexions could not get on in the military.⁹⁹ He wrote,

After hearing the Request you have made, over and over again in my mind, looking at it in every Point of view I am capable of, the first Impression still remains - and that for you to pass the *Bourne* over which there can be no *Return* would in all probability expose you to more bitter disappointments than those you are now so acutely sensible of...or will be likely to experience in the persevering Pursuit of your profession...Before I throw aside my pen or direct it to some other course, I will hope I shall cut up the Plea, which strikes me to be used in much the same way, and with equal weight as the exclamation of the apologising pitiable unfortunate Jane Shore - my Poverty consents, but not my will.

Despite this warning, Simmons made the transfer, although he was quick to acquire a second patron: his Lieutenant-Colonel, Sydney Beckwith. Simmons was particularly concerned

⁹⁷ Colonel Sibthorp was the brother of John Sibthorp (1756-1796), a medical doctor who succeeded their father as Sherardian Professor of Botany at Oxford. Colonel Sibthorp was also the father of five sons including Colonel Charles de Laet Waldo Sibthorp and Rev. Richard Waldo Sibthorp. Charles served with the 4th Dragoon Guards in the Peninsular War and succeeded his father as Colonel of the South Lincolnshire Militia. He was an ultra Tory Member of Parliament, representing Lincoln following his brother, father and great-uncle. Richard, who had evangelical sympathies, was ordained an Anglican but twice entered the Roman Catholic Church.

⁹⁸ RGJ, Folio 2, p.10, H.Sibthorp to G.Simmons, 11 April 1809. Sibthorp sent him £25 after his wound at Almeida, 'as an unequivocal testimony of that I feel for, and of the sentiment of Regard I have for you'. RGJ, Folio 2, p.12, H.Sibthorp to G.Simmons, 21 September 1810.

⁹⁹ Although he knew officers in the Rifle Brigade (he asked Simmons to remember him to Lieutenant Crastor and Captain Daniel Cadoux) Sibthorp was was not apparently confident about his influence in the army. Ibid.

to help his eight younger brothers likewise to find situations suitable for gentlemen, and 'by obtaining the patronage of Colonel Beckwith' he found places for two of them in the Rifle Brigade rank and file.¹⁰⁰ Joseph Simmons was later promoted from the ranks as his brother had hoped, and Maud joined the 34th Foot as an officer.

This patronage from the Colonel of Simmons' battalion, together with shared service in the corps, not only attached Simmons and his brothers to Beckwith's circle of connexion, it tied him to other members of the Beckwith family. He became a close friend of Charles Beckwith, nephew of Sydney (Charles was also captain of Simmons' company) and they corresponded long after Sydney Beckwith died. When Captain Thomas Beckwith, the son of Sydney, died in 1828 while serving in the Rifle Brigade (and thus opened up a space for a non-purchase promotion) Charles Beckwith wrote to Simmons to tell him that he and the other officers in the regiment 'were astir' to get him promoted. (Simmons, having little money, was still a lieutenant some sixteen years after his service in the Peninsular War.) Simmons, regarded as sharing in the Beckwith interest, was duly promoted to captain three weeks later. In this instance the Beckwiths did not entirely use up their claim to the vacancy in backing Simmons, however. A second-lieutenancy was created in the ensuing chain of promotions, and this was given to a younger Beckwith (another Sydney). Soon after, Charles asked Simmons to 'look after his younger brother'. And Simmons offered friendship to others in the family, too, in return for their support. In 1839 Charles Beckwith wrote to Simmons thanking him for his 'attentions and civilities' to his family, including his sister,

You have done just what I expected from you and more, as I am well convinced that you will never hesitate to save me to the full extent of your ability whenever you can.¹⁰¹

Simmons not only had a special connection with the Beckwiths, he also maintained friendships for many years with other high-ranking and influential Riflemen.¹⁰² Their

¹⁰⁰ G. Simmons, *A British Rifle Man: The Journals and Correspondence of Major George Simmons, Rifle Brigade, During the Peninsular War and the Campaign of Waterloo*, W. Verner (ed) (A. and C. Black, London, 1899), pp. 6, 7, 17, 95, 109. RGJ, Folio 2, p. 10, H. Sibthorp to G. Simmons, 11 April 1809. Simmons also had a friend who he hoped would provide a position in the navy for at least one of his brothers, Simmons, *A British Rifle Man*, p. 8.

¹⁰¹ RGJ, Folio 2, p. 18, C. Beckwith to G. Simmons, 7 May 1828; and *ibid.*, p. 20, C. Beckwith to G. Simmons, undated.

relationships were underpinned by loyalty to the regiment and mutual service; and shared experiences gave rise to strong feelings of affection, and sometimes humour. Sir Harry Smith wrote to Simmons in 1845 on hearing that he planned to write an account of his Peninsular services,

I am sure I shall laugh over many of the scenes, don't forget when we were all going down wounded when your Bullocks ran off I was going to hang the Gens de Toro if he did not bring you a fresh pair - they *were fresh* tell that story of your sufferings and Short's coachmanship - also throwing the water in Ironmongers face when we marched up the Belem Rangers - that Long fellow is still alive and has a son in the 4th Regiment - DDDDDDDD [sic]...George you must tell the story of poor old Sydney B's Milk Goat *you bought* for him, you always believed I had a hand in exchanging it for a Billy - but *I had not* poor old Wooley Johnston alas dear noble fellow *did it* - I only among others helped to *laugh*...¹⁰³

Simmons appears to have used several of these Rifle Brigade friends to give him testimonials. Harry Smith, for example, wrote a glowing account of his services and character, adding at the end, 'I hope my letter is all you wish'.¹⁰⁴ Simmons also kept in contact with Amos Norcott and George Brown.¹⁰⁵ Likewise, he had obtained the enduring friendship and gratitude of Sir Andrew Barnard (who became Colonel Commandant of the 1st Battalion) and this later resulted in a promise to write recommendations for him.¹⁰⁶ Simmons recalled that after he had been wounded at Waterloo,

my noble and kind friend Sir Andrew Barnard rode over to see me and told Mr Overmann to spare no expense in my service saying a great deal more in my praise than I mean to publish here. I could not help observing to Mr Overmann this was just as it ought to be, I saved that great and glorious man's life when badly wounded I removed him under murderous fire from a body of French infantry at the Battle of Nivelles in the Pyrenees and in a month brought him back to the battalion convalescent. The Duke of Wellington sent his surgeon to see him, but he would have none but myself to attend on him.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰² Many friendships between officers of the Light Division in the Peninsular War were long-lasting. See, for example, RGJ, Folio 2, p.9, C.Beckwith to W.Napier, 1 May 1845.

¹⁰³ RGJ, Folio 2, p.24, H.Smith to G.Simmons, 3 May 1845.

¹⁰⁴ RGJ, Folio 2, p.25, H.Smith to G.Simmons, 26 February 1847.

¹⁰⁵ RGJ, Folio 2, p.17, A.Norcott to G.Simmons, 13 July 1828; *ibid.*, p.32, G.Brown to G.Simmons, 15 August 1855.

¹⁰⁶ On the occasion of the opportunity arising for Simmons' promotion to captain, Charles Beckwith wrote, 'but I can truly say that each had anticipated the other, and I do not believe that Sir Andrew Barnard had let half an hour pass before he went to the Horse Guards'. RGJ, Folio 2, p.18, C.Beckwith to G.Simmons, 7 May 1828.

¹⁰⁷ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 1, G.Simmons, Narrative of Waterloo

Simmons realised the extent of his reliance on regimental connections for his position and that of his family. When he wrote in 1855 an account of his part in the battle of Waterloo, he ended with a message for his son, then studying at Woolwich, who wanted to serve with the Royal Engineers,

I have made this statement for my Boy's edification, trusting that in the day of battle, he may endeavour to try to make as many friends of rank (and at the same time not be a toady) and distinction and try to exceed him if possible in the duty he owes to *his* country.¹⁰⁸

The army provided Simmons with the connexions and society of gentlemen. His service to the institution and to individuals were counted together, and his relationship with other Rifle Brigade officers conflated the professional with the personal. During his career Simmons was able to gain the affection and esteem of other Riflemen and this both gave him a place in a web of patronage, and confirmed and maintained his status as a gentleman. When he considered going onto half-pay after his promotion in 1828, Charles Beckwith reminded him that his social position depended on his profession,

... in the meantime you have a good home and money's worth in your hand - Besides, George, the men in private life are too proud and too indifferent in their habits to please you. It would be impossible for you with your small means in England to associate with gentlemen, which I know you like.¹⁰⁹

A number of themes run through these examples. Men with successful current or past military careers used their influence to help younger kin enter into and progress in their profession. The impulses and the mechanisms for assisting kin were essentially constant: the pressing sense of obligation to family and friends, the building of chains of kin in the corps, and the system of formal and informal contacts in the regiment and at the Horse Guards. There was at work in these examples, too, a broad understanding of kinship and alliance. William Stewart helped servants and fellow Scots, recognising a duty of connexion to them; the patronage given to Simmons by Colonel Sydney Beckwith entailed an extended link between families that were not related by blood; and, similarly, William Stewart gave substantial help to the son of his

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ RGJ, Folio 2, p. 18, C. Beckwith to G. Simmons, 7 May 1828.

friend and former colleague Major Smyth. These were all ties of sentiment and personal loyalty that recognised extended networks of alliance and demanded mutual support.

And these examples point at the same time to the role of service in patronage. In all the cases of assistance to younger family members, the older and more senior patrons regarded rewards for their own talent and achievements as transferable. In addition, they were especially willing to help those they thought able or who had served them or the army. Stewart progressed partly through application and aptitude, Sibthorp thought highly of the talents of Simmons and Barnard was indebted to him for his bravery and medical skill, Murray believed Norcott was a valuable officer. Conversely, Josslyn Pennington, again, showed only limited professional promise and less than solid character, and the help given to him was circumscribed accordingly. Thus these examples show in the operation of patronage a blending of blood, extended kinship (including friendship and regimental affiliation), service and talent.

These were all elements in a view of merit associated with the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness in which, as we have seen, conduct, sentiment and energy complemented birth and money. Certainly they were sometimes in competition. (Potential patrons, and the donors they in turn might approach, were often called to judge between the claims of numerous individuals seeking a limited number of places.)¹¹⁰ Yet they were interconnected, particularly through family. Service, though, viewed in one way, antithetical to connexion, was, as we have seen an important aspect of inheritance, both in aristocratic tradition and in the gentlemanly notion of duty appropriate to social station. Those like Stewart, Simmons and the Norcotts bringing forward kin linked their own records to their names. Where service and talent alone (as for Macdonald) might be enough to establish a claim to assistance in the first instance, any patronage tie had implications for family when the connexion opened an opportunity for a limitless number of further requests from the recipient, and his kin or friends, and also indebted

¹¹⁰ The Duke of Wellington rejected many requests. For example he was asked by Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Coke to look favourably on the request of Captain Elton (about to be put on half-pay of the 15th Regiment of Dragoons) who wanted to command a company in the Rifle Brigade. The Duke wrote across the top of Elton's letter, 'Refer to commanding officer. I know nothing of this gentleman.' Lord FitzRoy Somerset wrote in addition, 'as the writer is not known to you, it would be best I think to inform him that you do not interfere with promotions in the Rifle Brigade'. Southampton Univ., WP1/679/6, T.Coke to the Duke of Wellington, 10 September 1821.

these to the donor and his kin. Thus the idea of merit that underpinned patronage was integrated although complex. It also, through drawing in whole families and their 'allies', created a vast network of connexion for the Rifle Brigade that merged at many points with other networks extending through the army (and navy) and into civilian society.

3.3 Patronage and the Other Ranks

Most of the evidence for patronage in the Rifle Brigade concerns officers and their families. However, as some of these examples have begun to show, officers used their influence to help the other ranks as well. Their willingness to assist men from the regiment sprang in part from a view of duty that was integral to the contract of service between social ranks in the outlook of gentlemanliness, and it echoed aristocratic 'noblesse oblige'.¹¹¹ Yet it also reflected a transfer across the whole regiment of a notion of merit that encompassed both connexion and capacity. Connexion for the other ranks was unlikely to relate to blood or other civilian links with officers or to arise from, for example, political or royal contacts. (These were not impossible, however. There were cases such as the brothers of George Simmons or the son of William Norcott's civilian servant from home,¹¹² who were both private soldiers, and, as will be shown, a few other ranks came to the attention of royalty, while at least one, William Surtees had a connexion with a member of Parliament.¹¹³) Nonetheless, a number of the men had connexions of other kinds: some had regional bonds with officers, or became friends on some level with officers, or were related to others in the ranks. And membership of the regiment was itself a type of connexion. On the other hand, capacity, as we have seen, was recognised as a

¹¹¹ The generosity of officers was not limitless. Lady Gordon, for example, irritated her husband by giving £5 in 1819 to the regimental school of the 85th Regiment, 'This sum must last at least two years:- she has very large demands of this sort, and so have I in the shape of poor rates:- so much so that if this rate goes on with its present progression, the poor will become the Lords of the Soil, and every man's estate will be held only for their advantage.' Nat.Lib.Scotland, MS 2836, 38-39, J.Gordon to G.Brown, 2 January 1819.

¹¹² See below, p149, fn133.

¹¹³ See above, p.73, fn104 for the parents of William Surtees sending their Member of Parliament to ask that their son might buy himself out of the army.

claim to preferment for all Riflemen from the foundation of the regiment. This might include talent and skill; or service (to an individual officer, the regiment or the army more broadly) or long service, even without special distinction; or good character, including sobriety, cheerfulness, discipline and deference. This mixed assessment of merit was remarkably similar to that used by officers in their approach to patronage for themselves. A series of examples can show how this fundamentally gentlemanly view of diversity in merit also underpinned patronage for the other ranks.

Membership of the corps alone established some claim to patronage. Colonel Francis Atherley, for instance, was said in his obituary in the *Rifle Brigade Chronicle* to have welcomed to his home all ex-soldiers of the Rifle Brigade and 60th Regiment, in which he served.¹¹⁴ Similarly, Sir William Cope appears to have sent money for a Rifleman he did not know: Mr Hurst (probably not of the regiment) wrote to thank Cope for his donation. He informed Cope that the man's Christian name was Ben, and he had served in twenty-one engagements. He ended his life as a farm labourer and, according to Hurst, regularly attended church. He died when a cart wheel passed over an old wound. The money from Cope was given to the elderly couple with whom he had lived.¹¹⁵ There is at least one instance, too, of blanket permission for men to approach an officer (and member of the royal family) for help. When the Duke of Connaught left the regiment in Canada, he called on all the men to feel they could 'ask him for assistance if they should need it'.

Nonetheless, personal contact, for the other ranks as for officers, considerably strengthened relationships of patronage. Those dependant on the recommendation of officers for employment after service appear often to have left the regiment with little more than the brief summary of their services and character on a discharge certificate, and most may have been barely known to their officers. But a few at least did come to their special notice, and some were given considerable help.

¹¹⁴ *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1897.

¹¹⁵ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, G.Hurst to W.Cope, undated [c.1880].

Sergeant John Fisher (who was with Lieutenant Cuninghame at the Rifle Pits or Ovens when he earned the Victoria Cross in November 1854) received a series of testimonials from officers of the Rifle Brigade and other units, collected through service over some forty years. His military career included periods of active service in the Second Kaffir War and the Crimea, followed by service as a musketry instructor at Fleetwood and then Hythe. On retiring from the regular army he became an instructor for the volunteers, with a brief spell as a School Board Visitor. He wrote in 1891, on his retirement, a list of his services. This included an account of his promotions, the actions in which he was engaged, his medals, his posts in the volunteers, and the names of sixteen officers who had given him testimonials. Some of the original documents were appended. That of Lieutenant-Colonel Sir William Cuninghame, written in 1869, is typical.

Sergeant Fisher, I recollect you perfectly as being one of the very best NC Officers in the battalion in the Crimea, you are quite at liberty to show letter [sic] - I regret to say that I do not know of any such place as you are looking for at present. Should I hear of anything I will write and let you know. I would be very glad indeed if I could be of any use to you.

Directly after the names of officers, Fisher wrote a list of presents and who had given them to him.

Meerchams Pipe –	section of cavalry, Fleetwood
Gold pencil case –	Major D.Barnes
Clock –	Staff School of Musketry on my discharge
Tobacco Jar –	Pay Sergeant Fell, Staff School of Musketry on my discharge
To wife, teapot –	the Women's School of Musketry
7 volumes of books, Crimean War –	Chertsey Rifle Corps
illuminated frame –	ditto
names of subscribers –	ditto
to wife, teapot, cream jug, sugar bowl –	ditto
Pipe –	Major Russell ADJT [Adjutant]
Stick, ebony silver mounted –	ditto
Gold scarf pin set in brilliants –	Col.Nettleship
Framed illuminated address with purse of money also –	3rd Vol.Battn.E.Surrey Regt. ¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ RGJ, Memoirs of 2924 John Fisher in the 1st Battn Rifle Brigade from the date of his Enlistment in the above Corps to 30 Jan 1854; RGJ, Statement of Services of Sgt Major John Fisher.

It appears that these presents were in themselves taken as a record of the success of his career. Fisher's military achievements, in other words, translated into testimonials for further employment, and into esteem expressed in token (though in some cases quite expensive) gifts, largely of a domestic or personal nature. Even for the other ranks, that is, the personal and the professional were conflated: friendship and respect complemented service and ability.

Similar gifts were apparently standard for other ranks of outstanding service.¹¹⁷ Bandmaster William Miller of the 1st Battalion was another such soldier. He was the son of a private in the Rifle Brigade, and he joined the band at the age of five. He served in it for fifty-two years, acting as Bandmaster for thirty-seven.¹¹⁸ On Millar's retirement in 1880, Lieutenant-Colonel Lord Edward Pelham Clinton (with the help of his wife) organized a subscription fund 'as a mark of...approbation and esteem'. Indeed Miller's situation on retirement had caused him 'many an anxious moment'. In effect Clinton aimed at establishing a pension for him, as well as finding him further employment.¹¹⁹

The Queen is going to give £20, and the Prince of Wales £10 and the Duke of Connaught £10. I wish they would have given more for a good start is a great thing. The committee we have proposed is to consist of the Duke of Connaught, Lord Alexander Russell, Sir William Cope, Capt. Moorsome and the Officer commanding the depot of the First Battalion...we can purchase an annuity of £50 - for £500 and if we *could* raise £1000 we should get a hundred a year for him and that would be a nice help.

In addition, Miller was given a silver bugle, a silver teapot and other presents.¹²⁰

Major John Knox, formerly a sergeant in the Scots Fusilier Guards, was another who advanced through a mixture of professional merit and personal contacts made through the regiment. He was commissioned after his conduct at the storming of the Redan, and won the

¹¹⁷ For example, Major James Richer (who joined the Rifle Brigade as a private soldier in 1854 and rose to Captain in 1884) was given numerous presents, including a silver tea service and tray; seventy-one officers subscribed to gifts for him. RGJ, Services of Major J.S. Richer.

¹¹⁸ *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1891, pp.103-109; *ibid.*, 1911, p.115; *ibid.*, 1915, pp.70-75.

¹¹⁹ In the event Millar secured the post of Bandmaster of the Edinburgh City Militia in 1858, through the influence of the Duke of Buccleugh, uncle of Hon. Henry Marsham who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1863 to 1874.

¹²⁰ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.196, E. Clinton to W. Cope, 16 December 1880; *ibid.*, p.186, E. Clinton to W. Cope, 18 August 1880; *ibid.*, pp.193-194, H. Moorsom to W. Cope, 4 October 1880; *ibid.*, p.197, H. Moorsom to W. Cope, 27 December 1880; *ibid.*, p.190, E. Clinton to W. Cope, 25 August 1881; *ibid.*, p.201, H. Moorsom to Cope, 1 October 1881; *ibid.*, p.234, E. Clinton to W. Cope, 21 January 1885; *ibid.*, pp.188-189, E. Clinton to W. Cope, undated [c.1880]. The silver bugle is now at the Royal Green Jackets Museum in Winchester.

Victoria Cross. He obtained a position as a musketry instructor, and after meeting the Duke of Cambridge in that capacity, was given permission by him to sell his unpurchased majority. He was then able to pursue a career in the civilian prison service, as we have seen, and he retired in 1872 as a prison governor.¹²¹

Fisher, Miller and Knox were exceptionally successful and well-regarded by their officers. Yet there is considerable evidence for others receiving more modest assistance on a similar basis. For example, in 1824 William Stewart wrote to the Duke of Wellington seeking positions as Paymasters and Deputy Barrackmasters for sergeants of the regiment about to be discharged.¹²² And the *Rifle Brigade Chronicle* of 1895 listed the names of retired Riflemen (mostly NCOs) and their current employers.¹²³ A number were in posts normally filled through patronage, for example in the Post Office, political clubs, the Houses of Parliament and government departments.¹²⁴ In addition, several ex-private soldiers and ex-NCOs were employed by former officers. A few, for example, worked on the estate of Sir William Cope at Bramshill. (Francis Wheatley who won the Victoria Cross became the lodge-keeper.)¹²⁵ Sergeant McGroly became Adjutant to Major Francis Atherley when he became Major of the 1st Administrative Battalion of the Isle of Wight Volunteers, in 1870.¹²⁶ And, in business, Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Fryer similarly employed Major James Richer (who as we have seen rose from the ranks) at the London Tramways Company of which he was a President Director.¹²⁷

¹²¹ O.Creagh and E.M.Humphris, *The Victoria Cross 1856-1920* (J.B.Hayward and Son, Suffolk, 1985), pp.22-26.

¹²² Southampton Univ., WP1/787/5, W.Stewart to the Duke of Wellington, 5 March 1824.

¹²³ *Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1895, pp.279-284.

¹²⁴ For the difficulties faced by most other ranks soldiers in gaining civilian employment after retirement, and for organized schemes to help them from c.1870, see A.Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the Regular, 1859-1899* (Croom Helm, London, 1977), pp.211-214.

¹²⁵ Cope, *History*, p. 314. The obituary of Sir William Cope in *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1891, pp.203-205, notes, 'Bramshill House was for many years the resort of numerous Riflemen and Sir William was ever ready to show kindness to, and took the deepest interest in, the individual welfare and advancement of everyone, officers, NCOs or men, belonging to the Regiment. As an instance of this it may be mentioned that all the employees about Bramshill were old Riflemen'.

¹²⁶ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, E.Somerset to M.Dillon, 20 November 1878.

¹²⁷ RGJ, Services of Major J.S.Richer, letter 31, E.Fryer to J.Richer, 30 May 1898. Richer's father was in the other ranks of the Rifle Brigade, according to General Sir Alfred Horsford, 'a right good man'. *Ibid.*, letter 20, A.Horsford to H.Maclean, 8 September [c.1878].

Some evidence does survive to indicate that officers deliberately cut themselves off from personal contact with the men ¹²⁸ Certainly, in the exclusive rules of the officers' and NCOs' messes, and in the organization of social functions such as private parties and regimental balls, there were clear social barriers between ranks. Likewise there is evidence of bad feeling toward men commissioned from the ranks among officers who obtained commissions directly. For example, during the Crimean War Lieutenant David Gordon wrote of one subaltern at the Christmas dinner,

we were about 30 and sang songs until one o'clock when Ashton, who was drunk, would lead God Save the Queen, and made a hash of it. We don't like him. Was a sergeant in the Guards and is really a snob in appearance and ideas.¹²⁹

However, a large number of references in the Rifle Brigade material indicate that clear social layering did not preclude close contacts between officers and men that mixed the professional and the personal, and their friendship as well as application and skill were valued. There are references, for example, suggesting that there could be particularly close contact in action.¹³⁰ Major-General Robert Craufurd, for example, was said to have lifted after only one stroke a sentence of 150 lashes for stealing bread given to Corporal Miles of the Rifle Brigade during the retreat to Corunna. Craufurd relented after being reminded that Miles had shared his last biscuit with the general when they had both been desperately hungry as prisoners at Buenos Aires. He was supposedly much moved by the appeal.¹³¹ (This colourful story may have grown somewhat in the telling, but in any case the sentiment behind it was one of which Sir William Cope and the regiment were evidently proud.)

And individuals could come to the notice of officers in variety of other ways as well. There is evidence, too, of at least one instance when a commanding officer took note of the family of an other-ranks soldier. Rifleman Harris remembered the occasion in the Peninsular

¹²⁸ For opposition from officers in the 1840s and 1850s to the religious contacts in the ranks of Captain Maximilian Hammond see below, pp.278-279.

¹²⁹ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 3 January 1856. For the contemporary definition of 'snob', see P.Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal* (André Deutsch, London, 1982), pp. 107-108

¹³⁰ Service in the field sometimes created peculiar situations. For example, William Norcott recounted how he and a private soldier who acted as a blacksmith were swept up together by a Turk in the Crimea and obliged to take coffee with the British consul in a tent. 'My Rifle Blacksmith stared with wonder.' RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 25 April 1854.

¹³¹ Cope, *History*, pp.98-99.

War when Lieutenant-Colonel Sydney Beckwith appealed to the Duke of Wellington to stay an order for the execution of Fluellyn Comyn, Bandmaster of the 1st Battalion. Comyn had beaten up another bandsman, and, leaving him for dead, had deserted briefly to the French. Beckwith made his request because he had 'a great respect for Comyn's father', a soldier who had produced seven sons, all in the regimental band. The pardon was given, 'taking into consideration the interest made by his lieutenant-colonel'.¹³²

And, finally, quite intimate relationships between officers and soldier-servants were evidently not uncommon. In this relationship, in which professional and personal elements were most mixed (and perhaps where there fewer implications for discipline) strong affections could, if only occasionally, be fostered.¹³³ Sir William Norcott's Crimean War diary, in particular, reveals a great mutual affection between him and his servant Harding, whose duty it was 'to make the bed and store things away', and to prepare and bring him food.¹³⁴ Norcott wrote of his dependence on him, 'He evidently remembers Pan's [Norcott's wife's] injunction to take care of me. I am a child in his hands'.¹³⁵ 'Harding', he wrote,

is invaluable, hard working, as hard as a nail and full of pluck – above all he thinks of me and for me – and of you all, and his eye glistens when a letter comes from home.

When Harding contracted cholera, Norcott brought him into his own cabin on board ship to sleep so that he could care for him (Norcott himself was a convalescent).¹³⁶ And on Harding's

¹³² C.Hibbert (ed), *The Recollections of Rifleman Harris as Told to Henry Curling* (Military Book Society, London, 1970), originally published as H.Curling (ed), *Recollections of Rifleman Harris*, (London, 1848), pp.45-49. Fluellyn Comyn was eventually discharged from the army as 'too bad for anything'.

¹³³ This was not a purely military phenomenon. For example, Hon.Josslyn Pennington was distressed to hear that his brother Lord Muncaster had dismissed for misconduct their servant Robert, 'I am so sorry about poor Robert, I could have cried. Of course it was necessary, but all the many deeds of former days came into my mind, and I could not help pitying him. I hope my dear M. he will be able to live somewhere respectably. I know you could never bear to see him want. He came the year I was born, and...when I come home I shall miss him terribly...I feel it deeply'. Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington to G.Pennington, 1 February 1856. Also, William Norcott had a special affection for Jack (Elly Jones), a female servant at home. He dreamed of her holding his children and he kept a photograph of her among the most treasured possessions he kept together in case of his death. RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 2 September 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 12 September 1854; *ibid.*, vol 6, 23 August 1855.

¹³⁴ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 30 July 1854.

¹³⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 16 March 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 20 August 1854. Mrs.Norcott sent Harding her thanks for looking after her husband.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol 2, 10 August 1854.

removal to hospital, Norcott wrote to his wife that he was now tended by a stranger, 'I have no one to speak to of you and my itty Crabs'.¹³⁷

Norcott was particularly intimate with Harding, but he also appears to have had a close relationship with another servant, his batman James. When Norcott's favourite horse, Fez, was killed in a fall, James 'was much down about it, and would willingly go into mourning'.¹³⁸ Norcott lost another treasured horse at Inkerman, and, after the battle, he returned with James to the field to find and destroy it. He took a lock from its mane.

I could contain myself no longer. Gratitude, affection, pity and admiration filled my soul, and throwing myself upon him [the horse] I burst into a paroxysm of tears such as men only shed – (scalding, overpowering)... James stood by sobbing...The dead and dying lay thickly in those parts of the ground over which we had fought.¹³⁹

Likewise, Charles Beckwith kept his soldier-servant after they both retired. Beckwith wrote to Simmons in 1838 that his 'valley de shambles' (who was 'principally occupied in blacking his master's wooden leg) still thought of,

John Bull and "oats" that we got at that town; which is about as much as he knows of the geography of his travels. But no matter for that he is a good old fellow.¹⁴⁰

And Lord Seaton's son found his father, when ill at the end of his life, sitting in a chair weeping as he remembered his soldier-servant shot at the battle of Waterloo. Shortly before he died the man had called for help and Seaton had told him to lie quiet and that the battle would soon be over.¹⁴¹

(It is interesting to note that while most of the evidence for patronage and financial assistance that survives relates to officers helping others, there is a suggestion that the men also helped each other, at least with donations. A letter was sent to Sir William Cope in 1878 from an unknown Rifle Brigade officer concerning the poverty of Mrs. Brett, the recently widowed wife of Lieutenant-Colonel John Brett. Brett had risen from the ranks in the Rifle Brigade,

¹³⁷ Ibid., vol 2, 28 August 1854.

¹³⁸ Ibid., vol 1, 13 June 1854.

¹³⁹ Ibid., vol 3, 6 January 1855.

¹⁴⁰ RGJ, Folio 2, p.18, C.Beckwith to G.Simmons, 21 August 1839.

¹⁴¹ G.C.Moore-Smith, *The Life of John Colborne, Field-Marshal Lord Seaton: Compiled from his Letters, Records of his Conversations, and Other Sources* (John Murray, London, 1903), p.376.

earning a commission for his distinguished conduct in the Kaffir War. The other ranks had subscribed to a fund for Mrs. Brett.

£15 or £17 has been collected by the men...and if I may note you for a pound – it will forward the cause.)¹⁴²

The system of patronage touching both officers and other ranks was perpetuated through the early and mid-nineteenth century in part because it proved to have military value. Affection between Riflemen and more extended personal commitments through the regiment (and into the rest of the army) created bonds of interdependence and life-long connexion (as forseen by Manningham and Stewart in the *Regulations*) that were incentives to loyalty. Men serving alongside family (who they might love, but who also might have some control over them), feeling a sense of kinship to the corps, and trusting in assistance in civilian life for their military and personal efforts, might be expected to have a stake in their duties that could boost efficiency. And when claims for assistance rested not only on connexion (including membership of the regiment) but on 'character', zeal, competence and long service, the gentlemanly values of the regiment (which included social and military discipline) were strengthened. In addition, the patronage system attracted men of gentlemanly rank and ability to the officer corps and kept them in the service. It offered opportunities through its social life and through professional achievement to make connexions for advancement both in the army and in non-military occupations,¹⁴³ and it allowed officers to feel at ease and to maintain continuity with home by

¹⁴² NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.179-182, [unsigned] to W.Cope, 11 December 1878. Brett was severely wounded at Bloem Platz in 1848, and subsequently served as a sergeant in the company of Edward Somerset (later a general officer) in the 1852-53 Kaffir War. He was noticed by Sir George Cathcart and was commissioned in 1854, serving as Somerset's Adjutant in the Crimean War. Brett's younger brother was a private soldier killed at Inkerman. Ibid., pp.174-175, E.Somerset to M.Dillon, 17 November 1878; *ibid.*, pp.177-178, E.Somerset to M.Dillon, 20 November 1878; RGJ, Cope MSS, p.321, Lieutenant John Brett's Services.

¹⁴³ It also offered marriage opportunities. For example, Shadwell's father informed him, 'Miss Pearson is threatening a visit to Windsor, should you fall in with her do not forget she is the first cousin of Sir Edward Broomhead a very old Lincolnshire family, and people that stand very high in that County notwithstanding her appearance, and if any of your lads want a spinster with a *considerable* fortune and a good family to boot you can offer them your assistance'. RGJ, Folio 1, p.80, H.Shadwell to J.Shadwell, 8 June 1840. Likewise the regiment could provide references that might be important in arranging marriages. For example, a clergyman, Mr.Garwood, wrote to Andrew Barnard asking about the character of Lieutenant Lister of the Rifle Brigade who wished to marry his daughter. Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters*, p.240.

service alongside kin,¹⁴⁴ school friends, political and religious contacts, and local acquaintances.¹⁴⁵

Patronage, then, had a military value. While it bolstered the claims to power and influence of high social rank (not least by fostering social ambition in the able through endorsing the reward of social position and money for virtue and application), it nonetheless encompassed capacity and effort in the claims to merit it recognised. Thus patronage was important for the integration in outlook and personnel of the Rifle Brigade with civilian society, and it fostered professionalism within, not in opposition to, the ideal of gentlemanliness.

¹⁴⁴ Personal sentiment was an important factor in making such patronage appointments. When senior-ranking officers appointed relatives as their ADCs, for example, they sought to create not only a competent and militarily like-minded staff, or to promote family, political or other interests, they also aimed to create a unit in which they could enjoy true family affection. General Murray for example, noted that he appointed Amos Norcott to his staff because he knew Norcott would 'bring him comfort' as well as benefit the service. RGJ, Letter Book of General Murray, T.Murray to Brownrigg, 13 March 1801. A staff, like the officers in a regimental mess, lived closely together, and many of their duties were social and personal. Lord Cornwallis at the turn of the century, for example, spent considerable time with his young ADCs, particularly in the evenings, and grew fond of them. He called them his 'family'. C.Oman, *Sir John Moore*, pp.195, 199. Harry Smith, likewise, described the services of his ADC in the 1890s as performed, 'in official and private capacities'. He had kept his confidences 'with every regard to my honour', and Smith spoke of his fraternal love for him. RGJ, Special Letters 2, H.Smith to Payne, 30 September 1859.

¹⁴⁵ This could have sad consequences. For example, Colonel Sibthorp was worried in case Simmons and his brother both died serving together. RGJ, Folio 2, p.10, H.Sibthorp to G.Simmons, 11 April 1809. And Josslyn Pennington noted in the Crimea, 'Nobody is talking of anything here but fighting now, but I cannot enter into their feelings on the subject. I am very sick of it and want to get home... they have managed to kill all my old schoolfellows that I like'. Muncaster Castle, J.Pennington to G.Pennington, 3 September 1855. Likewise, Francis Markham noted that he served in the Crimea and Indian Mutiny alongside twenty-five schoolfellows in the Rifle Brigade and other regiments. Of these, five were killed. F.Markham, *Recollections of a Town Boy at Westminster 1849-1855* (E.Arnold, London, 1903), pp.100-101.

Chapter 4: Reading and Theatre in the Reception of Civilian Culture

Evidence for the Rifle Brigade, then, offers numerous examples of personal contacts with wider society, and also suggests a more general integration of the corps into civilian culture, not least through adherence to a shared ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness. The mechanisms for forging and maintaining links beyond the regiment included, as we have seen, non-military careers, individual interests such as politics and sport, and family and other connexions. This chapter will argue that they also included sustained and frequent exposure to civilian reading material and theatre. This exposure brought into the corps at all ranks a wide range of opinion and information on current events from home and from areas where the regiment was stationed, and, I would suggest, provided a primary means of keeping Riflemen in touch with evolving nineteenth-century culture on many fronts.

The evidence for what was read in the Rifle Brigade and by whom is far from complete. The act of reading printed matter such as a journal, newspaper, novel or history was probably too commonplace in this period to be recorded often by Riflemen even in a detailed diary, and it is likely, too, that most of the material read would be too unconnected with other activities and thoughts in hand to warrant a mention in either official or private documents. Again, even where it is known that a particular publication or document was seen, reaction to it often remains obscure. These problems make it impossible to establish either an exhaustive catalogue

of material read in the regiment or a full account of its impact. Nonetheless, the evidence for reading that does survive is substantial, and it gives a good indication of both the level of enthusiasm in the regiment for printed material and the range of ideas and information to which Riflemen were exposed. The weight of evidence suggests that all ranks had good access to civilian books and newspapers throughout the period from 1800 to c.1870, whether at home or abroad, and they read a good deal. Particularly from the mid-century their reading was varied and it often reflected material widely popular outside the army.¹ These conclusions are reinforced by the evidence for visits to the professional theatre and regimental productions of plays.

This is not to suggest, however, that the outlook of Riflemen as individuals or as a group was directly reflected in, or entirely shaped by, what they read or saw on stage. Rather, what is argued for here is the view that reading and theatre in the regiment were similar in breadth and content to material enjoyed by the peers of Riflemen outside the army. Further, because of shared experience from, in most cases, a former civilian life and from ongoing contacts with the non-military, they are likely to have been interpreted in a similar way. This reflected a framework of reference shared with the non-military. From this, it can be argued that reading and theatre facilitated the continuous evolution in the regiment of professional, social and religious views, including on gentlemanliness, similar to ^{those} ~~that~~ found in contemporary civilian society.²

¹ Riflemen also read narrowly military material. Although this was an important section of their reading and it contributed to a distinct professional expertise, it included lives of commanders, battle descriptions and letters and dispatches that were also popular in some civilian circles.

² See V.Berridge, 'Content Analysis and Historical Research on Newspapers', in M.Harris and A.Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Centuries* (Associated University Press, London, 1986), p.206.

4.1 Newspapers, Periodicals and Books

The evidence for reading by officers is relatively plentiful. Even on active service, newspapers arrived regularly with their mail, and the post from home was often the subject of comment. For example, Lieutenant John Gairdner wrote to his father during the Peninsular War,

We get the English papers out here by every packet, and a great treat they are to us, we last night got papers up to 30th of Jany. and...that is pretty quick.³

Likewise, Captain Edward Rooper wrote to his family in 1847 during the First Kaffir War that he read the English papers in camp, and he noted that they were wrong in supposing that the English hunted the Kaffirs down like wild beasts as in reality it was the other way around.⁴ And Lieutenant Thomas Bramston, sailing for the Second Kaffir War five years later, noted in his journal that shortly after stopping at Freetown his ship met a schooner at sea. The captain came on board to ask for newspapers: 'Luckily we had a few to give him'.⁵ Also, on 11 September, 1853, while still in Africa, Bramston received from home a copy of the *Illustrated London News* covering the army camp at Chobham. He wrote to his mother that he thought *Punch* was delicious on the subject.⁶

There was a steady supply of newspapers to individual officers in the different battalions of the regiment during the Crimean War too. The *Times* (which had the highest sales of any British newspaper in the early and mid-nineteenth century), the *Illustrated London News* and *Punch* were staple fare for officers at this time, but other papers were taken as well.⁷ Major William Norcott received on 13 March 1854, 'by arrangement' from a Mrs Price, presumably a friend at home, 'the Hampshire paper' and the *United Services Gazette*, and he read the *Morning Post*.⁸ Lieutenant David Gordon received from home copies of the *Dumfries Herald*

³ NAM, 7101-20, Gairdner MSS, J.Gairdner to his father, 19 February 1812.

⁴ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.150, E.Rooper to [unrecorded], 23 January 1847.

⁵ RGJ, Bramston Diary, 18 February 1852.

⁶ RGJ, T.Bramston to his mother, 11 September 1853.

⁷ In 1801 The *Times* had daily sales of between 2,500 and 3,000 copies. In 1821, produced with steam presses, it sold 7,000. In 1858 it sold 60,000 while none of its rivals sold more than 10,000. A.P. Wadsworth, 'Newspaper Circulations, 1800-1954', *Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society*, 4, 1955, cited in T.Nevett, 'Advertising and Editorial Integrity in the Nineteenth Century', in Harris and Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society*, p.152.

⁸ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 13 March 1854; *ibid.*, vol 3, 25 November 1854.

and 'for a wonder a *Dumfries Courier*'.⁹ Lieutenant William Cuninghame wrote to his mother from the Crimea,

The papers you send me begin to arrive now regularly. I always get one and often two by each mail. They are very amusing to me and to the public; my tent is converted into a sort of reading room.¹⁰

As well as receiving newspapers, Rifle Brigade officers were acquainted with journalists covering the war. Russell of the *Times* was entertained by several of them and Major Norcott was entreated at one point when he was very ill to stay the night with Russell, 'he would give me up his bed and pig on a sofa. I must look devilish seedy'.¹¹ Also, David Gordon had dinner on 1 February, 1856, with two 'amateurs', one of whom, a Mr Barkeley, he believed to be another newspaper correspondent.¹² And at least one officer in the regiment made contributions to the press himself during the war. William Cuninghame noted in a letter to his father in December, 1854,

The pictures in the Illustrated of the Charge of our Cavalry, and indeed of all fights, must be drawn in London; they are as unlike the reality as possible...Most of the pictures of the place, camps, trenches, etc. etc., are very good and the news more generally correct than any other paper. Their Own Correspondent here is a very good draughtsman. I have often seen his sketches long before they were published in the papers.¹³

He may have been referring to the work of Captain Hon. Henry Clifford, also of the Rifle Brigade, who published several drawings and watercolours at this time. 'The Assault on the Redan' appeared in the colour supplement to the *Illustrated London News* on 30 October, 1854.¹⁴ Major Norcott, too, sent his efforts to the *Illustrated* and another, unnamed, paper, trying to get the 'most advantageous terms' for them, but he noted on 6 August that they had not been accepted. Nonetheless he continued to sketch, 'observing the shadings' in the *Illustrated* and *Punch* in order to improve his own, and Norcott and Clifford sometimes

⁹ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 12 January 1856; *ibid.*, 31 January 1856.

¹⁰ RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, letter 55, W. Cuninghame to his mother, 20 April 1855.

¹¹ RGJ, W. Norcott Diary, vol 3, 21 November 1855.

¹² RGJ, Gordon MSS, D. Gordon to [unrecorded], 9 October 1855.

¹³ RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, letter 26, W. Cuninghame to his father, 7 December 1854.

¹⁴ C. Fitzherbert, *Henry Clifford V.C.: His Letters and Sketches from the Crimea* (Michael Joseph, London, 1956).

sketched together. On 30 June 1855 Clifford began a portrait of Norcott for him to send to his wife.¹⁵

Fewer personal papers survive for the 1860s, but those that do remain suggest that officers were reading a range of local and British papers. The 2nd Battalion saw action in the Indian mutiny from 1857 to 1858 and remained in India until 1867. In March 1859, Captain FitzRoy Fremantle recorded in his diary sending for the *Lucknow Herald*, and later in the year he was reading, among 'lots of newspapers', the *Calcutta Mail* and the *Delhi Gazette*. He also received in January two issues from the month before of the *Observer*, and delighted in showing a young rajah from Lahore the pictures in the *Illustrated London News*.¹⁶

The officers mess also took a range of newspapers and journals. No evidence has been found for reading material taken by the officers' messes of the Rifle Brigade battalions in the first three decades of the nineteenth century. However, part of the 2nd Battalion Mess Rules is extant, giving much relevant information for the period 1844 to 1899. In 1844 the battalion was in Nova Scotia. The mess was already taking newspapers, together with the army list and a number of periodicals: a resolution was passed in September of that year that these should be charged to the Library fund rather than the mess fund as before. In 1850, while stationed in Canada, the library and mess funds were amalgamated, and the subscription set at 25s per annum. In April 1862, now in India, each officer was asked to contribute one day's English pay in advance towards newspapers and periodicals, with the balance due at the end of the year to be paid by subscription. On 5 July, 1863, still in India, it was determined at a mess meeting that all officers, whether on leave or not, should pay 2s 6d monthly (or 30s per annum) to the library fund.¹⁷ This was a sizeable sum for a mess of around eighty officers.¹⁸ In aggregate the

¹⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 27 June 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 28 June 1854; *ibid.*, vol 3, 10 January 1855, *ibid.*, vol 6, 30 June 1855; *ibid.*, vol 6, 13 July 1855; *ibid.*, vol 6, 20 July 1855.

¹⁶ NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, vol 1, 26 January 1859; *ibid.*, 23 February 1859; *ibid.*, 5 March 1859; *ibid.*, 23 March 1859; *ibid.*, 23 March 1859; *ibid.*, 13 October 1859.

¹⁷ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 16 September 1844; *ibid.*, 6 November 1850; *ibid.*, 5 April 1862; *ibid.*, 5 July 1863.

¹⁸ A second lieutenant received annual basic pay (on which there were many other demands) of £95.16s.3d in 1806 and this rose only in the twentieth century. Likewise a lieutenant-colonel was paid only £365.0s.0d. See E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.14,

contributions must have bought a considerable amount of reading material, even allowing for the cost of transportation from England, and of volumes like the British and Indian Army Lists which may have been bought from the same fund.¹⁹ The *Times* sold at 5d in 1844 and 1850, and 4d in 1862 and 1863 (3d after 1866); and new single volume books from, for example, Chatto and Windus, typically cost between 3s and 10s. The increase in contributions by officers, from 25s a year in 1850 to 30s in 1863 is striking when it is remembered that the battalion increased in size and there was a dramatic fall in newspaper prices in the period with the abolition of various 'taxes on knowledge'.²⁰ It follows, even given that it may have cost more to ship papers to India than Canada, that significantly more material was being bought by the officers in the 1860s.

It may be interesting to compare these figures with those for the United Service Club in 1852, 1856 and 1866, and for the Oxford and Cambridge Club from 1861. Expenditure on newspapers and journals of the United Service Club remained roughly static at around £240p.a. through the 1850s and 1860s (excluding the cost of large numbers of papers bought for resale to members) while that of the Oxford and Cambridge Club more than doubled from £134 8s in 1861 to around £300 in the 1870s.²¹ Reading habits in the 2nd Battalion mess abroad appear to have reflected this trend toward increased newspaper reading among the officers' peers at home.

24-25; see also G.Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977), p.87.

¹⁹ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 11 November 1862 notes that 10s was spent on the Bengal Army List; and *ibid.*, 9 November 1863 shows £5.5s.7½d spent on the *Delhi Gazette* for 1863. *ibid.*, 6 May 1863 notes that £339.12s was owed by the mess for newspapers to 31 December 1862, and £99.13s was owed for books.

²⁰ The tax on advertisements was lifted in 1853, the stamp duty (reduced already from 4d to 1d in 1836) followed in 1855, and the tax on paper, the final impediment, was removed in 1866. See D.Read, *Press and People 1790-1850: Opinion in Three English Cities* (Edward Arnold, London, 1961), pp.66-67.

²¹ S.Koss, *The Rise and Fall of the Political Press in Britain: Volume 1: The Nineteenth Century* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1981), p.93. Koss notes the significance of the reduction in newspaper prices in the period, 'In other words, the reduction of prices allowed both of these clubs to purchase considerably more copies of a growing profusion of papers. From this fragmentary evidence, one may deduce that part of the dramatic increase in overall consumption, arguably the most politically significant part, occurred among privileged orders, whose appetite for newspapers became an addiction'.

The names of specific titles are also given in the 2nd Battalion mess records. In 1851 at Kingston in Canada the mess resolved to discontinue the *Naval and Military Gazette* and to take instead the *Army Despatch* and *Spectator*. In 1852 they decided to take the *Sporting Magazine* if the mess could afford it. And in October 1855, while stationed at Canterbury in Kent, the Commanding Officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Lawrence requested that they discontinue taking *Bell's Life in London*.²² The reason for this is not given, but his known Evangelical views may have been a factor. The magazine reported society news – some of which an Evangelical might deem immoral – and it often acted as stake holder for prize fights: it was therefore considered by some to encourage gambling. (Either the cancellation did not last or individuals continued to read the journal in the face of Lawrence's objections: reference was made in the 2nd Battalion magazine the *Skirmisher* in 1860 to news of a recent cricket match reported there between the Rifle Depot Battalion at home and Winchester School.)²³

During the Crimean War there was an officers' reading hut in the 1st Battalion camp (David Gordon told his wife that one of the walls had collapsed)²⁴ and it is very likely that there was an equivalent for the 2nd Battalion at the same time. In April 1862 the 2nd Battalion mess substituted the *Cornhill Magazine* for *Macmillan's Magazine* and in 1863 they were taking the *Delhi Gazette*. In October 1863, after a full six years in India, the mess stopped taking the *New York Tribune*.²⁵ In 1866 at Meerut the 2nd Battalion mess stopped taking the *Spectator* and took the *Pall Mall Gazette* in its place. In 1883 they stopped taking the *Saturday Review* but took the *Observer* and the *Sporting and Dramatic News*. In 1888 they stopped the *Daily*

²² RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 16 September 1851; *ibid.*, October 1855. See T.Mason, 'Sporting News 1860-1915', in Harris and Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society*, pp.169, 184 for the popularity of *Bell's*, including in the colonies and among army officers. It was 'at the start of our period...something of a national institution, the premier, indeed unique, sporting paper, without which a gentleman's Sunday was incomplete'.

²³ RGJ, *The Skirmisher: or Rifle Brigade Gazette*, August 1860, p.4.

²⁴ RGJ, Gordon MSS, D.Gordon to his wife, 28 November 1855.

²⁵ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 5 April 1862; *ibid.*, 9 November 1863; *ibid.*, 4 October 1863. This may have been the result of diminished interest in American news, or, possibly, a gesture of opposition to the Northern cause. An article cut from an unidentified newspaper, kept in the Rifle Brigade archive, reports a concert given – between 1862 and 1864 – in aid of the Lancashire cotton famine. Lieutenant Edmund Johnson, Lieutenant Charles Eccles and Lieutenant Andrew Green performed. Eccles played the flute, and Green the cornet, despite having lost his left arm and right thumb during the Indian Mutiny. RGJ, Folio 1, p.101.

Telegraph and *Bayley's Magazine* and took a second *Graphic* and *Morning Post* instead. In 1892 they discontinued the *Standard*.²⁶

It is not always clear from these records for how long individual journals and papers had been taken before they were stopped, nor which titles were not mentioned at all but were taken continuously (like, presumably, *The Times*). Nonetheless it is evident that the officers were keen to receive a range of non-military reading material, that some titles were read by enough officers to justify taking two copies, that they varied the titles they took, and that they were willing to pay relatively large sums for them. The publications they chose were in many cases entirely up to date, too: they discontinued the *Cornhill Magazine* only two years after it was started, and *Macmillan's*, which they took instead, was only three years old in 1862. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, taken in 1866, was only begun the year before.

The titles taken in the 2nd Battalion mess, and by individuals, through the period 1800 to c.1870, varied in target readership, editorial line and content. It has been shown above that officers came from mixed political backgrounds, and this is reflected in the varied political bias of the newspapers they saw. The mess resembled in this way the London political clubs which, like the Houses of Parliament, are known to have deliberately taken newspapers of opposing political persuasion. Indeed, the more influential newspapers in the nineteenth century engaged in a dialogue about current issues that presupposed their readers to be acquainted with rival papers and more specialist journals as well.²⁷ When Lord Seaton advised his son in 1835 on how to improve his education in preparation for a military career, he suggested that he, 'devote a certain time to the reading of periodicals, the best articles in the *Quarterly Review*, *Edinburgh* and *Blackwood*'.²⁸ The *Edinburgh Review* was Whig, founded by Henry Brougham and Sydney

²⁶ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 8 August 1866; *ibid.*, 16 April 1883; *ibid.*, 1 May 1888; *ibid.*, 19 September 1892.

²⁷ Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, p.23 argues that reading newspapers was part of the Victorian political process, 'Momentous events might inconveniently occur in distant places, but their impact was fully registered only when they were debated in Parliament and appraised by the leader-writers of the London press'.

²⁸ G.C.Moore-Smith, *The Life of John Colbourne, Field-Marshal Lord Seaton: Compiled from his Letters, Records of his Conversations and Other Sources* (John Murray, London, 1903), pp.268-269.

Smith in 1802, and the *Quarterly Review* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* were Tory rivals.

Of the papers mentioned in the Rifle Brigade evidence, a few were difficult to pin to any political standard. The *Times* was famously fickle (or censoriously independent) in its political support. The *Saturday Review* was originally a Peelite paper, successor to the *Morning Chronicle* and opponent of the *Times*, and it tended to Liberal views. However, it was jealous of its editorial sophistication and independence, and, as it declared in its preliminary announcement, its writers proposed to address themselves,

to the educated mind of the country, and to serious, thoughtful men of all schools, classes, and principles, not so much in the spirit of party as in the more philosophical attitude of mutual counsel and friendly conflict of opinions...The *Saturday Review* is independent of both individual statesmen and of worn-out political sections...²⁹

It also addressed a wide range of topics and concentrated on literary features, boasting there, too, an autonomous line. And the *Daily Telegraph*, established in 1855, though less serious (apart from, for example, the contributions of Gladstone in the 1860s), had changing but relatively weak political affiliations.³⁰

However, particularly in the mid-century, most newspapers, both local and national, were politically partisan (though their loyalties might change). Indeed many recognised their role in distilling and leading opinion as an obligation.³¹ The *Spectator*, taken by the 2nd Battalion mess from 1851 to 1866, was aimed at Whigs and educated Radicals. It had supported Lord John Russell over the 1832 Reform Act, and the joint editor from 1861 to 1867 was R.H.Hutton, theologian and journalist, who had been editor of the Unitarian *Inquirer* from 1851 to 1853, joint editor with Walter Bagehot of the *National Review* from 1855 to 1864, and assistant editor of the Radical *Economist* from 1858 to 1860.³² *Punch*, founded in 1841, lampooned political figures on all sides, as well as fashions and current events, but in its early

²⁹ Cited in H.R.Fox Bourne, *English Newspapers: Chapters in the History of Journalism* (New York, 1887) reissued (Russell and Russell, New York, 1966), p. 247; see also *ibid.*, pp.232, 246-248.

³⁰ L.Brown, *Victorian News and Newspapers* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985), pp.171-176.

³¹ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, p.3.

³² Thomas Perronet Thompson, formerly of the Rifle Brigade, was co-owner of the Benthamite *Westminster Review* from 1829 and its editor from 1832 to 1835, although it is not known if the Rifle Brigade mess took the journal. See L.G.Johnson, *General T.Perronet Thompson 1783-1869: His Military Library and Political Campaigns* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1957), pp.142-158.

years it, too, was Radical. The *Illustrated London News*, guided by the future Member of Parliament and entrepreneur Edward Watkin, was Liberal.³³ Indeed, of the titles mentioned in the Rifle Brigade evidence, only the *Standard* was solidly Conservative.

In 1849 the *Morning Post* made an abrupt swing away from the Tories and became the organ of Lord Palmerston.³⁴ Likewise, the *Observer*, in the first decades of the nineteenth century was given financial support by the Tory government, but in the early part of Queen Victoria's reign it was funded by the Whigs, and represented the views of the Melbourne administration.³⁵ It continued as a broadly Liberal paper. The *Pall Mall Gazette*, by contrast, moved from a mildly Liberal but largely indeterminate political stance in the late 1860s to a firm Tory bias by the 1870s. (Although in the 1880s it started again to take a radical line.)³⁶

On balance, Rifle Brigade officers appear to have seen more Radical and Whig-Liberal than Conservative papers. It is not a simple matter to correlate this with their political views, however, not least because of the comparative paucity of Tory national titles in the mid-century (a political disadvantage often lamented by Disraeli) and the Whig-Liberal domination of the provincial press.³⁷ In other words the list may appear slanted against the Tories not because most officers were Liberals but because they saw a large number of papers and most papers in the period were Whig, Radical or Liberal. The political balance of officers' reading echoed that of the wider mid-nineteenth-century respectable press, and it gave officers access to a standard spread of opinion.

The target readership of the various publications seen by Rifle Brigade officers varied socially as well as politically. The *Morning Post*, for example, had a small circulation and a markedly upper-class audience.³⁸ The *Pall Mall Gazette* was aimed at the élite of the London clubs. However, journals like the *Cornhill* and *Macmillan's* were intended for a broader slice of the educated classes. The *Daily Telegraph* was, by contrast, the most successful of a group of

³³ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, p.129.

³⁴ See *ibid.*, pp.78-81; and Brown, *Victorian News*, p.61.

³⁵ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.43-44.

³⁶ See *ibid.*, pp.159-160.

³⁷ See *ibid.*, pp.13, 46, 82, 157-158.

³⁸ See Brown, *Victorian News*, p.24.

London newspapers sold for only a penny, and it quickly gained a large readership (300,000 by 1880) believed to be composed mainly of London tradesmen and clerks.³⁹ The *Illustrated London News*, begun in 1842, was unashamedly popular, deliberately championing the poor. It took a special interest in health and safety legislation, the Poor Law and the regulation of mining, but it offered entertainment and the rare attraction of pictures to a wide audience. In its second number it declared its intentions,

Our business will... be...with the household gods of the English people, and, above all, of the English poor; with the comforts, the enjoyments, the affections, and the liberties, that form the link of that beautiful chain which should be fashioned at one end of the cottage, at the other end of the palace, and be electric with the happiness that is carried into both.⁴⁰

Regular reading of these papers and journals would have supplied officers with information (from news, editorials, advertisements, essays and features) pertaining to social groups beyond their own narrow military set, and beyond the concerns of their immediate families and friends. This, it can be argued, promoted their reception of ideas and social attitudes that were neither military nor specifically landed or upper-class, but rather were the common property of a broad reading public.

Many of the publications mentioned in the Rifle Brigade material had a strong literary content. The *Spectator*, the *Saturday Review* and the *Pall Mall Gazette* carried good literary features, as did the *Quarterly Review*, the *Edinburgh Review* and *Blackwood's Magazine*. The *Cornhill Magazine* had been started by Thackeray. It printed his last two novels and featured contributions from Ruskin, Matthew Arnold and Mrs Gaskell. *Macmillan's* was established by David Masson, formerly professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh University, and had among its early contributors Matthew Arnold and Charles Kingsley. The *Morning Post*, which published daily news, had taken articles by S.T. Coleridge, Southey and Wordsworth in its early years. That is to say, officers were reading about books, and so, again, imbibing through periodicals political, social, religious and philosophical ideas current in literary and broadly educated circles.

³⁹ Wadsworth, 'Newspaper Circulations', p.152.

⁴⁰ Cited in Fox Bourne, *English Newspapers*, p.119.

An examination of the periodicals seen by officers in the regiment, then, indicates that they were continuously exposed to a diverse mass of material. This is underscored by an examination of the more specialised titles mentioned in the evidence. *Bell's Life in London*, to which Lawrence had objected, had begun in 1824 and was a weekly paper until the 1850s and 1860s when it experimented with more frequent publication. As we have seen, it covered society and sporting news. The *New Sporting Magazine*, which the 2nd Battalion mess had hoped to take in 1852, was a similar paper, started in 1831 by Robert Smith Surtees. A reference to Jorrocks the sporting grocer, whom it featured, appeared in the poem written by Lieutenant Robert Vans Agnew in 1840.⁴¹ (Jorrocks was a successful Cockney grocer who became a landed gentleman and Master of Foxhounds, with a secretary, Captain Dolful, an ex-army officer. The stories made fun of upper-class pretensions as well as middle-class aspirations and faux pas.)⁴² The poem, a comic description of the officers of the 1st Battalion, was intended to be read to the assembled mess. It can be inferred that, in order to catch the reference, everyone present was expected to be familiar with the magazine and the books that came from it. Much of the news in sporting and society papers would only have been comprehensible to readers closely following current events of ephemeral interest, involving known people and places. In other words, the whole mess, old and young, of long and short service, followed to some extent and understood news from, for example, Tattersalls' the horse dealership, the Derby and Ascot, and more obscure events such as matches in amateur cricket and professional pugilism. Such information was, in turn, essential for an appreciation of the jokes in *Punch*.

In addition, regional papers sent from England and Scotland: 'the Hampshire paper' received by Norcott, and the Dumfries papers sent to Gordon, complemented the national papers with detailed local news. The better local papers by the mid-century had a full range of comment on national and sometimes even international affairs, and leading papers like the *Leeds Mercury*, the *Manchester Examiner*, the *Bradford Observer*, and the *Sheffield*

⁴¹ RGJ, Folio 1, p.12, 5 December 1840.

⁴² See P.Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal* (André Deutsch, London, 1982), pp.98-105.

Independent (though none of these is specifically named by Riflemen) were particularly good on issues connected with urban politics and industrial unrest, even if much of their news-gathering relied on reports in the national press.⁴³ However the demand in the regiment for local newspapers from home evidently issued from continued connections, and from familiarity fed by periodic information. Again it is pertinent to note that local newspapers were generally regarded as supplements to national titles, and much of their news content would have been of little interest unless the reader knew the people and places to which the stories referred.

It is impossible to speculate, given the limited evidence, on the full list of titles seen by Rifle Brigade officers at different times. A number of important nineteenth-century titles are missing in the references, including the *Nineteenth Century*, and, equally, more popular titles like the *Gentleman's Magazine* and the *Daily News*, and the burgeoning list of local newspapers.⁴⁴ More extreme political journals like the Tory *John Bull* and, at the opposite extreme, perhaps less surprisingly (although the army's role in quelling civil unrest may have made these of urgent interest at particular times),⁴⁵ publications like the Chartist and Anti-Corn Law newspapers, are not mentioned either. However it is safe to assume that the list of titles they saw is wider than that for which we have evidence. To begin with, a number of officers belonged to London clubs. The Rifle Brigade Chronicle gives details of the clubs of ex-officers in the later nineteenth century, using them as addresses for correspondence, and *Burke's Peerage* reveals more for the mid-century.⁴⁶ It seems that some officers were members of

⁴³ See Read, *Press and People*, pp.71-72 for the advent of strong editorial opinion in local papers, particularly with the establishment of the *Manchester Herald*.

⁴⁴ There were five daily newspapers outside London in 1854; but between 1855 and 1860 120 papers were established in towns where none had been published previously. Nevett, 'Advertising and Editorial Integrity', p.152

⁴⁵ Andrew Barnard wrote to his sister from Newcastle in 1819, 'I have little apprehension of any disturbance in this quarter, the evil spirit is certainly on the decline. Some of the most violent committee men have recanted and declared that they had suffered themselves to be deceived by the publications such as the *black dwarf* [sic] etc.' A. Powell, *Barnard Letters 1778-1824* (Duckworth, London, 1928), p.274.

⁴⁶ 'Provisional List of Past Officers of the Rifle Brigade, Showing War Services', *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1890, pp.46-56 gives current addresses. Of those serving before 1870, eleven used a club address. Lord George Hamilton, Carlton Club; Hon. Henry Marsham, Junior Carlton Club; Hon. William Ponsonby, Brooks's; Henry Lascelles, 'Travellers' Club; Wilmot Bradford, Lord Chelmsford and Sir Martin Dillon United Service Club; Alfred Ames and Lewis Percival, Junior United Service Club; William Arbuthnot and Hon. Thomas Scott, Army and Navy Club.

London clubs while they were in service, too,⁴⁷ and at least two officers belonged to gentlemen's clubs abroad. When William Norcott landed at Malta in 1854 he spent time at the club where he had already become a member during a previous posting.⁴⁸ And Thomas Bramston was made a member of the club at Madeira when the 1st Battalion stopped there on the way to the 1st Kaffir War.⁴⁹ Clubs were centres for reading newspapers and journals, as well as for gossip and conversation, and typically offered members access to a spread of titles.⁵⁰ Furthermore, officers normally had several months of leave every year, and spent considerable stretches of time visiting family and friends.⁵¹ They would undoubtedly have been exposed to whatever reading material circulated in those homes.

For some, too, contact with newspapers outside the regiment may have come through personal political connections. Many new titles in the nineteenth century were founded by proprietors from the nobility and gentry, who gave sponsorship in the tradition of electoral spending.⁵² The Duncombe and Lascelles families of Yorkshire, for example, prominent in local Tory politics in the mid-nineteenth century, as we have seen, had family members on the board of directors of the Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Company producing the *Yorkshire Post*.⁵³ Both had family members in the Rifle Brigade.⁵⁴ Again, FitzRoy Fremantle, who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1854 to 1860 (when he transferred to the Coldstream Guards) was a cousin of Lord Cottesloe (1798-1890) who, as Sir Robert Peel's patronage secretary, had responded for him to all newspaper matters and was well acquainted with many leading journalists.⁵⁵ Similarly, the brothers Edward and Henry Newdigate of the Rifle Brigade were, as

⁴⁷ See Spiers, *The Army and Society*, pp.22-23.

⁴⁸ RGJ, Norcott Diary, vol 1, 9 March 1854; *ibid.*, vol 1, 11 March 1854.

⁴⁹ RGJ, T.Bramston to his mother, January 1852.

⁵⁰ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.158-159.

⁵¹ Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.26 notes that leave for the most fortunate, officers of the Brigade of Guards, was 'as much as four months annually for captains, five for majors, and six or more for colonels'.

⁵² See Brown, *Victorian News*, p.70.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.60

⁵⁴ Frederick William Duncombe, son of Admiral Arthur Duncombe, Member for the East Riding from 1851 to 1868, served in the Rifle Brigade from 1859 to 1861 before transferring to the Grenadier Guards, and Henry Arthur Lascelles, son of William Lascelles, also a Conservative Member of Parliament, was in the regiment from 1855 to 1881.

⁵⁵ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, p.78.

we have seen, kinsmen of the anti-Catholic Tory Member of Parliament Charles Newdigate-Newdegate who owned for a time the *Press*, the paper begun in the Conservative interest by Disraeli in 1853.⁵⁶ There is no direct evidence to suggest that any of these connections led individual Riflemen to read newspapers, but such webs of connexion are likely to have informed their familiarity with the local and political press.

Contact with wider British news and culture through newspapers and journals was reinforced by reading books. There are many references in the documents relating to the regiment to books owned and read by officers, or known to them. For the early decades of the century, James Gairdner made a reference in his diary of 1812, written as the regiment passed through Spain, to a town being that 'in which Sancho Panza was tossed in a blanket',⁵⁷ and, again, Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605) was mentioned by George Simmons in his account of his part in the Battle of Waterloo, written in 1855. He described the men cooking their breakfast rations,

They were a good deal like Sancho Panza, who found out in his severe trials, that the belly keeps up the heart, not the heart the belly.⁵⁸

Gairdner mentioned, too, visiting a castle in Spain 'in which they show off Gil Blas cell'.⁵⁹ *Gil Blas of Santillane* by Le Sage (1715-1735) was also mentioned by William Norcott in his diary for 1854: he judged *De L'Orme* by Bulwer to be similar but inferior.⁶⁰ And Cooke Tylden-Patenson was saved at the skirmish near Vera in the Penninsular War by a small volume of *Gil Blas* in the left pocket of his pelisse, "the ball striking the book close to the edge, and taking the impression of the cross mohair braid on the cover".⁶¹

Gairdner, who knew Latin, Greek, French and Spanish, was an avid reader. On 8 May, 1815 he recorded that his landlord at Ghent introduced him to a reading room which belonged to the Société Littéraire, 'so that I can now go there when I choose'. On 20 July he went to see

⁵⁶ *ibid.*, pp.89-91, 149-150.

⁵⁷ NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 8 August 1812.

⁵⁸ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 1, p.271, Simmons' Narrative of Waterloo, 15 August 1855.

⁵⁹ NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 9 August 1812.

⁶⁰ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 3, 16 January 1855.

⁶¹ M.G.Daughlish and P.K.Stephenson (eds), *Harrow School Register 1800-1911* (Longman, Green and Co, London, 1911), p.37.

the Royal Imperial Library, instituted for public use, and he noted several times his admiration for the fondness of the French public for reading and knowledge of 'all literary subjects'. On 30 October he was billeted in the chateau at Vaux and was pleased to find a good library there, too.⁶² After the occupation of France had ended and Gairdner began to consider a career outside the army, he wrote to his father explaining that he was attracted to farming because it would allow him plenty of leisure time and he wanted above all else to be able to read. In the meantime, he wrote, he wanted to travel to Italy. From 1819 to 1820 Gairdner attended classes in philosophy at Edinburgh. It is not known what texts he read, but this would have brought him into contact with the circle of Dugald Stewart, Professor of Moral Philosophy there from 1785 to 1820, and that of Thomas Brown, also Professor of Moral Philosophy from 1810 to 1820.⁶³ John Peter Boileau of the Rifle Brigade, who, before he joined the regiment had studied at Merton College, Oxford, had also studied under philosophers and scientists at Edinburgh, including the chemist Thomas Hope, the mathematician John Playfair and, again, Dugald Stewart. Boileau later in life developed broad intellectual interests, particularly in archaeology and local history.⁶⁴

Henry Havelock, had also been well educated as a young man, and was made a 'Laker for life' when he heard Wordsworth's 'Composed upon Westminster Bridge' recited by Thomas Talfourd. He read works of ancient history in Greek and Latin in the years following Waterloo while he served in the Rifle Brigade, encouraged by his 'guide, philosopher and friend' Harry Smith,

He...continued to cultivate the classics, reading them not only as a matter of taste and enjoyment,⁶⁵ but also with a view to make himself master of the military strategy of the ancients.

⁶² Similarly, Lieutenant John Fitzmaurice spent two or three months at the Chateau d'Evèquemont at Meulan. His wife later wrote, 'The family were gone, to whom it belonged, but he had the advantage of an excellent library'. Mrs. Fitzmaurice, *Recollections of a Rifleman's Wife at Home and Abroad* (Hope, London, 1851), p.53.

⁶³ NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Diary, vol 3, 8 May 1815; *ibid.*, 20 July 1815; *ibid.*, 30 October 1815; NAM, 7101-20, Gairdner MSS, J.Gairdner to J.P. Gairdner, 20 February 1811; *ibid.*, J.P.Gairdner to J.Gairdner, 19 October 1819.

⁶⁴ O.Chadwick, *Victorian Miniature* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1960), pp.58, 122.

⁶⁵ J.C.Marshman, *Memoirs of Major-General Sir Henry Havelock KCB* (1867) (Longman, Green and Co, London, 1909), pp.7-9.

Also, Thomas Perronet Thompson was well-educated and well-read. He was seventh on the list of wranglers at Cambridge in 1802, and was elected a fellow of Queen's College while he was serving as a midshipman in the navy. Thompson was to become immersed, soon after his service in the Rifle Brigade, in the works of Turgot, Adam Smith and Malthus, and he was deeply influenced in his later political and journalistic career by the ideas of Jeremy Bentham. Again, Major William Johnstone, a particularly popular figure in the regiment, was described by John Kincaid, in his obituary of him in the *United Services Journal*, as 'a deep reader and a deep thinker' with an 'insatiable appetite for knowledge'. He was reportedly fond of arguing, although 'it mattered not which side he took'.

I knew him, in Ireland, engaged for a length of time in a nocturnal controversy with a parish priest, in espousing the cause of Milton's hero against the Catholic creed; and when we eventually marched, after a few months, I asked him how matters stood between them? "Egad," said he, "I don't know; but I think I had the best of it!"⁶⁶

The officer corps of the first two decades of the nineteenth century appears, then, to have contained a significant number who demonstrated considerable intellectual training and curiosity.⁶⁷ The evidence for the reading of Gairdner, Boileau, Havelock, Thompson, Johnstone and Charles Beckwith (of whom more will be said below) reinforces the view that some officers at least cultivated a serious interest in contemporary letters and ideas.⁶⁸

Nonetheless, Rifle Brigade officers read popular as well as intellectual material. Kincaid, in his *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade in the Peninsula, France and the Netherlands from 1809 to 1815* (1830) made a number of literary references of his own. He mentioned *Gil Blas*, and Hotspur of Shakespeare's 'I Henry iv', and made a comparison with 'love depicted in Moore' - presumably a reference to the racy but moralising novel *Zeluco* (1786) by Dr. John

⁶⁶ "J.K.", 'Anecdotes in the Life of Major Johnstone of the Rifle Brigade', *U.S.J.*, 1837, pp.354-356.

⁶⁷ See below, p.229, fn100 for officers with university degrees.

⁶⁸ Gat argues for the importance of the cultural context of military theory in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with the view that changes in military theory were one aspect of the conflict between the Enlightenment and the German Movement of the early nineteenth century. A.Gat, *The Origin of Military Thought from the Enlightenment to Clausewitz* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1989), pp.26-29, 62, 64, 67. It was typical for British officers to own or have contact with libraries containing a mixed stock of military, philosophical, historical, literary, religious and classical works. For example, the Duke of Wellington took a collection of books to India in 1796 including John Locke, *An Essay on Human Understanding*, Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, five volumes of William Paley, and works by Rousseau, Voltaire and Swift. E.Longford, *Wellington: The Years of the Sword* (Panther, London, 1971), p.74.

Moore, father of Sir John Moore. He also referred to Jane Porter's *The Scottish Chiefs* (1810), a successful romance based on the battle of Bannockburn and historical events in the life of William Wallace, and to Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814).⁶⁹ Scott was another author often mentioned in the Rifle Brigade material. References to his books appear in, among others, William Surtees *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (1833)⁷⁰ and the anonymous prologue to the 2nd Battalion Christmas play performed at Subathoo in 1862.⁷¹ Again, in 1808 during the retreat to Corunna, Sir John Moore borrowed a copy of *The Letters of Thomas Lord Lyttelton*, a notorious profligate, and 'the book greatly entertained him'.⁷²

For the mid-century, Lieutenant John Shadwell received a letter from his father (formerly an officer in the 35th Regiment currently on half-pay) in 1840 informing him that he had read aloud to John's mother, until he was hoarse, Charles Dickens' *Master Humphrey's Clock* (from which *The Old Curiosity Shop* was published in 1841).⁷³ Also, Mrs. Fitzmaurice was at pains in her account of her husband's adventures in the Napoleonic Wars, and their travels together from 1827 to 1830, to indicate to the reader the extent of her cultivation and the range of her reading.⁷⁴ She complained, for example, of the ignorance of the local ladies she met in Sardinia. They hardly ever looked into a book,

and their conversation turns upon nothing but dress, and the affairs of their neighbours, whom they watch from their windows the greater part of the day. Nor is the want of mental cultivation at all compensated for by their personal attractions.

⁶⁹ J. Kincaid, *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade: in the Peninsula, France and the Netherlands from 1809 to 1815* (1830) (Peter Davis, London, 1929), pp.26, 35-36, 127, 173, 221.

⁷⁰ W. Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (Blackwood, London, 1833) (reprinted Military Book Society, London, 1973), p.15.

⁷¹ Prologue 'Theatre Royal' Subathoo, 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade, Christmas 1862, RGJ, Folio 1, p.64.

⁷² Moore-Smith, *Life of John Colbourne*, p.98.

⁷³ RGJ, Folio 1, p.80, H. Shadwell to J. Shadwell, 6 June 1840.

⁷⁴ The aunt who brought up Mrs. Fitzmaurice was the widow of Sir Philip Francis, reputedly 'Junius', the well-known writer on literary and political subjects with Whig connexions. G. Fitzmaurice, *Biographical Sketch of Major-General John Fitzmaurice KH* (privately printed, Tiber Press, Anghari, 1908), p.59.

Like several Riflemen,⁷⁵ she referred to the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*⁷⁶ (translated into French in the eighteenth century, but into English only in 1839-1841, by Edward William Lane). Also, Mrs Fitzmaurice made comparison between her family and that in Thomas Moore's satirical verse letters about middle-class English travellers, *The Fudge Family in Paris* (1818). She quoted Petrarch on the death of Laura, and referred to the letters of Madame Sévigné. And she also included lines from the poetry of Alaric Watts, journalist and sometime editor of the *Leeds Intelligencer*, the *Manchester Courier* and the *United Services Gazette*. She noted the work of Washington Irving on Spain, made an amusing point by reference to Sheridan's Mrs. Malaprop and mentioned Byron's 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' (1812-1818).⁷⁷ Two years later, in May 1853, while on active service in Africa, Bramston wrote to his mother that he had recently finished reading Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852),

I...like it very much. I wish we had a lot of such books out here.⁷⁸

He evidently responded to the central message of dutiful social leadership, Christian faith, humility and happiness in a hierarchical social order that struck a strong cord among a wide British readership.⁷⁹

Further, the 2nd Battalion mess records show that there was an officers' library in the battalion, although it offers few details. In 1852 the mess resolved to dispose of some books (unnamed) and in 1855 the officers took £15 from the library and newspaper fund to buy furnishings for the ante-room of the mess.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ For example, Cuninghame reported with disgust that when they arrived at Sebastopol, the only two books to be found in camp were two French novels and a copy of the *Arabian Nights*. RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, W.Cuninghame to C.Cuninghame, 24 August 1854.

⁷⁶ Mrs.Fitzmaurice, *Recollections*, pp.101, 105; NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, pp.292-293, F.Fitzmaurice to W.Cope, [undated].

⁷⁷ Mrs.Fitzmaurice, *Recollections*, pp.52, 75, 78-79, 106, 117, 158, 168-169. It seems that she also sketched as she travelled with the regiment, and intended to publish her drawings as an accompaniment to the text should there be a second edition.

⁷⁸ RGJ, Bramston MSS, T.Bramston to his mother, 7 May 1853.

⁷⁹ Harriet Beecher Stowe stayed with the parents of Lord Frederick Leveson-Gower in 1853 (the year he was commissioned). R.Sutherland Gower, *Records and Reminiscences: Selected From 'My Reminiscences' and 'Old Diaries'* (John Murray, London, 1903).

⁸⁰ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 15 January 1852; *ibid.*, October 1855.

There is more information, again for individuals rather than the mess, for books known to officers of the 1st Battalion during the Crimean War. William Cuninghame, for example, noted in a letter that he had passed the narrowest part of the strait where Lord Byron swam, and evidently knew his works.⁸¹ And Norcott spent a large part of his leisure time in the Crimea reading. He bought dialogues in French, Spanish, Italian and English which he hoped to read with his wife on his return home – possibly to improve his languages – and he read several light novels in French. He also read ‘The Entail’ (1823) by the Scottish novelist John ~~Galt~~^{Galt} (chosen by him, he noted, for the author’s name) which he would recommend to his wife to read. And he was also sent Thomas Carlyle’s *Signs of the Times* (1829), a book which, he wrote, he had owned once before.

Likewise, in 1859, in India, FitzRoy Fremantle recorded that he read Lieutenant Frederick Sotheby’s copy of a book by Montalembert (whether by father or son is not clear) which he passed on to Major Moir (possibly an officer in the Bengal Artillery.) Moir was a like-minded Christian: he went to church with Fremantle, and Fremantle attended a service in Moir’s tent.) He also read George Eliot’s *Adam Bede* in 1859, the year of its publication. In 1862, when in the Coldstream Guards and based in Ireland, he read a number of short stories, including Bulwer-Lytton’s *A Strange Story* (1862), again newly published, and the novel *East Lynne* by Mrs. Henry Wood.⁸² And, while he was in Canada with the 1st Battalion, Gerald Boyle wrote that he was struck by how much a fort he had seen resembled one described by James Fenimore Cooper.⁸³

The list is a remarkably ordinary cross-section of works popular among the middle and ruling classes in the early and mid-century. *Gil Blas*, *Don Quixote*, the poetry of Wordsworth and Byron, and *Waverley*, were all very widely read in the period, and the works of George Eliot, Dickens, Cooper and Harriet Beecher-Stowe were also familiar to a broad fiction-reading public. Romance and adventure clearly had a particular appeal in the regiment. However,

⁸¹ RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, letter 4, W.Cuninghame to T.Cuninghame, July 1854.

⁸² NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle MSS, vol 1, 30 January 1859; *ibid.*, 16 January 1859; *ibid.*, 6 March 1859; *ibid.*, 22 December 1859; *ibid.*, vol 2, 28 July 1862; *ibid.*, vol 2, 4 January 1862.

⁸³ RGJ, Folio 2, p.45, G.E.Boyle, ‘Our Journey Through New Brunswick, February 1862’

references to Montalembert (if it is to the son, he wrote about, among other topics the authority of the Pope and St.Elizabeth; if to the father, the topic would have been military), to *Signs of the Times* and to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* suggest an interest, too, in topical religious questions in some quarters. Likewise the mention of *East Lynne* (with its suffering heroine who flees her home with a seducing villain but returns in disguise to work as a governess to her own children and dies in mournful repentance) points to a taste for domestic and moralising fiction. There seems, I would argue, nothing in the officers' choice of reading to betray a particular military ethos or cultural outlook, nor a specifically upper-class or landed set of attitudes. On the contrary, their taste was eminently main-stream: they chose for the most part publications popular and in some cases even fashionable at home. As a result, their reading reinforced intellectual and cultural links with civilian society.

4.2 Theatre

Equally revealing of the cultural outlook of Riflemen were their theatrical interests. Many of the Rifle Brigade letters and diaries make references to attending and performing plays, and theatre seems to have been popular among all ranks just as it was popular at all levels of civilian society. Quartermaster Surtees (who rose from the ranks) saw plays performed at Gallegos at the headquarters of the 43rd regiment during the Peninsular War.⁸⁴ James Gairdner noted on 18 January that the first performance there was of Oliver Goldsmith's 'She Stoops to Conquer'.⁸⁵ (This play continued to be popular through the period: Lieutenant Hon.Thomas Wynn was ill for a week in 1861 after painting his lips red with vermilion to play Miss Neville.)⁸⁶ And on 4 February, 1812, the Light Division (the 43rd, the 52nd and the Rifle Brigade) combined to perform R.B.Sheridan's 'The Rivals'. In March there were performances of 'The Raising of the Wind' and 'Fortune's Frolic' and the other ranks acted 'The Brothers

⁸⁴ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.187.

⁸⁵ NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 18 January 1813.

⁸⁶ RGJ, Wynn Diary, November 1861.

and the Poor Soldier'. In April Wellington saw the division perform 'The Apprentice'.⁸⁷ Surtees boasted that, also in 1812, the Rifle Brigade put on plays in an open air theatre on the Isle Dauphine during the suspension of hostilities at the end of the American Expedition, and the lavish performances impressed the American officers who attended.⁸⁸

Gairdner expressed strong views about the theatre. While in France from 1815 to 1818 he frequently attended plays, operas and the ballet. He considered the French to excel at light opera, although he preferred serious operas in Italian. The English, he declared, were more feeling than the French. The English attending tragedies were able to abandon themselves to the fictitious woe, but the French were over-critical and spent their time thinking what they would say when they were asked their opinion of it. He disliked the classical subjects of French tragedies, believing 'modern' stories like Shakespeare's 'Othello' to be more interesting.

how any modern people and above all how the French can enter into the feeling of Achilles, Agamemnon and Alexander the Great is what I cannot conceive, besides there is a coldness and dignity which characterises all classical stories and writings ill suited to the excitement of violent passions or tender feelings...In French tragedy I never can forget the actor, but I never saw Mrs.Siddons, Miss O'Neil or Mr Kemble without recollecting [sic] for the time that there were any such people in existence...

Gairdner was something of a Romantic, looking for 'the language of nature' in drama. In French tragedy, he complained,

there are none of those sudden bursts of genius, glances in the tones which express the most inexpressible feelings of the Heart, such as you see on the English stage.⁸⁹

Lord Alexander Russell, in the mid-century, was rather less discerning about the theatre, but he was nonetheless keen to encourage dramatics among the officers and men of the

⁸⁷ NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 4 February 1813; *ibid.*, 7 March 1813; *ibid.*, 10 March 1813; *ibid.*, 15 April 1813.

⁸⁸ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.400. See G.Russell, *Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society 1793-1815* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1995), pp.172-177.

⁸⁹ NAM, 6902-53, Gairdner Journal, vol 3, 30 April 1815; *ibid.*, 4 May 1815; *ibid.*, 8 May 1815; *ibid.*, 14 July 1815; *ibid.*, 30 October 1815; *ibid.*, 24 December 1815; *ibid.*, 29 December 1815. Gairdner's views on emotion in theatre and the most convincing expression of passion fit into a wider contemporary controversy about the role of intellect in acting: whether the actor should express himself with actions at the appropriate dramatic moments, or feel emotion throughout as if he were the character. John Kemble, admired by Gairdner, favoured the latter, and his presentations of dramatically unified characters were made in a highly Romantic spirit. See M.R.Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991), pp.133-134.

1st Battalion.⁹⁰ He listed in his diary eight plays performed by the officers of the Rifle Brigade in the Crimea: 'Box and Cox Get Married and Settled' (by J.M.Morton, 1847), 'To Paris and Back for £5', 'The Phenomenon', 'John Debbs', 'Betsy Bake', 'Cool as a Cucumber', 'Toddle Kens' and 'Trying it On'. He saw the men perform 'Hamlet' (after noting this Russell put an exclamation mark in his diary: he evidently thought it rather beyond them) and saw the sergeants do 'Fish out of Water', 'Diamond Cut Diamond', 'PP or the Man and the Tiger' and 'Slasher and Crasher'.⁹¹ William Cuninghame also became involved in theatricals during the Crimean War and saw several performances. He wrote to his mother,

The theatre I told you in my last letter I was going to is great fun, some of the acting very good indeed, and the orchestra composed of a scratch pack of the best musicians in the Division, first rate. The only drawback being that... every one of the 150 spectators smokes away like miniature volcanoes...The audience applauded at two variations of the old song of Billy Barlow composed for the occasion. All the Generals were seated in the front row and enjoyed it above everything.⁹²

In India in 1860 and 1861, the 2nd Battalion put on 'The Illustrious Stranger', 'The Conjugal Season', 'The Writer to the Times' and the burlesque 'Bombastes Furioso' (William Barnes Rhodes, 1810).⁹³ The *Skirmisher* listed five plays done by the battalion in one month in 1860: 'The Gipsy Farmer', 'Mr.Vie's 'Joe'', 'Mr.Power's 'Mate'', 'Jack' and 'Mary Maybush'.⁹⁴

This enthusiasm for dramatics was accompanied by an attraction to the professional theatre, and there are instances recorded of officers and men attending plays, pantomimes and operas at various stations and in towns through which the regiment passed. This was true both abroad and at home. For example, William Norcott went to the opera almost every evening at

⁹⁰ For his religious views with regard to theatre see below, p.264.

⁹¹ RGJ, Russell Diary, 21 November 1855; *ibid.*, 5 December 1855; *ibid.*, 29 December 1855; *ibid.*, 22 January 1856; *ibid.*, 25 January 1856; *ibid.*, 6 February 1856; *ibid.*, 3 April 1856; *ibid.*, 11 March 1856; *ibid.*, 13 March 1856; *ibid.*, 24 June 1855.

⁹² RGJ, Cuninghame MSS, letter 79, W.Cuninghame to C.Cuninghame, 28 December 1855.

⁹³ C.A.Wilkinson, *Reminiscences at Eton, (Keate's Time)* (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1888), pp.199-207 mentions the popularity of dramatics at Eton under Dr.Keate, 1809-1932. 'Bombastes Furioso' was a favourite for the 'turn-out of the "brave army" with its various flutes and penny trumpets and other musical instruments, and motley dresses and arms'. Again, 'Bombastes Furioso' and 'Diamond Cut Diamond' were put on by the Cambridge Academical Dramatic Club in 1865. R.Sutherland Gower, *Records*, p.98.

⁹⁴ RGJ, Folio 1, p.64, playbill of a performance of 'The Writer to the Times', Christmas 1861; *ibid.*, playbill of a performance of 'Bombaste Furioso', Christmas 1861. RGJ, Folio 1, *The Skirmisher*, August 1860; *ibid.*, September 1860.

Valetta on his way to the Crimea, and he saw several works by Verdi. Andrew Barnard, who died in 1855, was a founding member of the Garrick Club in London in 1831, while he was Colonel Commandant of the 1st Battalion. And John Shadwell's father wrote to him at Windsor in 1840 assuming he would be able to attend,

We went to the Theatre to see Van Amburgh and the Lions and I assure you it was a most wonderful and beautiful sight, and one you *should make* a point of seeing when you have an opportunity.⁹⁵

As with newspapers, journals and novels, Riflemen seem to have been remarkably up to date on occasion in their knowledge of plays. For example, an article in the August issue of the *Skirmisher* referred to 'Griffinish' feelings about social rank, beauty and fashion. Thus readers in India were evidently expected to be familiar with Gerald Griffin's novel *The Collegians* (1829) which had been successfully adapted for the stage the year before, in 1859, by Dion Boucicault under the title 'The Colleen Bawn'.⁹⁶

This evidence indicates knowledge in the Rifle Brigade of several theatre genres of the nineteenth century. Gairdner's enthusiasm for 'Othello' and other Shakespeare plays and the performance by the men of 'Hamlet' during the Crimean War reflect the strong Shakespearian revival of the period, even among sections of the lower classes.⁹⁷ Gairdner knew French light opera and several officers mention Italian opera. Some of the plays performed by the regiment and the Light Division were 'legitimate' comedies, such as 'She Stoops to Conquer'. 'Slasher and Crasher' was a farce, and 'Bombaste Furioso' a burlesque. Many of the performances evidently included music (as well as members of regimental bands, many officers played instruments and sang),⁹⁸ and they used the conventions of musical accompaniment for music hall and melodrama.

⁹⁵ RGJ, Folio 1, p.80, H.Shadwell to J. Shadwell, 6 June 1840. Van Amburgh's show was very popular: Queen Victoria saw it seven times. Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, p.1.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.168.

⁹⁷ See *ibid.*, pp.18, 47-48.

⁹⁸ For example, in 1862 Leopold Swaine organized boys from the band and clarinet players in the regiment to meet in his rooms to sing the Christie Minstrel and other choir songs. L.V.Swaine, *Camp and Chancery in a Soldier's Life* (John Murray, London, 1926), p.24.

A review of recent light plays of various sorts appeared in *The Skirmisher* in September 1860.

Mr. Soper was splendid in his comic songs, the top of the head in "How do you like my bonnet" and the pathos and exquisite drollery of "Where's My Mother" "brought the house down on both the last occasions. We think the Ethiopian Serenaders were not so good as the other company, but should they enlist the services of Mr. J. Jones of Lambeth, they will succeed better: the modesty of the tall young negress was as it should be...we think the music that was played when the mate was shot, should not be paraded in such a place.

(Either the music-hall atmosphere – pubs were often used as venues at home – or the poor standard is apparent from the same reviewer's comment that they would do well to close the bar while performances were in progress.) The review reveals that the battalion was well-versed in contemporary light entertainments. The use of men to play female roles, while undoubtedly adding to the sense of fun in the context of nineteenth-century attitudes to gender, fitted into a tradition of transvestism in contemporary drama. (Men only played women in professional theatre in burlesque and pantomime, but women took on boys' parts and, on occasion, serious adult male roles.)⁹⁹ Mr. Jones may have been a generic name for struggling lower-class music-hall heroes.¹⁰⁰ Lambeth is apparently a reference to the well-known Canterbury Music Hall.¹⁰¹ And the shooting of 'the mate' suggests a nautical melodrama (or a parody of one). This genre grew out of dramatisations of Britain's sea and land battles in the Napoleonic Wars, but continued in popularity to the end of the century. Such plays were full of action and virtuous heroism but their plots also turned on the domestic and romantic.¹⁰²

The reference to Ethiopian Serenaders indicates that the 2nd Battalion was performing a 'nigger' minstrelsy, a form popular at all social levels from the 1830s to the end of the

⁹⁹ See Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, pp.130-131.

¹⁰⁰ See J. Traies, 'Jones and the Working Girl: Class Marginality in Music-Hall Song 1860-1900', in J.S. Bratton (ed), *Music Hall: Performance and Style* (Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1986), pp.23-48.

¹⁰¹ Francis Markham went to the Canterbury Music Hall as a boy. F. Markham, *Recollections of a Town Boy at Westminster 1849-1855* (E. Arnold, London, 1903), pp.85-86.

¹⁰² See Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, pp.152-153. For the use of music in nineteenth-century drama see *ibid.*, pp.11-12, 33-34, 123.; also A. Bennett, 'Music in the Halls' in Bratton (ed), *Music Hall*, pp.1-22.

century, but particularly from the 1850s to 1870s.¹⁰³ 'Nigger' minstrelsy was performed in theatres and music halls, and as street entertainment and amateur performance, and were generally considered respectable. The entertainments had a complex structure, with social satire, clowning, mimicry, skits, illusions and songs – sometimes comic, sometimes sentimental, performed in several consecutive phases within established conventions. Harmony of voices and musical arrangement were especially important in English forms of minstrelsy, a challenge not apparently easily met by the regimental company. Minstrelsy had at once a marked satirical edge with respect to middle-class social and moral pretensions and a nostalgia for a supposed social unity of the past that made its reception ambivalent. It also incorporated references to current politics.¹⁰⁴

Riflemen clearly had access to scripts and song lyrics, even while serving in India, and they showed an appreciation of accepted practice in playbills, staging, costume, casting, acting, effects and reviews that suggests they attended performances outside.¹⁰⁵ Indeed much of the appeal of music hall and melodrama in particular lay in familiarity with the forms. It also lay in stock-in-trade concerns: the father-daughter relationship, the pathos of the tragic heroine, the triumph of good over villainy. Thus Riflemen were familiar with a range of standard underlying themes that had social, political and religious implications, including power relationships within families, the position of women in society, and issues of class and social mobility. Ideas and concerns relating to a wide range of issues in British culture, then, found

¹⁰³ The other ranks of the 1st Battalion put together 'an amateur nigger band' while sailing to Africa, and entertained the officers. RGJ, Bramston Diary, 12 February 1852.

¹⁰⁴ The Ethiopian Serenaders were a minstrel group of the 1830s and 1840s, and the name was used to describe all black-face minstrelsy. See M. Pickering, 'White Skin, Black Masks: 'Nigger' Minstrelsy in Victorian England' in Bratton (ed), *Music Hall*, pp.70-91. 'Blackface minstrelsy during this period became very much a part of this process of cultural change...What was being symbolically worked out in minstrelsy, at a metalevel of commentary, were questions about the status of white Victorian society in the whole human social and biological order. These questions were posed within the framework of class differentiation.' For politics in drama and the negotiation of political and social issues within the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century theatre, see Russell, *Theatres of War*, pp.15-17 and *passim*.

¹⁰⁵ The army may even have spread knowledge of the theatre as it travelled. Andrew Barnard noted in 1816 that there was a theatre at Valenciennes which he hoped would improve through the patronage of the garrison. A.D. Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters 1778-1824* (Duckworth, London, 1928), p.256.

their way into the regiment through scripts, performances and comment on theatre just as they did through newspapers, periodicals and books.

The conclusion that the regiment reflected mainstream literary and theatrical tastes is in keeping with what is known of the backgrounds of officers in the Rifle Brigade. A number of examples can be given. Some officers came from families with famous libraries (even if only a small percentage of their stock may ever have been read by the owning families). For example, the family of the Newdigate brothers had the famous eighteenth-century gothick library at Arbury. And the Lytteltons and Cavendishes were eminent patrons of literature and the arts. A few, too, were related to men and women of letters.¹⁰⁶ The uncle of Reginald Heber Percy, Richard Heber, was a celebrated book collector, a friend of Sir Walter Scott and a founder of the Athenaeum Club. Hon. Edward Noel's uncle was the poet Roden Noel. Captain William Frederick Thynne, grandson of the 2nd Marquess of Bath, had an elder brother, Francis, who married Edith, daughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Rose d'Aguilar, a minor poet, was the mother of Arthur Lawrence. Harry Smith's sister Mrs. Sargant was the author of *Joan of Arc: a Play*, *Charlie Burton* and several other published works.¹⁰⁷ And Thomas Perronet Thompson was a distant cousin of the Quaker writer Amelia Opie (who was also a friend of Sir John Peter Boileau of the Rifle Brigade).¹⁰⁸

It is not difficult, then, to establish that there were connections between individuals in the regiment and literary figures – as might be expected from their predominantly upper-class backgrounds. Precisely how often and how closely officers came into contact with literary members of their families, and literary family friends, is, however, (as with their political connections) difficult to discover. Certainly, as will be discussed below, the weight of evidence

¹⁰⁶ Frederick Ames's brother became a composer of music after retiring from the army.

¹⁰⁷ H. Smith, *The Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith* G.C. Moore Smith (ed) (John Murray, London, 1901), vol 2, p.397.

¹⁰⁸ 'She brought into the austere atmosphere of Ketteringham Hall a breath of skittishness and archness and roguery which even Sir John never seems to have resented. It is safe to say that no one but Mrs. Opie could with impunity begin a letter to Sir John Boileau with the words, 'O thou amiable thing!' or end with a postscript, 'a lump of love to distribute, Sir John – among thy belongings.'" Chadwick, *Victorian Miniature*, p.65. Amelia Opie was the wife of the painter John Opie, Royal Academician.

indicates that officers generally had upbringings very similar to those of their siblings destined for civilian careers, and many had long spells of leave spent at home.¹⁰⁹ Both these factors suggest that family was important to the apparent community of taste in published material (including plays) between officers and their non-military peers.

A number of Rifle Brigade officers had well-developed interests outside their profession, and several wrote books themselves. The range of topics gives an indication of the interests they pursued while in the regiment, while on half-pay or after leaving the service. For example Major Edward Rooper published botanical water-colours while he was serving. Some of them were apparently of sufficient quality for Sir William Hooker, director of Kew Gardens, to attach his name to them. According to Rooper's brother, Robert Burford had arranged with him for a panorama (a canvas unrolled at one side of a stage and rolled up at the other) of his sketches to be displayed at Leicester Square, before the outbreak of the Crimean War diminished public interest.¹¹⁰ Again, Sir Thomas Livingstone Mitchell, who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1811 to 1826, produced plans of the Peninsular War battlefields that were published in 1840. He became a well-known explorer and wrote *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia* (1838), *Journal of an Expedition into the Interior of Tropical Australia* (1848), *The Australian Geography* (1850) for use in schools, and, quite unrelated, a verse translation of *The Lusiad of Luis Camoens* (1854). Similarly William Norcott wrote a book called *The Mountains of the Abruzzi*. Hon. John Abercromby wrote *A Trip Through the Eastern Caucasus* and *Pre- and Proto-Historic Finns*.¹¹¹ And likewise, while still in the army but not in active employment, Charles Beckwith wrote liturgical and theological works.¹¹² This

¹⁰⁹ For example, Lord Alexander Russell, on leave as a lieutenant, stayed at Woburn while the Duke of Sussex, the Duchess of Inverness, Lord Scarborough, George and Lady Agnes Byng, Lord Uxbridge and two of his daughters were guests. Alexander and his brother Edward were involved acting plays and charades, and dancing, 'with all the amusements of an English country house'. Diary of Lord William Russell, 13 January 1843, cited G. Blakiston, *Woburn and the Russells* (Constable, London, 1980), p.471.

¹¹⁰ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.148, W. Rooper to W. Cope, 19 March 1878. For the popularity of panoramas of battlefields, see Russell, *Theatres of War*, pp.74-78.

¹¹¹ He was later President of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, and was given an honorary doctorate by the University of Edinburgh in 1911.

¹¹² See below, p.249.

concentration by at least a few Rifle Brigade officers on interests unrelated to their duties (though often developed as a result of opportunities and experience gained during service) does not appear to have been unusual in the army.¹¹³ The phenomenon demonstrates both the openness of officers to non-military activities and their willingness to communicate with a wider (reading) public of civilians with kindred interests.

Published material performed a number of functions for officers in the Rifle Brigade. Certainly, it was a welcome source of entertainment. Bramston, for example, wrote to his parents in 1852 that while he was sailing for Africa with the regiment he had nothing to do when off-duty but lie on deck and read.¹¹⁴ Reading was not entirely for enjoyment, however. Even beside material with a military purpose, more general publications also had several professional functions. First, they provided, in the case of newspapers and journals in particular, information for officers about foreign affairs (or, sometimes significantly, British views of foreign affairs) including the progress of past and present wars. The comment and political gossip of newspapers offered important insights into the climate of opinion inside and outside parliament in the absence of official communications, and officers frequently tried to deduce from the press how the army would be instructed. For example, William Norcott wrote in his journal in the Crimea that although he had doubts about the strength of the army owing to the number of officers still at home and on leave,

From the English papers, from the speeches in the House of Lords and Commons, there is no doubt that the attack on Sebastopol has been directed, and that we are going at it.¹¹⁵

Printed material, notably newspapers and the more intellectual journals, but including novels and poetry, had a second professional function in keeping soldiers informed of wider civilian views of the army's activities and performance. On one level they provided immediate

¹¹³ For example, D.Henderson, *Highland Soldier 1820-1920* (John Donald, Edinburgh, 1989), p.285 notes that many officers in the Highland regiments were avid readers, and many were accomplished ornithologists and taxidermists.

¹¹⁴ RGJ, Bramston MSS, T.Bramston to his mother, 6 February 1852. A.Starkey, 'War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1781', *War and Society*, vol 8, No 1, 1990, pp.1-28 notes that British officers in the later eighteenth-century American wars called for regimental libraries and wanted access to more low-brow reading material.

¹¹⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 16 August 1854.

reaction to events. For example, Rifle Brigade officers, like others in the services, expressed in letters and diaries their indignation at newspaper reports of the army's incompetence and the inadequacies of officers in the Crimean War.¹¹⁶ General Sir George Brown declared in a letter to George Simmons in 1855, after he had failed to secure the appointment of successor to Lord Raglan in the Crimea, that to get on in the world it was necessary also to please the newspapers who ruled with arbitrary tyranny greater than that in Russia.¹¹⁷ Similarly, Harry Smith showed his sensitivity to the prejudices and ignorance of the press when he wrote to his sister in a letter of 26 August, 1835,

You will, I hope, have observed by the papers that your brother Harry has not been an idler in this Kaffir War, which, thank God, I now bring to a close...although, Alice, you will see some of the papers teeming with vituperative abuse believe them not; never was a war of retribution carried on with more mercy: never was the hand of leniency more readily extended where contrition or submission was evinced; and while I so actively served my Country's cause, as well as that of Justice, I have been guided by a principle of generous mercy towards an irreclaimable, relentless, and vindictive enemy. Do not then suppose that in your brother you have a monster of iniquity...rejoicing in blood and destruction...¹¹⁸

Indeed, the *United Service Journal* in its first amalgamated issue of 1829 set out specifically,

To watch and propitiate these prejudices, dissipate erroneous impressions regarding the Services, and set ourselves right with our countrymen firmly but temperately...¹¹⁹

(Even to read the military press, it could be inferred, was to hear echoes of debate across civilian-military lines.)

However, on another level, published material seen by Riflemen conveyed current notions, both idealised and critical, of the work and personnel of the army that went to the heart of nineteenth-century British culture. For example, as has been noted, many Riflemen make references to the novels of Sir Walter Scott. They were therefore familiar with his pantheon of wild and romantic British heroes (Fergus McIvor, Ivanhoe and Rob Roy MacGregor) that was influential in shaping the contemporary revival of medievalism. Related notions of virtue and

¹¹⁶ Nonetheless, there was a stream of letters from officers to *The Times* after the Crimean War criticising the military leadership. The national press was an important platform for army reform debate by the military as much as by critical civilians.

¹¹⁷ RGJ, Folio 2, p.32, G.Brown to G.Simmons, 15 August 1855.

¹¹⁸ Southampton Univ., WP2/177/17, H.Smith to A.Sarjant, 26 August 1835.

¹¹⁹ *USJ*, 1829, 1, p.1. It amalgamated with the *Naval and Military Magazine*.

chivalry, part of the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness, fed both pride in the armed forces and a sense of modern military inadequacy. This ambivalence was reflected in the views of Riflemen on professional military behaviour.

Taking on board contemporary ideals maintained a broad cultural alignment between officers and civilians. This had a socialising effect which again had a professional function. Reading helped to apprise officers of the finer points of polite behaviour evolving at home. *The United Service Journal*, for example, carried a piece in 1837 entitled 'A Peep into Regimental Society' (signed 'W') which referred to the importance of reading, with conversation, to the education of youngsters in the mess. Reading, it claimed, helped to soften their tempers, and to mould their characters, improving their manners and addresses to women. Ignorance, the article declared, was more rare now in the mess than it had been in former days.¹²⁰ Thus reading contributed to the shaping, indeed standardisation, of behaviour. Gentlemanly credentials were, as we have seen, important for acceptance by other officers. Routes to preferment through patronage networks often involved social engagements, particularly dining, with high ranking officers or influential civilians. For example, William Norcott, who had many good connections through his father Amos Norcott, had lunch with Lord Raglan on 30 June, 1855. Lord Raglan then remarked to Lord Hardinge, the Secretary of State for War, that Norcott had been purchased over some twenty times, and he promised to see if he could help, and it was the personal intervention of Lord Raglan that gave him most hope, as we have seen. Similarly, Henry Havelock managed to secure promotion to Adjutant (after he had left the Rifle Brigade), in the face of opposition from fellow-officers, through the efforts of his wife who wrote to Lord William Bentinck, the Governor-General of India and local Commander-in-Chief, on her husband's behalf. She was summoned and received by Lord William's wife 'with the cordiality of a friend' before Lord William came to tell her the request had been granted.¹²¹

¹²⁰ "W", 'A Peep into Regimental Society', *USJ*, 1837, 1, pp.466-474.

¹²¹ J.C.Marshman, *Memoirs of Major-General Sir Henry Havelock KCB* (1867) (reprinted Longman, Green and Co, London, 1909), p.45.

Success in the army depended to a degree on social skills and it was therefore linked to methods of gaining success in the finely graded echelons of polite society in the period. This involved a mastery of subtle and changing rules. Conversation was one important trait, beside, for example dress and manners, that betrayed gentlemanly social standing (with its associations of moral stature and character). Particularly from the 1830s there was increasing analysis of, and self-consciousness about, the various moral, intellectual and social aspects of conversation, both in the domestic and public arenas.¹²² The mess, it could be argued, provided an alternative, semi-domestic forum. There were many aspects of conversation to master: delivery, tone, and, particularly later in the century, accent, a delicate sensitivity to sharing ideas and listening to others, and an ability to adapt subjects to suit the size, social class, or gender mix, of company. Central to proficiency was, however, a stock of suitable topics. The 'voice theorist and conversation guru' Edwin Drew wrote in 1857,

What subjects are best? Plainly those that belong to the elegancies of life, and which are not likely to strike deep at personal prejudices, or to beget contentious or sectarian differences:— Nature, as seen abroad and at home — the varied aspects of human society, as witnessed during foreign travel — History, in its various unfoldings of human character, and its record of the greatneses and failings of nations — Science, in its application to the wants of life, and its revealings of natural laws and economies — and, above all, Art and Literature — pictures, sculpture, and books.¹²³

Officers were well-placed in the army to gather both in the line of duty and by sight-seeing (of which those in the Rifle Brigade did a great deal), such a stock of subjects: travel and adventures gave access to exotic art treasures and architecture, to experiences of the flora and fauna (especially by hunting) in foreign lands, and to the peculiarities of physical geography. Contact with various races furnished yet more topics. Nonetheless, some knowledge of British, French and Italian culture, including novels, poems and plays was always a mark of a gentleman.¹²⁴ Reading fashionable or popular material could, of course, be done by officers

¹²² A. St George, *The Descent of Manners: Etiquette, Rules and the Victorians* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1993), pp.45-83 points to the reinforcement of social hierarchies by rules of conversation, and the appearance of an array of manuals presenting the acquisition of skills in conversation as a route to self-improvement. It was commonly advised to prepare conversation in private and practice it at home, for future performance.

¹²³ E. Drew, *The Public Speaker's Vade Mecum. Elocution: its Principles Reduced to Practice* (London, 1857), p.7, cited *ibid.*, p.57.

¹²⁴ John Fitzmaurice was known as a good linguist, a 'great pleasure to him', and, according to his son, his reading in French, Spanish and Italian, and the foreign friends he made, allowed him to learn

anywhere in the world, even in the most isolated station, provided they were sufficiently in touch with home – either through personal contacts or periodicals – to know what they should be reading or reading about.

There is evidence for Rifle Brigade officers deliberately educating themselves in the interlinked skills of polite social intercourse which reading underpinned. Sir Andrew Barnard, for example, was teased,

to sit next at dinner a pleasure to find
one who always is trying to strengthen his mind.¹²⁵

Likewise, Charles Beckwith tried to learn whist against the day he might become a general.¹²⁶ (Some, however, were evidently less keen: the 3rd Battalion Story Book contains a note for 20 March 1872 recording that Lieutenant Charles Hulse was heard to say that he was so delicate, if he visited a picture gallery he was knocked up for a week.)¹²⁷

As well as equipping officers to socialise with superiors, these skills were required in some areas of army work. Aides-de-Camp, for instance, were required to assist high-ranking officers in entertaining royalty, diplomats and other dignitaries at home and abroad; and regiments frequently gave balls in return for invitations from local nobility or gentry, or to court support for the British government. Equally, accepted rules of engagement in war required a sensitivity among officers to current ideas of social propriety and honour. Thus in the army

much he would not otherwise have known in 'art, commerce and agriculture'. Fitzmaurice, *Biographical Sketch* pp.11-12. Lord Seaton's advice to his son for his military education as he joined his first regiment in 1835 included, 'A knowledge of the French language is not only necessary for every gentleman, but an officer cannot even be sent to an outpost without it'. Moore-Smith, *Life of John Colborne*, p.269.

¹²⁵ RGJ, Folio 1, p.12, R.Vans Agnew poem, 5 December 1840. Sir Andrew had been a precocious scholar as a small child, encouraged by his grandmother. She wrote to him when he was five years old (although he was already destined for the army), 'I hope you will meet with no impediment to universal knowledge'. And she corresponded with him about Greek and Latin texts, the Bible and history. He later collected books, prints and paintings, and he exchanged musical scores with members of his family while he was in the army. Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters*, pp.21, 23-24, 26, 27-28, 33, 45, 46, 70, 151-154, 218, 220, 242.

¹²⁶ J.P.Meille, *General Beckwith: His Life and Labours Among the Waldensians of Piemont* translated by W.Arnot (T.Nelson, London, 1873), p.17.

¹²⁷ RGJ, 3rd Battalion Rifle Brigade 'The Story Book: A Record of Facts, Anecdotes, Statements or Remarks that are Marvellous but True?', 20 March 1872.

officers could gain, in part through reading, a basic training fitting them to behave as gentlemen in their related civilian and military roles.

4.3 The Reading of the Other Ranks

The other ranks soldiers of the Rifle Brigade, as we have seen, attended many of the plays performed by officers, at least in the mid-century, and put on others of their own (mostly light pieces, but including the more ambitious production of 'Hamlet' of 1855)¹²⁸ and these were in turn watched by officers. They also attended, like officers, professional theatre and opera in towns where the regiment stayed. In addition, they, too, saw books and periodicals. Unfortunately, little evidence for their reading survives, in particular for the first three decades of the century. Nonetheless, there are indications, as will be shown below, that a few men read religious material in this period, and there is evidence to show that the other ranks had access, at least, to books and newspapers throughout the regiment's history.

The Rifle Brigade was unusual in having a regimental library from its establishment in 1800.¹²⁹ Colonel Manningham appears to have intended it to be open to the other ranks, with the particular aim of preparing them for promotion.¹³⁰ Very little evidence survives for the library, however, and it is not clear when the officers' mess acquired a separate collection of books, nor how the spread of titles held may have changed over time. The other-ranks library of

¹²⁸ Spouting Clubs for the performance of a variety of plays, including serious tragedy, were strong among clerks, artisans and other-ranks soldiers in London and provincial towns from the turn of the century. See Russell, *Theatres of War*, p.132.

¹²⁹ See Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.64 for the establishment of a regimental library for the Black Watch in 1830, and for Lord Hill's approval of the establishment of regimental libraries in 1841. See Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home*, pp.97-98 for the use of regimental libraries by a maximum of only 20% of the rank and file from the 1840s to the 1870s, although the men were in many cases encouraged by officers to read, and for doubts about how often books borrowed were actually read. *Ibid.*, p.93 for the authorisation of the establishment of libraries in large barracks across Britain in 1840.

¹³⁰ C.Manningham, *Standing Regulations For the Rifle Brigade, Late 95th (Rifle) Regiment Formed at Blatchington Barracks August 25th, 1800* (1801) (T.Egerton, London, 1819), p.72.

the 2nd Battalion seems to have been sufficiently used (or abused) for the books to need repairs in 1873, but no borrowing list or catalogue survives.¹³¹

It is clear, however, that from the 1840s some of the other ranks were reading newspapers regularly. A letter survives written on 14 June, 1841, by Private Richard Fletcher of the 1st Battalion to his brother and sister living at Conduit Street, Leicester. Fletcher wrote from the 1st Elmo Barracks at Malta,

...I am very busy and have been ever since we have been at [sic] I have had small time to write to my dear wife but her I cannot neglect and I write to her poor creature every mail to [sic] goes out of Malta and allways will...the last letter I had from her was in the Middle of may she stated to me she was expecting going to france with the famaly she his living...I should be very much obliged to you if you would send me a Lester newspaper sometimes as they would pass a many dull hour away as if my dear wife goes to france she will not have the chance as she has know as she allways sends me soom every time she writes to me...I hope I shall have a long letter from you before long...¹³²

Likewise, Thomas Bramston noted in his diary for 18 May, 1852, while the 1st Battalion was camped at during the Second Kaffir War,

A most disagreeable day blowing a hurricane...Several tents blew down, the Major's marquee among them. He picked up a piece of paper which came blowing across the parade ground which on examination turned out to be a letter to the Reynolds newspaper abusing the officers from the general downwards, written by one of the men.¹³³

It is safe to assume from this that the author of the letter, and both the Major and Bramston, were acquainted with the newspaper's radical content and style: *Reynolds'* was a direct descendant of the Chartist press, given to censoring the ruling classes, and it had a sizeable section for readers' letters and enquiries. It is worth noting that the paper was only begun a year before, early in 1851, indicating that the regiment was well up to date with the popular press.¹³⁴

¹³¹ Two copies of William Cope's *History of the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1877) were ordered in advance for the soldier's library. RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 1 May 1863.

¹³² RGJ, Folio 1, p.97, R.Fletcher to T.Fletcher, 14 June 1841.

¹³³ RGJ, Bramston Diary, 18 May 1852.

¹³⁴ Berridge, 'Content Analysis' in Harris and Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society*, pp.208, 217-218 has argued that *Reynolds' Newspaper* reflected a continuing analysis of the British social structure that was based on a Jacobinical view of 'old corruption'. She sees its editorials, with their Chartist inheritance, and its broader news content (particularly its handling of sensational scandal) as infused with an opposition to 'privilege' that extended and supplemented attacks already common in popular literature and theatre. While she is quick to concede that 'Patterns of working- and lower-middle-class consciousness are still an elusive focus of historical research, primarily through lack of evidence', she argues that *Reynolds'* consolidated 'a form of class solidarity' for its readers by employing the type of

Similarly, Private Frederick Hart wrote to his mother in England on Christmas day, 1854, from the Crimea, complaining of the conditions of life in the camp,

I often think that as soldiers fighting hard, living hard, dying hard and to go to old nick after all is hard indeed.¹³⁵

Among the miseries he listed is his disappointment at not receiving the papers sent from home. And finally, there is evidence from William Norcott suggesting that the other ranks were aware of popular enthusiasm at home for the Crimean War. Anticipating an attack on Sebastopol, based, as we have seen, on his reading of parliamentary speeches, Norcott noted,

If we go at it, I shall have every confidence. The men might be carried away by popular clamour.¹³⁶

By 1860, newspaper reading was apparently common among the lower ranks. The August 1860 issue of the *Skirmisher* carried a piece imagining a war between Britain and France in 1863, and declared that everyone in the regiment who could read a three-syllable word would read about it in the papers. Another contribution in September called on Riflemen to spend less time reading rubbishy publications, filling their minds with nonsense, and to use time instead reading this newspaper and practising gymnastics. Another article in the same issue declared that its purpose was to gather together scattered information on the state of Europe, as, although the English papers arrived in India a month after they were published and everyone could read them, some did not take the trouble,

after their daily duties are over, to bother their heads by gathering from scattered paragraphs in the columns of a newspaper, what is, after all, but a confused notion of the progress of the great events which are now agitating Europe.

The anonymous author of another article, 'Nolens Experta', who expressed his approval of the freedom of English newspaper editors to give not only news but 'opinion on such news', proceeded to give a short and spirited account of his own of the defeat of 'the grasping and haughty rulers' of Austria, the British fears of French aggression that motivated the volunteer movement of 1859, and the current exploits of Garibaldi 'the champion of liberty'.

rhetoric with which they were familiar. Berridge has shown that soldiers and sailors were chief among its correspondents: they provided 25% of all queries printed in 1862, and 39% in 1866.

¹³⁵ RGJ, Folio 2, p.49, F.Hart to his mother, 25 December 1854.

¹³⁶ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 16 August 1854.

There is particularly good evidence, too, for the 2nd Battalion after the Indian Mutiny. Captain FitzRoy Fremantle was the officer in charge of organising a reading room (as well as the supply of items such as footballs, quoits and sets of dominoes and chess) in the men's canteen in camp at Bankee in India, which opened on 15 January, 1859. Fremantle kept a note of some of the titles he ordered for the other ranks: the *Friend of India*, *Cassell's Family Paper*, the *Sunday Observer*, the *Lucknow Herald*, and other, unnamed, English periodicals, including 'the evening mails'.¹³⁷ As with the mess records for the 2nd Battalion, the list was not intended to be complete, and other titles may have been staples not worthy of special comment.

The *Friend of India* was the first English weekly in India, started and edited by John Clark Marshman, brother-in-law of General Sir Henry Havelock and son of the Baptist missionary Dr Joshua Marshman. John Cassell was a carpenter and grocer, the son of a Manchester publican who began his career as a temperance lecturer and from 1850 published several improving periodicals for working men.¹³⁸ The *Sunday Observer*, as we have seen, was a Whig paper in the 1840s and then Liberal. It was illustrated and popular but not specifically aimed at the working classes.

These publications may or may not have been the men's own choice, and it is impossible to know how many actually read them. The supply of newspapers was undoubtedly part of a wider movement among officers and civilian philanthropists to encourage the constructive use of leisure time in the army and amongst working men more generally, and it appears from the 2nd Battalion mess records that the officers paid the bill. However, the earlier reference to *Reynolds' Newspaper* and the evidence of papers sent from home to Fletcher and Hart, together with the assumption in the *Skirmisher* that all ranks read the news, suggests

¹³⁷ NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, vol 1, 27 January 1859; *ibid.*, 23 February 1859; *ibid.*, 5 March 1859; *ibid.*, 23 March 1859. Official provision of newspapers and periodicals for men in the services continued to increase to the end of the century. Brown, *Victorian News*, p.48 points to a Treasury return of 1881-2 showing the Admiralty providing men on Royal Navy ships with numerous copies of Hampshire local papers, *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, *Irish Monthly* and *Catholic Progress*.

¹³⁸ There were several similar publications available. Magazines such as the *Penny Magazine* (published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge), the *Family Economist* and the *Family Friend* gave advice on a range of topics connected with self-improvement, including home management and respectable pastimes.

strongly that the men saw newspapers regularly and voluntarily, and that all their reading was not directed by superiors.

It is worth remembering here that the other ranks were not an entirely homogeneous set, either in social or regional background. A proportion at any one time were illiterate, and many of these came from very poor backgrounds.¹³⁹ At the same time, in the early years of the regiment, there were a few ex-officers from other regiments in the ranks. Occasionally, too, throughout this period, gentlemen volunteers joined the ranks,¹⁴⁰ often in the hope of earning a commission. That is to say, a very small proportion of the men at any one time were quite well educated. Corporal H.E.Scott was one such anomalous figure. He came from a middle-class Devon family with no tradition of military service. He joined up in 1851 and served for eighteen years, seeing action in the Second Kaffir and Crimean Wars, and spending eight years with the regiment in Canada. He obtained the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal in 1870. His father's favourite journal was the *Athenaeum*, a leading artistic and literary review with many eminent contributors, and Corporal Scott (who kept a journal and began a history of the regiment in the Kaffir War) borrowed copies of that magazine from his own club, the Pembridge in Bayswater, after he retired and returned to London in 1870.¹⁴¹ While the opening section of his account of his service in the Kaffir War (including a reference to Voltaire)

¹³⁹ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.89 notes that in 1843 27.3% of recruits in the Rifle Brigade were illiterate when they joined. This was a low proportion compared to other regiments probably because the Rifle Brigade was slightly more successful in attracting recruits and so could choose between them. Only 5½% of the Scots recruits were illiterate where the other nationalities had much higher rates. See A.A.MacLaren, *Religion and Social class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1974), pp.144-158 for the religious education of the lower classes in Scotland in the first half of the nineteenth century. R.Macdonald, *Personal Narrative of Military Travel and Adventure in Turkey and Persia* (A.and C.Black, Edinburgh, 1859), p.296 recalled that when as a sergeant recruiting in the 1830s, 'it was only in the haunts of dissipation and inebriation, and among the very lowest dregs of society, that I met with anything like success. I could seldom prevail on even the uneducated to enlist, when they were sober-living and industriously inclined'. RGJ, Book of Regimental Orders and Brigade Orders includes a table with numbers of men in 1873 holding education certificates of 2nd to 4th class. 3 sergeants, 16 corporals and 44 privates had 2nd class certificates; 8 sergeants, 11 corporals and 72 privates had 3rd class certificates; and 1 corporal and 84 privates had 4th class certificates.

¹⁴⁰ 'Long' Thompson, author of *Life is a Jest: The Testimony of a Wanderer*, was a middle-class man in the rank and file in the 1860s. A.Bryant, *Jackets of Green: a Study of the History, Philosophy and Character of the Rifle Brigade* (Collins, London, 1972), p.149. For gentlemen in the ranks, see Spiers, *Army and Society*, pp.45-46.

¹⁴¹ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol 2, p.75, W.Glass to W.Cope, 4 March 1877.

survives,¹⁴² nothing has been found regarding his reading habits while in service, though he may well have brought into the barracks reading material aimed at the educated classes.

These references to periodicals seen by lower-ranking Riflemen can usefully be viewed against the background of other material that was available to them and the changing reading habits of those with whom they came into contact in civilian society. Until army barracks were widely improved in the mid-century, soldiers were frequently billeted at inns and pubs as well as in private houses, both at home and abroad. It is known, too, from disciplinary records and from private letters and memoirs, that, again at least until the mid-century when regimental coffee-rooms and 'Soldiers Homes' organised by private charities offered some alternative, pubs were the main centres of soldiers' entertainment in off-duty hours. There, and at establishments such as barbers' shops and coffee houses, they had access to newspapers and could hear them read aloud.¹⁴³ Throughout the nineteenth century it was common for pubs to take, in particular, local papers and Sunday papers. The Sunday press was largely, but not exclusively, Radical in the early and mid-century, and although papers were produced on a Saturday for distribution the following day, they smacked of blasphemy to Sabbatarians. The number of Sunday titles and their circulation expanded quickly in the century and many, offering summaries of the week's news, were pitched at a working-class readership.¹⁴⁴ However, some more expensive and sophisticated titles like *Bell's Life in London* (attractive for its sports coverage) are known to have circulated in pubs, too, as did, at the opposite end of the market, a range of Radical and variously scurrilous, or (until the abolition of the tax in 1855 made them superfluous) illegal, unstamped material.¹⁴⁵ Through pubs, Riflemen would have had direct and frequent access to a strong and continuing tradition of printed material for the literate working classes in Britain, stretching into the eighteenth century and beyond. This material included broadsheets and ballad sheets, and Jacobin, Socialist, Chartist and dissenting pamphlets and newspapers.

¹⁴² RGJ, Cope MSS, p.59.

¹⁴³ See M.Girouard, *Victorian Pubs* (Cassell, London, 1975), p.34.

¹⁴⁴ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.51-52, 56-57.

¹⁴⁵ Mason, 'Sporting News', in Harris and Lee (eds), *The Press in English Society*, pp.183-184.

Until the later decades of the nineteenth century, newspapers were an expensive luxury to those on low incomes. Fears of the radical press had led in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to the imposition of a series of taxes that raised the price of stamped papers to levels prohibitive for the mass of British people.¹⁴⁶ These 'taxes on knowledge', were removed in stages, as we have seen, in parallel with the process of representative political reform and the increasing dominance of ideas of free trade. Weekly papers (selling at around 7d-10d before 1836, at around 4d-5d afterwards, and between 3d and ½d when the remaining taxes had gone) were a more economical option than daily papers. From the 1840s even the moderately low-paid were able to make frequent weekly purchases, or even daily purchases on occasions of special interest. (Purchasing levels are, however, notoriously difficult to correlate with circulation and readership. For instance, there were well-organised schemes for sharing papers, of which reading in pubs was a part, and working people did not necessarily have to buy papers themselves, or alone, to see them.)¹⁴⁷

Riflemen in the other ranks, too, are likely to have found newspapers expensive to purchase on a regular basis: their wages in the early and mid-century broadly compared with those of civilian unskilled labourers. Nonetheless, expedients such as having papers sent from home with the mail, sharing papers, relying on officers to buy them for the canteen, seeing them in pubs (and possibly even reading copies discarded by officers, although there is no evidence for this) would have ensured contact with the press commensurate with that of their peers at home. Indeed, the mixing of men from different backgrounds and their recreation in different

¹⁴⁶ For eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century attempts to discourage the radical local press see Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.32-36; and Read, *Press and People*, p.68. No evidence has been found to suggest that officers tried to restrict material seen by the other ranks. However, when Major-General Sir Charles Napier (who had some sympathy with Chartism) was the commanding officer of the Northern district from 1839 to 1841, he was afraid that Chartist ideas might spread to the army and disrupt discipline. In the event there were few instances of disaffection, although he suspected there were 'many Chartists among the Rifles'. W.Napier, *The Life and Opinions of General Sir Charles Napier, GCB* (John Murray, London, 1857), vol 2, pp.30-31, 34, 54, 62, cited Spiers, *The Army and Society*, p.79. See *ibid.*, p.77 for Radicals circulating seditious literature among troops, apparently 'republicanizing' a section of the Grenadier Guards in 1832-1833.

¹⁴⁷ Brown, *Victorian News*, pp.30-31, 48 ; *ibid.*, pp.27-28, 50. *Reynolds'*, *Lloyd's* and the *News of the World* were printed on tough rag paper in the mid-nineteenth century and were intended to be read by several people. Arrangements for sharing included passing papers from one house to another in rural areas and hiring papers by the hour.

towns as the regiment travelled, may have meant, if anything, that Riflemen of all ranks were exposed to a broader selection of periodicals than is likely to have been the case if they had not joined the army. This was probably particularly true of those from rural areas where the range of accessible titles remained restricted in this period.¹⁴⁸

The reading of newspapers is likely to have created and maintained links between the other ranks and wider society. On the one hand it kept them in touch with aspects of nineteenth-century culture that were specifically working-class and to a large extent national. Regular access by Riflemen to popular newspapers invites the conclusion that the other ranks were part of a diverse lower-class audience that was both receiving information and analysis, and reflecting back sets of commonly held views. However, on the other hand, the men were also in touch through them with opinion and values associated with the middle and upper classes. For example, most local newspapers were aimed at a broad audience and made few concessions to less educated readers. They acted as filters of the national press, separating out issues of local interest, but maintaining the original values and tone.¹⁴⁹ And there is evidence in the diary of Private William Bolton to support the view that the men continued to feel an affinity with Britain as home, and through literature (conceived broadly) took on board aspects of nineteenth-century culture that were widely familiar across society (including ideas associated with regenerated gentlemanliness).

Bolton was born in the parish of Dibden, near Chelmsford in Essex, and enlisted at Chertsey in 1852, aged eighteen years. He kept a journal during the Indian Mutiny, for the most

¹⁴⁸ The same point might be made for the theatre. From the later eighteenth century most provincial towns had theatres, and in the nineteenth century many London companies toured with successful plays, but most country people had little contact with dramatics beyond shows put on at country fairs and markets, and by strolling players. It might be noted, too, that even cheaper seats in a commercial London theatre typically cost between 1s and 2s (though they could be as little as 3d or 6d in a minor theatre by the 1860s), so that seeing 'legitimate' theatre (longer comedies, tragedies and quality farce) was relatively expensive. Thus access to performances of a range of plays in the regiment was probably an unusual opportunity for many in the ranks. Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age*, pp.6-7, 16-18, 39-40, 53; also Russell, *Theatres of War*, pp.183-185 for theatre as a means of education for John Shipp and Robert Hay, lower-class men of the army and navy.

¹⁴⁹ See Koss, *The Rise and Fall*, pp.24, 94; see also Brown, *Victorian News*, pp.75-94 for professional journalists and editors moving between provincial and national newspapers, and bringing uniformity of outlook.

part recording details of marches and battles. At the back of the notebook he wrote out five poems (or possibly song lyrics). His script is good, but phonetic spelling betrays a strong regional accent. The first poem is signed by him and may have been his own composition. The scene of the poem is apparently in Britain (with an elm tree and a mill pond) and it evokes, from the distance of India, the sounds of the British countryside. The poem conveys a longing for affection that is intensely personal while, at the same time, it is pervaded with a sense of place that suggests vivid memories of home.

The beating of my hone heart

I wandered by the Bruck side I wandered by the mill
I did not hear the Bruck flow for the noisy weal was still
Thar was no bee or grass hopper
No chirp of any Bird
But the beating of my hone heart was the only sound I heard

I sat beneath the helam tree
I watch the long long shade and as it still grew longer
I did not feel afraid
I lished for a foot fall
I lished for a word
[But the beating of my hone heart was the only sound I heard]

Forst silent tears was flowing
when someone stood behind
A hand was on my sholder
I know his touch was kind
hit drewn me near and nearer
we did not speak a word
But the beating of our hone hearts was the only sound we heard

W. Bolton

The other poems are better crafted and may well have been the words to popular songs. (The spelling is better, too, and Bolton probably copied them.) Three of them are resonant of the nineteenth-century medieval revival. One of these (untitled) concerns the misery of a young soldier, apparently a crusader, attending the wedding feast of his sweet-heart, who has married the man's commander. The last two verses (it appears from the narrative leap between them that others may be missing) read,

One tress of her golden hair I twine
in my helmet sable plume
and then on the field of Palestine
I will seek an early doome
and if by the lancers hand I fall
mid the noble and the brave
One tear from Lady Love his all
I ask for the warrior's grave

A snow white scarf a pledge of love
on his right arm he wore
he pressed it in his aching heart
Snow crimsoned in his gore
he cast a fading glance around
but all was wrapt in gloom
then lifeless sank upon the ground
the knight of the sable plume.

The fourth poem, 'I will hang my harp on a willow tree' again uses for narrator a young soldier scorned by his lady.

She took me away from my war Lord like
and gave me a silken sute
O had I last thort of my master's sword
when I plaid on my ladys lute
She seems to think me a boy
above her pages of lower degree
O had I less loved with my boyish love
it would have been better for me

And the final poem, 'The peace of the valley', apparently set again at home in Britain and in modern times, though the chivalric imagery persists, is about a soldier killed in war. It ends,

The vine round the cottage door strays
its boughs neglected and stern gase
from the door must the widow long
for a form that can never return
he sleeps far away mid slain
his broken shield pillows his head
the smiles of his children await him in vain
the peace of the valley is flead
the calm of its once happy howers¹⁵⁰

Bolton's taste in poetry is entirely in line with sentimental ballads popular throughout Britain in the mid-century. The themes of nostalgia for the countryside, unrequited love, separation and death are ones with which a contemporary soldier in India might readily identify, but they nonetheless appeared frequently in a range of Victorian literature. Chivalric images

¹⁵⁰ NAM, 8203-46, W.Bolton log of the Indian Mutiny, 1857.

were popular in the literature of the middle and upper classes (not least in developing ideas of regenerated gentlemanliness), but they also pervaded working-class poetry and theatre. Gothic melodramas were especially successful. They featured castles, tyrants, virtuous maidens and knights in armour, and relied on audience understanding of and sympathy for Romantic and chivalric values of truth, purity, youth, perseverance and love, as well as the universal desire to see right triumph over might. Notions of chivalry, that is, appear to have crossed (if in highly dramatised and crude forms) lines of social rank in the Rifle Brigade as at home.¹⁵¹

Thus newspapers, books and theatre may have acted both to create cultural homogeneity across classes within the regiment, and to keep the outlook of Riflemen in broad alignment with attitudes current outside. This is not to underestimate the social and cultural gulf between officers and men, nor the differences in their experiences of society before, during and after service, but it is to argue that there was at the same time significant common ground in basic frames of reference and thinking (including an understanding of gentlemanliness) across the regiment and between the regiment and civilian Britain.

¹⁵¹ See M. Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1981), pp.67-86 for the use of chivalric ideas in working-class subversiveness, and by contemporary radicals.

Chapter 5: Personal Devotion

A principal theme in this dissertation has been that Riflemen serving in this period were not confined in either their cultural or social lives to narrowly military, or narrowly landed and upper-class, or lower-class, spheres. It has been found instead that these soldiers evidently shared with contemporary civilians across social groups patterns of outlook in which can be traced the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness. This shared notion of gentlemanliness helped to shape both the professional development of the Rifle Brigade from its formation, and its social relations inside and outside the army. The ideal was underpinned, as we have seen, by evolving interpretations of Christian doctrine (as well as by current social and political thought). Christian theology and tradition provided important inspiration in the development of new ideas (and in shoring up the old) regarding community, responsibility, leadership and national identity in this period. And it took a central place in contemporary ideas of individual virtue, respectability and honour. The following two chapters aim to focus on religion in the Rifle Brigade: to establish a relatively high incidence of personal piety and to examine its characteristics, but even beyond this to show, first, that Christianity coloured attitudes to a range of conduct, and, secondly, that Riflemen adhered to forms of institutional and cultural religion that did not necessarily involve devout behaviour or intense reflective belief.¹ A picture

¹ Christian belief was assumed in the army throughout this period, if only at the level of national identity and loyalty to the Crown. The other ranks on enlisting were required to declare a Christian denomination: Roman Catholics no longer had to make a Protestant declaration after 1799, so that Rifle Brigade recruits chose from Church of England, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic. In 1862 the category of other Protestant was added, largely for Methodists. Furthermore, until 1827 officers were

of the breadth of the reception of Christianity in the Rifle Brigade will assist in understanding the strong adherence of the corps to the ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness.

Alan Ramsay Skelley, in *The Victorian Army at Home*, puts forward the view shared by a number of modern historians that,

The traditional military view of religion was an instrumental one: chaplains were useful for comforting the sick and wounded and for keeping an eye on the rank and file, and doctrine did not matter as much as the fact that religious services contributed to morale and church parades kept the men tidy...The indications are that only a small percentage of men ever became devoutly religious. The compulsory church parade, which required half of Sunday to prepare for, made that particular day the most hated of the week. Soldiers on the whole seem to have detested having religion forced upon them and those who were visibly devout were frequently ridiculed by their comrades, especially if hypocrisy was suspected.²

And Edward Spiers in *The Army and Society 1815-1914* argues that,

Prior to the Crimean War, neither evangelicalism nor the revival of Methodism made much of an impact upon the soldier.

Likewise, in *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902*, looking at the officer corps, Spiers refers to a small number of overtly religious individuals, but endorses the overall picture of a low level of personal devotion and a limited role for religion in military life in general in the nineteenth century. He points to a vogue for paternalism in the later part of the century in line with developments in the public schools, that followed on directly from an older 'honorific and gentlemanly code of values'. The influence of,

the unselfishness, thoughtfulness, and sense of *noblesse oblige* which were intrinsic aspects of Matthew Arnold's ideal of a Christian gentleman

was felt in the army, he argues, from the mid-century. However he suggests that nonetheless the motivation for renewed efforts to care for the men and their families, that was a feature of the second half of the century, was traditional, social and disciplinary rather than religious.³

required under the Test Act of 1672 to take the oath of Supremacy and Allegiance and to receive the sacrament in the Church of England within three months of appointment.

² A.Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899* (Croom Helm, London, 1977), pp.165-166. See also H.J.Hanham, 'Religion and Nationality in the Mid-Victorian Army', in M.R.D.Foot (ed), *War and Society* (Paul Elek, London, 1973).

³ E.M.Spiers, *The Army and Society 1815-1914* (Longman, London, 1980), pp.27-28; E.M.Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army, 1868-1902* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1992), pp.113-115.

This playing down of the role of religion in the army follows on from a series of contemporary observations from both the civilian and military sides. And certainly the views of Rifle Brigade officers expressing disgust at irreligion in their corps, which will be examined in the next chapter, were in line with negative comments about the virtue and piety of the army more generally made in the nineteenth century as a matter of course. Field Marshall Wavell recognised the religious undercurrent to a widespread aversion to the army when he recalled,

There was in the minds of the ordinary God-fearing citizen no such thing as a good soldier.⁴

Soldiers of all ranks had a reputation (justified by frequent incidents) for heavy drinking, brawling, womanising and profligacy.⁵ Their behaviour was commonly linked to an assumed irreligion, and this was connected, first, to the view that the military was isolated from society, and, secondly, to stereotypes of social class. Soldiers were separated in obvious ways from the influence of women in domestic life,⁶ they were called to suspend individual conscience in favour of military obedience, and they were allegedly brutalised by army discipline⁷, by living in barracks and in the field, and by fighting in wars. Further, the army generally excluded large sections of the middle classes whose supposed virtue, seen as both rational and Christian, was,

⁴ Field Marshal Sir A.Wavell, *Soldiers and Soldiering* (J.Cape, London, 1953), p.125, cited Spiers, *Army and Society*, p.52.

⁵ J.W.M.Hichberger, *Images of the Army: The Military in British Art, 1815-1914* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1988), p.159 and passim. argues from paintings that between 1854 and 1865, 'the ideological construction of the soldier in the ranks was transformed...from that of a potentially dangerous wastrel to that of a patriotic warrior'; *ibid.*, pp.161-166 for the blame put on officers for sexual crimes and the underlying 'bourgeois attacks on the aristocracy's right to rule'. See also A.Babington, *Military Intervention in Britain from the Gordon Riots to the Gibraltar Incident* (Routledge, London, 1990), pp.36-37 and passim. One officer repeatedly in the public eye was Lord Cardigan, notorious for his elopement with Mrs.Johnstone in 1823, for wounding an officer in a duel, possibly unfairly, in 1840, and for flogging a soldier on Easter Sunday, 1841, in the building just used for worship. Cardigan's reputation for sexual promiscuity was fanned by a series of other scandals in the 1840s. See C.Woodham-Smith, *The Reason Why: The Story of the Fatal Charge of the Light Brigade* (Constable, London, 1953), pp.20-21, 83-92; also D.Thomas, *Cardigan: The Hero of Balaclava* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1974), pp.168-175; also J.Wake, *The Brudenells of Deene* (Cassell, London, 1953), pp.357-394.

⁶ For early and mid-nineteenth-century views of the moral influence of women, see C.Davidoff and C.Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (Hutchinson, London, 1987), pp.149-192.

⁷ See Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army*, pp.147-152; also H.Hopkins, *The Strange Death of Private White: A Victorian Scandal that Made History* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1977).

as we have seen, so often held up for favourable comparison with their social superiors and inferiors.

However, contemporary accusations of irreligion in the army cannot be taken as straightforwardly showing an institution that was culturally isolated and that reflected irreligion among sections of the upper and lower classes. Rather, these accusations should be seen, I would argue, as arising from assumptions and views (tied to a religious outlook) shared across the civilian-military divide, that failed to take account of complexities in role of Christianity in the military.

Diana Henderson in *Highland Soldier, 1820-1920* strikes a note that suggests an essential cultural affinity in religion between the army and wider society, across divisions of class,

The nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were an age in which although a man might not practise religion, there appears to have been a general belief in Divine Providence and the will of God, a blanket umbrella which could explain misfortune, disease and accident.

She hints at links between the military and a broader religious culture in the nineteenth century (for Scots at least) that went beyond compulsory Church Parade and *noblesse oblige*. She notes that 'a high proportion of Highland soldiers were active religious participants' and suggests that these men were aware 'of the religious and political implications' of Nonconformity when the Free Church of Scotland broke from the Scottish Kirk in 1843. Henderson reports that Surgeon Munro of the 93rd, commenting on support from half the men in his regiment for the new church, wrote of,

'the injudicious interference with religious feeling' which reflected upon the discipline of the 93rd which led to 'Restlessness, irritability, a tendency to drunkenness and an inclination to offer resistance to authority'.

The example suggests, in contrast with the picture drawn by Ramsay Skelley and Spiers, a personal commitment to religion and denomination (though the nature of that commitment is not further discussed) that crossed lines of rank and involved a high proportion of the men. Feeling was strong enough it seems for there to be a direct clash between an NCO and the commanding officer of the 93rd, Colonel Robert Spark, who refused the man promotion

on grounds of his religious views. Splits in opinion within the corps were in line with very recent doctrinal debate, organisational shifts and class antagonism in the church in Scotland and this is the more remarkable when it is noted that the regiment was at the time stationed in Canada.⁸ Clearly the religious, social and political outlook of the Scottish regiments cannot be translated directly across the army, not least because Presbyterianism's interaction with Scottish society was distinctive.⁹ All the same, Henderson's example is important in suggesting a closeness in religious outlook between one military unit and its linked, multi-layered, community at home.

In considering the impact of religion on the Rifle Brigade it has become apparent that although Riflemen had professional roles that were separate from both family relationships and from a range of activities outside the army, their experience was not rigidly compartmentalised. Continuities of attitude and belief carried across different facets of their lives. There is evidence to show religion influencing Riflemen before, during and after service in the army: in their childhoods, in their education, in their friendships, and while they face responsibility, danger and death. It is also clear that religious views coloured their attitudes and actions with regard to the regiment both in conscious efforts to live a godly life and, as will be shown in the next chapter, in less deliberate constructions of personal, institutional and national virtue. That is to say, Riflemen acquired cumulatively over time complex sets of views and beliefs to which contemporary Christianity, coming from a variety of sources, made an important contribution; and these views shaped the ethos and culture of the regiment.

⁸ D.M.Henderson, *Highland Soldier 1820-1920* (John Donald, Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 285-287.

⁹ See A.A.Maclaren, *Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1974); also C.G.Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (Methuen, London, 1987).

5.1 The Religious Backgrounds of Riflemen

The childhoods of most Riflemen remain inevitably obscure from lack of evidence. However, some important information has been found, and in the case of officers in particular much can be deduced with confidence from wider knowledge first of their individual families and, secondly, of their schools. The surviving material is striking in underlining the dominance during the early years of many individuals of a civilian environment in which religion played an important part.

For the men, enlistment and discharge records reveal a variety of home parishes and occupations before and after service. It seems that only a small proportion of the other ranks were themselves children of other ranks men in, or retired from, the army. Most recruits were labourers from town or country, or had worked in one or more trades before they joined, and they came from non-military backgrounds.¹⁰ Ages at enlistment varied, but a large majority were young adults over seventeen years of age when they began their service. (The minimum age was set at eighteen years in 1871, though boy recruits of fourteen years and upwards had long been a feature of regimental recruiting.)¹¹ Their contacts with the military before service are impossible to establish in the vast majority of cases without more evidence, but from what is known of recruiting for the Rifle Brigade the childhoods of other ranks Riflemen typically passed within the culture of their various civilian families and occupations. The story of the religious training of the men is likely to reflect the mixed reception of religion among the nineteenth-century lower and lower-middle classes across mainland Britain and Ireland.¹²

¹⁰ See Spiers, *Army and Society*, p.46 for the previous occupations of other ranks before enlistment across the army and from 1861.

¹¹ W.Farr, 'The Application of Statistics to Naval and Military Matters', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institute*, vol.3, 1859, no.X, pp.211-212 gives statistics from the 1851 census for low rates of marriage in the forces and high rates of mortality, concluding that the number of sons produced by soldiers could not replace the number needed to refill the ranks and officer corps: 'Officers cannot often be the sons of officers, soldiers are not the sons of soldiers'; *ibid.*, pp.210-211 shows only 879 children aged 10 years, compared to 62,364 men aged 20 years, and 48,282 aged 25 years, serving in the combined forces in 1851. Only one individual in every 22 effectives was of the age of 40 and above.

¹² For the uneven impact of religion on the working classes see I.C.Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1976), p.50; also K.S.Inglis, *Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1963);

The evidence for officers is more substantial. A number of Rifle Brigade officers can be shown to have come from backgrounds where religion had a significant role in family life, or where a particular set of beliefs was associated with the family group. Moreover, there is evidence for continued contact with families, and for officers remaining as adults under the influence of religious instruction received as children.

A number of officers were the sons of clergymen,¹³ and many had other clerical relatives. This was the case in both the early and mid-century. The Cooper family serves to illustrate the multiple interrelations between Riflemen and clergy that can be traced in many instances. An abridged genealogical table shows the clerical relatives of the two Coopers in the Rifle Brigade. (See Figure 14).

Caution is needed, however, before making assumptions about the tenor of religion in families with clerical relatives. In particular, it should be remembered that in the first three quarters of the nineteenth century a large number of clerical appointments were not made by the church itself, and, furthermore, motives for both clergy and laymen preferring candidates were mixed. Bishops were recommended to sees by the Prime Minister of the day, mindful of patronage debts and of votes in the House of Lords. In addition, livings were valuable property assets and incumbents could exercise for their patron considerable political and social influence. There were also urgent economic and dynastic considerations for patrons when opportunities for employment among the ruling classes were severely restricted. All of these tended to compromise the piety and vocation of nineteenth-century Anglican clergy. In 1821 private patrons (using a broad definition including trusts and patron-incumbents) held patronage rights to over half the total number of just over 10,000 benefices, and in the 1878 the gift of some 6,228 of the total of 13,380 livings was still in private hands. Moreover it was estimated in 1823 that three hundred peers and baronets owned the patronage of 1,400 livings. Several Riflemen were private patrons during or after service. For example, Sir John Villiers, Sir William Cope and Henry Waddington were patrons of one living each; Lord Muncaster was

also J.Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825-1875* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1976).

¹³ See above, p.44.

patron of two; and Charles Newdigate-Newdegate was patron of three. And Rifle Brigade kin included, at one extreme, the Duke of Devonshire who had thirty-eight parishes of which to dispose, and, at the other, the Dashwoods who controlled only the local living on a more modest estate.¹⁴

A number of individuals connected with the Rifle Brigade, such as, for example the father and brother of Major Edward Rooper (three Roopers were in the regiment) who held in turn the family living of Abbots Ripton in Huntingdonshire, clearly pursued their ecclesiastical careers within the framework of local landed family patronage. Equally, for example, the Rt.Rev.Charles Baring, great uncle of the 2nd Earl of Northbrook who served in the regiment, was given preferment by Lord Palmerston, under the influence of Lord Shaftesbury, as one of a series of politically useful, though sincere, Evangelical appointments.¹⁵ Ownership of the land and political influence were, that is, closely entwined with the Anglican church in the early and mid-nineteenth century so that piety was linked to temporal power. Nonetheless, some at least of the clerical relatives of Riflemen were undoubtedly devout. For example Bishop Heber of Calcutta¹⁶ (father-in-law of one Rifle Brigade officer – whose own father was Hugh Percy, bishop of Carlisle – and grandfather and namesake of another), the Hon and Rev. Baptist Wriothsley Noel¹⁷ (uncle by marriage of one Rifle Brigade officer and great uncle of another), and the Most Rev. Frederick Temple¹⁸ (brother-in-law of a Rifle Brigade officer) were all

¹⁴ See Bourne, *Patronage*, pp.13-14, 30, 179-180; D.Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1990), p.255; M.J.D.Roberts, 'Private Patronage and the Church of England, 1800-1900' *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol 32, No 2, 1981, pp.199-223; A.Haig, *The Victorian Clergy* (Croom Helm, London, 1984), pp.227-282. Sir John Peter Boileau it might be noted, was eager to dominate a parish and behaved at times as if he owned the living at Ketteringham in Norfolk, which technically he did not. Boileau's brother George married the daughter of the Rev.George Pollen, father-in-law of Colonel Coote Manningham, and succeeded to both the Pollen estates and the associated living. O.Chadwick, *Victorian Miniature* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1960), pp. 10-11, 15, 41-42, 89.

¹⁵ O.Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (Adam and Charles Black, London, 1966), part 1, pp. 472-476; *ibid.*, p.476 Chadwick notes that 'Bishop Baring of Durham was afterwards considered by nearly everyone to be a poor appointment'.

¹⁶ Bishop Heber travelled across India and published poems and hymns.

¹⁷ Noel was the minister of the prominent Evangelical St.John's Chapel, Bedford Row in London, and after his conversion to Baptist principles in 1848, minister of John Street Baptist Chapel, also in London. He published pamphlets and other religious works.

¹⁸ Temple was headmaster of Rugby School from 1857 to 1869, a friend of A.H.Clough, A.P.Stanley and Matthew Arnold, and an advocate of temperance and reform in education. He was Archbishop of Canterbury from 1896 to 1902.

outstanding churchmen. Other clerical kin of Riflemen, too – members of the Hammond, Russell and Wellesley families, for instance – are also known to have had a high degree of personal piety. It is difficult to establish precisely, however, without more evidence, the influence exercised by these clergymen on their army relatives. Certainly in this period many ruling- and middle-class families were split along doctrinal lines, in particular with regard to vital religion and Tractarianism. (Sir William Perceval Heathcote, 6th Bart., of the Rifle Brigade, for example, was the son of Caroline Perceval, niece of the Evangelical Prime Minister, and sister of Rev. Arthur Perceval, Chaplain to the Queen. And Sir William also had two brothers ordained in the Church of England. Yet of his children, one became a Catholic nun and another a Jesuit.) And degrees of devotion could vary widely even between close kin. All the same, it is safe to say that many of these clergy are likely to have contributed to, and their positions were often expressions of, the broadly religious and sometimes sectarian identities of their families.

Even beyond the problematic indicator of clerical relatives, however, some families provided contacts with religion where immediate relatives were exclusively or predominantly lay. One of the salient features of nineteenth-century British Christianity, but of evangelicalism in particular, was the extent of lay devotion expressed by observance in the home. Several networks of kinship between religious families carried threads of connection with the Rifle Brigade. For example, the Legge, Glyn, Ryder, Grey, Baring and Hammond families were all interrelated and all had predominantly Evangelical identities.¹⁹ (See Appendix 2). These families included in most cases some clergy, but their religious bent was also importantly perpetuated by lay male and female family members. Indeed, it is from largely lay families that much of the strongest evidence for religion in the backgrounds of Rifle Brigade officers emerges.

Further, there is a variety of information concerning the beliefs and church-going habits of the officers themselves as children, and of their siblings and parents, and evidence of moral

¹⁹ See F.K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1961) for Evangelical family networks in the early decades of the century; see also R. Brent, *Liberal Anglican Politics: Whiggery, Religion and Reform 1830-1841* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987), p.125 for the Ryders and Barings.

and religious instruction in the home which indicates that individual officers from urban and rural, middle-class, landed and aristocratic families alike (and indeed from the royal family) all experienced childhoods where religion had a central place. This observation runs counter to much that was written about the army in the mid-nineteenth-century press, where middle-class and non-landed officers (notably a handful who died in wars, including Hedley Vicars, Henry Havelock and General Gordon) were taken up as representatives of the vigorous and godly influence of a piety lacking in the landed gentry and aristocracy. It will be argued here that this slant on the state of the army in the mid-century had an evangelical flavour, though the view had wider credence in respectable and gentlemanly society, and it arose in the context of broader religious movements with political implications. While it is a matter of historical debate whether the middle classes led the religious revival of the period, and how far they shaped its various manifestations, the view that middle-class army officers (whose religious views and backgrounds in any case varied) came from more religious families and were personally more pious than their ruling class counterparts would seem to be mistaken for the Rifle Brigade.

While Nonconformity was indeed rare among officers in the regiment, and particularly rare among officers from the ruling classes,²⁰ a significant proportion of officers from aristocratic and broadly ruling-class, as well as broadly middle-class, backgrounds came from devout families with varying sectarian (including Evangelical) allegiances, had religious instruction as children, and carried religious beliefs themselves into adult life. The extreme piety of a few Rifle Brigade officers appears exceptional only in degree in the light of evidence for many others in the officer corps. Examples will be given first for middle-class then upper-class officers.

Quarter-Master Surtees (who rose from the ranks and gained his commission in 1809) was a middle-class officer who underwent a painful evangelical conversion during the Peninsular War. At that time, after some years of indulging in 'every vice and sensuality' (although he betrayed continued religious feeling in, for example, the sense of horror he

²⁰ For the small but increasing number of Methodists in the Army in the mid-century compared to those in wider society, see J.H.Thompson, 'The Free Church Army Chaplain 1830-1930' (PhD dissertation, Sheffield University, 1990), pp.87, 126-128.

remembered at the regiment being quartered in a Dutch church, and in resorting to prayer at the time of his first action) he was struck by memories of his mother who sprang, he wrote, 'from a pious race', presumably the Scots, and he recalled childhood memories of her teaching about God.²¹

Experiencing a sense of acute crisis, Surtees sought guidance from the Bible and from religious works including *The Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul* (1745) by the dissenter Philip Doddridge, and from evangelical sermons, in particular those of Rev. Benjamin Mathias, Chaplain of the Bethesda Chapel in Dublin between 1805 and 1835, who was his favourite preacher.²² He also consulted an unnamed local clergyman in Lisbon. As he began to live a more religious life, while still in the regiment, Surtees worried about the tension between Christian doctrine and the task of fighting in wartime. He reconciled the two by the thought (a not uncommon though controversial one among a section of evangelicals drawn to shun 'the world') that it was possible to live a godly life in any occupation and amidst any amount of sinfulness, and that the army was his calling on earth. Surtees felt he was doing his religious duty by remaining in the service, and he tried to apply Christian principles to his actions there.

It is apparent, then, that Surtees carried memories of his youth and affection for his family into his adult and working life. (He wrote that his father, too, turned to religion before his death, but even during Surtees' childhood he had 'had a heart susceptible of the tenderest feelings'.) Surtees also read current religious literature and made contacts with other Christians while he was in the service. And all of these influenced his religious views. These in turn were brought to bear on his motivation for serving and his attitude to the profession.²³

Likewise, General Thomas Perronet Thompson, whose parents were wealthier than those of Surtees, but who nonetheless can be classified as of the urban middle classes, also had

²¹ The influence of mothers on the more religious among the rank and file was commonly noted in the testimonies of soldiers from the 1860s and 1870s, see *ibid.*, pp. 51, 145. Surtees described his family, from Corbridge in Northumberland, as 'among the middle classes': his father was a tradesman of moderate means who had been dismayed that his son had decided to enlist. W. Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (1833) (Military Book Society, London, 1973), pp.1-2.

²² Mathias was a Church of England clergyman who published various works including apologies for the union of the Churches of England and Ireland and refutations of Calvinism.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp.1-2, 9-10, 16, 46, 98, 171-178, 308-309, 415-417, 422.

a religious upbringing. His mother was the daughter of William Briggs, one of John Wesley's Book Stewards, and his father began as a clerk in the mercantile house of William Wilberforce's grandfather, before he became a parliamentary associate of the grandson. Both parents were deeply devout and gave their children a religious education. Thompson, who had studied under Isaac Milner at Cambridge, shared his parents' Evangelicalism during his two years in the Rifle Brigade from 1806 to 1808. He was close to members of the Clapham Sect and was passionately opposed to slavery. He remained close to his father until he (Thomas Perronet Thompson) came into conflict with the government at home in Britain, while he was Governor of Sierra Leone from 1808 to 1810, over abuses in the suppression of the slave trade in the colony. Thompson's father refused to back his son's call for an enquiry and disowned his son. Thompson then began to move away from the Evangelical beliefs of his youth, toward rationalism and Benthamite radicalism.²⁴ (Indeed, Thompson offers an example, if an unusual one, of a religious middle-class officer who moved *away* from Christianity.)

By contrast, Henry Havelock, the son of a successful Sunderland ship-builder (again, that is of the wealthy urban middle classes) was brought up, unlike Surtees or Thompson, in the main stream of the Church of England. According to his first biographer, Rev. William Brock,²⁵ he too had had instruction at home as a child, though his religious feelings 'fluctuated considerably' after his mother's death.

As with so many others, the religious impressions of Havelock were traceable to the influence and the efforts of his mother when he was a little boy. It was her custom to assemble her children for reading the scriptures and prayer in her own room. Henry was always of the party whenever he was at home, and in course of time he was expected to take the reading, which he generally did. Under these pleasant circumstances he knew, like Timothy, the Holy Scriptures from a child.²⁶

His piety as a child was sufficient to impel him to join with a group of schoolfellows at Charterhouse in reading sermons in the dormitory, despite the taunts of their peers. His friends there included Julius Charles Hare,²⁷ the future classicist and theologian; Connop Thirlwall, the

²⁴ See L.G. Johnson, *General T.Perronet Thompson 1783-1869: His Military, Literary and Political Campaigns* (George Allen and Unwin, London, 1957).

²⁵ Brock was a Baptist minister, first at Norwich, then at Bloomsbury where the Havelock family were in his congregation.

²⁶ W.Brock, *A Biographical Sketch of Sir Henry Havelock KCB* (James Nisbet, London, 1859), p.15.

²⁷ See below, p.214, fn42.

future bishop of St.David's; George Wadding, the future Dean of Durham; and William Hale, the future Archdeacon of London and Master of Charterhouse. Havelock remained in touch with these clerics later in life.²⁸

Havelock served in the Rifle Brigade from 1815 to 1821,²⁹ and in this period he apparently still retained the religious convictions of his childhood. He had moved through a phase of Unitarianism, but in 1823 he embraced Evangelicalism after developing a friendship with Lieutenant Gardner of the 13th Regiment on a voyage to India. Soon after, he turned to the Baptist faith of the Marshman family. As Brock put it,

For years he had known what it was to be anxious about his soul, and also about the performance of the divine will. He felt that life had not been given to him to be spent exactly as he pleased. The scriptures had not been put into his possession to be set at nought or disregarded. The son of God had not died for him in sacrifice for sin, without having the strongest claim upon him for the most grateful and responsive love. All this had been at work upon him for years...³⁰

Another example of a religious middle-class childhood is that of Harry Smith. He was from another pious Anglican, in this case professional and rural, family. His father was John Smith, a surgeon, and his mother was Eleanor Moore, daughter of the Rev. George Moore, Vicar of St.Mary's and St.Andrew's, Whittlesey, near Cambridge, and Minor Canon of Peterborough Cathedral. Harry Smith and his ten siblings were brought up in Whittlesey, and they were privately educated in philosophy, classics, algebra and music by their grandfather's curate, the Rev. George Burgess, who taught in the south aisle of the church. The Smith family was closely linked to the parish: after her father's death, Eleanor Moore's first cousin took over the living.

Letters between Harry Smith and his family reveal the devout atmosphere of his home, and both his fond memories of childhood and his own religious feelings in later life. He was particularly close to his mother and to two of his sisters,³¹ and their correspondence contains

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.12-14.

²⁹ There were continued links between Havelock and his family and the Rifle Brigade. He was a life-long friend of Harry Smith. Also, one of Havelock's sons, George, married Annie Beresford, related to William Beresford and Marcus Beresford of the Rifle Brigade; and another son, Allan, married Aline Beresford, niece of Marcus Beresford.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p.22.

³¹ Thirty years after Waterloo Harry wrote to his sister, Mrs.Sarjant, of his fond memories of home and his desire to return, 'When shall I enjoy that liberty so pleasing, when emancipated from all the

prayers and references to parish gossip. His mother's last letter to him and to his brother Tom, also serving in the 95th Regiment (Rifle Brigade), included, for example, the lines,

But to God alone must the praise be given, who has preserved you both, I hope to be an ornament to y^r country and a blessing to y^r friends, and may God Almighty of his infinite mercy still hold his protecting Arm over you both, and may we never lose sight of him, and have always his goodness in our sight as never to neglect our duty for his great mercies towards us at this time and all others.

Likewise, after receiving news of the survival of his three sons after the Battle of Waterloo, Smith's father wrote to him,

For three of you to have been engaged and to have come off unhurt, must have been not the fate of chance, but Providence seem'd to have watch'd over you all and protected you. How grateful we all ought to be to the Almighty. I assure you my prayers have ever been offered up to the Throne of Grace, praying for the Protection of you all, and a safe return to England.

It is clear, too, from his correspondence that Harry Smith himself had faith and this was grounded in the religious experience of his youth. Religion continued to colour both his professional life and his relationship with his family while he was in the army. In 1845 Harry Smith had pasted,

on the most conspicuous part of my writing desk...in large characters the tenth verse of the ninth chapter of Ecclesiastes 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might'.³²

And he wrote to his Rifle Brigade comrade Major George Simmons in 1847 soon after hearing news that Simmons' son was to enter the army,

may the gallantry and integrity of the Father descend upon the son – his honour and integrity, his filial affection – his Piety and love for his neighbour – then he will be as bright an ornament to his Queen and Country, to his Profession and his Faith – as the high minded man and gallant most gallant soldier my friend and, comrade and Brother Rifleman – George Simmons! is the prayer and the hope and the confidence of Harry Smith.³³

shackles and labours, bars, bonds, and tempers, which business lays on us, and which we have to contend with? Alas! memory takes us by the hand and leads us back to our early haunts, habits and friends - the flower garden of other years...Still hope encourages us...there may be some years of quiet and recreation in store for us, surrounded by those we love, and eased of the labours of public life'. H.Smith, *The Autobiography of Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Smith*, G.C.Moore-Smith (ed) (John Murray, London, 1901), vol.1, pp.1, 2, 369, 370, 377, 397.

³² H.Smith to A.Sarjant, 1 September, 1845, cited *ibid.*, vol.2, pp.396-397.

³³ RGJ, Folio 2, p.25, letter H.Smith to G.Simmons, 26 February 1847

Not all officers from religious backgrounds were middle-class, however. The family life of Lieutenant Charles Boileau of the Rifle Brigade, who died of wounds received at the Redan, and of his brother John (who was appointed to the regiment but never joined it) was dominated by their father Sir John Peter Boileau (himself a lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade and the brother of another Rifleman). Sir John was an anti-Puseyite Anglican of a conservative stamp. He traced his ancestry, rather fancifully, to French crusader stock, and he had aristocratic Huguenot forbears. He also married Lady Catherine Elliot, the daughter of the 1st Earl of Minto (who had been noted in religious circles for his endeavours to restrain rather than promote Christian missionaries in India). Nonetheless, Sir Peter's father had made his fortune in trade in India in the later eighteenth century, and both father and son had bought rather than inherited their estates in Norfolk. Sir John's social standing was somewhere between that of a middle-class parvenu and a landed gentleman with aristocratic connections. He, however, felt no lack of confidence in his ancestry, and took on the mantle of the duties pertaining to his status as a landowner. He was a magistrate and sat on many local committees, he was a committed Whig-Liberal, and, as has been seen above, he was active in a number of learned societies in London. He also took his family to the capital for the season every year, and gave frequent balls and parties at Ketteringham Hall.

Sir John saw religion as fundamental to his social, intellectual and family life. He conducted family prayers each day for the entire household (including his two Rifle Brigade sons), and attendance at the local parish church was expected of both family and servants. He read sermons aloud on Sunday evenings, including pieces by Charles Vaughan (disciple of Thomas Arnold and friend of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley), Charles Kingsley, Thomas Arnold and Thomas Pyle, preferring liberal divines. Sometimes sermons were chosen in order to correct what Sir John saw as errors in the views of the Evangelical and Calvinist vicar Mr. Andrew on predestination, election, the Papists, the Second Coming, justification by faith alone and the uselessness of works for salvation. The Boileaus were also close friends of the family of Edward Stanley, bishop of Norwich (including his son Arthur Penrhyn Stanley who often visited the Boileaus). Indeed Bishop Stanley described Sir John as 'one of the most religious

and best of men I ever knew', and Boileau's residence in Norfolk apparently influenced Stanley's acceptance of the see. Lady Catherine, Sir John's wife, was a retiring figure, but deeply religious like her husband, and concerned both about her personal morality and her spiritual duties to her children. She kept a journal of reflections and self-examination, revealing her piety and her attempts, in the light of her marriage vows, to quell her desire to resist the domination of her husband.

The Boileau children were thus brought up in a strict and serious household with a strongly religious atmosphere. When small, they were educated at home by a tutor and a series of governesses under the guidance of their father. The effects on them of this upbringing varied. Certainly the Boileau girls turned out to be very religious as adults. Ama held views close to those of their Evangelical vicar, Mr Andrew, and she married the Rev. William Gurney. Neither Caroline, Mary nor Theresa married, and all three 'renounced the world', though, holding Low Church views, they stopped short of entering convents. Caroline, the eldest, became active in charitable work and was later a preacher.

Less is known of the religious views of the boys. It seems they felt acute tensions between the constrictions of moral conduct imposed on them at home and the comparative freedom of boarding school, and they all appear to have had emotional problems. One brother, Robert, joined the navy and subsequently led an allegedly dissolute life cut off from his family. Similarly, Charles (who served in the Rifle Brigade) was evidently a likeable young man, who struggled to conduct himself well, but drank heavily and was hopelessly improvident. He was expelled from both Rugby and Eton, and came close to a court-martial in the 50th Regiment for debt. His father was deeply disappointed in him and both parents feared for his soul. Nonetheless, after he was wounded, his family learned that Charles had carried a prayer book and a miniature portrait of his mother in his pocket at the storming of the Redan, and that he had shown outstanding bravery. Yet he had written to his sister before his death another admission of debt (although he promised again to change his ways) and there was little evidence of a change of character. Doubts remained in the minds of his parents as to whether he had sufficiently repented at the end to gain salvation.

Both Boileau boys appointed to the Rifle Brigade, then, were well-versed in Evangelical and liberal Anglicanism, and had direct experience, from their father's quarrels with Mr Andrew and the views of their sisters, of current political and doctrinal splits in the church. Indeed the emotional dynamics of their family were charged with moral and religious anxiety. At first sight Charles Boileau fits well the role of a feckless and irreligious younger son of the landed classes, typical of the type of lax officer criticised in the mid-century press. Closer examination of his personality, childhood and background, and the circumstances of his death, reveal, however, a rather different picture. Even Charles Boileau, one of the more dissolute officers in the regiment, was the subject of family concern for his soul, and even he was far from immune to family and religious sentiment. Indeed, it could be convincingly argued that, far from existing outside those forces, Charles Boileau was so beset by the demands of paternal and self-consciously aristocratic religious morality that his life was severely warped.³⁴

Another religious family with Rifle Brigade connections, in this case from a minor branch of the Irish aristocracy, was the Boyles. They were Low Church like the Boileaus, but were of a more Evangelical cast, and the family atmosphere was evidently less repressive. Colonel Gerald Boyle, who served in the regiment from 1858 to 1891 (and who sponsored his cousin the Hon.E.G.Boyle for a commission in 1898) was a nephew of Lord de Ros³⁵ and a grandson of the Earl of Cork. A series of fifty-one letters survives written between April and December, 1852, to Gerald from his father John Boyle (who became a Liberal member of Parliament), his mother the Hon.Cecilia Boyle and his siblings. Gerald had just started at Carshalton school³⁶ and was twelve years of age when the correspondence began.³⁷ His parents wrote to him frequently, continually giving him advice about prayer and proper conduct and the

³⁴ Chadwick, *Victorian Miniature*, pp.39, 59, 65-66, 68-80, 92, 122-129, 146-156; Sir John moved closer to Evangelicalism in his later years, after the death of his Rifle Brigade sons. He accepted the advice of Mr.Andrew and gave up reading works such as *Notes on the Parables* (1841) by Richard Trench, which he had previously enjoyed, turning instead to Thomas Scott and Roberts of Wood Rising. *Ibid.*, p.177.

³⁵ See Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.74 for the activities of de Ros on military matters in the House of Lords.

³⁶ For Carshalton, see Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp.123, 127.

³⁷ Gerald Boyle was subsequently sent to Eton where he stayed from 1854 until Christmas 1858; he was commissioned into the Rifle Brigade in June of the same year. He served in the regiment for thirty-three years (before serving in the volunteers for a further ten years).

letters reveal much about their interpretation of Christianity. The first of the series, from his father, concerned the boy's recent entrance examination,

...you not only succeeded but you were mentioned as being the first of 16 Boys, some of whom had come upon a second time, this shews me that, the great and the good Father of us all has given you very great abilities, and I trust you will make greatest use of them, always thanking him and his son, Jesus Christ, for the great talents they have given you.³⁸

Three weeks later he sent his son a Greek Testament with a lexicon 'so that you will have no trouble making out the words'.³⁹ (This is reminiscent of Henry Havelock who declared that he wanted only to educate his eldest son to read the New Testament in Greek, and to know mathematics and Latin, before sending him to Sandhurst.)⁴⁰ And Gerald's mother was anxious soon after to know

what religious instruction you have on a Sunday (beside Church) and if you have to repeat the catechism. I hope you are *very careful* about *speaking clearly*.⁴¹

John Boyle also asked the boy to find out if one of his school-fellows, Hare, was the son of Mr. Augustus Hare: 'his father was a very good, delightful man, very clever'.⁴² They showed many Evangelical traits: John Boyle noted in one letter that he attended and approved of a sermon given by a missionary, Mr. Call;⁴³ Cecilia Boyle urged her son to use a prayer card she had sent him and encouraged him to learn the words by heart; and both parents directed their son to Bible reading and a personal and intense relationship with God and particularly the suffering Jesus. All of these were typical of Evangelical observance and activity. Cecilia Boyle wrote,

³⁸ RGJ, Boyle letters, J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 2 April 1852.

³⁹ Ibid., J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 19 April 1852, 22 April 1852.

⁴⁰ J.C.Marshman, *Memoirs of Major-General Sir Henry Havelock KCB* (1867) (Longman, Green and Co., London, 1909), p.50. Havelock sent his sons to the school of the Rev.Dr.Cuthbert at St.John's Wood, having an evangelical's dislike of the unreformed public schools. J.C.Pollock, *The Way to Glory: The Life of Havelock of Lucknow* (John Murray, London, 1957), p.7.

⁴¹ RGJ, Boyle letters, C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 14 May 1852.

⁴² Augustus William Hare (1792-1834) was a noted liberal divine, the brother of Julius Charles Hare. His nephew, Augustus John Cuthbert Hare (1834-1903) endured (and in later life publicly rebelled against) a strict and unhappy Evangelical childhood. See R.Brent, *Liberal Anglican Politics: Whiggery, Religion and Reform 1830-1841* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987), p.145; also W.Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1957), pp.234-235.

⁴³ RGJ, Boyle letters, J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 19 April 1852.

Tho they [the prayers on a card] are in a sound *form*, never forget to open your heart to God besides, in any little sorrow or trial of temper, and spread it before him; like we read the good King Hezekiah did. Since his time, we who have received the gospel, have also the blessed Promise, that if we *ask* we shall *receive*, if we *knock* it shall be *opened*! Think of all this my dearest boy, and try more and more to be all we can wish.⁴⁴

And she counselled her son,

above all, my child, in all your little troubles seek *Him* whose love to you surpasses that of your earthly parents, and who never fails to help those who do so... Perhaps the Jye [her nickname for him] will write me something for Good Friday. You remember the 53rd of Isiah full of our Saviour's sufferings.⁴⁵

The Boyles appear to have been in accord with a wider shift in Evangelical perception occurring from about the 1820s, and feeding the Broad Church movement of the mid-century, that favoured doctrines laying less stress on the vengeful and angry attributes of God (and so less stress on damnation and the need for constant and painful atonement), emphasising instead the mercy of God and the saving power of personal and loving communication with Christ. (Interestingly, William Norcott's religious views in this same period in the 1850s, as will be shown, mixed the two approaches, dwelling on the harsh judgement of God for himself and for the nation, but reserving for his wife a more loving and forgiving relationship with God and allowing for a highly sentimental view of motherhood and childhood.)

Part of this same shift in doctrinal emphasis was a renewed commitment to work in the world. In the early decades of the nineteenth century a prevalent Evangelical view had been that it was proper to perform works (as opposed to trades or professions) as a witness to the internal regeneration of the individual, but that all good deeds were inescapably carried out in an essentially wicked world. Although God might approve of good deeds and might also ordain a given station in life, the human condition was basically one of evil. The role of good works in salvation had long been a matter of dispute in both millenarian debates and the Arminian-Calvinist split over grace and free will, and, certainly, one strain of Evangelicalism had long seen work in the world as a channel for the will of God. Indeed, much philanthropic work in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was underpinned by this range of conflicting

⁴⁴ Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 24 April 1852.

⁴⁵ *ibid.*, C.Boyle to G.Boyle, April 1852.

views.⁴⁶ The mid-century, however, witnessed a move across a broad section of Christian believers toward an emphasis on the efficacy of directing religious energy to essentially non-religious and non-philanthropic occupational tasks. Both the recognition of a more loving and understanding God, with the concomitant softening of the censure of children, and, also, a fresh religious commitment to professional work in the world, appeared in the Boyle letters.

Cecilia Boyle's attitude to violence among the boys at Carshalton is revealing. She wrote to Gerald,

Thanks...for your letter received yesterday; Papa and I are sorry tho' to hear that there had been such a row among the Boys. It shows how *careful* we should all be with that "unruly member" the tongue, for had not the 4th class boys talked about the 5th chaps, all this sad fighting and quarrelling would not have arisen; I do hope, however, dearest, that *you* kept out of it all as much as you possibly could, and did not mix yourself up in it from a *false* sense of *honour* and the *Bible* [underlined three times] is *our* [underlined twice] standard and does not St. Paul charge us "as much as he is in us, to live *peaceably with all men*"; *always do you best* to promote Peace and make Peace amongst your school fellows, always remembering our Saviour's promise to *Peace makers* and what a blessed office it is.⁴⁷

She clearly equated the boys' rough behaviour with sin, but she evidently saw it more as a sad weakness than a source of possible damnation. Indeed, after her son had been involved in a fight at school in which other boys had been cruel to him, she visited Gerald and far from scolding him or fearing for his soul, she was simply upset at his bruises,

I think you and I behaved very well yesterday - did you *pipe* when you went to bed? I miss you *very* much.

The injunctions to avoid fighting are particularly striking given that Gerald was being actively groomed by his parents for the army, as was his younger brother, Robert, for the navy.⁴⁸ John Boyle wrote to Gerald,

As to the Boxing Gloves, I believe at every school this science goes on but I would prefer the games of cricket and football. Upon first going to a large school there are many disagreeable things to encounter, in a few weeks you will become reconciled and the boys will soon find your good humoured and kind hearted manner and seek your friendship. I am glad you like two or three boys...The account your mama gave me, of you, after having seen you, has made me very unhappy for although boys might have been rude, I never remember being obliged to fight two battles, in one week, and if this

⁴⁶ B.Hilton, *The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought 1795-1865* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1988), pp.14-19. See below, p.234, fn122.

⁴⁷ RGJ, Boyle letters, C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 7 June 1852.

⁴⁸ In the event Robert Boyle did not join the navy, but after going to Harrow and Oxford, he became a Fellow of All Souls, qualified as a barrister, and became an Inspector of Schools.

mode of warfare is to continue, let me know; during the whole time I was at Winchester, five years, I never fought but one battle...I am sorry to say it happens too often the bigger like to see the little boys have a good battle...⁴⁹

Gerald and Robert were following a strong family tradition of military and naval service in the Boyle family on both sides (see Figure 15). Although John Boyle had a brother in Holy Orders, and various relatives had entered other professions or been occupied as landowners, a remarkably large number of them were in the services: Gerald had six first cousins in the army, and his grandfather the Earl of Cork was a general.⁵⁰ Fostering his interest in the military, Gerald was sent newspaper cuttings of the sinking of the *Birkenhead*, the military transport,⁵¹ news of the Kaffir War⁵² and news of military relatives. For example he was told when Cavendish Boyle became Military Secretary at Barbados.⁵³ Similarly, his parents let him know that General Sir Harry Smith had visited them.⁵⁴ (He may have been their prime contact in the Rifle Brigade before Gerald's commission.) And the boy was proudly informed by his father that he had boasted to the eminent Waterloo veteran the Marquis of Anglesey that his son had passed his exams so well, 'which he was glad to hear'.⁵⁵ Military anecdotes were related even by his mother,

I dined the other evening at Lord Beverley's who told us that he had formerly commanded a Regiment of Militia, and that he recollects quite well somewhere about 1814-15, there being no soldiers left in England, and that the Militia did duty at the Palace, and two of the Light Cavalry Volunteers were on Guard under those two arches at the Horse Guards - how odd it must have looked!⁵⁶

To the Boyle parents, in the early 1850s, there seems to have been no conflict between on the one hand raising a son in a traditional aristocratic mould to follow a career as an army officer, and, on the other, encouraging him to be godly. They were prepared to chose public

⁴⁹ Ibid., J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 4 April 1852.

⁵⁰ Gerald was sent to stay with the Earl in 1852. Cecilia Boyle warned her son, 'mind you brush your hair and your teeth *well* [underlined three times], have your hands *as clean as possible*, be *very civil* to everyone, and mind you open and shut Grandpapa's doors *very quietly!*'. Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, Friday [undated]. In addition, the boy corresponded from school with his uncle William, 23rd Baron de Ros. (He reportedly told the Queen about the results of Gerald's examination.) He knew this uncle well enough to ask him to send a contribution to his school newspaper. Unfortunately de Ros was too busy with business in the House of Lords to oblige. *ibid.*, C.Boyle to G.Boyle, Monday [undated].

⁵¹ Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, April 1852.

⁵² Ibid., J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 4 April 1852.

⁵³ Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 24 April 1852.

⁵⁴ Ibid., J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 31 May 1852; *ibid.*, C.Boyle to G.Boyle, June 1852.

⁵⁵ Ibid., J.Boyle to G.Boyle, 21 April 1852.

⁵⁶ Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 30 April 1852.

schools for their sons, including Eton for Gerald, one of the most notoriously vice-ridden and resistant to reform, as will be shown below, (a move which many Evangelicals would have rejected) and they seem to have endorsed the idea that boys should develop fortitude in such an environment as a preparation for adult life. Nonetheless, they had no hesitation in setting up the Bible as a guide to conduct in opposition to honour and school tradition.

Like Quarter-Master Surtees and like Captain Maximilian Hammond (who, as will be shown, in 1855, three years after the Boyle letters were written, decided that his religious duty lay not in the church but in the army) the Boyles evidently viewed the military as one of several possible callings in the world, where God's will could be furthered, and where it was entirely possible to live a religious life. Indeed they saw the work of the army as one branch of the work of God. Crucially, they saw the army as fitting for the son of a family of their social status: the upper-class birth of Gerald carried a religious duty to work in the world in a gentlemanly profession.

It is a great comfort and pleasure to us, my dear Boy, to hear so good a report of your conduct and studies, and to know that you are doing your best to fulfil your duty in the situation of life where God has placed you. Seek his blessing more and more...and remember that his eye is always upon you.⁵⁷

They apparently foresaw no particular religious difficulties for their sons in the services (and they knew these professions very well) and they undoubtedly intended that their boys remain Evangelicals in faith.

Another officer with aristocratic connections, in this case in the English peerage, who experienced a strongly religious childhood was Lieutenant Henry Ryder. His mother was Georgiana Augusta Somerset, the third daughter of the 6th Duke of Beaufort. (She was also a cousin of General Edward Somerset of the Rifle Brigade.) Henry Ryder's grandmother, the Duchess of Beaufort, was a prominent Evangelical in the early part of the century who brought up eight Evangelical daughters, several of whom converted their husbands.⁵⁸ Henry Ryder's father, the Hon. Granville Ryder, was a Conservative Member of Parliament, who, together with his brother the 2nd Earl of Harrowby, was active in the Sabbatarian movement. Indeed the

⁵⁷ Ibid., C.Boyle to G.Boyle, 12 May 1852.

⁵⁸ Bradley, *Call to Seriousness*, p.40.

extreme religious zeal of that brother when he was an undergraduate at Cambridge had been a matter of concern to their father and to the influential Evangelical, the Rev. Charles Simeon.⁵⁹

Henry Ryder was barely eighteen years of age when he was killed at the Redan on 8th September, 1855, and he had only been commissioned the year before. His correspondence with his parents from the Crimea shows that they were continuing to direct him in religious matters. A letter from Ryder to his father reveals that his mother had written to Mr. Huleatt a chaplain attached to the cavalry division, asking him to visit her son. This he had done, but had not been able to find the young man, and Ryder reassured his father that he would return the visit 'at the earliest opportunity'. Mr. Huleatt wrote to Ryder's mother on 15 September, after her son had been killed, to inform her that he 'altogether depended on the sacrifice of the death of Xt for his eternal life' testified by the fact that the night before the battle he 'devoutly received the Holy Communion'. He ended his letter with the lines,

When a mother's fond heart by a death stroke is bleeding...
The Comforter's presence is all she is needing.
He has entered her soul and she knows "it is well".⁶⁰

Henry Ryder was, then, brought up by prominent Evangelical parents who, like the Boyles, expected their son to lead a religious life in the Rifle Brigade, as a continuation of his civilian experience. Again, he had spent three years at a public school - at Harrow under Charles Vaughan (where unusually firm religious guidance from the head master was still mixed with less than pious traditions of self-rule by the boys)⁶¹ and then two years at Merton College, Oxford. His education and career were patterns of aristocratic youth, but there was nonetheless an important undercurrent of strong religion in his background and he showed no sign of breaking from this when he entered the army.

Another son of religious aristocratic parentage serving in the Rifle Brigade was General Lord Alexander Russell. (His brother, Lord Cosmo Russell, was also in the regiment, as were

⁵⁹ D. Webster, 'Simeon's Pastoral Theology' in A. Pollard and M. Hennell (eds), *Charles Simeon (1759-1836): Essays Written in Commemoration of his Bi-Centenary by Members of the Evangelical Fellowship for Theological Literature* (Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, London, 1959), p. 103.

⁶⁰ NAM, 7712-46-1.

⁶¹ See below, p. 226.

his two sons Alexander and Leonard.) Lord Alexander's father was the 6th Duke of Bedford, a leading Whig and father of Lord John Russell the Prime Minister. His mother was Lady Georgiana Gordon.⁶² They were moderately Low Church Anglicans and conventionally pious (though it might be noted that the Duchess had an affair with the painter Sir Edwin Landseer).⁶³ They, too, were careful to guide the religious opinions of their children and to make religious observance a part of family life. When Lord Alexander's brother the Rev. Lord Wriothsley Russell began to veer towards Methodism, the Duke wrote,

He is thoroughly amiable and has high principles of honour, but he has a weak mind and is easily led by designing people. Heaven guard him from the Calvinists, Methodists and Evangelicals, unfortunately so much the fashion among our young clericals...don't imagine I want him to be a gay and pleasure-hunting parson - quite the reverse, he must steer his boat between the Scylla and Charybdis of the Church and endeavour to be a good, pious, moral and benevolent divine without folly or fanaticism.⁶⁴

The Russell family attended church at Woburn regularly and, in particular, made Sundays more serious than other days. Lord Alexander, according to Lieutenant Thomas Bramston of the Rifle Brigade, was his mother's favourite son, and when he heard of her death in 1852 he promptly returned to England from Kaffraria.⁶⁵ As will be seen below, it is clear from his diary that Russell maintained a degree of religious faith, with moderate views not dissimilar to those of his parents, and he and his wife set an example of devotion while he was a senior officer in the regiment.

A further and contrasting example of an aristocratic and personally pious Rifle Brigade officer with a religious background is Major-General Hon. Sir Henry Clifford (who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1846 to 1856, and earned the Victoria Cross in the Crimean War). He was the third son of Hugh, the 7th Lord Clifford, head of one of the leading English Roman Catholic families of the period.⁶⁶ The Cliffords were descended from Sir Thomas Clifford, the 1st Lord

⁶² Lady Georgiana Gordon was the daughter of Elizabeth, Duchess of Gordon (1794-1864), a leading Evangelical who joined the Free Church of Scotland in 1846. See F.K. Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1961), pp.414-415.

⁶³ G. Blakiston, *Woburn and the Russells* (Constable, London, 1980), p.185.

⁶⁴ Cited *ibid.*, pp.188-189.

⁶⁵ RGJ, T. Bramston to his mother, 7 May 1853.

⁶⁶ Other Catholics from prominent families among the officers of the Rifle Brigade serving in the mid-century were Lionel Standish (first commissioned 1842) who changed his name but was from the Strickland family of Sizergh Castle in Cumberland; Francis Howard (commissioned 1866), see below,

Clifford of Chudleigh, Lord Treasurer to King Charles II, who had been reconciled to Rome and had consequently retired from public life. Henry Clifford's maternal grandfather was Thomas Weld of Lulworth Castle in Dorsetshire, who in 1818 had handed over his family estates to a younger brother and was ordained in the Catholic Church. He became a cardinal and subsequently Bishop of Kingston in Ontario.

Henry Clifford's early education was at Prior Park, Bath, an expensive Roman Catholic school,⁶⁷ and then at Stonyhurst under Jesuit priests. After his mother died in 1831, when Henry was five years old, he spent long periods in Rome with his father, under the direct influence of Cardinal Weld.⁶⁸ He later attended Fribourg University.

It is clear from his correspondence that Clifford was himself very devout, and he made frequent references to religion in his (almost daily) letters home from the Crimea. He appears to have taken a close interest in the Roman Catholic mission to the troops. For example, he wrote to his siblings Constantia and William⁶⁹ in January, 1855, from the camp before Sebastopol,

Reverend Mr. Butt who is with the Light Division is the only Priest up here in Camp. There is one in Balaclava. Mr. Butt is almost knocked up and now he has to do duty for five divisions, he cannot hold out much longer. It is such a contrast to see the work our Priests do, and the Protestant Clergy, tho' some of them do all they can, but after all, they have so little consolation or means of helping the sick and those on their death beds.⁷⁰

He was convinced of the good effects on morale, courage and discipline of religion. He wrote in other letters from the same period, 'religion is the only thing that I can think makes a man truly composed under fire', and, 'Our soldiers will fight twice as hard if they have priests with them.'⁷¹

To his sister Eleonora, a nun, he wrote,

pp.263, 278; Hon. Joseph Constable-Maxwell-Scott (commissioned 1867), son of the 10th Baron Herries and kinsman of the Duke of Norfolk; and Hon. Otway Cuffe (commissioned 1872), son of the Earl of Desart. For the intermarriage of Catholic families, see Appendix 2.

⁶⁷ Prior Park was opened as a seminary in 1830. Five years later it was given over to the Rosminians who taught boys for the professions and commerce as well as for the church. See ed. G.A. Beck, *The English Catholics 1850-1950* (Burn Oates, London, 1950), pp. 199-202.

⁶⁸ C. Fitzherbert, *Henry Clifford V.C.: His Letters and Sketches from the Crimea* (Michael Joseph, London, 1956), pp. 13-20.

⁶⁹ William Clifford became Roman Catholic Bishop of Clifton in 1857. At the age of thirty-three he was the youngest bishop in England.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 154.

⁷¹ H. Clifford to [unnamed], 3 February, 1855, cited *ibid.*, p. 159.

Day after day I think I feel better prepared to die if it is God's holy will, and he gives me grace to look forward to meeting you and those I love in heaven, if it is better for us all.

To you I can write this better perhaps than to anyone, for you will understand me I know. I feel Religion is my greatest comfort, and gives me courage in danger I am sure I could derive from no other source. I have placed all in the hands of Him and His Holy Mother long since, they have always done what is best for me, and I am almost without anxiety for the future.

I am very happy, Elly dear, very happy, for I know I try to do the will of Almighty God cheerfully, and no one in camp is master of so light a heart.⁷²

He also asked his family and friends to pray for him.⁷³ Indeed his letters to his father were so full of religious feeling, that his father was (somewhat hopefully) convinced that his son had a religious vocation, and after the war Clifford duly took an eight-day retreat and was examined by a Jesuit, Father Ravnigan. However, neither 'he nor I can discover any vocation in me for a Priest or a Monk'.⁷⁴

Clifford, then, was of aristocratic background, steeped from childhood in both English and continental Catholicism. He maintained close personal and religious links with his family while he was in the army, and, further, he married a Roman Catholic convert, daughter of an Oxford scholar of the generation associated with the Oxford Movement.⁷⁵ His attitude to his professional work in the army, most notably in his conviction that good conduct in battle was produced by faith, and his sense of sacred duty, was influenced by Christian conviction, and he was sustained by the religious support of his family.

It is worth noting, finally, that even some of the most militarily distinguished and socially elevated officers in the regiment also had relatively religious backgrounds. Although he was suspicious of vital religion, the Duke of Wellington, was certainly a believer, if of a deeply paternalist and conservative bent. (For example, he became a member of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in 1819 and gave five guineas to it annually until almost the

⁷² H.Clifford to E.Clifford, 22 December, 1854, cited *ibid.*, pp.134-135.

⁷³ H.Clifford to 'father, relations and friends', 19 February, 1855, cited *ibid.*, p.207.

⁷⁴ Letter H.Clifford to W.Clifford, 26 January, 1857, cited *ibid.*

⁷⁵ Clifford married, in 1857, Josephine Anstice, who had recently converted to Catholicism with her mother. Josephine's father, who died young, had been at Christ Church, Oxford. He won the Newdigate Prize in 1828, and in 1830 gained a double First in Classics and Mathematics: the only student of his year to achieve this. Among others taking Firsts in Classics in that year were the future Cardinal Manning and H.W.Wilberforce, who, tutored by J.H.Newman, was ordained an Anglican priest and subsequently went over to Rome. Josephine's mother was a Greek scholar in her own right.

end of his life.)⁷⁶ His family contained several distinguished clerics, including his brother the Rev. Gerald Valerian Wellesley, and their nephew, Hon. Gerald Wellesley, Dean of Windsor, a favourite of Queen Victoria. One of the brothers of Catherine Pakenham, Wellington's wife, was a clergyman too, and so was her nephew, Arthur, son of Major-General Sir Hercules Pakenham (who served for six years in the Rifle Brigade).⁷⁷ She was also a close friend of was the Irish Evangelical writer Maria Edgeworth.⁷⁸

The education of the royal children, including the Duke of Connaught, and in particular the strict regime devised for Prince Albert Edward, is well known. The royal parents were concerned for the moral development of their children, but were wary of an overly religious emphasis (particularly fearing the influence of Puseyism) and they did not appoint clergymen as tutors.⁷⁹ (Prince Albert and Queen Victoria held Broad Church views.) Nonetheless, as sons of the Supreme Governor of the Church of England, the princes regularly attended services with their parents, were versed in the doctrines of the church, and knew many of the higher clergy.

Thus a spectrum of Christian views was reflected in the backgrounds of individuals in the Rifle Brigade. And officers from families of various shades of belief were influenced by their relatives while they were serving in the regiment. Thomas Perronet Thompson and Harry Smith from the early part of the century, and Charles Boileau, Henry Ryder and Henry Clifford from the 1850s, offer clear examples of the mixture of middle- and ruling-class and aristocratic families providing religious guidance to sons in the regiment. These same individuals, together with William Surtees, Henry Havelock, Gerald Boyle, the Wellesleys and the Duke of Connaught, serve to illustrate also the mixture of urban and rural, regional, cosmopolitan and parochial experience that underlay differences in religious outlook. And the backgrounds of

⁷⁶ E. Longford, *Wellington: Pillar of State* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1972), p. 88.

⁷⁷ Catherine's brother Thomas Pakenham, later Rear-Admiral, assisted Charles Beckwith's mission to the Waldensians. See below, pp. 248-249. He asked the Vaudois minister at Genoa to further Beckwith's scheme for evangelizing the Italians. J.P. Meille, *General Beckwith: His Life and Labours Among the Waldensians of Piedmont* trans. by W. Arnot (T. Nelson, London, 1873), pp. 216-217.

⁷⁸ J. Wilson, *A Soldier's Wife: Wellington's Marriage* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987), pp. 118, 121, 132-133.

⁷⁹ R. Rhodes James *Albert, Prince Consort* (Hamish Hamilton, London, 1983), pp. 227-248.

other officers referred to below could serve to further underline the strength and variety of religion in the regiment.

The officer corps evinces in its mixture of family backgrounds direct connections with many of the major religious currents of the period. Thompson had links with early Methodism and the Clapham Sect, and at a later stage with Utilitarianism and Benthamite scepticism; the Boileaus had connections with liberal Anglican divinity and the beginnings of the 'muscular Christianity' of the 1830s to 1850s, and through the Mr. Andrew they were in touch with leading Evangelical figures like William (Millenarian) Marsh;⁸⁰ Boyle was brought up in the midst of a softened mid-century Evangelicalism; Clifford was involved with the resurgence of English Roman Catholicism. Other officers, again, could be usefully added to this list. For example, Edward Newdigate was connected through his parliamentary kinsman with strong anti-Catholicism (although his brother Alfred, formerly vicar of Kirk Hallam, Derby, turned to Rome). And Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Woodford (son of Field-Marshal Sir Alexander Woodford and a cousin of the Rifle Brigade officer Lord Alexander Russell) was a great-nephew of Lord George Gordon whose anti-Catholic petition sparked off the Gordon Riots of 1780. Also, William Francis, Lord Mount-Temple (who was in the regiment briefly in 1829) was later brother-in-law of Lord Shaftesbury, and organised religious conferences at Broadlands aimed at furthering philanthropic work.

There is evidence, then, to show that many officers were given religious guidance as children in the context of religious family identities, and many were brought up saying prayers at home and attending church as part of a family. And the religion they knew coloured their later beliefs. These contacts were supported by experience of religion at school and at university.⁸¹

⁸⁰ O. Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (A. and C. Black, London, 1966), part 1, pp. 451-452.

⁸¹ It was still normal in the early nineteenth century to commission officers into the army with a minimal formal education. William Stewart, for example, as we have seen, had ended his education at the age of fourteen, and, similarly, Alan Pennington joined the navy at fourteen. (The small number of promoted NCOs in the regiment may in some cases have had no formal education at all before entering the regiment.)

As children, several attended small preparatory schools run by clergymen. Henry Clifford's attendance at the Catholic Prior Park has been noted, as has Harry Smith's education under his grandfather's curate. Henry Havelock went to school at Dartford under the Rev.J.Bradley, Curate of Swanscombe, where he remained for three years as a parlour-boarder before he went to Charterhouse. Edward Rooper was taught by Rev.John Edwards at Bury, and Hon.Neville Lyttelton at the school at Geddington, Northamptonshire, of Rev.William Montagu Church. Alan and Josslyn Pennington boarded in the late 1840s and early 1850s at the vicarage of the Rev.Francis J.Faithfull in Hatfield, and Jack Ramsden their cousin (and probably his brother Frederick Ramsden of the Rifle Brigade) was educated there too.⁸² Likewise, Gerald Boyle was taught as a boarder at Ditton in Devon by the Rev. F.Styles before moving on to Carshaiton and then Eton. Such coaching by clergymen, often involving spells of residence in their houses, was standard for sons of wealthy families in the nineteenth century who were not taught, like Charles Boileau, at home.⁸³ Lessons were typically centred around the classics, though modern languages, mathematics, music and other subjects might be added. The tutor was often a practising parish priest, so that some religious observance was common.

Also, many officers throughout the period had public school backgrounds. At least 145 Rifle Brigade officers serving between 1800 and 1870 were at Eton, fifty-five at Harrow, seven at Rugby, six at Brighton College, and five each at Westminster and Winchester.⁸⁴ Periods of

⁸² Francis Faithfull, Vicar of Hatfield, (1811-1854) was a successful coach in the classics and taught a number of aristocratic boys. See D.Leinster-Mackay, *The Rise of the English Prep School* (Falmer Press, London, 1984), pp.56, 59

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp.77-81. 'Dame schools' run by women were an alternative, especially for small children, and, for example, Leopold Swaine attended one in Hamburg from the age of five to seven. L.V.Swaine, *Camp and Chancery in a Soldier's Life* (John Murray, London, 1926), p.2. Thomas Bramston went to Cheam, a fashionable and academically strong preparatory school run by Pestalozzian principles. The headmaster in this period, Mr.Tabor, was an Evangelical and he allegedly created an oppressively religious atmosphere. Leinster-Mackay, *The Rise of the English Prep School*, pp.40-42 .

⁸⁴ In addition, four future Rifle Brigade officers have been traced at Leamington College, two at Cheltenham College, two at Stonyhurst, and one each at Radley, Charterhouse, Shrewsbury, Hull Grammar School, King Edward VI School at Louth, Downside, and Elizabeth College on Guernsey. In addition, Charles Robinson was educated at the Upper Canada College, Hon.William Colville was at a school in the Weimar, and Leopold Swaine was taught by Dr.Elder, a Lutheran Clergyman in Hamburg, and by Rev.M.Vent 'the Protestant clergyman of Leopold I'. (Swaine also studied for his army entrance examinations under a Presbyterian minister, Mr.Hamilton, who lived near Hyde Park in London. Swaine, *Camp and Chancery*, p.9).

attendance at these schools varied, with some boys staying for only a few months. However, a large proportion stayed for several years.

The main business of public schools in this period, to the 1860s, was to teach classics and to provide an environment in which ruling-class boys from across the country could mix (increasingly exclusively) and could develop strong and independent characters to fit them for leadership in any field. Most school masters were clergy (at Eton, for example, there was a strong connection with Kings College, Cambridge, and the school was a religious foundation) and daily attendance at chapel was mandatory. The nature and intensity of religious instruction varied, however, across time and between schools. From the 1830s to 1870s, with the influence of Thomas Arnold at Rugby and with varied reactions to critical attention from the press, the public schools varied in their attitudes to religious and moral guidance for pupils, largely depending on the views of individual head-masters. There is plenty of evidence for boys disrupting chapel services at Eton, and for the difficulties they had in hearing sermons. And it has been convincingly argued that even Thomas Arnold's teaching may have had only a limited impact on the majority of boys in his care at Rugby.⁸⁵ Charles Vaughan's liberal preaching and his reforming regime at Harrow in the 1840s and 1850s, referred to above for the education of Henry Ryder, may have been more effective, but there was nonetheless strong resistance offered by both parents and boys to the tide of greater moral and religious supervision.⁸⁶ It is clear that it would be wrong to exaggerate the religious atmosphere of any of the old public schools in the mid-century, but nonetheless there was normally considerable contact with clergymen and with Christian doctrine.⁸⁷

Eton was the school with the strongest Rifle Brigade connections. Though there is limited evidence for the experience of Riflemen who went there, some relevant information

⁸⁵ See Chandos, *Boys Together*, pp.254-256.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.142-147, 305-306. The death in 1849 at Harrow of the youngest son of Lord Shaftesbury, caused by head injuries sustained in a boxing match, was the subject of a public scandal; Lieutenant-Colonel Boyd Francis Alexander of the Rifle Brigade (serving in the regiment from 1852 to 1872) had been in the same intake at Harrow as the young Francis Ashley.

⁸⁷ Francis Markham of the Rifle Brigade recalled that the sermons of Liddell at Westminster 'were thoroughly adapted to the boys, touched on school-life and the preparation of the boy for his manhood, and had an excellent effect'. F.Markham, *Recollections of a Town Boy at Westminster 1849-1855* (Edward Arnold, London, 1903), p.65

emerges from the diary kept by Gamel Pennington, Lord Muncaster, from March 1849 to March 1850, covering his last two terms at school when his brother Josslyn was also a pupil. His evidence supports the view that the atmosphere of Eton at this time was not predominantly religious. All the same, it underlines the importance to the boys of the routine of chapel-going, and suggests that there was significant exposure to Christian doctrine there, even if religious instruction fell short of some reformers' ideals. Gamel himself does not appear to have been a particularly pious boy, but Anglican religion was, nonetheless, closely knitted into his experience as an adolescent at school.⁸⁸

Gamel Pennington's diary makes frequent mention of his two brothers who served in the Rifle Brigade: Josslyn, with him at Eton, and Alan, still at Mr. Faithfull's school at Hatfield. Several other future Rifle Brigade officers also appear in its pages, including Hon. George Legge, Lord Edward Clinton,⁸⁹ Henry Newdigate, Henry Blundell, the Hon. Frederick Wellesley and Leonard Malcolm. At school, Gamel, Josslyn and their friends spent much of their time boating and idling on the river. Gamel, who seems to have had a great deal of spare time, also read for pleasure. The books mentioned by him include no specifically religious works,⁹⁰ even though religion had a conspicuous role in his school life. Gamel and his schoolfellows went to chapel at Eton every weekday morning and twice on Sundays. Gamel noted that he took the sacrament three times while he was at Eton, though he evidently took it more frequently when

⁸⁸ This view is supported by Rev. C. Allix Wilkinson, *Reminiscences at Eton (Keate's Time)* (Hurst and Blackett, London, 1888), pp. 124-125. He recalled that boys at Eton in the early decades of the century (in which period they were supposed to have been most unruly) were often naughty in chapel, but only because the masters used it as a sort of daily roll call, without themselves setting an example of gravity. On Sundays when all the masters were present, and when the presence of ladies 'carried with it the sacred feeling of family worship in the home circle of the Sabbath day', then the Eton boys thought about the holy day, time and place, paid attention to their prayer books 'as they would at home' and 'followed the service with respect and devotion'. 'As young Christian gentlemen they attended and joined in the service on the Sundays, though as sharp and intelligent youngsters they criticised the old twaddles who were commissioned to preach to them.'

⁸⁹ There is frequent mention of Clinton because Gamel had an enduring crush on his elder brother, the future Duke of Newcastle, also at Eton.

⁹⁰ He lists T. B. Macaulay, *History of England From the Accession of James II*, published in five volumes from 1849 to 1861, the poetry of Alexander Pope and stories by the popular writer George James. Likewise, although at one point he was made to copy two hundred lines of Milton as a punishment, his schoolwork was mainly in classics: the translation from Greek of the stories of Antigone and Oedipus at Colonus, and parts of Homer, and, from Latin, sections of Catullus. Muncaster Castle, G. Pennington Diary, 7 February 1850; *ibid.*, 24 June 1849; *ibid.*, 16 May 1849; *ibid.*, 30 April 1849; *ibid.*, 13 June 1849.

he was at home.⁹¹ (Many of his diary entries end idiosyncratically with the word 'Amen!' although they never contained prayers.)⁹² Gamel also made an occasional note of sermons he heard at school.

Dr.Hawtrey gave a very good lecture in afternoon church about the Vth Commandment as referring to obedience to temporal Princes and more especially Tutors and those set over us by our parents (as masters here at Eton). Mr Bethell preached in the morning.⁹³

Likewise, he wrote, 'The Provost preached a beautiful anthem in the afternoon out of Job', and 'Plumtree preached a charity sermon to which I gave a shilling'.⁹⁴ The Boileau boys were prepared for confirmation at Eton at about this time (so determined was their father to keep them away from the Evangelical Mr.Andrew) and it is clear that Eton did impart to pupils some religious instruction.⁹⁵

It may well be that boys were variously influenced by the religion on offer at chapel, from masters, and in books, according to their individual personalities and family backgrounds. Routine attendance at chapel evidently provided continuity from home for the Pennington boys and there is no sign of resentment or rebellion in Gamel's diary. Theirs was not a particularly religious family (although the boys' great uncle, the 1st Baron Muncaster, was a parliamentary ally of Wilberforce and he introduced for him the first anti-slavery bill, and, likewise, his estranged mother, the boys' great-grandmother, had been markedly devout).⁹⁶ There seems to have been little supplementary religious instruction at home, but Gamel and his siblings accompanied their mother (a widow) to church twice every Sunday.⁹⁷ While the children were allowed to play games and the family sometimes went on walks, Sundays were evidently quieter than other days.⁹⁸

⁹¹ Ibid., 27 May 1849; *ibid.*, 28 July 1849.

⁹² Ibid., 4 May 1849; *ibid.*, 25 April 1849; *ibid.*, 9 May 1849.

⁹³ Ibid., 18 March 1849. Edward Hawtrey was head-master of Eton from 1834-1852. He expanded the school and encouraged scholarship; the other preacher may have been Christopher Bethell, bishop of Bangor, 1830-1859.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 13 May 1849; *ibid.*, 17 June 1849.

⁹⁵ Chadwick, *Victorian Miniature*, p.147.

⁹⁶ Sarah, Lady Pennington was sent away by her husband, suspected by him of liaisons with other men. She wrote *A Mother's Advice to her Absent Daughters: With an Additional Letter on the Management and Education of Infant Children* (London, 1817) which went into eight editions. This included advice on prayer, Christian conduct and devotional reading.

⁹⁷ Muncaster Castle, G.Pennington Diary, 30 September 1849.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 16 December 1850.

After leaving Eton, Gamel went to a second rectory school at Harrowden, run by a clergyman, Mr. Roughton, in order to prepare for Cambridge. He learned drawing, more classics, and modern history. The routine of church attendance continued, this time following Mr Roughton with his family and the other boarders to hear him preach in his different parishes.⁹⁹ There is a strong sense of continuity in religious observance from home to school, and, for Gamel, from school to crammer and then university. His experience was probably not untypical of the experience of the public school boys who went on to university before joining the Rifle Brigade.¹⁰⁰ At Oxford and Cambridge colleges, as at the public schools, chapel was mandatory, and the majority of teaching fellows were ordained.¹⁰¹

Religion was part of a wider culture linking Eton and other institutions. Gamel Pennington's diary, again, underlines how smooth the social and cultural transition normally was for public schoolboys moving on into professional life. There were constant contacts between Eton and the military, both with the Guards regiments based at Windsor, and with regiments like the Rifle Brigade into which whole groups of contemporary pupils were commissioned. Many Old Etonians returned to the school soon after leaving, often to visit relatives and Gamel mentioned both soldiers and university men among them.¹⁰² He looked forward to renewing Eton acquaintances once he started at Cambridge; and boys destined for the army, like Lord Edward Clinton (who had the nickname 'The Major') and Josslyn Pennington, impatient to leave school and find a commission, would have had a similar old school network of servicemen and civilians across the world into which they would fit.¹⁰³

It is clear, then, from the evidence for officers' family backgrounds, where both clerical and lay members shaped the religious identities of families, and where Christian observance

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 7 October 1849; *ibid.*, 25 October 1849; *ibid.*, 28 November 1849.

¹⁰⁰ Nineteen Rifle Brigade officers have been traced at Oxford, and eight at Cambridge.

¹⁰¹ See A. Haig, *The Victorian Clergy* (Croom Helm, London, 1984), pp.27-29.

¹⁰² Muncaster Castle, G. Pennington Diary, 2 May 1849; *ibid.*, 4 June 1849.

¹⁰³ Wilkinson, *Reminiscences*, pp.1-5 notes, not untypically, that his father and brother were at Eton, he himself had six brothers there, eleven first cousins, two brothers-in-law, ten nephews, one son-in-law, four grandchildren and 'more to go'. He would want to send all his male kin to Eton for at least one year, 'to give them the tone and let them have the advantage of being Eton fellows into whatever profession they went and wherever they were scattered in any part of the world'. One of his brothers who went to Woolwich instead always regretted missing out later in life on the 'freemasonry and friendship of Etonians'.

was a part of household and school routine, that the officers of the Rifle Brigade had between them considerable experience of and involvement with contemporary religion.

It might be added that this evidence is revealing not only of the cultural horizons of Riflemen and the influences that shaped their professional and social outlook. It may also say a great deal about the ethos of the regiment that it appointed so many officers from prominent religious and particularly from celebrated Evangelical families.¹⁰⁴ In any case, Rifle Brigade appointments included in the 1830s a member of the family of the Sabbatarian Member of Parliament Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw, and, equally, in the 1850s and 1860s two grandchildren of the lay Evangelical patron the 2nd Earl of Dartmouth; the nephew of the Evangelical 2nd Earl of Harrowby; a son of the 6th Earl of Guilford (an Evangelical clergyman); the grandson of Sir Thomas Dyke Acland (Evangelical Member of Parliament and philanthropist); and the namesake of Bishop Reginald Heber. I would argue that no institution making such appointments, whatever the strength of the individual talents and political and military connections of the candidates, could have been fighting shy of strong religion. It is likely that any large group of individuals selected from the nineteenth-century ruling classes would be expected to include men from families with religious involvements. Nonetheless, the large number of officers coming from prominent religious families in both the early and mid-century would seem to suggest that the regiment fostered a religious bent in its officer corps. This may not be unduly surprising when it is remembered that the Rifle Brigade was one of the more modern and fashionable regiments in the army, in an age when earnest religion itself came into fashion, and was associated with a range of modernising movements.

¹⁰⁴ This may have resulted in part from the Evangelical connexions of William Stewart whose sister Catherine in particular (a friend of Isaac Milner, and married to Sir James Graham of Netherby) moved in influential religious circles.

5.2 Religious Belief in the Regiment

The evidence found for voluntary religious observance by individuals while they were in the regiment is fragmentary but nonetheless revealing. It falls into two main areas: evidence for religious belief across the various Rifle Brigade battalions, and evidence for religious experience in reaction to danger and death.

5.2.1 *The Battalions*

One of the fullest sources for religion in the regiment is the memoir of Captain Maximilian Hammond.¹⁰⁵ This account is concerned only with his individual conversion and with Evangelical Christianity among those Hammond knew. It applies only to the 2nd Battalion in the period between 1844 and his death at the Redan on 8 September, 1855. Nonetheless, the correspondence cited in his memoir is important in revealing the considerable impact of Evangelicalism on that section of the regiment before the Crimean War, and it points to the religious commitment of individual officers and men who survived that conflict and remained in the regiment for many years after. Further, Hammond's memoir shows the effect which a few zealous individuals could have on the religious lives of others in the corps. More broadly it points up the religious divisions present in the regiment and the strong feelings which religion could arouse.

Maximilian Montague Hammond (who, it should be noted, had a brother, William Oxenden Hammond, a nephew William Whitmore Hammond, and two cousins, Julius Glyn and Charles Oxenden, in the Rifle Brigade in this period: he was not an outsider) came from an established and landed East Kent family with many religious and particularly Evangelical connections. His father, William Osmund Hammond of St.Alban's Court, wrote a book on Christian prophesy. Two of his brothers, Egerton (father of William Whitmore Hammond) and Henry (editor of the memoir) were ordained.¹⁰⁶ And his Rifle Brigade brother, William Oxenden

¹⁰⁵ M.M.Hammond, *Memoir of Captain M.M.Hammond, Rifle Brigade* (James Nisbet, London, 1858).

¹⁰⁶ According to ed.M.G.Daughlish and P.K.Stephenson, *The Harrow School Register 1800-1911* (Longman, London, 1911), Henry Hammond withdrew from the Church of England.

Hammond, a talented water-colourist, was friendly in later years with the architect George Devey (who largely rebuilt St.Alban's Court),¹⁰⁷ and was also part of the social circle of his neighbour the High Church landowner Sir Walter James.¹⁰⁸ Hammond, that is to say, was brought up in a family that was serious and religious in both his own and the previous generation.

He was led to Bible reading for the first time since joining the army by another officer of the Rifle Brigade, Arthur Lawrence,¹⁰⁹ who precipitated in the 2nd Battalion something of a religious revival while it was stationed in North America. Lawrence, then a captain, and his new wife followed the regiment to Halifax, Nova Scotia, towards the end of 1844. Lawrence had been transferred in 1830 into the Rifle Brigade as a lieutenant, having previously served in the 23rd Fusiliers, and so had already been fourteen years in the regiment and seventeen years in the service. He was to serve in total thirty years in the Rifle Brigade.¹¹⁰ (Again, he was no outsider.) Soon after their arrival in Halifax, Lawrence and his wife invited Hammond to drink tea with them in their home and join 'in searching the scriptures'.¹¹¹ 'J.F.', probably Surgeon John Fraser, was also of the group. This seems to have been a deliberate attempt to proselytise a young officer, and it was done in a domestic setting, with the help of a regimental wife. Lawrence, whom Hammond describes as 'of an earnest Christian character', had long been devout. One anonymous officer recalled that he had been in the habit of meeting with Lawrence to pray and discuss scripture before his marriage, and that he had been delighted to discover in 1844 that Lawrence's new state would not hinder a renewal of their old sessions 'on a larger scale'.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ Devey held strong religious views close to those of the Rev. Charles Voysey who was expelled from the Church of England in 1871 for opposing the doctrines of everlasting hell, the inspiration of the Bible and the divinity of Christ.

¹⁰⁸ M. Girouard, *The Victorian Country House* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1979), pp.214-220

¹⁰⁹ Lawrence's family came from Liverpool and had kin in Jamaica. They can be described as belonging to the wealthy commercial middle classes. Lawrence was educated at Eton in the 1820s. His brother Charles was incumbent of St.Luke's Church in Liverpool.

¹¹⁰ Lawrence's religious and philanthropic efforts were directed at the army more broadly, too, in later years. He founded the Officers' Daughters School at Bath and a Soldiers' Daughters Home. He also supported the Army Scripture Reading Society and the Soldiers' Institute at Portsmouth.

¹¹¹ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.31-34.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp.41-42.

As a result of this invitation, Hammond received the sacrament for the first time in four years. He began what was to be a regular regime of religious reading, and he corresponded with his family and friends at home about his choice of material. Doubtless many of the titles he saw were familiar to him from childhood, but at least one, a memoir of M'Cheyne,¹¹³ was given to him in Halifax by a lady, and he read it with 'W' (probably Captain George Wilkins of the Rifle Brigade).¹¹⁴ The selection of reading revealed in Hammond's memoir is varied. He was interested in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century religion: he read some of the work of John Flavel the controversial Presbyterian divine, and (a book which Hammond disliked) a work by a disciple of Bishop John Hacket, who had famously opposed the excesses of Archbishop Laud.¹¹⁵ He also read d'Aubigné's *Reformation*.¹¹⁶ The bulk of his reading, however, reflected works that were popular or widely influential in the first half of the nineteenth century. He read Butler's *Analogy of Religion* (1736) which was a standard text of the broad religious revival of the period, and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, central for Nonconformists in particular.¹¹⁷ He also read writings by Charles Simeon (1759-1836), who, as incumbent of Holy Trinity Church became mentor to two generations of Evangelical Cambridge undergraduates. Hammond wrote that Simeon's views 'entirely coincided' with his own.¹¹⁸

Many of the titles Hammond saw were strongly evangelical. He read a tract on renunciation by the popular Birmingham Congregational preacher John Angell James, as well as the equally popular tracts 'The Sinners' Friend' (1821) by John Vine Hall,¹¹⁹ and 'Come to Jesus' (1848) by his son, the London Congregational minister Christopher Newman Hall.¹²⁰

¹¹³ M'Cheyne was an eminent preacher of the Church of Scotland who had most notably been sent to Palestine in 1839 to collect information about the Jews. He died in 1843, and Hammond was remarkably up-to-date in reading of his life in 1844-1845.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.41.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.101, 209-211.

¹¹⁶ J.H.Merle d'Aubigné, *Reformation du seizième siècle* (Paris, 1835-1853), 5 vols, was very successful in England, with various translations and abridgements between 1838 and 1842. The work was strongly Protestant, refuting the authority of Rome, and rationalism.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.47, 177.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.64.

¹¹⁹ J.V.Hall was a Nonconformist Tory and forerunner of teetotalism. He gave up drink in 1818.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.181, 206. Newman Hall had close contacts with Gladstone and worked to improve relations between Anglicans and Nonconformists. 'Come to Jesus' sold 4,000,000 copies in forty languages in his lifetime. See B.Harrison, *Dictionary of British Temperance Biography*, Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin Supplement, Aids to Research 1, 1973, p.57

Hammond also read the works of Alexander Keith (1791-1880) who wrote on Christian evidences indicating the fulfilment of prophesy.¹²¹ Hammond appears to have had a particular interest in prophesy in line with many evangelicals,¹²² and he also read Andrew Bonar's *Prophetical Landmarks*.¹²³ While Hammond's leanings were toward Evangelicalism, and he was strongly anti-Tractarian, he, like many Anglicans of all shades, read, too, John Keble's hymns.¹²⁴

The meetings for worship and discussion became regular in the 2nd Battalion, with a fifth (unnamed) person joining Lawrence's group.

We read a portion of some chapter, and afterwards comment upon it, and join in general conversation. We also read a chapter every night in one of our rooms, which is most enjoyable.

Three or four other officers of the regiment, including 'Captain W.', 'and one or two others belonging to the garrison' joined soon after, and four of the like-minded Rifle Brigade officers lived together on one staircase in the barracks.¹²⁵

In 1846, some members of the group of Evangelical officers left for England, and Hammond complained to Wilkins that although three of those remaining were still faithful adherents, others were backsliding. Hammond organised a time for mutual prayer with Wilkins

¹²¹ Hammond, *Memoir*, p.178. Keith had travelled with M'Cheyne to Palestine as a Church of Scotland minister, but subsequently joined the Free Church.

¹²² William Norcott and Charles Beckwith were also interested in prophesy. Millennialism, concerned with calculations from the Bible of the date of the Second Coming of Christ, took two forms in the early and mid-nineteenth century. Post-millennialism, associated with the Clapham sect, held that a period of evangelising would bring the Kingdom of God which would last a thousand years before the Second Coming. This position tended to encourage political and social involvement. Pre-millennialism, less wide-spread among evangelicals and Nonconformists though increasingly strong from the 1820s, held, by contrast, that Christ would come before the thousand year Kingdom of God, and this would happen soon as contemporaries were living in the 'last days' and were witnessing the collapse of the world into evil. Pre-millennialists believed this current period to be one in which believers might still be saved. Despite a generally pessimistic view of the efficacy of good works, they, like post-millennialists, were typically active philanthropists and were concerned with fostering upright conduct as a means to saving souls. See Hilton *Age of Atonement*, pp.14-19; also C.Binfield, 'Jews in Evangelical Dissent: The British Society, The Herschell Connection and the Pre-Millenarian Thread', in F.Broeyer and M.J.Wilks (eds), *Prophesy and Eschatology: Studies in Church History*, Subsidia x (Blackwells, Oxford, 1994), pp.233-237.

¹²³ Bonar, too, joined the Free Church.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.239. Keble was prominent among the leaders of the Oxford Movement in the 1830s and 1840s, but his poetry, and particularly *The Christian Year* (1827), was very succesful, reaching far beyond the limited number of Puseyites.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.36, 41. Hammond was influenced at this time by Rev.William Twining, a local minister and kinsman of the Twining family of tea-mercahants and philanthropists.

and John Fraser, set for 1st January, 1847.¹²⁶ He suggested specific prayers including confession for,

The sins of the past year, both of commission and omission; our sloth, indolence, unfaithfulness, and unfruitfulness; our neglect of duty and improving opportunities for usefulness; our sinful compliance with the ways of the world and worldly men; our inconsistencies, and the dishonour to God, and blot in our profession by such acts.

He gave, too, prayers of supplication for members of the regiment.¹²⁷ Hammond's religion, it seems, was deliberately intended to affect his own and others' behaviour in military matters.

While stationed at Montreal from 1846, Hammond recorded that up to ten individuals were gathering for prayers on Saturday evenings, and sometimes more than twenty met each fortnight at the house of 'Mr.W.' (possibly a local clergyman) and his wife.¹²⁸ Of the men, a 'Private M.' (unidentified) of the regiment was visited by Hammond while in hospital dying of consumption. According to a letter from another rank and file man, 'M.' was converted after he saw that Hammond, although 'a gentleman was not ashamed to kneel with a private soldier,' and the sick fellow afterwards made some of the other men 'promise to commence a new life'.¹²⁹ Nonetheless, Hammond was dissatisfied in 1847 with the number of conversions. 'The regiment is woefully dark in spiritual things, and abounding in vice and drunkenness.' He became involved in a prayer group for the men, meeting on Sunday and Wednesday evenings in the school-room, which attracted between thirty-five and forty men. This was established soon after an evening school was begun, teaching at first six men, and then upwards of eighty to read and write (they were none 'capable of reading the word of God'). These classes were apparently held in parallel with the existing regimental school: since the foundation of the regiment there had been provision for teaching the men, but this had originally had a primarily professional purpose., as we have seen. Hammond also taught civilian children in a local Sunday school at Kingston.¹³⁰

By 1848, then, Hammond was active in a number of schemes for religious education.

¹²⁶ The choice of New Years Day may echo the Methodist Watch Night services.

¹²⁷ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.94-5.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.104, 106.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.108.

¹³⁰ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.110, 174, 135-6, 141.

On Saturday we have our little meetings in my room, and on Wednesday, also, we have prayer together, more especially for the regiment, and the efforts made for the spiritual welfare of the soldiers, and also for our own Christian friends and families. On Wednesday and Sunday evenings, too, we have our meetings in the school-room, which, through the goodness of God, have hitherto been full to overflowing. Last Sunday there were forty-four men besides ourselves, and women, and children. On Sunday, also, I have to go to the hospital after church, and have the men in for prayer, etc. At present we are reading the 'Pilgrim's Progress', with some explanations, and plain words, and turning to the scripture references.¹³¹

The impression is of considerable Evangelical activity generated from within the regiment. Hammond's work among the men continued on his return to England in 1850, when he took charge of the depot schools at Parkhurst Barracks, in the week-time as well as on Sundays. He established a Sunday School and took a Sunday afternoon service in the hospital. He recorded converting the young daughter of a sergeant of the Rifle Brigade.¹³² At Chatham, later in 1850, he established another Sunday School, for the children of the soldiers of the garrison, despite some opposition, and a Bible class in the week at the boys' school in the Chatham Barracks. The officers' meetings also continued.

When he joined his regiment in the Crimea in 1854, Hammond was 'bold in confessing Christ before men', lecturing his company on bad language and distributing religious tracts and magazines, including twelve copies each of 'Leisure Hours' and 'Churchman's Penny Magazine'.¹³³ In the 2nd Battalion when it went to the Crimea, Arthur Lawrence was the lieutenant-colonel, John Fraser the surgeon, John Newman the Paymaster, and William Norcott was one of the two Majors, transferring to the 1st Battalion as a lieutenant-colonel in December, 1854. There was therefore a strong Evangelical element in the battalion's leadership even before Hammond, as one of ten Captains in the unit, joined them in the east; and among the lieutenants in the corps in 1854-1855 were FitzRoy Fremantle, Henry Ryder and his cousin George Grey.¹³⁴ (It is worth noting, too, that the 2nd Battalion also included in 1854-5 several

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 222.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 271-273.

¹³⁴ George Henry Grey was the son of Sir George Grey 2nd Bart. (1799-1882), grandson of 1st Earl Grey. Sir George was Home Secretary under Russell and Palmerston, and Colonial Secretary under Aberdeen. Sir George was a noted Evangelical who considered entering the church but decided politics was a means of doing God's will. He was a committed Sabbatarian. George Henry Grey's grandmother was Mary Whitbread, sister of Samuel Whitbread, brewer and Whig politician.

officers with other, or less Evangelical, religious connections: Astley Paston Cooper, Edward Newdigate, and the Hon. Barrington Pellew.¹³⁵)

Between 1844 and 1850, that is, around ten officers (out of some forty in total, of whom half were at a distant station with the reserve battalion and several were absent sick, on secondment or on leave, at any one time)¹³⁶ were meeting for prayers on Saturday evenings, and some twenty (although these included officers from other regiments) met fortnightly. Of the men, around forty out of a total of about 500 in the main body of the 2nd Battalion joined in a prayer group, and some eighty learned reading and writing in an Evangelical environment. As many as one third of the officers in the battalion (therefore over half in the main portion of the battalion), then, may have been active Evangelicals at this time, and between 1 in 6 and 1 in 13 of the men were involved in activities organised by the group. (These figures do not necessarily include all those in the battalion from religious families, many of whose own views are unknown, nor those who may have been equally devout but strongly anti-Evangelical.) Although Hammond was clear in his anti-Puseyite and anti-Nonconformist views, he was broadly ecumenical in outlook and prided himself on acknowledging that all Christian belief was united in the search for God. He was concerned to save souls, and so to convert individuals to Evangelicalism, but he appears to have been tolerant of all serious religious opinion.¹³⁷ This may have increased the success of the revival in his battalion.

Hammond's influence on the 2nd Battalion did not end with his death. As has been noted, FitzRoy Fremantle recorded in his diary that on 30 January, 1859, in the wake of the Indian Mutiny, three copies of Hammond's memoir were distributed to every company. The book would have clearly identified for everyone familiar with the unit those associated with Hammond, and the large number of copies provided indicates official pride in his attitudes.

¹³⁵ Pellew's grandfather was 1st Viscount Exmouth, Admiral of the Blue, who bombarded Algiers in 1816 to force the release of enslaved Christians.

¹³⁶ For example, fourteen of thirty-seven officers were absent from the combined 2nd Battalion in June 1847. PRO, WO 17 1551, General Monthly Return of Officers belonging to the several corps serving in Canada, June 1847. The officers of the 2nd Battalion were evenly split between the main and reserve battalions with Head Quarters in different locations in Canada for most of this period.

¹³⁷ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.65-67.

Fremantle himself was clearly devout, and he had Evangelical sympathies.¹³⁸ He regularly went to extra church services on Sunday evenings. For example, on 16 January he went to an evening service with John Fraser, the surgeon of Hammond's Evangelical circle. He sometimes attended services in civilian churches in India, too, and he took communion at least three times in 1859. Fremantle met various clergy in the early months of 1859, including civilian missionaries, army chaplains, and the Bishop of Calcutta. On March 14, he had a priest named Father Brown and a civilian named King to dine,

There arose a tremendous discussion about divorce which would keep being reverted to notwithstanding all my efforts to turn it off.¹³⁹

And in 1862 he met with a brother of George and Charles Legge of the Rifle Brigade, serving in the Coldstream Guards, and they taught Sunday School together.¹⁴⁰

Fremantle occasionally listed how many, or more often how few, in the regiment went to church, suggesting that he would have liked to have seen more religious feeling in the corps,

I had a very interesting conversation with him [the chaplain, Waterhouse] in the afternoon about some sick of my company. I am very sorry there were so few at the voluntary service: only 20.¹⁴¹

(This, again, is an instance of criticism of lack of religion in the corps made from an evangelical point of view.) Fremantle was in charge of organising the men's canteen, as we have seen, and his choice of periodicals for them included, amongst other improving material, the *Friend of India*, the newspaper edited by the Baptist John Clark Marshman, brother-in-law of Henry Havelock.

Besides this information for the 2nd Battalion, there is some evidence for active religious participation among officers of the 1st Battalion. William Norcott was concerned

¹³⁸ Fremantle's first cousin was the Very Rev. William R. Fremantle, Dean of Ripon from 1876-1895, a noted Evangelical. See D.W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Unwin Hyman, London, 1989), p.16 for W.R. Fremantle stating Evangelical principles, including the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. FitzRoy Fremantle was close to his family, and wrote to them weekly from India. Only twenty-two years of age in 1859, he had already seen action at the siege of Sebastopol and at the attack on the Redan where he was wounded. He had also been present at the capture of Lucknow.

¹³⁹ NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, 16 January 1859; *ibid.*, 23 January 1859; *ibid.*, 30 January 1859; *ibid.*, 6 March 1859; *ibid.*, 13 March 1859; *ibid.*, 3 July 1859; *ibid.*, 17 July 1859; *ibid.*, 17 July 1859; *ibid.*, 4 September 1859; *ibid.*, 18 September 1859; *ibid.*, 2 December 1859; *ibid.*, 25 December 1859.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 17 January 1862; *ibid.*, 19 January 1862; *ibid.*, 29 January 1862.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 16 October 1859.

during the Crimean War, like many in religious civilian society, that the nation was facing in that conflict a test of its merits in the eyes of God. Direct divine intervention would bring about victory or defeat, and thus show His praise or censure for the contrasting political and social structures of Britain and Russia. Norcott's diaries reveal that he believed, at the same time, that his personal worth was also under scrutiny, and that God might punish his individual sinfulness by allowing him to be killed, whatever the outcome of the war. He experienced great distress at the thought that he might not deserve forgiveness and so might be allowed to die, but at the same time he fervently hoped that his wife's faith and virtue, which he believed (again in line with Evangelical patterns) to be purer than his own, would be rewarded with her husband's life. Norcott looked on his marriage as a sign of predestination and holy blessing, and he believed his own courage and military gifts were part of the same divine scheme. Indeed, as has been noted, his diary makes clear that he continued to fight in the war, despite enormous temptation to return home, out of a desire for promotion by which he might provide for his family and bring them honour, and this was related to his sense of duty to God.¹⁴²

Norcott admitted in his diary that he felt afraid of dying, particularly of cholera. Although he believed it to be useless to strike bargains with God, he was determined to make efforts to lead a godly life during the campaign in order to deserve preservation. Further, Norcott strove hard to atone for his sins in prayer, and he also, for example, gave money to the widow of the Evangelical paymaster of the 2nd Battalion, Lieutenant Newbury, because, he wrote, he was moved to do so by the Lord. Norcott made a point of tending the sick and wounded and was prepared to offer one coughing victim of cholera from the other ranks his own medicine. In addition he tried to keep the Sabbath, and prayed with his young brother-in-law, serving in another regiment, who he felt was in need of guidance. That is to say, Norcott tried to live a godly life following standard Evangelical patterns, in his dealings with the

¹⁴² RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 24 February 1854; *ibid.*, 9 April 1854; *ibid.*, 19 May 1854; *ibid.*, vol 2, 6 August 1854; *ibid.*, 15 August 1854; *ibid.*, 27 August 1854; *ibid.*, vol 3, 1 December 1854; *ibid.*, vol 4, 18 March 1855; *ibid.*, vol 6, 26 July 1855; *ibid.*, 2 August 1855; *ibid.*, 8 August 1855; *ibid.*, 12 August 1855; *ibid.*, 29 August 1855.

regiment as well as in private. His professional life at this time (including as we have seen his administering of punishments) was clearly coloured by his religious beliefs.

And there is further evidence for the 1st Battalion stationed in Canada between 1862 and 1870. The lieutenant-colonel at this time was Lord Alexander Russell, a moderately Low Church Anglican as has been noted. His wife organised an Anglican Assembly at Hamilton, with Captain Lord Edward Clinton (whose family were mostly High Church) on the committee. This was probably a fund-raising organisation.¹⁴³ Ensign Lord Adelbert Percy Cecil (again from a predominantly High Church family)¹⁴⁴ made contact with the local rector, Rev. Gamble Geddes, on arrival in the town, and, with Lieutenant Lord Edward Cavendish, he taught at Geddes' Sunday School and frequently visited the rectory.¹⁴⁵ Thus the aristocratic Russell, Clinton, Cecil and Cavendish emerge as Church of England adherents (of varying shades) active in the corps.

The balance of religious activity between battalions, then, is not easy to establish fully, but the indications are that all the Rifle Brigade units had a continuous and vigorous Church of England, including Evangelical, presence.¹⁴⁶ The battalions were normally separate while on service, but individual officers did cross between them, particularly on promotion and on the augmentation of the regiment, and there were many transfers in the Crimean War especially. In addition, while all four battalions were camped before Sebastopol they often mixed socially.

¹⁴³ Bishop John Inglis urged the formation of 'Church Societies' of laymen and clergy to raise money to support missionaries, build churches and conduct schools. Such societies were formed in all the Atlantic colonies between 1837 and 1843. R.T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1976), p.236.

¹⁴⁴ Lord Adelbert Cecil (1837-1889) was the fourth son of the 2nd Marquess of Exeter. His sister Mary married in 1861 Dudley, 3rd Earl of Harrowby, brother of the Henry Ryder of the Rifle Brigade.

¹⁴⁵ Geddes made attacks on the Catholic bishop, Farrell, over the burial of a notorious local insolvent, Sir Alan MacNab, and 'became the Protestant Hero of Canada and was feted at the Rifle Brigade picnic in Grimsby'. Adam Fox, 'Civis Hamiltonius et Britannicus Sum: Hamilton in 1862: The Trent Affair, The Prince Consort's Own Rifle Brigade and Their Effects Upon Hamilton Elite Society and Imperial Position', (unpublished essay, 1991).

¹⁴⁶ It is known, too, although there is less information, that members of the Rifle Brigade supported, in this period, the Methodist Mission at Aldershot, established by William Rule in 1857. One of the first men buried there by the Wesleyans was a 1st Battalion Rifleman of the other ranks, and, despite the surrounding controversy, Rule recorded in April 1859, 'the entire feeling of the camp is with me'. Thompson, 'Free Church Army Chaplains', pp.51-7, 79.

5.2.2 Reactions to Danger and Death

A further group of evidence relating to voluntary personal religion while in service in the Rifle Brigade concerns the reactions of Riflemen to peril and imminent death. This shows soldiers of all ranks turning to God in moments of extreme emotion.

Private F.W.Hale in his letter to his mother at Christmas in 1854 from the Crimea, said that he was struck by the resolve of British soldiers for victory or death, at the Alma and at Inkerman. Defeat, he wrote, never occurred to them, 'they know what is their doom'.¹⁴⁷ Coming to terms with continual danger and fatalities was one of the central preoccupations of Riflemen, like other soldiers, in time of war. Some apparently took on a devil-may-care attitude,¹⁴⁸ while others recorded intimations of the supernatural in observing premonitions of death.¹⁴⁹ Many, however, seem to have thought of death in conventional Christian terms: as connected to God's will, to judgement, and to salvation. A number of those undergoing religious experiences while in the regiment did so when faced with acute illness and death. William Surtees' conversion came with a feeling of despair at the thought of dying in a state of sin when he was critically ill with fever and an intestinal disorder during the Peninsular War.

I...quietly lay myself down, in dreadful expectation of the fatal hour, and when, as I imagined, the infernal fiend would be commissioned to seize and carry off my soul to its abode of everlasting misery. I could not pray, nor had I any the most distant hope that my sentence could be reversed, for I fully believed it had been finally pronounced by Him who changeth not...both disease and mental agony came from Him...And I have now, and I hope I shall have for ever, the greatest cause to bless His holy name for this.. for having thus taught me to know how evil and bitter a thing sin is, and to set a juster estimate upon his favour. Thus he taught me also to value and love the Saviour...¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ RGJ, F.Hale to his mother, 25 December, 1854

¹⁴⁸ See Hibbert, C.(ed) , *The Recollections of Rifleman Harris as told to Henry Curling* (Military Book Society, London, 1970) originally published as H.Curling (ed), *Recollections of Rifleman Harris* (London, 1848), p.878 for putting a devil-may-care attitude beside intelligence as laudable attributes characteristic in the regiment during the Peninsular War.

¹⁴⁹ For example, 'When the Riflemen were occupying their camp on the Pyrenees, an owl had taken up its quarters with them, and always perched on the tent of Lieutenant Doyle, who was killed at the Nivelle. Its accustomed haunt being gone, it transferred its perch to Captain Duncan's tent. The joke ran, in the rough mirth of the camp, that he must be the next on the roster, a joke of which he neither liked the point nor saw the wit. Yet so it was that he fell in this day of Tarbes'. Cope, *History*, pp.170-171.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.175, 179.

Likewise, Charles Beckwith, as we have seen, turned to religion while convalescing after losing his leg. Also, Maximilian Hammond, as well as falling under the influence of Captain Lawrence, experienced 'the dawn indeed of those convictions which...led to the bringing in of a better hope' when, first, he witnessed the illness of a fellow officer on a hunting expedition in the forest near Halifax, Nova Scotia, and then when he was nearly drowned himself crossing a river with a load of moose meat,

from that time he dated his determined seizure of the means of escape for himself from a greater if not so apparent danger.¹⁵¹

And Lord Seaton was likewise affected by a wound in the head in Holland in 1799. He became less wild, became extremely abstemious, and refused 'to follow the fashionable habit of swearing'.¹⁵²

A concern for religious preparation for death was frequently mentioned in diaries and letters in times of danger. George Simmons wrote to his parents in 1809 from Portugal,

A soldier thinks of nothing that has passed by; it is only the present time that concerns him...I wish I could say he was a little more prepared for a speedy exit into a future state.¹⁵³

Maximilian Hammond was anxious, too, to bring individuals to God before their deaths. Toward that end, he visited not only the sick of the regiment, but, for example, the civilian victims of typhoid in the fever sheds in Canada in 1847.¹⁵⁴ Similarly, William Norcott, on hearing of the death of John Newbury, Evangelical paymaster of his battalion, in 1855, was concerned about the state of his soul at death. He wrote in his diary that Arthur Lawrence, who had seen him, reported, 'he is at peace with God, and I am sure of it.'¹⁵⁵

There are references, too, in the Rifle Brigade material, to belief in the operation of Providence and the will of God in determining the deaths of soldiers. The belief of Harry

¹⁵¹ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.22-34.

¹⁵² G.C.Moore-Smith, *The Life of John Colborne, Field-Marshal Lord Seaton: Compiled from his Letters, Records of his Conversations, and Other Sources* (John Murray, London, 1903), p.16. Bishop Bethune of Canada later described Seaton as a man of 'decided religious impressions' and 'most anxious for the welfare and advancement of the Church of England to which he belonged'. Cited *ibid.*, p.322.

¹⁵³ Simmons, *Twenty-five Years*, p.36.

¹⁵⁴ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp. 111-125.

¹⁵⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 6, 3 August 1855.

Smith's father that his sons were saved at Waterloo by Providence has been noted. Similarly, Arthur Lawrence wrote to his wife in 1854 of God's protecting hand saving him at Inkerman.¹⁵⁶ And William Norcott frequently referred to Providence sparing his life, as on 30th July, 1855, when his groom was killed riding his master's horse. He also wrote on 11th September, 1854, 'If He determines my death – wisdom and goodness will be at the bottom of it.' Norcott also, rather inconsistently perhaps, when he was dangerously ill at Scutari, recorded discussing with Coote Buller of the 1st Battalion, a fellow convalescent, his support for theories of predestination.¹⁵⁷

Communion was apparently a normal prelude to battle for Rifle Brigade officers during the Crimean War. Though resorting to the divine may have had a hint of superstition or insurance attached, this concern with religion at the last suggests that Christian belief was, in the final resort, at the heart of many individuals' world view. One officer wrote of the evening preceding the attack on the Redan,

Captain Hammond entered the mess-room, where all the officers were assembled, after having volunteered for duties of special danger on the following day. The real feeling of each officer may probably be guessed; but the conversation was generally of that light and thoughtless character usual in a mess-room. An orderly came to the door, and having whispered an announcement, the party prepared to break up. 'Hammond, we are all going to take the sacrament, of course you will come.' 'I wish I had known; why did they not tell me,' was the reply; and, after a few moments hesitation, Captain Hammond added, 'No, I am not prepared now.' The whole of the officers then repaired to the little wooden chapel...he had, on the preceding Sabbath communicated at Constantinople, and had found it good to be there.¹⁵⁸

There is also evidence to show that the Christian content of the burial service was important for at least some other-ranks of the regiment. There is, for example, the story of the wife of Private Cochran, who was taken by Rifleman Harris to the body of her husband who had been killed at the battle of Rolica, in the Peninsular War. Harris recalled,

With hands clasped and tears streaming down her cheeks, she took a prayer-book from her pocket, and kneeling down, repeated the service for the dead over the body. When she had finished she appeared a good deal comforted.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol.2, A.Lawrence to his wife, November 1854.

¹⁵⁷ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, 1 December, 1854.

¹⁵⁸ Hammond, *Memoir*, p.338.

¹⁵⁹ Hibbert (ed), *Recollections*, pp.29-32.

Similarly, when Captain John Uniacke died in 1812 from injuries received from the explosion of a mine at Ciudad Rodrigo, his pay-sergeant was determined that he be buried in consecrated ground, and persuaded a Spanish priest to lay him to rest in a Roman Catholic graveyard, by reassuring him the officer was Irish.¹⁶⁰

In short, some individuals at least saw preparation for death in a Christian light, in terms of saving faith; or the power of repentance, prayer and absolution; or of Providential dispensation. And others found comfort in the efficacy of the sacrament and in the assurance of a Christian funeral. Personal religion was perhaps most urgently and most commonly experienced during service in the regiment in connection with illness and death, and a religious burial, in readiness for the hereafter, was the most basic of religious aspirations.

5.3 The Religious Activities of Officers After Service

Seven Rifle Brigade officers took Holy Orders after retiring from the army. John Walsh (retired 1833), John Buckner (retired 1836), Sir William Cope (retired 1839), Charles William Doherty (retired 1851), the Hon George Barrington Legge (retired 1858), James Hook (retired 1862), and Henry George Bowden (retired 1867) were all ordained. Maximilian Hammond also considered the priesthood, as we have seen: he first thought of it in 1847, but decided, after consulting a number of friends, that his career in the army was marked out by God's Providence. In 1855 he went as far as to have an interview with the Archbishop of Canterbury who agreed to ordain him, but the need for officers in the Crimea persuaded him again to stay in the service.¹⁶¹

George Legge (who was in the 1st Battalion from 1851 to 1858), was Rector of Packington, Warwick, from 1860-1, where his patron was the 6th Earl of Aylesford,¹⁶² and

¹⁶⁰ Mrs Fitzmaurice, *Recollections*, pp.183-4.

¹⁶¹ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.128-31, 305-6.

¹⁶² George Legge's eldest brother William married Lady Augusta Finch, sister of the 6th Earl of Aylesford.

Vicar of Whittington, Lichfield, from 1878-1882).¹⁶³ Little is known of his religious views or ministry, but it would appear that he continued to approve of the army even after turning to the church: in 1888 George Legge put down his son Hugh (born 1870) for a place in the Rifle Brigade although he did not subsequently join. Even more obscure is the clerical career of Buckner, who served in the regiment from 1826 to 1836 and who died at the Vicarage in Bapchild, near Sittingbourne, in Kent. And likewise no information has been found about James Hook (3rd Battalion, 1855-1862). Charles Doherty, who served in the regiment from 1848-1851 was Vicar of Worle in Somerset from 1870 until his death in 1874.

There is more information, however, about the religious life of the other three ordained officers. First, Henry Bowden, an Etonian who was in the 3rd Battalion from 1855 to 1856, was ordained in the Church of Rome. From 1867 until 1900 he was a Catholic priest at the fashionable and influential oratory in South Kensington. Also, some information survives relating to the clerical career of John Walsh in a letter of July, 1886, from his son, Colonel G.P. Walsh, to Sir William Cope. According to this, Walsh was born in Ireland, the son of another soldier turned priest, and he was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, taking his degree at fifteen years of age. He joined the 95th regiment (later the Rifle Brigade) in time to fight at Waterloo, where he received three wounds and lost a leg. He served as a barrack master in Ireland, 'and acted in other appointments' before taking Holy Orders in 1837.

He was not ordained to any curacy, the Bishop of Derry taking his word that he would never sue him for maintenance. Lord Hill Commander-in-Chief his dear friend got a promise of a living for him from the government – Conservative – the day before he was ordained the government out [sic] and the radical minister would not carry out the pledge. He entered the Church out of true love for the Church and religion and not for salary. He often took sole charge of parishes but in his position he said he could never serve under a rector. He did once accept a licensed curacy when the vicar was abroad and was appointed to Newbarton[?] in Suffolk.

Walsh travelled, preaching, 'constantly all over England for public charities', and according to his son, 'was a splendid speaker and in the pulpit he carried away his audience with his rare

¹⁶³ Legge's brother Hon Augustus Legge was Bishop of Lichfield from 1891 to 1913. It may well be significant to George Legge's career that the 2nd Earl of Dartmouth - 1731-1801 - was a prominent lay Evangelical patron attached to Methodism, who purchased nearly a dozen livings which he gave to Evangelical clergy. He placed Henry Venn at Huddersfield and John Newton at Olney. See Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, p.60.

power of oratory'. The Queen reportedly wanted him to preach the sermon at the funeral of the Duke of Wellington, but the Chaplain-General, Gleig, objected.

So my father went to Dublin and preached the funeral sermon to the troops there. I was with him. Sir Edward Blakeney, commanding in Dublin, stood up as he walked up the aisle. The officers and men stood up too and never was such a sight seen. His text "I have fought a good fight..." was just the thing. The late Duke wrote for the sermon and it was bound in silk... This I believe is still at Apsley House.

Bishop Blomfield¹⁶⁴ at one time forbade him to preach in London, disapproving of army men entering the Church according to Walsh's son, but on meeting with him, relented, and 'made a full apology and afterwards went to hear him preach'. Walsh's burial monument at St Saviour's, Jersey, reportedly reads,

He was a humble Christian, an uncompromising Protestant, a staunch Conservative, a good clergyman, a chivalrous soldier, an eloquent orator, a learned scholar, and a talented author.

He apparently kept in touch with the Rifle Brigade after retiring, meeting with old comrades on the anniversary of Waterloo each year, and,

In General Dillon's [Sir Martin Dillon] book presented to the royal family, and to the officers of the various battalions of the Rifle Brigade will be found my father's portrait.¹⁶⁵

He was photographed at one time wearing both his cassock and his Waterloo medal.

Sir William Cope, the recipient of this letter, was himself rector of Easton, in Hampshire, and a minor canon of Westminster. He, too, was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and he served five years in the Rifle Brigade. He took an M.A. at Magdalene Hall, Oxford, in 1840 where he seems to have been captivated by Tractarianism. No information relating to his ministry has been found, but it is known that he corresponded with Charles Kingsley. Kingsley's living at Eversley belonged to Sir William, having been given to Kingsley by Sir John Cope, 11th Bart., in 1844. Charles Kingsley knew Cope well, but held him in low

¹⁶⁴ C.J. Blomfield, bishop of London, held moderately Evangelical views. He supported the reforming work of the Chaplain-General Rev. G.R. Gleig, an ex-officer, Chaplain-General to the Forces from 1844-1875. See Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.87.

¹⁶⁵ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol.2, pp.235-242.

esteem, remarking, for example, 'poor man, he is very pleasant when sane', and, on the subject of his extreme Puseyite views, 'why he stays in our church I cannot conceive'.¹⁶⁶

Nonetheless, Cope and Kingsley discussed theology in some depth. In December, 1858, Kingsley replied to a letter from Cope on the subject of miracles in St Augustine,

I cannot find the passage which your friend quotes from St. Augustine...I have run my eye over the miracles which he mentions as having occurred under his own eyes...I find but three...God forbid that I should deny them. How can I limit the wonders of grace, who find daily the wonders of nature beyond my comprehension or expectation...

And he wrote to Cope on Christmas Eve in the same year,

...the part of your letter which deserves a long answer...is what you say about natural science and Dean Buckland.¹⁶⁷ It is exceedingly comfortable to me, who know nothing of him, as proving him to have been the wise man I believed him. As for the fact - my doctrine has been for years, if I may speak of myself - that 'omnia exeunt in mysterium' (a saying, I think, attributed to St. Augustine); that below all natural phenomena, we come to a transcendental - in plain English, a miraculous ground...I am deeply touched by what you say as to the miracles of grace. It is all true, and most necessary to be preached now - to me as well as to others; for one is apt to forget grace in nature, the unseen in the seen. As you say, - after the crowning miracle of this most blessed night, all miracles are possible.¹⁶⁸

Sir William Cope was prominent among the mourners, including Dean Stanley of Westminster and the Bishop of Winchester, Samuel Wilberforce, who met Kingsley's coffin for burial at Eversley on 28th January, 1875.¹⁶⁹ The Sunday after the funeral, Cope preached the morning sermon on Kingsley's life at Eversley Church. Charles Kingsley was attracted to the army and knew Catherine Marsh. Kingsley's tract, *Brave Words to Brave Soldiers and Sailors* (1855), at first published anonymously, was an attempt to spread the gospel to the services. It is not known whether Sir William Cope co-operated with him in missionary work to the army, but Sir William was undoubtedly aware of his views.

¹⁶⁶ Cited S. Chitty, *The Beast and the Monk: A Life of Charles Kingsley* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1974), pp.145-146.

¹⁶⁷ William Buckland (1784-1856) was professor of mineralogy at Oxford, 1813, and reader in geology, 1819. He was canon of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1825, and Dean of Westminster, 1845-56. He upheld the Mosaic account of the flood.

¹⁶⁸ F.E. Kingsley (ed), *Charles Kingsley: His Letters and Memories of His Life* (Kegan Paul, London, 1885), pp.219-21.

¹⁶⁹ R.G. Wilberforce, *The Life of the Rt. Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, DD: Lord Bishop of Oxford and Afterwards of Winchester* (Murray, London, 1881), pp.305, 339, 370.

Again, Cope was no minor figure in the regiment (as well as being the regimental historian, his son served in it for thirty years), and his strong religious views, developed in the 1840s, do not appear to have put him out of step in any way with the corps.

Besides the ordained officers from the Rifle Brigade, Charles Beckwith, who remained a layman, devoted his time entirely to religious work after his service. Beckwith was a moderate Evangelical who settled in the Piemontese valley, in North-west Italy, among the Waldensians, a long-established Protestant people. Beckwith retired from active service after, like Walsh, losing a leg at Waterloo. He had entered the army at the age of fourteen, and was on full pay in the Rifle Brigade for fifteen years. Beckwith, who had experienced an Anglican upbringing in Nova Scotia, 'listened to the voice of God' and took to Bible reading while convalescing after his wound. He set about a programme of self-education in 'theology, history, political economy and agriculture', and, looking for a philanthropic mission, made an abortive attempt in the 1820s to help working people in Spitalfields, in London.

In 1827, while waiting at Apsley House to see the Duke of Wellington, with whom he was on friendly terms, he saw a copy of Dr.W.S.Gilly's *Narrative of an Excursion to the Mountains of Piemont and Researches Among the Vaudois or Waldenses, Protestant Inhabitants of the Alps* (1824)¹⁷⁰ which led him to travel himself to the Piemontese valley. He settled there, becoming a patron and instigator of educational and church reform. He gave large sums of money towards the building of churches and parsonages, and organised the revival of primary schools, and the foundation of secondary schools, and of further education colleges for the training of teachers and ministers. He was also involved in hospital reform. Beckwith was active, with Gilly, in the establishment of a Protestant mission at Turin, linked to that at Genoa, and in the establishment of a Waldensian Evangelical Church at Turin.

Beckwith's ultimate aim was the evangelization of Roman Catholic Italy.¹⁷¹ He tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Presbyterian Waldensian Church (which he believed could act as

¹⁷⁰ William Stephen Gilly (1789-1855), was a canon of Durham Cathedral.

¹⁷¹ Henry Drummond and Robert Haldane, founders of the Continental Society to Evangelize Europe, led the evangelical drive of the 1820s and 1830s to convert Catholics abroad, and to regenerate the Protestant Churches of Europe, which they viewed as Socinian. (Socinianism held that those who

the spring-board for mass conversions) to conform to Anglican liturgy and organisation. This, in his view, would make the Waldensian Church more congenial to the Catholic mind than 'rebellious' and 'disobedient' continental Presbyterian churches. Beckwith published a number of religious works in Italian propounding his views, including, in 1853, *Horae Apocalypticae, ossia le Profezie di Daniele e dell'Apocalisse di San Giovanni*, 'one of a series of attempts to explain the only prophetic book of the New Covenant', drawn largely from the Evangelical E.B.Elliott's well-known *Horae Apocalypticae* (1844).¹⁷² Beckwith aligned himself with no particular branch of the Church of England, but was an avowed patriot and Evangelical. He belonged,

Not certainly to the *Broad or Latitudinarian Church*, from which his belief, in all points coinciding with the old and wholesome evangelical doctrine, would have withheld him. Neither was it to the *High Church*, the attachment of which to ritual would certainly have had for him a considerable attraction. But its exaggeration on many points inspired him with distrust; and this whole party had, in his eyes, the double fault – first, of giving to tradition in matters of faith an importance which Beckwith attached to the Bible alone; second, of driving onward almost inevitably to Romanism by exaggerating the value of episcopal ordination. But he by no means attached himself to the *Low Church* party, although their doctrines were identical with his own...Certain customs peculiar to members of that party...that of their fondness for prayer-meetings, where the greatest approval is often given to discourses neither of the wisest nor always of the most truthful nature, and where truth is frequently sacrificed to make the subject patronised for the time more interesting...A pure and open Anglicanism was his sole standard of a visible Church and of ecclesiastical organisation.¹⁷³

Beckwith's religious work was done entirely outside the army, although he had become a committed Evangelical while still in the service. Nonetheless, like Cope, he kept strong links with the regiment after retiring. He corresponded with George Simmons, with Harry Smith and with William Napier (whose brother Sir Charles Napier was in the regiment in its early years). Again, there is no evidence to suggest any conflict between Beckwith's strong religious views and his support and affection for the regiment. He had, as we have seen, several kinsmen in the regiment.¹⁷⁴ Charles Beckwith was one of ten children, and he had two brothers, Henry and

followed Christ's virtues would be saved, but it rejected the Trinity, the deity of Christ, and original sin.) See D.M.Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, (Croom Helm, London, 1984), pp.24-25.

¹⁷² Meille, *General Beckwith*, pp.229-242.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.* pp.288-9.

¹⁷⁴ RGJ, Folio 2, Simmons MSS; RGJ, C.Beckwith to W.Napier, 1813; C.Beckwith to W.Napier, 20 April, 1840, cited in Meille, *General Beckwith*, pp. 298-303.

Sydney, some fifteen and sixteen years his junior, who were both in the Rifle Brigade. Henry joined in 1824 and Sydney in 1828. Their cousin wrote,

He may be said in many respects to have acted a father's part towards them after their father's death when they were still at school.¹⁷⁵

It is safe to assume that he encouraged his brothers in their military careers, and, indeed, he arranged at least one of their Rifle Brigade commissions.¹⁷⁶

Finally, there is evidence that several of the Rifle Brigade officers who were returned as Members of Parliament were active in religious questions. George Dundas was opposed to the admission of Jews into Parliament; Lord Charles Wellesley supported 'well-considered measures combining religious instruction with general education'; Sir Henry Wilmot was a staunch supporter of the link between church and state, and he opposed Gladstone on church questions, as did Edward Somerset; Thomas Perronet Thompson was opposed to all religious endowments; and Sir John Villiers Shelley was opposed to church rates and grants from the public purse other than for secular purposes.¹⁷⁷

Piety, then, was by no means rare among Riflemen before, during or after service at any time in the early and mid-nineteenth century. The Rifle Brigade contained a significant number of devout men and they were to be found throughout the regiment, although the 2nd Battalion may have experienced a particularly strong resurgence of Evangelicalism from the 1840s to 1860s. These outstandingly religious men came from a range of backgrounds including the landed gentry and aristocracy, as well as, in a few cases at least, the lower classes. Their religion was fostered by continuous links with civilian society (through kin, friends, clergy and printed material), and they varied in their religious opinion.

Nonetheless, even given these examples, it seems that over all only a minority of Riflemen (and an especially small minority in the other ranks) were overtly and actively devout. Yet, as we have seen, the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness, to which Christianity was central, evidently touched the regiment as a whole. The next chapter will examine the evidence

¹⁷⁵ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol.2, T.Beckwith to Cope, [undated]

¹⁷⁶ See above, p.139.

¹⁷⁷ M.Stenton and S.Lees, *Who's Who of British Members of Parliament* (Harvester Press, London, 1976 and 1978) vols 1 and 2.

for irreligion (including indifference to religious activity) in the corps, and will look to a broader understanding of contemporary Christian belief to make sense of this conflicting material.

Chapter 6: Faith, Morality and Gentlemanliness

While there is abundant evidence, then, that individuals of all ranks in the Rifle Brigade displayed personal religious devotion and maintained contacts with religious society, this must be set against contrary evidence for irreligion in the corps. There survives, it seems, no single example of an observation that this was a religious regiment to match, for example, Henry Havelock's praise for the 78th Highlanders in 1857.¹ On the contrary, several sources would indicate the opposite. For example, Captain John Kincaid wrote in his *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade* of an incident during the Peninsular War, in 1810,

...my attention was attracted to a group of British officers on their knees in the middle of the street - an attitude so unusual in those days, even in the proper place, that I could not resist my curiosity and on approaching found them surrounded by a pyramid of letters, the contents of the mail just arrived from England.²

And again, Quartermaster William Surtees, then a private soldier, wrote describing a sea voyage in 1806,

We passed a Sunday on our voyage home, at a certain hour of which our pious naval commander (Lord Gambier) made signal for the whole fleet to lay to, and have divine service, that is, in such ships as there were chaplains on board of. This caused the irreligious and profligate part of our people on board the Princess Caroline to blaspheme and storm at a terrible rate, for being so long detained when the wind was fair.

It happened when we arrived in the Roads at Yarmouth...that a terrible gale began to blow, which baffled all exertions to withstand it...During the gale, I understand a sailor was blown off the foreyard; and nearly at the same moment a

¹ J.C.Pollock, *The Way to Glory: The Life of Havelock of Lucknow* (John Murray, London, 1957), p.161.

² J.Kincaid, *Adventures in the Rifle Brigade in the Peninsula, France and the Netherlands from 1808 to 1815* (1830) (Peter Davies, London, 1929), p.14.

woman, one of our corporal's wives, fell down the hatches into the hold and broke her back, of which, indeed, she afterwards recovered, but never after regained her upright posture.

These scoffing gentlemen before mentioned, attributed the whole of our misfortunes to the delay occasioned by the divine service before adverted to, and were not sparing of invective against the individual who caused its performance, forgetful, it would seem, that *He*, whom that commander invoked on that day, holds the winds in *His* hand, and can at pleasure let them loose on an ungodly fleet, whether for correction or judgement, at what time, and in what manner best pleases him.³

Likewise, David Gordon recorded in his journal in 1855, at the camp near Balaklava,

In many respects this is a rum place - you often read in the newspapers of the religious tendencies of British soldiers and of the deathbed scenes of devout warriors - well my friend Blundell [Lieutenant Henry Blundell of the Rifle Brigade] and I attended the sacrament Sunday before last. And out of all the brigade (some 3 or 4,000 men) there were only seven present - and this including the brigadier Lord William Paulett and two or three Colonels of regiments - Even the excuse that the Band hut of the 57th (the place of the ceremony) was difficult to find would hardly account for so small an attendance. But, seriously speaking, your British soldier is not only an irreligious dog, but a blasphemous one. Their constant oaths of most extraordinary invention would be revolting, were they not so utterly ridiculous. You know I am no professed saint and hold myself worse than many, but really sometimes it is "un peu trop".⁴

And William Norcott noted in his journal for 5th November, 1854,

Divine Service...I believe the men would have become brutes, but for this one day and the 1½ hours silence.⁵

The evidence for irreligion in the regiment is too frequently found and too persuasive to dismiss. Certainly it is a warning against exaggerating levels of piety. However, it will be argued here that much of this evidence cannot be taken at face value. Rather it suggests both variety in religious opinion in the army, derived from wider Christian debate, and an overspanning, shared outlook in thought and taste across social and denominational divisions. (And this, it can be argued, was expressed in the notion of regenerated gentlemanliness.) It also aligns the regiment with the secular (or inactive Christian) society revealed in the 1851 census.⁶

In particular it emerges that depictions of the regiment as irreligious often centred on a connection made by contemporaries inside and outside the military between conduct and belief. Judgements were, in many cases, based on a fundamental assumption that specific conduct

³ W.Surtees, *Twenty-five Years in the Rifle Brigade* (1833) (Military Book Society, London, 1973), pp.71-72.

⁴ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 12 November 1855.

⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, 5 November 1854.

⁶ See O.Chadwick, *The Secularization of the European Mind in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1975), pp.89-91.

(such as, on the one hand, attending divine service, or, on the other, swearing) was an indicator of whether an individual was devout. This general view was common across Christian denominations. However, while there emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century broad agreement over the main tenets of respectability and virtue and their expression in conduct at least to a minimum standard (never to go to church, or to swear outrageously, might be universally condemned), there were also sharp differences in opinion throughout this period as to what in detail constituted upright and Christian behaviour. In particular, there was controversy over Evangelical standards. And this created a deep ambivalence in estimates of religiosity. In addition, there were in operation in the regiment, and in the army more widely, a number of other standards for morality that cut across and ran parallel to Christian codes. Conduct such as drunkenness, the use of prostitutes, or disregard for the Sabbath, which were sometimes taken to show the irreligious state of the army, frequently occurred in the context of those other morality systems, and therefore occurred outside considerations of religion, rather than in deliberate opposition to Christianity. The one did not preclude the other. As a result, behaviour appears as an unreliable indicator of moral sensibility, and of religious belief, and much of the evidence pertaining to the godless state of the regiment is undermined.

This chapter will examine attitudes to behaviour in the regiment, and balance Christian views of conduct against other moral systems, before presenting material indicating the presence of strong institutional and cultural religious feeling.

6.1 Christian Morality

The use by contemporaries of proscribed moral behaviour to indicate a lack of religious feeling in the army needs to be seen in the context of the highly influential late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century evangelical revival. Evangelical opinion developed over several decades in that period a strict, though much-debated, code of suitable Christian conduct as the

standard by which to judge eligibility for divine favour. Evangelicals put more emphasis than non-evangelicals on original sin and redemption. Their central doctrines concerned salvation, and they saw the cross as the only means of restoring a sinful individual's relationship with God, and of allowing access to heaven. For evangelicals, the sacrifice of Jesus called for a personal response in this life.⁷ Hence conduct was taken as a window on the soul. Any slip into sin, evident in reprehensible conduct, could signal that an individual was not fully converted and was resistant to the influence of the Holy Spirit. All other unblemished deeds could thus be outweighed on the day of reckoning, and damnation ensue. Negative behaviour was therefore often the focus of evangelical attention. This outlook was distinctive, but nonetheless it informed and ran parallel to a broader drive for moral reform in society (rooted also in wider social and economic changes of the period) that was not specific to particular theological views. Much contemporary criticism of soldiers coming from inside and outside the army⁸ should be viewed, I would argue, in the light of this basically evangelical view of the link between specific standards of behaviour and the salvation of souls. but also in the context of a continual redefining in wider middle- and upper-class culture of standards of virtue and conduct.⁹

Christianity of various complexions stood behind much army reform work undertaken from outside and inside the military,¹⁰ and it provided a broadly united direction in harmony

⁷ As Ian Bradley has written, 'The starting point of Evangelical theology was the doctrine of the total depravity of man...The Evangelicals were preoccupied with the fate that awaited sinful man when he came face to face with a terrible and powerful God of Judgement...To escape the eternal damnation which was the inevitable fate awaiting erring humanity, the individual must achieve regeneration of his soul by utterly repenting of his sins and fully accepting Christ's death as an atonement for them...Although good works played no part in the Evangelical scheme of salvation as such, they were regarded as the only sure evidence of a true conversion. Furthermore, the Evangelicals held that a regenerate man could have no pleasure in anything but striving to please his new Lord.' I.C. Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness: The Evangelical Impact on the Victorians* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1976), pp.20-22, 148-9. For definitions of Evangelicalism, see also D.M. Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture* (Croom Helm, London, 1984), pp.9-15.

⁸ See M. Trustram, *Women of the Regiment: Marriage and the Victorian Army* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1984), pp.4-5. Rev. G.R. Gleig, who bridged the civilian-military divide, was rumoured to be 'Emeritus' who wrote pieces on army reform for the *Times*, covering religious and moral but also professional questions. Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.87.

⁹ See Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp.1-9.

¹⁰ See K. Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: An Appraisal of their Social Work in the Victorian Era* (Geoffrey Bles, London, 1962), pp.260-262; see also S. Wood, 'The Other Half: Further Developments in Recording the History of British Military Temperance Movements', *National Army Museum Annual Report*, 1986, pp.28-30 for the efforts of Miss Lucy Papillon at Hythe, and Rev. Charles Carus-Wilson at Portsmouth, in establishing Soldiers' Homes as a part of the temperance movement; see also *ibid.*

with evangelical goals. Nonetheless, it was not always easy to agree on the proper interpretation of Christian conduct when even the evangelicals themselves, though sharing characteristic beliefs, varied in precise doctrine, espousing differing degrees of strictness. This was evidently a problem in the Rifle Brigade. All the denominations recognised at different times by the army were present in the regiment, although proportions of each varied according to date, and to the regional origin of different intakes of new officers and recruits.¹¹ Each denomination, and indeed the various shades of belief within each (not least the High, Broad and Low branches of the Church of England), had differing degrees of worry about, for example, dancing, dress, billiards, cards and racing.¹² There are several instances of disagreements regarding correct conduct resulting from conflicting Christian opinion recorded for the regiment. Examples can be given for alcohol, the keeping of the Sabbath and the theatre. These will serve to show the range of conduct acceptable at various times to those of all ranks who might claim to be believers (a large majority of Riflemen as will be argued below) and in particular to officers claiming a gentlemanly identity.

6.1.1 Alcohol

Temperance was closely, though not exclusively, connected with evangelicalism.¹³ (Father Theobald Mathew, for example, was a leading figure from the Roman Catholic

for the combined influence of public concern with the work of the Barrack-Master Captain Buckley in precipitating the foundation of the Chatham Garrison Institute in 1857; also Catherine Marsh, *English Hearts and English Hands* (London, 1858); also A Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home: The Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899* (Croom Helm, London, 1977), pp.163-165.

¹¹ J.Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825-1875* (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1976) would suggest that the Lincolnshire men brought by George Simmons when he joined the regiment (see above, p.114) probably had Methodist and Church of England backgrounds. In the Rifle Brigade Depot in 1825 there were seventy-two Catholic privates and 140 Protestant; two Catholic corporals and ten Protestant; and one Catholic sergeant and eleven Protestant. Southampton Univ., WP1/837/12, Monthly Return of Rifle Brigade Depot, 30 December 1825.

¹² See Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp.70-75.

¹³ Moderation in drink was associated with high professional standards from the foundation of the regiment. William Stewart and Coote Manningham wrote in the regimental regulations, 'The very best security which there perhaps is for regularity and good order, is sobriety. Any officer who is acquainted with soldiers, and any soldier who chooses to open his mind and reflect, will agree with the assertion, that intoxication, drunkenness, is the cause of two thirds of the irregularities and consequent punishments which ensue in a British regiment. The very best soldiers in the world are probably the Hungarian Hussars, and if any one reason more strong than another can be given it is, perhaps, they

Church.)¹⁴ And total abstinence in particular was normally associated with vital religion.¹⁵ Evidence for the Rifle Brigade from the 1840s confirms this link. The first example of complete abstinence in the Rifle Brigade other ranks comes from 1841.¹⁶ Private Richard Fletcher of the 1st Battalion wrote to his brother and sister in Leicester from the Elmo Barracks in Malta,¹⁷

The only friend I have his the Lord him I will look up to every day and hour of my life he has promised to be my Guide and Comfort through all the troubles and Trials that may befall me whilst I am abroad and oh had I paid more attention to his sabbaths instead of going to public houses I need not been where I am but I assure you my dear Brother I have seen my folly in every point and to my sorrow and never will I do as I have done in former days. I have left of drinking and I have not drunk either spirits or wine this 4 months...when I look Back upon my former conduct it is like a dagger piercing my heart and my Blood runs through my veins as cold as death.¹⁸

Fletcher, who had moved with the corps from England earlier in the same year had evidently had contact with religious temperance through his civilian wife. It is not clear from his letter whether he came into conflict with others in the regiment or received encouragement.¹⁹

are the soberest'. C.Manningham, *Standing Regulations for the Rifle Brigade, Late 95th (Rifle) Regiment, Formed at Blatchington Barracks, August 25th, 1800* (1800) (T.Egerton, London, 1819), p.48. For the essentially non-religious motivation of Lord Frederick Fitzclarence in countering drunkenness through reform, see H.Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army 1830-54* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1984), pp.29, 34, 58.

¹⁴ Father Mathew (1790-1856) was from an Anglo-Irish landowning family, and entered the Capuchin order. He became a well-known temperance campaigner in England after visiting London in 1843, and he lectured in America. See B.Harrison, *Dictionary of British Temperance Biography*, Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin Supplement, Aids to Research No 1, 1973.

¹⁵ See B.Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians: The Temperance Question in England 1815-1872* (Faber, London, 1971), pp.179-184.

¹⁶ Drinking by the other ranks can usefully be set in the context of drinking customs among sections of the working classes for whom it was not merely a panacea for boredom or hardship, but was associated with physical stamina, protection from cold and relief from pain. It was, too, for many, central in community life, for example in the customs of certain trades, at markets and fairs, and at meals. Alcohol was also associated with the independence of men to work when they wanted to, and to control their own money. See Harrison, *Drink and the Victorians*, pp.39-44. Furthermore, drink was associated with religious festivals and with wakes and baptisms. Thus moderation and complete abstinence (as a religious position) were probably sharply differentiated for the other ranks. Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp.68-69 suggests that a factor in working-class reluctance to join the army in this period was the absence there of chapel and church activities which had replaced traditional festivities in areas where Methodism and the pietistic traditions of dissent (including temperance) were strong.

¹⁷ Although the Rifle Brigade had a good reputation for conduct and high morale, it had, for example, 121 cases of drunkenness in the 2nd Battalion and 124 in the Reserve Battalion in December 1842 alone, or one in eight men. National Library of Scotland, MSS 2843, f.9, R.Irton to Brown, 1 February 1843, cited Strachan *Wellington's Legacy*, p.66.

¹⁸ RGJ, Folio 1, R.Fletcher to his brother and sister, 14 June 1841.

¹⁹ The Rifle Brigade may have had contact with British Nonconformist temperance through magazines like *The Soldiers' Magazine and Military Chronicle* which began circulation in 1828. S.Wood, 'The Other Half: Further Developments in Recording the History of British Military Temperance

However, Maximilian Hammond, a strong Evangelical as we have seen, was furthering the movement in the 2nd Battalion in Canada in 1847 and 1848. He hired 'competent lecturers' on temperance with his own money and, many of the men relinquished, and never resumed, the use of intoxicating beverages'.²⁰ Hammond did not record how many took the pledge, or whether he was the first officer to encourage the movement among the Rifle Brigade other ranks. (It is possible that he may have been in touch with individuals in the American temperance movement which predated the British, and was already strong by the 1830s.²¹ The 2nd Battalion had been posted to Bermuda in 1842, Nova Scotia in 1843, and Canada in 1846.) In any case, the survival of temperance medals for the mid-century indicates that a number of men subsequently took the pledge with official approval.²²

Rifle Brigade Evangelicals were not united, however, on the question of total abstinence. Several of them, evidently the majority, saw no harm in alcohol in principle, though they were not in favour of drunkenness, and these supported moderate temperance (in opposition to the stand taken by Fletcher and Hammond). William Norcott made the most comment on drinking, in his Crimean War diaries. He was not teetotal himself and did not disapprove of the men drinking. On 27th April, 1854, he noted that he entertained a French captain and four French soldiers in his tent and they were 'rather astonished at the whiskey (I had only this and rum left to offer them)'. And on 29th April he gave his servant Harding a

Movements', *National Army Museum Annual Report*, 1986, p.27. It may also have been influenced by Henry Havelock's pioneering Regimental Temperance Society established in the 13th Regiment in 1836. By 1838 this was well-known in the army, and thirty other units in India had begun similar organizations. On average these attracted about a quarter of the regimental strength. Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.28. The appeal of temperance to Private Fletcher in 1841 does not appear peculiar in this context. The only Rifle Brigade officer to serve alongside Havelock in the 13th Regiment was Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Kelly. Havelock served in the 13th from 1822 to 1844, and Kelly from 1808 to 1825. Kelly then served in the Rifle Brigade until 1841.

²⁰ M.M.Hammond, *Memoir of Captain M.M.Hammond, Rifle Brigade* (James Nisbet, London, 1858), pp.136-137.

²¹ S.Wood, 'Temperance and its Rewards in the British Army', *National Army Museum Annual Report*, 1976-1977, p.11.

²² The Rifle Brigade may have been unusual in encouraging temperance in the army outside India before the Regimental and Garrison Institutes were established in the early 1850s in towns in the South of England, and before the resurgence of the army temperance movement in the 1860s under the influence of the Rev. John Gregson, friend of Henry Havelock. Several nineteenth-century temperance medals are held in store at the Royal Green Jackets Museum, although it has not been possible to discover exact dates for them.

whiskey and had a rum and water himself, after they had become drenched in a shower of rain. Harding's drink must have been potent, for it sent him to sleep 'half drunk', and he 'unfortunately' neglected to make Norcott's dinner. It is significant that in Norcott's eyes the fault was neglect of duty, not drinking.²³ Likewise on the 21st June, he wrote that he believed porter to be better for the men's health than milk. Norcott was not, all the same, a heavy drinker. He recorded on his wedding anniversary on 4th July, 'I had some whiskey and water which I do not touch once a week'.²⁴ And he was proud that he had had 'pluck enough to eschew gin and water' at the club in Valetta.²⁵

Similarly, David Gordon, another officer with Evangelical leanings, complained twice in his journal for November 1855 of the drunkenness of the men, but went on to comment that he believed this was caused not by the ration grog, but by the extra drink they were able to buy. However, for himself, Gordon described with pleasure 'the great succession of presents' the officers had received over the Christmas period of 1856, including sherry from the Duke of Newcastle (Secretary for War and father of Lord Edward Clinton of the Rifle Brigade) and a large quantity of 'Clumber ale' brought by Clinton. 'We live like fighting cocks, which of course we are by the way.'²⁶ Likewise, Fremantle enjoyed drinking (as well as balls, dinners, theatre and billiards) and he made no reference to any conflict with his conscience although he made efforts to keep the men from excessive indulgence. He found six of them drunk in 1859, in India, and,

Heard it was got from the 72nd canteen, so I posted off there directly after levée and saw the adjt [sic] about it.

²³ Norcott could show a sense of humour about the conduct of the other ranks. He made a sketch in his diary of a nurse at Scutari standing among sly-looking invalids in bed. The caption reads, 'Oh my! The goodness gracious! What wickedness! I'm sure its wickedness!'. RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, 17 January 1855.

²⁴ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 4 July 1854.

²⁵ Ibid., vol 1, 9 March 1854.

²⁶ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 12 January 1856. Norcott described the Duke of Newcastle when he visited the Crimea in August, 1855 as dressing so badly that he looked like his own servant; he made a comical drawing of him as a 'pillar of pepper'. For the Evangelical insistence on the propriety of dressing to fit social station see D.M.Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture* (Croom Helm, London, 1984), pp.68-96.

Likewise, he supported a meeting for athletic games and argued with a civilian, Mr. Menje, who believed that such events led to rather than prevented drinking and swearing.²⁷

Thus of the Evangelicals officers, Hammond supported teetotalism, while Norcott, Gordon and Fremantle found moderate drinking acceptable and even beneficial. Beyond these Evangelicals, some officers appear to have drunk a good deal. The mess accounts of the 2nd Battalion show well-stocked cellars: on November 11th, 1862, the officers had £842 5s 8d worth of wine in stock at Subathoo, and £1755 4s 8d worth in total, and in 1873 the officers resolved to take champagne, sherry, light claret and brandy to Africa.²⁸ And there is one recorded instance of conflict between an officer who was concerned about drink and another who indulged freely. Robert Vans Agnew (the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Vans Agnew, assistant in the Madras army to Major Broadfoot, a close friend of General Sir Henry Havelock, and possibly, therefore another Evangelical or even a Baptist) apparently did not drink, and he was criticised for it by another officer. In his poem of 1840 Agnew lampooned Sir Alfred Horsford (whose religious views are not known, but who rose to be one of the most distinguished members of the regiment),

Tho' the Bart cries (you'll find him all temp'rate of wine)
"Vans, why don't you drink, sure you hang out a *sign*".
What pains, old fellow, thou rare bit of stuff,
Whose nose often says, "I've had claret enough".²⁹

However, uncontrolled drunkenness was generally considered unbecoming for officers. Francis Howard, a Catholic, remembered of the 1860s,

Officers and men when I joined drank more than they do now, and ... I have known a Captain being nursed by his colour-sergeant, when he was suffering from D.T., and trying to bore down the leg of his bed to get at the rat at the bottom of it.³⁰

Yet he noted, too, that he 'never saw an officer drunk in our mess'.

Thus there is evidence for a range of views in the officer corps on drink, and for conflict backed by differing religious opinion. The less strict was the dominant approach, and a

²⁷ NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, 24 August 1859; *ibid.*, 23 August 1859.

²⁸ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules.

²⁹ RGJ, Folio 1, p.12, R.Vans Agnew poem, 5 December 1841. Horsford became Deputy Adjutant-General at the Horse Guards 1860-66, Military Secretary 1874-80, and received the G.C.B. in 1875.

³⁰ F.Howard, *Reminiscences 1848-1890* (John Murray, London, 1924), pp.45-6.

significant number of officers may regularly have drunk to excess. But there was, it seems, a consensus all the same on minimum standards of moderation and control for both other ranks and officers.

6.1.2 The Sabbath

The keeping of the Sabbath was another question of morality related to conduct on which Riflemen of varied religious opinion differed (beyond, again, a base line of agreement). The interpretation of the Fourth Commandment was a controversial question throughout the period. Some Christian groups believed that attending a church or chapel service was sufficient observance. Others believed that Sunday could legitimately be used for a range of self-improvements. Others again prescribed a strict code of serious behaviour which rejected all forms of work, while some, conversely, saw Sunday as a day of relaxation and even fun.

The debate on the Sabbath formed a part of other social and political conflicts. A series of Sabbatarian statutes were produced in the first half of the nineteenth century, and they addressed a variety of concerns. These included the Nonconformist objection to compulsion in religion and their resistance to financial support for Anglican parish churches; economic objections to the regulation of shopping, recreation and learning on Sundays; and anxieties about the adequate provision of churches and chapels in rapidly expanding cities. There was vehement support for the entertainment from non-religious sections of the working classes in particular.³¹ The army was itself on occasion the subject of controversy. In 1803 legislation meant that soldiers could opt, on grounds of conscience, not to drill on a Sunday. And, again, in 1856, after the troops came home from the Crimea, there were fierce public arguments about the propriety of military bands playing in parks on Sundays. Furthermore, army officers were prominent among parliamentary Sabbatarians.

Private Fletcher, as we have seen, repented in 1841 of frequenting public houses on a Sunday. And William Norcott, too, was careful about Sunday observance. On 6th August,

³¹ See J. Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday* (Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1980), p. 206.

1854, for example, he wrote to his wife, 'I do not call communication with you (my gift from Heaven)...breaking the Sabbath'. Likewise, on 5th November he was determined to resist the impulse to sketch on a Sunday, 'knowing He will aid me if I strive and pray for it'.³² And similarly, the Evangelical Arthur Lawrence wrote to his wife after the Alma that he had endured the first broken Sabbath since their arrival, but he hoped it would be the last.³³

These views may not have seemed extraordinary in the regiment. A number of Riflemen had connections with Sabbatarians through their families. Robert Vans Agnew, as has been noted, was related to Sir Andrew Agnew of Lochnaw who supported Sabbatarian causes in parliament,³⁴ as did members of the Ryder and Grey families. Francis George Baring, Earl of Northbrook (who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1870 to 1871) was the great-grandson of Sir Thomas Baring (1772-1848), an Evangelical M.P. and leading supporter of The Lord's Day Observance Society.³⁵ The Hon. Algernon Grosvenor, who served in the regiment from 1865 to 1870, was the son of Robert Grosvenor, 1st Baron Ebury, who introduced a Sabbatarian Sunday Trading bill in 1855 which he was forced to withdraw under pressure from Lord Palmerston after alarming demonstrations: one hundred and fifty thousand people, mainly working-class, assembled in Hyde Park to protest.³⁶ Similarly, Frederick Thesiger, who was in the Rifle Brigade from 1844 to 1845, was the son of the 1st Baron Chelmsford, a committed Sabbatarian who was active in the Metropolitan Sunday Rest Association founded in 1858, and who also introduced Sabbatarian legislation into parliament.³⁷ And finally, also in the regiment in the mid-century was Arthur Wilson Patten, son of Colonel John Wilson Patten, like Lord

³² RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 3, 6 November 1854. Norcott read E.H.Bickersteth, 'A Scripture Help', of which he approved. Bickersteth (1825-1906) was an Evangelical and Sabbatarian, later bishop of Exeter.

³³ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol.1, A.Lawrence to his wife, 22 September 1854.

³⁴ Sir Andrew Agnew's son, the 8th Bart., married Mary Noel, aunt of the Hon.Edward Noel who served in the Rifle Brigade from 1872 to 1898. The Noel family had many connections with Sabbatarians, and itself included, first, the Hon.Gerard Noel who gave evidence to the select committee set up by Sir Andrew Agnew, and, secondly, the Hon. and Rev.Baptist Noel who was prominent in the Lord's Day Observance Society. See above, p.[]. Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Sunday*, p.44.

³⁵ Ibid., p.43.

³⁶ Ibid., p.68; see also O.Chadwick, *The Victorian Church* (A.and C.Black, London, 1966), part 1, p.465.

³⁷ Wigley, *The Rise and Fall of then Victorian Sunday*, pp.110, 114, 116-117.

Chelmsford a Tory Member of Parliament, and a militant temperance supporter. He backed the 1854 Act restricting Sunday licensing hours to one o'clock to two o'clock p.m., and six o'clock to ten o'clock p.m..

However, while Sabbatarianism was hardly exotic in the corps, there was evidently also opposition to strict observance,³⁸ and this, like more lax views on alcohol, was probably the dominant opinion among officers. Letters and diaries reveal that the enjoyment of sports, music, sightseeing and other amusements were commonplace on Sundays throughout this period. For example, the regimental band often gave concerts on a Sunday in the early 1850s.³⁹ And field sports were very commonly pursued on a Sunday throughout this period. For example, Francis Howard told the story in the 1920s of the occasion when he nearly drowned while shooting one Sunday as a young officer in the 1860s,

On the following morning, my old rip of a soldier servant, who had never in his life been known to possess any religious principles, on bringing me a cup of tea, remarked with a sanctimonious expression on his face: 'Don't you think, Sir, that this was a judgement on you for shooting on a Sunday?'⁴⁰

(As a Catholic Howard was unlikely to be moved by Sabbatarianism.)

Thus the precise interpretation of Sunday observance was, like the proper use of alcohol, a matter of dispute in the regiment, and differences correlated with religious perspectives. However, as with censure of drunkenness in the mess, there was, all the same, an underlying consensus that some regard for the Sabbath was laudable. The regimental regulations were especially strict about behaviour on a Sunday,

Any irregularity, intoxication, or riot, occurring on a Sunday, or other religious day, will be severely punished.⁴¹

And the regiment appears to have been sensitive to a shift in wider civilian society toward more decorous conduct on a Sunday. While James Gairdner reported in his diary that balls were regularly held by the army on a Sunday on the continent during 1814, and there was cockfighting and organised sports in the regiment for Christmas Day in 1812, later diaries

³⁸ After service, Sir John Shelley was a key Member of Parliament in the anti-Sabbatarian movement.

³⁹ For example, it played with that of the Portuguese Caçadores on a Sunday at Madeira on the way to the Kaffir War. RGJ, *Bramston Diary*, 25 January 1852.

⁴⁰ Howard, *Reminiscences*, p.48.

⁴¹ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.49.

suggest that balls, horse races and sports days were held on Saturdays or weekdays, and not on Holy Days.⁴²

6.1.3 Theatre

Finally, theatrical and musical entertainments were controversial among the more religious in the regiment. On the one hand, Lord Alexander Russell, though a moderately low-church Anglican, was a leading light in the theatricals of the Crimean War period, and he was also very fond of the opera,⁴³ David Gordon wrote to his wife,

I never told you about the theatricals, although I sent you a play bill...After the plays were over the company sang God Save the Queen and the actors commenced dancing polkas and waltzes – cigar in mouth – Lord Alex [sic] danced like mad and Mrs.B. not afraid of showing her ankles displaying a pair of regimental trousers.⁴⁴

And, as we have seen, William Surtees enjoyed the theatre, as did FitzRoy Fremantle.⁴⁵ However, on the other hand, Maximilian Hammond again took a stricter Evangelical line. He gave up music and opera for religious reasons.⁴⁶ He confessed that he loved musical performances,

Not that I could enjoy it now, were I to go; for I could not help thinking of the evil connected with it...*I always feel that I must wait till I get to heaven, to enjoy music. I often feel a craving for it that cannot be satisfied here, and I am sure that the love of harmony cannot have been implanted in our natures for nothing.*⁴⁷

Thus, again, the officer corps in general was enthusiastic about theatre and music, and the moderate among the devout were in agreement with this line, but at least one Evangelical took a

⁴² NAM, 6902-52, Gairdner Diary, vol 2, 6 March 1814; *ibid.*, 1 May 1814; *ibid.*, 8 May 1814; NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 25 December 1812. William Surtees believed that these balls were wicked: the vices there, he wrote, were not so disgusting in appearance and so more seductive. Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.313.

⁴³ RGJ, Russell Diary, 22 December 1855; *ibid.*, 29 December 1855; *ibid.*, 25 January 1856; *ibid.*, 7 April 1856. He enjoyed whist and billiards, too. *Ibid.*, 29 November 1855; *ibid.*, 3 January 1856; *ibid.*, 12 February 1856.

⁴⁴ RGJ, letter D.Gordon to his wife, 3 January 1856.

⁴⁵ NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, vol 1, 30 April 1859; *ibid.*, 19 May 1859; *ibid.*, vol 2, January 1862.

⁴⁶ Condemnation of the theatre was common among evangelicals, but rejection of music was more extreme. See Rosman, *Evangelicals and Culture*, pp.60, 76-78, 134, 176.

⁴⁷ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.38-39, 46-47. Hammond also went as far as to give up smoking for religious reasons, and was 'sadly bullied for it' by some of his fellow officers. The British Anti-Tobacco Society was founded in 1853, and objected to smoking on the grounds that it was both inherently evil and associated with slavery. F.K.Brown, *Fathers of the Victorians: The Age of Wilberforce* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1961), p.405.

more disapproving view on religious grounds. Nonetheless, again, limits in line with contemporary convention were drawn. For example, William Norcott was disgusted by the lewd dancing performance of a Turk wearing,

black shoes, tights, and close trunk breeches. The dance of this man was most indecent – the gestures disgusting. These were interspersed with sudden jumps into the air, and coming down again in a sitting posture from which he quickly sprang.⁴⁸

These examples for drink, Sabbatarianism and the theatre show that a range of contemporary ideas of Christian morality was familiar to the Rifle Brigade, and that there was recognition at any given time of basic, if evolving, moral standards that the corps should uphold. These standards translated easily into an ideal of a regenerated gentlemanliness that could side-step sectarian religious opinion.

6.2 Other Moral Systems

It appears that differences in religious outlook, then, dictated certain variations in the definition by Riflemen of moral conduct. While it is important not to deny that some of the other recorded behaviour both of officers and other ranks supports a picture of low morality by any contemporary Christian standard (in some cases behaviour was reprehensible from all points of view), nonetheless, a number of these actions can best be understood, I would argue, as accommodated within variant schemes. Two further strands can be found. First, there was behaviour arising from views of conduct in war and the achievement of high morale that was part of a narrowly military system of values. And secondly, there was behaviour arising from notions of social authority, honour, and positive virtue that, although in tension with Christianity, was embraced within the idea of regenerated gentlemanliness. These other moral schemes can be connected to positive as well as negative feeling, toward the army in wider British society.

⁴⁸ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 19 May 1854.

There are many examples to draw on of theft, dereliction of duty, and a few of the use of prostitutes and rape by members of the Rifle Brigade. The Rifle Brigade, though known to be slightly better behaved than most regiments, was not far out of step in this respect with other sections of the army. It will be argued here, however, that these examples varied in important ways in the eyes of soldiers. If the evidence is examined closely, it is apparent that Riflemen perceived a difference in morality between, on the one hand, crimes such as dereliction of duty from drink, theft from comrades, and the assaults on women: crimes of unprofessional irresponsibility, or against persons, or entailing lack of control, all of which were considered reprehensible, and, on the other hand, crimes resulting from extreme hardship or danger, certain categories of theft from prisoners and locals under occupation, violence against enemies, and the use of prostitutes, which were more permissible.

Among examples of behaviour condemned in the regiment and therefore punished under military law, or dealt with by informal discipline, were many cases of drink-related crime. Private Richard Duxbury, 2nd Battalion, and Private Christopher Stevenson of the 3rd and later 1st Battalions offer two examples of careers blighted by alcohol. The Regimental Defaulters Book shows fifty-one charges of drunkenness and absence without leave against Private Duxbury from 1856 to 1874, with a series of fines, imprisonments and hard labour. Private Stevenson, holding a similar record, was eventually dismissed from the service with ignominy in May 1871, though he was remitted soon after.⁴⁹ These cases were evidently typical of many others (David Gordon, for example, saw four Riflemen flogged in as many days for drunkenness in 1855),⁵⁰ and such behaviour was never encouraged by officers or NCOs.

There were many cases, too, of theft. Surtees recorded that some of the men broke into the plate chest of the officers' mess, while the baggage was at Maidstone, before the Peninsular War, for which one man received eight hundred lashes.⁵¹ And, likewise, regimental records show that Private Bailey was to be imprisoned in 1873 for 336 days with hard labour, to have

⁴⁹ RGJ, Folio 1, Regimental Defaulters Book.

⁵⁰ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 21 October 1855. For crime in the other ranks across the army in the second half of the nineteenth century, see Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home*, pp.125-159.

⁵¹ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.43.

stoppages from his pay, and to forfeit all former service toward good conduct and pension, and to be discharged with ignominy, for breaking into Colour-Sergeant Thompson's quarters and stealing £4 5s 0d. He was 'also absent from picquet'.⁵²

Other censured conduct included assaults on women.⁵³ William Surtees recalled an attack by a group of new Irish recruits in the regiment on Colonel Sidney Beckwith's wife and maid, performed,

in a most violent and outrageous manner...proceeding to such lengths as perhaps delicacy forbids to mention.⁵⁴

And the Duke of Wellington was asked to give advice in 1843 when two Rifle Brigade officers, Lieutenant John Gibson and Lieutenant Peregrine Baillie Hamilton (whose father it might be noted was Member of Parliament for Aylesbury and whose grandfather was Archdeacon of Cleveland) had assaulted and possibly raped relatives of a Mr. Barber at a theatre in Malta. The officers were punished by local civilian courts (Gibson was given five days in prison and was fined £5.00) and they were both reprimanded by their commanding officer.⁵⁵

However, especially in time of war, some activities that might be condemned in a civilian context or from a Christian point of view, were condoned or were even positively encouraged in the regiment. For example, William Norcott, seemingly one of the most upright Evangelical Christians in the regiment, felt justified (though with some unease, as he recorded in his journal on 30th September, 1854), in taking two books, *I Promessi Sposi* and a book of prayers and meditations, from a prisoner in the Crimea, and in drinking his wine. 'I hope it was not robbery'.⁵⁶ Similarly, John Fitzmaurice took, at Ciudad Rodrigo in 1811, a silver snuff-box belonging to General Barrie, the French Governor, abandoned by him as he fled.⁵⁷ And in

⁵² RGJ, Book of Regimental Orders and Brigade Orders, 3 February 1873.

⁵³ It is clear that Riflemen in the other ranks recognized the enormity of rape on at least one occasion: several civilian insurgents were executed in Ireland in 1822 after raping (on a Sunday) the wives of Rifle Brigade privates and NCOs in Ireland. 'This assault was intended as a direct affront to the regiment.' One woman lost her sanity after the attack. Cope, *History*, p.223.

⁵⁴ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.52.

⁵⁵ Southampton Univ., WP2/96/56, letter the Duke of Wellington to the Adjutant General, 11 December 1843.

⁵⁶ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 3, 30 September 1854.

⁵⁷ G.Fitzmaurice, *Biographical Sketch of Major-General John Fitzmaurice, K.H.* (privately printed, Tiber press, Anghari, 1908), p.27.

published accounts, where less savoury memories are often passed over, heavy drinking, brawling and stealing could even be the subject of amusing anecdote.⁵⁸

Clearly, moral judgements in the regiment were not always directed by a Christian scheme. Groups of evidence suggest that there existed competing codes of behaviour dictated in some cases by rules of war, in others by morale and social cohesion, and in others by honour and social authority. Behaviour arising from any of these can be separated from more straightforwardly degenerate conduct. All of these standards could, at different times, contrast with and supersede evangelical and other Christian moralities in the nineteenth-century Rifle Brigade.

6.2.1 Conduct in War

Norcott and Fitzmaurice, in taking the property of prisoners in time of war, were following a well-established code of conduct for war. This code also dictated that a town under siege refusing to surrender was legitimate prey to those who were forced to storm it.⁵⁹ The sacking of Badajoz, for example, by the men of several regiments, although technically legitimate, became notorious (it was not unique: St Sebastian and Vittoria, for example, were also sacked with extreme violence), and was remembered with horror by several Riflemen. William Surtees described the men as 'swallowed up in their abominable rage for drink and plunder' after the capture of the town. Few could be found to help the wounded, and those

half-drunk brutes...very frequently kicked or trod upon several others, whom to touch was like death to them, and which produced the most agonising cries imaginable...[and they seldom made] more than one or two trips till they deserted us...I penetrated no further into the town that day than to a house a little beyond the breach, where I had deposited the wounded; but I saw enough in this short trip to disgust me with the doings in Badajoz at this time. I learnt that no house, church, or convent was held sacred by the infuriated and now ungovernable soldiery, but that priests or nuns, and common people all shared alike, and that any who showed the least resistance were instantly sacrificed to their fury...such scenes were witnessed in the streets as baffle description. But they were not content with what they had brought out of Badajoz; they had now got such relish for plunder, that they could not leave it off when driven from the town.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ For example, Kincaid and his comrades falsely blamed a fallen officer for stealing food in Kincaid, *Adventures*, pp.72-3.

⁵⁹ See G.Best, *Humanity in Warfare: The Modern History of the International Law of Armed Conflicts* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1980), pp.61, 93-94, 122-123.

⁶⁰ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.144-146.

However, Surtees could write in an almost apologetic tone,

On such occasions as this siege, where they were long and much exposed to fatigue almost insupportable, to the most trying scenes of difficulty and danger, which were generally borne with cheerfulness and alacrity, they perhaps reasoned with themselves and one another in this manner, - that they had borne so much and so patiently to get possession of the place, it was but fair that they should have some indulgence when their work and trials were crowned with success, especially as the armies of other powers make it a rule generally to give an assaulted fortress up to plunder.⁶¹

Similarly, John Kincaid wrote in 1830 of the burning and plundering of Aruda in 1810,

This was the only instance during the war in which the Light Division had reason to blush for their conduct; and even in that we had the law martial on our side, whatever gospel law might have said against it.⁶²

And again, Arthur Lawrence, another strong Evangelical as we have seen, felt justified in taking a fur coat as a gift from a Rifleman which he knew had been stolen at the sacking of the fort at Balaclava.⁶³

By contrast, stealing from neutral local residents was censured, and there are a number of examples of punishments for such thefts. William Norcott, for instance, noted that he had two men flogged for plundering a man of cherries – which they could have bought for threepence.⁶⁴ This was forbidden in both custom and martial law,⁶⁵ but there remained many grey areas, decided according to circumstance.⁶⁶ For example, local residents who were nominally allies could be seen as sources of supply when necessary and property deemed to have been abandoned was, by the code, fair game. Commanding officers often sanctioned their use. Kincaid wrote of Aruda,

We certainly lived in *clover* while we remained there: everything we saw was our own, seeing no one who had a more legitimate claim, and every field was a vinyard.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Ibid., p.149. Also, Kincaid, *Adventures*, pp.101-2, wrote of the men's feelings being so blunted by the horrors of the siege and assault that they could look on suffering at that time with apathy.

⁶² Ibid., p.18.

⁶³ W.Cope, *History of the Rifle Brigade (The Prince Consort's Own) Formerly the 95th* (Chatto and Windus, London, 1877), p.312.

⁶⁴ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 22 May 1854.

⁶⁵ See Best, *Humanity in Warfare*, pp.63-67, 89-94.

⁶⁶ See A.Starkey, 'War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1781', *War and Society*, vol 8, No 1, 1990, pp.6-8, 21, for the eighteenth-century development by Emerich Vattel and Chevalier de Jaucourt of centuries-old rules and restrictions for combat based on the Christian notion of 'jus in bello'. The honour, humanity and discretion of individual commanders were invariably invoked to direct conduct in the field, though the Articles of War gave some guidance.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p.21.

Taking from the dead and particularly the wounded, was more problematic. Corporal Scott very properly shot an American officer at New Orleans in 1815 when he saw him plundering wounded soldiers.⁶⁸ And Private John Harris remembered shooting a French Light Infantryman who was looking over the dead. However, Harris went to search his victim in his turn and was seen by an officer. He expected trouble, but the officer, saying he deserved something for the shot, helped him, and ripping up the lining of the dead man's coat found a purse containing money. At parade, Major Travis made Harris hand over the money, and he again anticipated a reprimand. Instead Travis handed it back saying he was only sorry it was not more.⁶⁹ Likewise, Surtees was clear about the moral justification for destruction and theft occasioned by military necessity,⁷⁰ even where this was contrary to religious principles,

We were occasionally compelled to resort to the cruel and unchristianlike expedient of pulling down houses to obtain the timber with which they were built for the purpose of cooking, or we must have eaten our food raw. This, however, was done in a regular and systematic order.⁷¹

And George Huyshe told his father (who was a regular church attender) that in the Ashanti he had been forced to loophole and take the thatch off a church to defend it, a 'Nice Sunday amusement'.⁷²

The killing of enemy troops was also the subject of a military code of morality. Surtees, as has been noted, was concerned about the Christian position on the taking of life in war, but felt, on balance, that it was justified.

It is true my occupation had not been, strictly speaking, of a Christian character, but I believed I was fulfilling my duty, hence the peace of mind which I enjoyed. I have since learned certainly, that a Christian, to resemble his Master, should be more ready to save than to destroy men's lives; but, at the same time, I cannot see why a Christian soldier should not be as zealous in the defence of his king and country, as those who are actuated by other motives; and it is certain, I believe, although I once doubted whether

⁶⁸ Cope, *History*, p.191.

⁶⁹ C.Hibbert (ed), *The Recollections of Rifleman Harris as told to Henry Curling* (Military Book Society, London, 1970) originally published as H.Curling (ed), *Recollections of Rifleman Harris* (London, 1848), pp.57-58.

⁷⁰ For the idea of military necessity and its roots in Enlightenment thought, see Best, *Humanity in Warfare*, pp.45-50.

⁷¹ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.193.

⁷² W.Huyshe (ed), *In Memoriam George Lightfoot Huyshe* (privately printed, London, 1874), pp.29, 35.

there was such a precept, that in whatever calling or occupation a man is in when called to become a Christian, that therein he should abide, 1st Cor.vii. 17, 20, and 24.⁷³

Surtees was perfectly satisfied, for example, about the propriety, in theory, of executing prisoners in some circumstances, although he evidently believed it better to show mercy. At Elvas a number of resisting French soldiers were taken prisoner.

Certainly, by the rules of war, I believe, they might have been put to death, for having stood an assault on the place; but a British general does not resort to the same measures which their Marshal Suchet did at Tarragona, when he put all, both soldiers and inhabitants to the sword.⁷⁴

There are many references, too, to informal understandings, amounting to a code of morality, between soldiers in the Napoleonic and Crimean Wars.⁷⁵ This code dictated when it was proper to fire on the enemy, to exchange prisoners or to rescue the wounded (and sanctioned ruthless treatment for turncoats and deserters).⁷⁶ For example, Surtees again recalled,

An officer and two men coming from the French advance, with what intention is not known, were observed by the corporal who was stationed at our abatis, who immediately took out his rifle and shot the officer through the body, on which his two men lifted him up and carried him into their picquet-house. We were apprehensive this would put an end to that good understanding which had hitherto subsisted between the picquets of the two nations, and much regretted the circumstance. It is more than probable the officer was coming as a sort of patrol, to ascertain whether or not we had left the post, which, being a military undertaking, subjected him to all the chances of war attendant thereon. This is the more probable from his having two soldiers with him armed, as I understand they were; but if it was meant as a friendly visit, as formerly sometimes took place, it was greatly to be lamented; however...the mutual good understanding continued to subsist between us.⁷⁷

⁷³ Ibid., pp.308-309.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p.143; see also *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1894, pp.118-119, for an account by the painter B.R.Haydon of the shock he felt on hearing the story of a Rifleman of the 2nd Battalion wounded at Talavera who became detached from his corps and fled from the enemy in the company of a Guardsman. They shot a Spanish gentleman in the back when he would not stop and let them ride on his donkey. They felt no remorse at stealing the animal and taking 300 dollars found in the saddle bags.

⁷⁵ The Africans in the first and second Kaffir wars of 1846-50 and 1852-3 did not establish a comparable understanding with the British troops, lacking a shared European culture of martial justice, and the experience of accommodation between armies in the American and continental wars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Rifle Brigade officers despised and mistrusted them as a result. For example, Thomas Bramston declared that the Kaffir habit of double loading weapons was 'low', and he noted that an officer of the 73rd Regiment who fell into enemy hands was put to death. RGJ, T.Bramston to his mother, 8 December 1852.

⁷⁶ See Best, *Humanity in Warfare*, pp.36-37, 61-62.

⁷⁷ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, pp.266-7; J.P.Gairdner's journal is also rich in detailed examples of this code in operation in the Napoleonic Wars, see NAM, 6902-51, Gairdner Diary, vol 1, 17 November 1812; NAM, 6902-52, vol 2, 28 November 1813; *ibid.*, 15 December 1813; *ibid.*, 18 December 1813;

And William Cunninghame wrote to his mother in 1855,

The day before yesterday I took advantage of the flag of truce which was hoisted for the purpose of burying the dead to inspect the Mamelon and the Russian as he is alive and at liberty. There was an immense crowd of English, French and Russians all over the ground between the Mamelon and Round Tower, all parties talking, laughing and fraternising with each other in the most wonderful way. The Russ....I am sorry to say...did not appear to be suffering at all from starvation.⁷⁸

Similarly, kind acts in wartime were often not described in diaries and letters as 'godly', although, for example giving food and water to prisoners was eminently Christian. Often such acts were performed 'for the sake of humanity'⁷⁹ and, for instance, Kincaid referred to Lieutenant Gardiner's 'mercy' as opposed to a French 'want of professional generosity' when he had allowed some vulnerable French picquets to return to their line, only to receive French fire in return.⁸⁰ Religion was not a consideration in these interactions. A rational and religiously neutral concept of just and laudable behaviour in war was at least as often the motivation for goodness, it seems, as notions of Christian charity.

6.2.2 *Morale and Social Cohesion*

Morale and social cohesion also influenced moral judgements made by Riflemen, in peacetime as well as in war. Harshness toward deserters was, for example, actuated in part by the need for mutual support and loyalty in danger, and there were cases of captured deserters being executed to the sound of curses from their erstwhile comrades. When Lieutenant Richard Bell was discovered to have faked illness to avoid fighting on 6th April, 1812, Gairdner wrote in a letter to his father, that he believed he had been let off too lightly in being allowed to resign. He declared, 'such pitiful scoundrels ought to be shot.'⁸¹ And Surtees remembered that one

ibid., 24 December 1813; ibid., 31 December 1813; ibid., 3 January 1814; ibid., 14 January 1814; ibid., 14 April 1814.

⁷⁸ RGJ, Cunninghame MSS, letter 59, W.Cunninghame to his mother 11 May 1855.

⁷⁹ O.MacDonagh, *Early Victorian Government 1830-1870* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1977), p.7 sees humanitarianism as a primary 'sentimental and theoretical' force in mid-nineteenth century thought, contributing to the Benthamite emphasis on the diminution of pain and the maximising of pleasure, and to the evangelical emphasis on good works and the value of the individual personality. Humanitarianism, however, appeared early in the nineteenth century and prevailed in public attitudes in Britain 'whatever private conduct or personal motivation may have been'.

⁸⁰ Kincaid, *Adventures*, pp.200-1.

⁸¹ NAM, 7011-21, J.Gairdner to his father, 25 April 1812.

group of men in this period who *were* shot, for desertion, spent a little time with the chaplain before the sentence was carried out. So deep was the ill-feeling towards them that when the chaplain came out Surtees believed even he looked ashamed at his particular calling.⁸²

Another instance of morality dictated by morale and social cohesion was the condoning of prostitution. An article, 'A Peep into Regimental Society' published in the *United Service Journal* for 1837 set 'a bottle and a kind landlady' against glory as the 'better antithesis' to images of death.⁸³ The regiment of the anonymous author of this piece is unknown, but many Riflemen evidently shared his outlook, despite some official disapproval.⁸⁴ For example, Lieutenant Thomas Bramston, who appears elsewhere to have been moderately religious, wrote in his journal for 16 July, 1854 (and later partly crossed out),

After dinner went the rounds with Cartwright [Captain Aubrey Cartwright] and Roderick [unidentified] had hard work to find out the right street, everyone declining to show us the way. However we found out at last and were anything but glad for I never had a worse woman in my life.⁸⁵

And Corporal H.E.Scott in a fragment of his manuscript history of his experiences in the 1852 Kaffir War preserved by Sir William Cope, remembered,

many a shilling was spent by our men that they may have a chat with a white woman.⁸⁶

When so few other ranks men could marry on the strength,⁸⁷ and many officers were unmarried from youth, lack of money or choice (although they were often delaying rather than rejecting

⁸² Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.135.

⁸³ "W.", 'A Peep into Regimental Society', *USJ*, vol 1, 1837, pp.466-67.

⁸⁴ C.Manningham, *Regulations*, p.54 for the official regimental view that it was the responsibility of the regiment not to encourage prostitution.

⁸⁵ RGJ, Bramston Diary, 1854-5.

⁸⁶ RGJ, Cope MSS, H.E.Scott, 'Account of the Second Kaffir War'. PRO, WO 17 1551, Monthly Return for 2nd Battalion Reserve, 1 January 1847 shows, for example, twenty-six rank and file out of a total of 519 were sick. A note records that the prevailing diseases were catarrhal and venereal infections.

⁸⁷ There were also lower-class traditions of both short-term and more durable relationships outside marriage (distinct from promiscuous prostitution) which may have influenced the men in delaying or avoiding marriage. See J.R.Gillis, 'Married but not Churched: Plebeian Sexual Relations and Marital Nonconformity in Eighteenth-century Britain' in R.P.Maccubin (ed), *'Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality During the Enlightenment* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1987), pp.31-42; also J.Weeks, *Sex, Politics and Society: The Regulation of Sexuality Since 1800* (1981) (Longman, London, 1989), pp.57-72. M.Mason, *The Making of Victorian Sexuality* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1994), pp.81-83 points to codes dictating relationships of a few weeks, sometimes repeated, between sailors and local women in London and Liverpool that were quasi-marriages.

marriage), the emotional well-being of individuals, and so the cohesion and discipline of units, was seen to be enhanced by the use of prostitutes.⁸⁸ This attitude was undoubtedly linked to more complex double standards in wider society,⁸⁹ but the particular circumstances of life in the services gave a specifically military angle to the issue.

Morale and social cohesion were considerations, furthermore, in the outright rejection in the regiment of aspects of a specifically evangelical Christian scheme. Prominent among objections to 'vital religion' recorded by Riflemen was its divisive effect in the regiment.⁹⁰ Wilful separation from allegedly sinful company was a distinctive mark of one strand of evangelicalism. A fear of moral contamination and bad influence was in part behind this attitude, but also, because evangelicals saw themselves as a special group, they tended to behave as a clique.⁹¹ Separatism was clearly recognised as a disruptive force in the regiment. Colonel Coote Manningham stated plainly in his *Regulations* the central importance of sociability and good will when he wrote on the subject of meals,

All messing is regarded by the Colonel as bearing a very important place in the good order and economy of the regiment; comfort and unanimity at meals, whether it be among officers or soldiers, is the source of friendship and good understanding: he therefore directs, that in the first place, all officers shall belong to one mess, which being calculated upon economical terms, he must consider any officer withdrawing

⁸⁸ See Trufram, *Women of the Regiment*, which argues for British regiments increasingly trying to provide a complete 'home' for soldiers, including providing for their emotional and sexual needs. See W.Farr, 'The Application of Statistics to Naval and Military Matters', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institute*, vol 3, 1859, no x, p.211 for marriage statistics in the services gleaned from the 1851 census showing

Age	%Civilian Male Pop. Married	%Army Married Men	%Army Married Officers
20-25	20%	5%	4%
30-35	71%	28%	35%
40-60			(A large increase in marriages for officers)

⁸⁹ Harry Smith evidently had an affair and he believed it to be wrong. 'I hope this war may be the means of again acquiring a liberty of conscience which my folly has heretofore for years banished from me. Nay, ever since that she devil caught me in her trammels at Cambray have I groaned under an oppression of debt...but now I hope to rise triumphant tho' corrected and *most humble*, over all my difficulties...I have spurned my own shadow and cursed myself for my wickedness and folly.' Southampton Univ., WP2/177/16, letter H.Smith to A.Serjant, 7 May 1835.

⁹⁰ Rowland Hill as Commander-in-Chief had banned temperance societies in the army on the grounds that they had their own code of behaviour and therefore could not be condoned. Strachan *Wellington's Legacy*, p.66.

⁹¹ Bradley, *The Call to Seriousness*, p.30.

himself from it as indicating a wish not to corps with his brother officers, in which case, the sooner he leaves the regiment the better.⁹²

Maximilian Hammond had experience of the problems with relations between the regenerate and the rest. He declared,

Before I knew the truth, I used to positively hate ****. I don't think I used to hate many people, but I confess I really *hated him* - I used to think him such a regular whining Methodist.

And Hammond himself was the subject of dislike on account of his own conversion. He wrote to his mother in January 1845,

You know well, no doubt, that we do not receive any encouragement from our brother officers. It is very painful to see plainly a reserve and coolness among many who were before our greatest friends; but it is quite impossible to keep on the same terms of intimacy as before, as our tastes and ideas are so opposed, that we cannot associate with them as we used.⁹³

Drinking, sports, theatrical entertainment, music, smoking, cards, billiards and dancing, all questioned, as we have seen, in religious debate, were central to regimental social life. Moral objections to them were obviated as much by considerations of unity, tradition and friendship (made the more compelling in a military context) as by the counter-arguments of other sections of Christianity noted above.

The tendency to separation by the religious, particularly evangelicals, also had disciplinary implications. Despite their feeling of moral superiority and the religious imperatives they recognised, regenerate soldiers had to come to terms with a separate moral scheme in military discipline. As William Rule wrote in the preface to *Wesleyan Methodism in the British Army* (1883),

We should all have a distinct idea of the constitution and discipline of the Army...Unquestioning obedience in those who serve, and entire responsibility in those who command...Yet no officer can be with impunity a tyrant; no private soldier without redress a slave. Everyone must obey; none can shun his duty...For all that is done authority must be had. Without authority none may presume to intrude into the

⁹² Manningham, *Regulations*, p.16. Also see, for example, the correspondence of George Brown concerning Lord Cardigan's celebrated dispute with Major James of 1852, in which reference is made to the Standing Orders of the army recognizing that unanimity and good understanding were intimately 'connected with the character and discipline of a regiment'. Nat.Lib.Scotland, MS 1848, Lord Cardigan to Lt. Gen. Sir E.Blakeney, 25 August 1852, pp.61-62.

⁹³ Hammond, *Memoir*, pp.44-45, 46, 50, 145.

service...The discipline...must be just, and it is essentially moral; it subdues the stubborn and brings down the proud.⁹⁴

Religious sensibility was sometimes related by officers to amenability to discipline, but army discipline, that is, had its own moral dynamic. Manningham in the *Regulations* made the connection, as we have seen,⁹⁵

A man without religion is generally a disobedient, a drunken, a cowardly, and of course, a cruel man; and the soldier who acknowledges not his Creator is not very likely to care much for the commands of any Officer, or other superior on earth.⁹⁶

There was little room for individual conscience in military work, and rank implied moral authority.⁹⁷ Manningham again laid down,

Whilst the Colonel directs, that obedience shall be prompt, respectful and without a murmur, so he insists upon command being exerted with steadiness, and founded upon good sense and propriety...real discipline implies obedience and respect wherever it is due on the one hand, and on the other just but energetic use of command and responsibility.⁹⁸

In regimental life, no other perceived duty could be allowed to come before military duty, and those duties dictated by religion were no exception. For example, a man marrying, even with permission from his superiors, although he acquired by his religious vows obligations toward his wife, was liable to be separated from her for long periods of time when he could not fulfil those duties. Manningham directed, in line with wider army policy,

a general roster will be established for the wives of all Corporals, private Riflemen and Buglers, who are sent home, in order that whenever a vacancy occurs in the limited number, of nine per hundred men, the first on that roster (which is to be made out originally by lot) may be written to and informed that she may rejoin the corps...no woman is to return to the corps without permission.

Manningham, and the commanding officers who followed him, organised for the presence of married women, that is, without regard to the religious moral obligations of marriage. They

⁹⁴ Cited J.H.Thompson, 'Free Church Army Chaplain 1830-1930' (PhD dissertation, Sheffield University, 1990), p.118.

⁹⁵ See above, pp.82-83.

⁹⁶ Manningham, *Regulations*, p.49.

⁹⁷ This view was expressed, for example, in the *United Service Gazette*, 7 February 1835, which opposed moves to educate soldiers and reduce corporal punishment: 'the moral agency of a soldier is...an inconvenience to the great military machine', cited Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p.22.

⁹⁸ Manningham, *Regulations*, pp.1-2.

considered only the military function of light infantry to travel quickly, humanity towards the women and their children, and the needs of the regiment for servants and washerwomen.⁹⁹

6.2.3 Social Authority and Honour

Finally, social authority and honour directed morality in a number of cases. Just as the orders of superiors were taken to carry moral authority, so there existed in the regiment a view that officers should display higher moral standards than other ranks. Sir John Moore (whose system of training was so influential in the Rifle Brigade) expressed this when he wrote to his father on drunkenness in the 51st Regiment that there might be some excuse for an other-ranks soldier forgetting himself, but there could be none for officers. Moore was clear that officers should receive a more severe punishment than other ranks for the same crime. He also believed, according to J.F.Maurice's *Diary of Sir John Moore* (1904), that the

governing classes have duties as well as rights, or rather, as has been more nobly said, and as Moore believed, that their duties were their rights, that their own welfare lay in fulfilling their duty.¹⁰⁰

There is evidence, too, for other ranks soldiers responding to and expecting higher standards of conduct and sentiment, including better manners, from their officers (though there is insufficient material to draw a clear picture of typical views). Rifleman Harris, for example, stated that,

The men are very proud of those who are brave in the field, and kind and considerate to those under them. An act of kindness done by an officer has often during the battle been the cause of his life being saved, Nay, whatever folks may say upon the matter, I know from experience, that in *our* army the men like best to be officered by gentlemen, men whose education has rendered them more kind in manners than your coarse officer, sprung from humble origin, and whose style is brutal and overbearing.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ Ibid., pp.51-56. Hammond, *Memoir*, p.99, referred to the desperate situation of wives married to soldiers without permission in Canada in the 1840s, and to a subscription raised by the officers to help them financially. Hammond, *Memoir*, p.44, also referred in another context, on his love of Christ, to Deut.xxiv 5, 'when a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business, but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he has taken'; he does not, however, connect religious obligation with army wives.

¹⁰⁰ See above p.90. J.Moore, *The Diary of Sir John Moore* J.F.Maurice (ed) (Edward Arnold, London, 1904), vol.1, p.14; *ibid.*, vol.2, pp.234-235.

¹⁰¹ Hibbert (ed), *Recollections*, p.41.

Leading by example was sometimes interpreted as an injunction for officers to keep up (perhaps hypocritically) a public front of morality in order to bolster authority. The 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, for instance, includes an entry for 1842,

No19. That no parish business be permitted while the servants are in the room - nor any incorrect conversation whatever at the Mess Table.¹⁰²

This outlook was reinforced by a broader view of solidarity among the upper classes in matters of immorality. Francis Howard, while near Munich in 1872, was shooting duck when his dog retrieved a dead baby wrapped in a linen cloth with a crest on it (and therefore presumably from a well-to-do family). Howard threw the body back. The keeper, on learning of the discovery, wanted to report the incident to the authorities as he was obliged to do, but Howard told him to say nothing, speculating (without Christian sentiment) that the baby was probably still-born and thrown into the river to save the mother from exposure.¹⁰³

The desire to bolster authority produced at times a deliberate social aloofness between ranks (despite, as we have seen, some officers taking a personal interest in the welfare of their men) that also had religious and moral implications. Howard, again, felt justified even in physical violence toward civilian inferiors in certain circumstances, in order to keep his position.

I am sorry to say I have known officers who knocked their servants about. That, to say the least of it, is cowardly, as the man dare not hit you back again and seldom has the physique which would enable him to do so. It would never do, however, to pass over deliberate cheek or insult without a box on the ear. To do so would lose you the respect of all the other servants.¹⁰⁴

However, coldness and formality were the more common means of establishing social distance in the service. Maximilian Hammond was something of an exception. He apparently surprised private Riflemen who were co-religionists by acknowledging them on the street even when he was in the company of other officers. Likewise, he deliberately undermined an order intended to

¹⁰² RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 22 November 1842.

¹⁰³ Howard, *Reminiscences*, pp.110-111.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.148-149.

prevent Evangelical officers teaching the gospel, their perceived moral and social obligation.¹⁰⁵

A fellow Rifle Brigade officer (unidentified) recalled,

Hammond, with several officers of the Rifle Brigade, and a few more belonging to the garrison, occupied themselves in teaching classes. About this period an order was issued prohibiting officers, in the Rifle Brigade, from instructing their men as they had been doing: in the mistaken idea, I believe, that it would cause too much familiarity among officers and men. Those who had the privilege of teaching in the same school will remember the deep grief which the order caused to Maxy Hammond, when deprived of the work in which he took so much delight. Nor will the remark be forgotten, which he made, after the prohibition to teach: 'Well,' he said, 'if I must not teach, I suppose there is no order to prevent my learning'; and, accordingly, he sat down at one end of the form on which some of his own men and others were seated, and listened to the teaching of one whose position should have been at his feet.¹⁰⁶

Nonetheless, Hammond's Evangelicalism, with its attendant duty to make personal contact with the unregenerate, by no means precluded a sense of honour. Indeed, he described his religious conviction in those terms.

The real Christian feels (so to speak) that his honour is at stake, and bound up in his duty towards his Lord and Master...¹⁰⁷

Honour was a code of conduct and moral sentiment related to social authority that was quite distinct from Christianity, but that compelled even the most religious in the regiment. There are a number of examples in the Rifle Brigade evidence of honour directing moral choices. Kincaid remembered,

We halted the next night in the handsome little town of Olmeida, which had just been evacuated by the enemy. The French general, Ferez, died there, in consequence of the wounds which he received at the battle of Salamanca, and his remains had, the night before, been consigned to the earth with the highest honours, and a canopy of laurel placed over his grave: but the French had no sooner left the town, than the inhabitants exhumed the body, cut off the head, and spurned it with the greatest indignity. They were in hopes that this line of conduct would have proved a passport to our affections, and conducted us to the spot, as to a trophy that they were proud of; but we expressed the most unfeigned horror and indignation at their proceeding; and, getting some soldiers to assist, his remains were carefully and respectfully placed in the grave. His *was* a noble head; and, even in death, it looked the brave, gallant soldier. Our conduct

¹⁰⁵ The conflict between evangelicals and non-evangelicals over preaching in the army was not new in the 1840s. See Kincaid, *Adventures*, pp.ix-x, for the men preaching to each other in the Napoleonic Wars because of the shortage of chaplains. The Duke of Wellington looked to Rev.Samuel Briscall, as head of the chaplains' department during the Napoleonic Wars, to counter an upsurge in Methodism among the soldiers and officers. E.Longford, *Wellington: The Years of the Sword* (Panther, London, 1971), p.302.

¹⁰⁶ Hammond, *Memoirs*, pp.42-43, 108. Also see Pollock, *Way to Glory*, p.41, on Henry Havelock encountering, after he left the Rifle Brigade, the feeling among officers that it was demeaning to socialize with lower ranks.

¹⁰⁷ Hammond, *Memoir*, p.115.

had such an effect on the Spaniards, that they brought back the canopy of their own accord, and promised solemnly that the grave should henceforth rest undisturbed.¹⁰⁸

The horror was produced, that is, not by the sacrilege of disturbing a Christian grave, but by the dishonour of an eminent officer.

Duelling was another clear case of honour directing moral choice. All denominations condemned the practice, yet settling questions of honour was commonly felt in the army to be more pressing than ecclesiastical strictures, at least until the 1840s.¹⁰⁹ On occasion, individual officers fought in single combat during battles. (For example at Waterloo Allen Stewart fought and killed a French officer and Simmons described it as a duel for honour.) However, there were several cases recorded of duelling in the Rifle Brigade off the battlefield. Surtees, for instance, wrote of a fellow officer in the Peninsular War, with no hint of reproach, but rather with pious regret,

Poor fellow, he has a good while since been called to his account, and that in a rather awful manner: he fell in a duel, but which (from all I could learn) he was engaged in from the best of motives, that of endeavouring to prevent the seduction of a young female belonging to his regiment. I hope he is at peace.¹¹⁰

William Norcott, too, had a history of duelling, and an instinct for it still in 1854, though he appears to have thought it wrong by then. He recorded in his diary (for his wife) his feelings of anger against 'Captain F.', possibly Captain Edward Forman, 1st Battalion, which nearly led him to call him out for a duel,

I have promised you never to risk my life again in personal affairs, *and I will not*. Had he turned on me, I should on reflection have remembered you, and shame would have followed - I have done with duelling - and know how little courage it requires to maintain a wrong or *double* the amount of it.¹¹¹

Likewise, John Fitzmaurice, according to his son (who believed that on this one issue he 'fell below the high standards of today') 'never could be brought to admit the heinousness' of duelling.

¹⁰⁸ Kincaid, *Adventures*, p.124.

¹⁰⁹ V.G.Kiernan *The Duel in European History: Honour and the Reign of Aristocracy* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986), pp. 210, 211, 216-17, 243, 280.

¹¹⁰ Surtees, *Twenty-five Years*, p.186; *ibid.*, pp.168-169 Surtees came close to duelling himself on at least one occasion when he almost challenged another officer in the 95th regiment - he noted that he had no Christian feelings then against it.

¹¹¹ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 7 August 1854.

He was born and brought up in the traditions of the *duello* and I have often heard him assert that the arrangement of twelve paces, a steady hand and a good pistol were excellent for checking bullies and preventing a woman's name being besmirched by slander.

Although it is not clear whether he ever actually fought a duel, Fitzmaurice reportedly twice came close to challenging members of the Board of Directors of Cheltenham College over questions of honour.

I cannot help thinking my father's presence at the Board must have given animation to the proceedings.¹¹²

Andrew Barnard was also unopposed to duelling. He concerned himself only with the details of honour in a challenge made in 1818 to a junior officer in the Coldstream Guards by a Frenchman. His main concern was to establish that the challenger was a gentleman. He learned that the Duke of Wellington supported his decision to allow the duel, 'he is fully convinced that had you acted upon the official information given to you by putting a stop to the rencontre, the most unfair and illiberal conclusions would have been drawn not only to the prejudice of Gordon [the officer] but to the British name and service generally'.¹¹³

6.2.4 Positive Virtue

Another aspect of the moral outlook of the regiment was positive virtue: extreme bravery or selflessness, application to duty, or previous good character were cherished, and could, in some cases, outweigh instances of immoral behaviour. This emphasis on the positive may go some way toward explaining the willingness of many soldiers to turn a blind eye to supposedly unChristian conduct. Rifleman Harris, for example, told the story of Sergeant Mayberry who, though previously well thought of, gambled away two hundred pounds of the regiment's money, cheated the men of a farthing each from their pay over ten months, and drew Corporal Morrison and Private Patrick Divine into the scheme. 'Captain Hart was as much astonished as if his own father had committed a fraud.' Mayberry was reduced to the ranks and flogged, and was reviled by his comrades. He subsequently volunteered for Portugal and

¹¹² Fitzmaurice, *Biographical Sketch*, pp.80-82.

¹¹³ Powell (ed), *Barnard Letters*, pp.266-271.

showed outstanding bravery at Badajoz, excelling himself even after Captain Hart had commended him, and had declared that he would try to get his rank restored.

'No going to the rear for me,' he said, 'I'll restore myself to my comrades opinion, or make a finish of myself altogether.'¹¹⁴

So, although wounded several times, he fought on until killed 'by a tremendous sword-cut which cleft his skull almost in twain'. Mayberry clearly expected extreme bravery to outweigh his past conduct, as indeed it did with Captain Hart, and to earn himself forgiveness, not by Christian repentance, but by positive action in the field.

This outlook may have arisen in part from the morality of group cohesion already referred to above, where military duty directly affected the common good, and morale-building glory for the corps could only be achieved in action. Success in action demanded individual bravery, and this quite naturally took a high place in the roll of military virtues. The extent to which courage was prized can be gauged from the custom by which officers presented medals to individual soldiers who showed exceptional bravery in action or who volunteered for and survived a Forlorn Hope. For example, Sergeant John Himbury of the 2nd Battalion was presented by the general commanding his brigade with a medal bearing on the obverse the inscription 'St. Sebastian, 31 de Agosto de 1813' and on the reverse a bugle with the number '95' and the words 'Rifle Corps'. The clasp was inscribed 'Forlorn Hope J.H. Sergeant'.¹¹⁵ (Captain Henry Clifford's father gave £20.00 to have made a series of medals for men in his son's company who had shown outstanding bravery during the Crimean War. However, it is worth noting that Clifford was sceptical about the result. They,

I fear will hardly thank him for them. I see them as they are - silver for a glass of grog, but of course I can't tell him this.)¹¹⁶

It would also seem, however, that a preoccupation with noble deeds which could pass over less exalted conduct, arose in harmony with notions of classical and romantic virtue that

¹¹⁴ Hibbert (ed), *Recollections*, pp.83-87.

¹¹⁵ Cope, *History*, p.148. The Royal Green Jackets Museum has a collection of Rifle Brigade Forlorn Hope medals; see M.G.M.Haines, *The Rifle Brigade Regimental Rarities*, O.M.R.S., No 1974, September 1990; see also J.L.Balmer, *Regimental Medals Handbook 1745-1895* (Langlands, London, 1897), pp.83-87.

¹¹⁶ C.Fitzherbert, *Henry Clifford, V.C.: His Letters and Sketches From the Crimea* (Michael Joseph, London, 1956), p.207.

could sit uncomfortably beside Christian moral tradition. There is evidence for an awareness of classical and romantic values in the regiment, and these appear to have been freely mixed together. For example, the regimental magazine the *Skirmisher* carried an article in the September 1860 issue on the use of talents, propounding the importance of emulating great characters of history, particularly classical heroes. The minds of these ancients, it argued, showed how much men could achieve, and the British inherited their attributes in their culture if not their blood. This followed a piece the month before, in the same periodical, on the volunteer movement of 1859, which referred to a Saxon yeoman myth of Old English blood flowing in the veins of the upper-class recruits.¹¹⁷ And at least one Rifleman, Lieutenant Henry Eyre (who had been at the capture of Lucknow) was sufficiently inspired by chivalry to become a Knight of Grace of St. John of Jerusalem.¹¹⁸ Romantic, classical, chivalric and contemporary Christian ideals of character and virtue were at their most compatible in attitudes to fighting and death.¹¹⁹ The popular adulation for the heroic deaths of army and naval officers, notably of Captain Hedley Vicars and Generals Havelock and Gordon in the mid-and later nineteenth century (but also of Nelson, Sir John Moore and others in earlier decades) drew on a mixture of traditions where honour and worth were proved by fearlessness in the face of death.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ RGJ, Folio 1, The *Skirmisher*, August 1860, p.1 and September 1860, p.8.

¹¹⁸ M.G.Daughlish and P.K.Stephenson (eds), *Harrow School Register 1800-1911* (Longman, Green and Co., London, 1911); *ibid.* records that Sir Francis Boileau, second son of Sir J.P.Boileau, was a Knight of the Order of St.John of Jerusalem in England.

¹¹⁹ See R.Jenkyns, *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1980), pp.24, 192-226; also, M.Girouard, *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English Gentleman* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1981), pp.141-144; also, for example, W.Robson, *The Great Sieges of History* (G.Routledge, London, 1855) which describes ancient, medieval and modern sieges to Sebastopol, and notes acts of outstanding courage, patriotism, humanity, devotion and honour.

¹²⁰ It has been argued that the eighteenth century saw a shift away from the proof of honour in battle lying in success in killing others, to proof lying in the manner in which an individual confronted his own death. See Starkey, 'War and Culture', p.18; also J.Keegan, *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo and the Somme* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1976), pp.191-194. This involved, I would suggest, a fusion onto classical, chivalric and Romantic notions, of a current Christian, and particularly evangelical, ideal of an exemplary and joyful passage to heaven following a life of virtuous action, complete atonement and abandonment to the will of God. This alteration in perception was not confined to civilians looking at the army from the outside. Much of the construction of narratives describing heroism in battle from the Napoleonic Wars onwards came from army men themselves. Far from being out of step with contemporary ideals, these military productions were in many cases very popular. The focus on individual men of action coming to exemplary ends fitted well with the nineteenth-century genre of the semi-hagiographical memoir, used to commemorate the lives of virtuous people from beloved mothers to missionaries.

The tone of regimental life cannot be said, then, to have been immoral in any straightforward sense. Moral schemes, including the competing ones of Christian denominations, and those shaped by the needs of war, social cohesion, honour and authority, were clearly compelling for Riflemen. This is underlined by instances of the regiment enforcing moral standards. The corps was proud of stories of the other ranks creating pressure on their peers (though again the evidence is limited). Walter Wood recounted an incident from the Peninsular War when supposedly,

A man of the first Battalion had robbed his comrades and deserted. Being captured, he was ordered to undergo 150 lashes, but Colonel Cameron, then at the head of the battalion, said he would pardon the offender if the battalion would be answerable for his good behaviour. The corps must have known its man, for it was not until a big share of the punishment had been inflicted, and after several chances had been given to the soldiers to speak, that a man stepped out of the ranks and begged the Colonel to forgive him. The interceder was as bad as the prisoner, but Cameron let the prisoner go. "Your bravery in the field, men," he said, "is known to me and the army. Your moral worth I now know. I am glad that not a man of the battalion would come forward for that prisoner except one; and what he is you know as well as I do."¹²¹

And the officers are known to have had, in the mid-century at least, a formally instituted system of self-regulated courts to administer moral and social discipline to junior officers and to mould their manners. Francis Howard, who was corporal of the escort of the subalterns court for the 4th Battalion, described the custom of officers holding their own court in the 1860s and 1870s.

Offences tried included,

shirking or neglecting duty, rough manners towards inferiors, secret nipping in quarters, selfishness, bumptious swagger in society etc.

Proceedings were apparently jocular for the most part, and punishments included confiscating liquor, cutting long hair and washing the dirty, but they could give up to six strokes with a fives bat 'on the offenders business end'. The consequences could sometimes be more far-reaching, however. Howard recorded the case of one errant officer whose behaviour was considerably modified by repeated courts martial, but there was 'a kink in him' that they could not deal with and he left the service.¹²² The mess also had a system of fines that collected considerable funds.

¹²¹ W. Wood, *The Rifle Brigade* (Grant Richards, London, 1901), pp.80-81.

¹²² Howard, *Reminiscences*, pp.79-80.

In January, 1863, for example, £79 6s 7½d was due to the Fine Fund of the officers mess of the 2nd Battalion 'on account of the Simla ball'.¹²³

It is apparent from the evidence found for the Rifle Brigade that morality was taken seriously in the regiment, but was not always guided by religious belief, and that, as a corollary, bad behaviour, in an evangelical sense, often had little to do with a lack of religious feeling. Clearly it is not accurate for the Rifle Brigade simply to invert the standard depiction of high levels of irreligion and associated immorality and crime, set beside a few cases of exceptional and reforming piety - a picture coloured by the Evangelical mission to the army of the mid-nineteenth century and perpetuated in modern historiography. This would be to deny, wrongly, that the regiment had problems with criminal and degenerate behaviour, and it would be to exaggerate the number (although this was not inconsiderable) who displayed strong religious devotion. It may well be that most Riflemen would be most accurately described, from a point of view influenced by evangelicalism, as like Charles Beckwith before his conversion. He had never been

either a sceptic or an infidel...But his faith had long been of that too common kind, a faith without works, which is dead'.¹²⁴

And a more balanced assessment may come from the view that the military introduced a code of behaviour of its own that was separate from Christianity, but that religion nonetheless often influenced views of morality, and where it did, there was variation in attitudes, and consequent hostility between groups, that reflected splits in non-military religious culture. The relatively high level of personal belief that can be traced in the regiment and many of the contradicting comments about irreligion in the corps can be reconciled if it is seen that Riflemen, taking on board long military tradition, were embedded in a broader British society that was characterised by a fractured Christianity and by religious competition.

¹²³ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 9 January 1863.

¹²⁴ J.P.Meille, *General Beckwith: His Life and Labours Among the Waldensians of Piedmont*, trans. by W.Arnot (T.Nelson, London, 1873), pp.19-20.

6.3 Institutional Religion

I would argue that there was a strong underlying religiosity among Riflemen throughout this period, and this was to be found in institutional and cultural religious feeling, which existed alongside at least some personal devotion. Charles Kingsley recognized the power of such belief, though he felt it was absent in the military, when he wrote,

There is a great deal of 'personal' religion in the army, no doubt: and personal religion may help men to endure, and complete the bull-dog form of *courage*: but the soldier wants more. He wants a faith that he is fighting on God's faith; he wants military and corporate and national religion, and that is what I fear he has yet to get, and what I tried to give in my tract. That is what Cromwell's Ironsides had, and by it they conquered.¹²⁵

As we have seen, Riflemen in service, retired, transferred, or dead, had an identity as soldiers and members of the regiment separate from other identities which they carried as individuals, or members of families. This regimental identity included Christianity. It was expressed in regimental life in the routine of religious observance and festivals, in regimental ceremony, and, in particular, in funerals and the commemoration of the dead.

The pattern of weeks and months was shaped for the Rifle Brigade by the Christian calendar. There were celebrations at Christmas and Easter, and on certain saints' days. The regiment also followed the weekly religious observances laid down in the Army Regulations. There was, when possible, a Church Parade for the whole battalion, regiment or brigade as appropriate, every Sunday throughout the nineteenth century, and associated religious services were conducted by denomination. The services were taken by a hotch-potch of ministers available to the army, or, in the absence of clergymen, by senior officers. The parades and services appear to have had quite distinct purposes, with the parades expressing an institutional religion, and the services intended for more personal worship.¹²⁶

The quality of denominational services is likely to have varied considerably, with the piecemeal provision of ministers (sometimes from local communities), but it seems that at times Sunday services could be quite inspiring. William Norcott, for example, found the gathering of

¹²⁵ R.G. Wilberforce, *The Life of the Rt. Rev. Samuel Wilberforce, DD: Lord Bishop of Oxford and Afterwards of Winchester* (Murray, London, 1881), p.164.

¹²⁶ See Ramsay Skelley, *The Victorian Army at Home*, pp.165-166.

Anglican soldiers at Divine Service in the Crimea deeply moving. Upwards of a hundred officers and the same number of men attended one service in the Turkish barracks.

The voices swelled the echo of the passage, earnest and trembling. Tears filled my eyes - it was overpowering. Oh! The exquisite beauty of religion. The consolation of a God - a redeemer. Armed and rugged men standing meekly or kneeling on the stone pavement.¹²⁷

By contrast, there seems to have been no expectation of personal emotional engagement in the parades. David Gordon's description gave an idea of the formality and hierarchy involved.

Three regiments drawn up to form three sides of a square - officers in front, Colonels in advance, with Windham and Lord William Paulett in advance again of the Colonels. The parson with a brown wide-awake, enlivened with a white wrapper, and advanced with a moustache and beard. He reads well, however, and the Bandsmen lead the responses.¹²⁸

The routine institutional expression of Sunday Parades appears to have been deliberately centred on obedience and presentation. It seems probable that at least part of the purpose of these parades was to express an institutional religious identity to which discipline was central. While 'keeping the men tidy' on Sundays was, no doubt, both useful for general professional purposes, and irksome to the men, on the other hand it was an indication of respect for religion.¹²⁹ It served the purpose (laudable in many Christian eyes) of filling the long hours of Sunday with a suitable activity, and, further, it was a confirmation of obedience to authority that ultimately acknowledged the religious dimension of obedience to the Crown.

Sunday Parades can be usefully put in the context of the wider debate in Britain on the Sabbath referred to above. Objections by the men to the parades may in part have reflected the opposition of sections of their civilian peers to paternalist religion (as distinct from religion itself). Equally, the support for parades by officers may reflect how far the army was in step with broad middle- and ruling class opinion on the propriety of Sunday observance and its role in cementing community and national unity.

¹²⁷ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 1, 21 May 1854.

¹²⁸ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 21 October 1855.

¹²⁹ Sunday Church Parades were not always irksome. For example, FitzRoy Fremantle noted in his diary that Church Parade was held one week at 5.20 a.m., while it was still dark (in order to avoid the Indian sun). The sermon lasted nine minutes and 'the whole thing took twenty-six minutes'. NAM, 8201-40, Fremantle Diary, 16 October 1859.

Burials expressed an aspect of the regiment's religious institutional identity that may have been more in tune with the feelings of most of the rank and file than Church Parades.¹³⁰

Soon after David Gordon landed in the Crimea in October 1855, he visited the cemetery,

where Goldie and Strangeways and our own Tryon and Godfrey and Cartwright are laid...all these scenes, and the remembrance of the deeds done here tend to raise the spirits wonderfully, to say who would not be a soldier.¹³¹

Funerals and monuments to the dead were of central importance to the institutional identity of the regiment over time, to its sense of purpose, and its current cohesion and camaraderie. The regiment, it seems, expressed regret, admiration, gratitude and solidarity: social and emotional bonds between the living and the dead, by means of Christian doctrine and observance. Furthermore, the impetus for this communal expression evidently came from all ranks. An article appearing in the *Rifle Brigade Chronicle* of 1895, for example, described the discovery of a simple carved stone in the wall of what had been the churchyard at St.Nicholas Church in Hythe. It was a crude monument, probably erected by the other ranks of the 2nd Battalion, in memory of the five sergeants and one hundred and twenty-five men of the corps who died of fever in the three months after the return of the troops from the Walcheren expedition in September 1809, and in the following year. The tablet, apparently contemporary, has a depiction of the Rifle Corps bugle with the inscription '95th regt 2nd Batt 1811', and the Biblical reference Col.ix, v.5: 'For though I be absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ'.¹³²

This care for the dead of the regiment by the other ranks continued through the period.

Sergeant William Bond recorded in his journal for 1852-3,

The North Barracks at Walmer was formerly a Hospital, at the back was the burying ground which had fallen into a shocking state of neglect, so that it was full of large

¹³⁰ This was probably linked to wider lower-class adherence to burial customs. There was, for example, great resentment at the 1836 circular from Edwin Chadwick to workhouses encouraging them to save money in ceasing to toll the bell at pauper funerals. See Harrison, *The Early Victorians*, p.84.

¹³¹ RGJ, Gordon Diary, 21 October 1855. Lieutenant Henry Tryon was killed leading the stormers at 'The Ovens', November 20th, 1854. Captain Aubrey Cartwright was killed at Inkerman, 5 November, 1854. Both Tryon and he were among the number celebrated in G.Ryan, *Our Heroes of the Crimea: Being Biographical Sketches of Our Military Officers, from the General Commanding-in-Chief to the Subaltern* (Routledge, London, 1855), pp.114, 88. Cartwright's judgement and valour were depicted as 'attributes of a demi-god'.

¹³² C.G.Slade, 'The Hythe Tablet', *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1895, pp.70-72.

holes, where mounds formerly stood, which contained some hundreds of bodies of the poor fellows of the Walcheren expedition, and the whole overgrown with long, rank grass. Our attention was drawn to this state of things by the burial of Corporal William Morris, our Depot Bandmaster, and representations being made to the Government of its neglect by the Chaplain General, who visited it with Captain A. Macdonnell, who was then in temporary command, the government sanctioned 200 trees and evergreen shrubs at a 1/- each to be purchased and planted. We levelled the mounds, filled up the pits, and laid out walks, covering them with shingle from the beach, planted the trees and shrubs, and a vast quantity of flowers, and made what was once a wilderness one of the beautifullest burying grounds in the kingdom. This was done as a labour of love for our comrades that had gone before.¹³³

And the sergeants of the 2nd Battalion also put up (at their own expense it seems) a monument in the Crimea for the dead sergeants of their unit, and these individuals were all named on the back of the memorial. This was the only one dedicated to the 2nd Battalion, which commissioned no general memorial to its men.¹³⁴

Similarly, Francis Howard, writing of the epidemic in India of 1879, noted that, while they dropped 'all these ideas' when cholera was prevalent, in ordinary times the men attached great importance to well-attended funerals and expensive coffins.¹³⁵ A touching letter survives supporting this view, written by Henry Ryder's soldier servant to his own wife. He described dressing the bodies of Ryder and Capt. Hammond for their coffins after the failed attempt on the Redan. He evidently took considerable trouble over the task and he informed his wife that Dr Frasier, the regimental surgeon, had told him he was 'a good soul for doing them up so nice'.¹³⁶

There are several references, too, to officers concerned with commemorating the dead.¹³⁷ Entries in the Second Battalion Mess Rules for 7th April, 1862, and 1 May, 1863,

¹³³ RGJ, Cope MSS, Bond Diary, 2 January 1852 to 10 August 1853.

¹³⁴ *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, 1897, pp.323-325.

¹³⁵ Howard, *Reminiscences*, p.186

¹³⁶ NAM, 7712-46-8, W.Hexter to his wife, 14 September 1855.

¹³⁷ Written records were another expression of this institutional identity in death. RGJ, *The Skirmisher*, August 1860, p.2, for example, carried an article in its first issue, entitled 'Some Anecdotes of the House We Live in', sketching 'the origin, formation and service of the Rifle Brigade'. This article noted the principle engagements of the regiment, making particularly proud mention of the large number killed: the value of the corps was measured, that is, not only by the number of times it was in action, and its effectiveness in battle, but by the sheer number of officers and men who died. Indeed records of the number and names of those killed, particularly officers, the honourable circumstances of their deaths, and details of their previous martial acts, were deliberately collected by Riflemen from the Napoleonic Wars onward. Cope's *History* was, above all, a collating of documents and memories, written as a monument to the regiment. Captain H.M. Moorsom wrote on the 8th March, 1877, that all Riflemen had a debt of gratitude to Cope for 'preserving many good deeds from obscurity'. NAM, Cope MSS, 6804/2, vol.2, H. Moorsom to W. Cope, 3 March 1877. Likewise, J. Kincaid, 'Anecdotes of the Life of the Late Major Johnstone, of the Rifle Brigade', *USJ*,

record officers putting money toward railings to surround the tombs of Charles Woodford and William Thynne, and toward a monument to the Rifle Brigade dead of the Indian Mutiny, to be placed in Westminster Abbey or Canterbury Cathedral.¹³⁸ And Sir William Cope received as part of his research a description of the Crimean War monument erected in 1856 by the officers of the 1st Battalion in memory of their dead. This was placed at the site of their camp near Sebastopol.¹³⁹ Josslyn Pennington, Lord Muncaster, was involved in 1882 in a scheme to amalgamate some hundred cemeteries in the Crimea to form two or three larger sites. These were to have regimental monuments, and the work was to be done 'with a view to getting them in a proper state'.¹⁴⁰ And again, a Mr Hart (unidentified, but possibly a descendant of Major John Hart who served in the regiment from 1803 to 1816) likewise corresponded with Sir William Cope in 1881 about organising fundraising in the regiment to construct a church porch at Biarritz in memory of the fallen of the regiment of 1813-14. Hart suggested that the substantial sum of money required (he had already found £665, but needed a further £800) should be given out of 'reverence for the old days'.¹⁴¹

This activity aimed at marking the lives and deaths of members of the regiment with monuments and Christian funerals is indicative of a communal as well as personal celebration of the rites of passage by religious language and ritual. It indicates a group religious feeling that was expressed in the weekly routine of the regiment, and in Christian festivals, but that was at its most compelling in relation to death. This institutional religious feeling was given telling expression in the establishment of a regimental toast in the nineteenth century that carried an almost prayer-like tone,

1837, vol 1, pp.354-361 was written, he declared, because such a man deserved to be remembered, not buried in a nameless grave.

¹³⁸ Captain Woodford was killed at Cawnpore, 28 November, 1857. His father, Field-Marshal Sir Alexander Woodford (1782-1870), had six lancet windows placed in the transept of Westminster Abbey to his memory. Captain Thynne, a grandson of the 2nd Marquis of Bath, was killed at Lucknow, 12 March, 1858.

¹³⁹ NAM, Cope MSS, 6804-2, vol.2, p.143. Officers were named, but the total number only of other ranks killed was recorded.

¹⁴⁰ Carlisle Record Office, D/PEN/137/CRIMEAN CEMETERIES, Stanley to Lord Muncaster, 17 December, 1882.

¹⁴¹ NAM, 6804-2, Cope MSS, vol.2, Hart to W.Cope, 12 November 1881; *ibid.*, 10 March 1882.

Here's to the Bugle of the Rifle Brigade, may it always be blown with the breath of good fortune. May Riflemen always Advance in good order, and Retire steadily from bad company. Incline always to the Right, and never to the Wrong. Form square against misfortune. Fire steadily on the enemy, but extend the hand of mercy to the wounded enemy. Wheel manfully round to the glories of old victories, and at last, when the Bugle shall sound the "Lie Down", may we all obey gladly, with a good hope of being found acceptable, when the last Bugle shall sound the "Get Up".¹⁴²

6.4 Cultural Religion

As well as instances of institutional religion, evidence is to be found in the regiment for religious sentiments connected with memories of home and with what can be shown to have been multiple national identities. These aspects of religious feeling can broadly be termed cultural. They are important to a full understanding of the role of religion in the regiment and its relation to broader British religious thinking. Cultural religion underpinned social cohesion in the regiment, and created powerful bonds with civilian society that were central to group and individual motivation in furthering the work of the army.

6.4.1 *Memories of Home*

William Norcott, as has been seen, was a committed Evangelical and Sabbatarian. Nonetheless, he wrote that on eating roast lamb while in the Crimea he was moved to shut his eyes, and in the flavour of 'two or three pieces of brown frizzled fat' he found, 'home - and Sundays and people carrying baked meat'. It is clear that Sundays meant to him not only religious observance by Biblical command, church services and regimental duties. They were also strongly and sentimentally associated in his mind with British tradition, and in particular with the private and domestic. Several references have been found to show that Christmas, in particular, was similarly evocative for others. Rifleman Harris recalled from the Peninsular War,

softer feelings occasionally filled the breasts of those gallant fellows, even whilst they were thirsting for a sight of the enemy. Some of the men near me suddenly recollected

¹⁴² RGJ, Folio 1, p.22, 'Rifle Brigade Toast'.

that this was Christmas Eve. The recollection soon spread amongst the men, and many talked of home, and scenes upon that night in Old England, shedding tears as they spoke of their relatives and friends never to be seen by them again.¹⁴³

Similarly, Private William Hart wrote to his mother on Christmas Day, 1854, from the Crimea,

we are all at this present time talking about how happy we where [sic] last Christmas and you may depend upon it we are all very solid thinking about old times and thinking what fools we are to be here, but there is no good repenting.¹⁴⁴

To mark the season, and to raise morale at what could otherwise be a time of homesickness, the regiment often put on Christmas entertainments, including theatrical performances, singing, dancing, and special meals. For example, David Gordon described for his wife the festivities of the officers in December, 1856,

On Christmas day we all dined together, all contributing a part of the dinner. Blundell and I had to furnish a pair of fowls and a tongue. We had some difficulty in getting the fowls and had to pay 15/- for them. Our dinner consisted of soup (from Lord Alex) Fish (Capt.Walker) Round of Beef (Ashton) Turkey and Truffles (Musgrave) other turkeys and geese, then a bustard (Paymaster) and two hares. Plumpudding, jelly and dessert (Col.Curzon). Fancy a dinner like this in the Crimea...We sang songs until one o'clock.¹⁴⁵

Programmes survive, too, for Christmas plays at Subathoo in India, for 1861 and 1862. The prologue to the 1862 play includes the lines,

And whether East or West our lots be cast,
Twixt now and then forget not Christmas past,
That each who seeks Old England's shore may find
A kindly thought for those who're left behind.¹⁴⁶

And in August, 1866, the Rifle Brigade Mess at Meerut, India, was planning ahead, ordering a box for Christmas from Fortnum and Mason.¹⁴⁷ Christmas in the regiment evidently took weeks if not months to plan, and it was painstakingly made to reflect domestic and broadly British festivities. In stressing the bonds, national as well as religious, of family and community, and in simply finding an excuse for a party, the Rifle Brigade participated in an observance of Christmas in wider society that was as much cultural as religious. Indeed, in this way, Christmas had much in common with the non-religious festivals of May Day and the King or

¹⁴³ Hibbert (ed), *Recollections*, pp.108-9.

¹⁴⁴ RGJ, Folio 2, W.Hart to his mother, 25 December, 1854.

¹⁴⁵ RGJ, D.Gordon to his wife, 3 January 1856.

¹⁴⁶ RGJ, Folio 1, 1861 programmes for 'The Writer to the Times' and 'Bombastes Furioso'. Only the prologue for the 1862 play survives.

¹⁴⁷ RGJ, 2nd Battalion Mess Rules, 8 August, 1866.

Queen's birthday, also observed in the regiment, as at home, but it was by far the greatest event of the year.

6.4.2 National Identities

Religion, then, was an ingredient in memories of home, particularly at Christmas time, that bound the regiment together and linked it with civilian society. At the same time, however, it had a role in shaping the more subtle contours of divided, or layered, national loyalties. The celebration of St. Patrick's Day, a religious festival in origin, was enthusiastically marked in the Rifle Brigade. There were a large number of Irish in the Rifle Brigade throughout the period, and the sense of regional identity was never lost. According to Mrs Fitzmaurice, for example, the Rifle Brigade marched to Badajoz on 17th March, 1812, 'the bands playing 'St. Patrick's Day in the Morning''.¹⁴⁸ And William Norcott received a deputation of men bringing him a shamrock to wear, as an Irishman, on St. Patrick's Day during the Crimean War.¹⁴⁹ These observances served to mark out the Irish across the army and to connect them with alternative nationalist (and therefore potentially subversive) sentiment at home. Furthermore, St. Patrick's Day was a cultural religious celebration that could supercede Irish sectarian differences in the overriding concern to assert an Irish, separate from an English, Scots or Welsh, identity.

Similarly, though with less elaboration there were celebrations on St. Andrew's Day for the Scots. The strength of the Scottish contingent in the regiment and its sense of solidarity can be measured from the remark in the memoir of General John Fitzmaurice which declared that he harboured a life-long prejudice against the Scottish because a certain senior officer in the Rifle Brigade in its early years (probably Sir William Stewart),

never lost an opportunity of favouring his own countrymen at the expense of the English and Irish officers.

¹⁴⁸ Fitzmaurice, *Recollections*, p.186.

¹⁴⁹ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 4, 17 March 1855; see E.T.Lones and A.R.White (eds), *British Calendar Customs, England: Fixed Festivals January to May* (Krauss Reprint Ltd., Lichtenstein, 1968), vol 2, p.165, for Irishmen in London presenting shamrocks to officers, N.C.O.s and men of the Irish Guards on St. Patrick's Day. The Rifle Brigade tradition may have mimicked this custom.

(It is revealing, however, that Fitzmaurice himself took the part of Irish boys while he was a Director of Cheltenham College.)¹⁵⁰

Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that officers at least had a shared sense of belonging to a British nation, beyond regional identities, in which religion played an important part.¹⁵¹ Protestantism was set up in opposition to Popish superstition in one strand of this identity, but more fundamentally, in the context of the French Revolution, abhorrence of irreligion was a sentiment that could unite men of diverse beliefs and religious traditions. This is clearly seen in reactions to the Napoleonic Wars.

John Charles Ramsden, the eldest brother of Charles Ramsden (commissioned in to the Rifle Brigade in 1823) and of Henry Ramsden (later of the 9th Lancers), wrote soon after the two boys had left Harrow,

It is decreed that you are to sett [sic] out today for your Education in France; and so I understand from you last night that you have *no* books of History or anything of the sort; I send you Millar's History of the English Constitution and Government, which it will give me the greatest satisfaction to believe, that you *both* read through and through till you have made yourselves *masters* of its contents, which the doing of, will amuse you, and from which the gain will be, that when you are observing what passes in the Country you are going into, you will more and more admire the noble superiority of your own Dear Country in *Laws*, in *Government*, in *Religion*, in *Morality*, and in *Manners*. That you may both return with this conviction (which I feel sure your good senses must shew you) and that you may both come back as good as you went is the greatest of all [my] desires...¹⁵²

George Simmons, reflecting too on the devastation of the French Wars, betrayed a religious as well as British national outlook when he commented to his parents in a letter of 1810,

The French are certainly the greatest curse the Almighty ever sent into the world. Universal conquest and ruin of everything sacred and binding between man and man is their sole aim. I hope their career will be checked sooner or later.¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Fitzmaurice, *Biographical Sketch*, pp.15, 80.

¹⁵¹ L.Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1992), pp.3-4, 6, 18-54 and *passim* points to Protestant religion as crucial in the development of British identity in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

¹⁵² Muncaster Castle, J.Ramsden to C.Ramsden, May 15 1816. For John Millar's place in a new mid-eighteenth-century interest in race and national origins, see G.Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London, 1987), pp.115, 152; see also W.C.Lehmann, *John Millar of Glasgow 1735-1801: His Life and Thought and His Contributions to Sociological Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1960).

¹⁵³ Simmons, *British Rifle Man*, p.121.

Similarly, Charles Beckwith's virulent dislike of Roman Catholicism was linked to his feelings against the French, shaped, also, in the years before the final defeat of Napoleon. He wrote to George Simmons during the French invasion scare in England before the Crimean War,

It does not seem certain or even probable that Johnny Petite will go to war with us, although he would be very glad to do so ... the knowledge the government possess of how matters went in the last days of Napoleon, and the very great possibility of having to pay the whole damage, will one must suppose, if anything will, preserve the public peace. Otherwise, they are such a set of ingrained blackguards that there is no saying what they may do ... I am told that a great many Frenchmen are settling in this country tired and worn out with the folly, rascality, irreligion, insecurity and total want of consideration between man and man, in their area.¹⁵⁴

William Norcott still saw the Crimean War in terms familiar at the beginning of the century, as being fought in defence of threatened general Christian principles linked directly with the defence of his country, and even his hearth. He wrote, 'we fight for right, our Queen and home,'¹⁵⁵ and he declared that England was lucky to have the blessing of Christianity.

There is no consolation, no help, no rest for the soul, nothing to go on for without it.¹⁵⁶ However, he expressed with a new sharpness British identity in contrast with the heathen and he cast the British in a combative missionary role as instruments of God's will. He wrote in his diary in April, 1854,

Divine service and the name of Jesus Christ be on these Turkish hills. May not this war, the Expedition, be God's chosen means to extend that Holy name?¹⁵⁷

Although in the event the allied force fought the Christian power of Russia (an allegedly tyrannical monarchy which in Norcott's view violated the principles of a divinely ordained social order), the war originated in a dispute over the Christian holy places and could be seen by Norcott, in line with many at home, as a conflict that had a religious mission to the heathen.

This emphasis on the role of Britain in a wider non-Christian world appears to have become more pronounced in the thinking of Riflemen from the mid-century. The aim of establishing good government, and the improvement of the society and morals of defeated peoples (sanctioned by divine will) evident in comments on the Napoleonic War by Riflemen,

¹⁵⁴ RGJ, Folio 2, p.20, letter C.Beckwith to G.Simmons, [undated].

¹⁵⁵ RGJ, W.Norcott Diary, vol 2, 28 August 1854.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 6 August 1854.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., vol 1, 23 April 1854.

was maintained. However, a more strident and confident imperialism was evidently emerging. The *Skirmisher* of 1860 carried an article entitled 'Self-Defence', arguing against legislative attempts to promote equality between the Indian people and the English.

We Englishmen on Indian soil are here only as conquerors. Whether of peaceful profession, or as men of the sword, we must always be regarded as such by the conquered races, and we must always be prepared to defend the position we have assumed. Our presence as conquerors, and more particularly as Christian conquerors, must at all times be asserted, and with our hands ready on the hilt of our swords. The mawkish sentimentality, of some among us, has the tendency to impede...the good which, through Divine Providence, in course of time, we are here to promote.¹⁵⁸

Similarly, Francis Howard in the 1860s and 1870s felt profound contempt for Indian religious beliefs and for caste traditions. He, too, was entirely clear that the army was imposing Christian progress on the sub-continent. Again, this shift in emphasis appears to have been fully in line with wider nationalist sentiment in Britain, shaped not least by rising economic confidence and by the growth of the Evangelical missionary movement, and this was focused in the Rifle Brigade, as elsewhere, by the shock of brutal resistance to British rule in India.¹⁵⁹

Religion, then, can be traced in the regiment in many forms: in personal, institutional and cultural manifestations, aligned with various denominations, and shaped by the reception of Christianity in different social groups and geographical regions. In maintaining connexions with a broad spectrum of nineteenth-century religious opinion, and evangelicalism in particular, the regiment was in touch with ideas of regenerated gentlemanliness (which acted, as we have seen, as an umbrella for a range of views in its endorsement of virtue and upright conduct). Indeed, these ideas could not be translated into the army without it. Lieutenant-Colonel Irton recognised the role of religion in the reception of the ideal when he wrote to Hammond's father (who was evidently concerned that his son was not acting the proper part of an officer),

Some of my officers have been reported to hold extreme opinions, and to exercise a corresponding extravagance of conduct in regard to religion. There are no grounds for any such imputation upon any members of the corps ... There are people who might describe him [Hammond], as they would other men, who desire to live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world, otherwise than they are; but there can be no mistake in the family of a young officer who in all points shows himself to be neither

¹⁵⁸ RGJ, Folio 1, *The Skirmisher*, September 1860, pp.7-8.

¹⁵⁹ See Best, *Humanity in Warfare*, pp.134-138 for the parallel views of the mid- and later nineteenth century, seeing progress as achievable by either peace or war, and for their relationship with thinking on international trade, Darwinism and imperialism.

more nor less than what a Christian gentleman must needs be, who has any claim to the name.¹⁶⁰

And the chaplain Huleatt had in mind the link in the ideal between Christian propriety and duty appropriate to gentlemanly station (including military leadership) when he wrote to Henry Ryder's mother that because her son 'was called away in the path of duty' there was every reason to hope he was found in Christ and would be in Him on judgement day.¹⁶¹ The evidence for religion in the Rifle Brigade again shows the regiment firmly connected at many points to civilian society and responsive to current culture, and it supports the view that the sharing of the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness is central to an understanding of the relationship between the British army and nineteenth-century society.

¹⁶⁰ Hammond, *Memoir*, p.49. This echoes the final passage in C.Marsh, *Memorials of Captain Hedley Vicars, 97th Regiment* (James Nisbet, London, 1856), p.315, 'In conclusion, the writer of these memorials would venture to repeat, with a deeper meaning, his own last words to his faithful men, "This way, 97th!" And would add a humble prayer, not only for that gallant regiment... but also for every soldier in the British army, that each may tread the same path to endless glory, by finding HIM who is "the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE"..."If any man serve me, let him follow me..."'

¹⁶¹ NAM, 7712-46-10, H.Huleatt to G.Ryder, 15 September 1855.

Conclusion

This study has aimed to shed light on the outlook and experience of individuals connected with the Rifle Brigade between 1800 and about 1870. Through a variety of sources, but particularly through the use of their own accounts of their thoughts and actions, it has tried to show the place of culture and custom in structuring their lives and attitudes. The influences underpinning the social and professional character of the corps were, it emerges, complex and evolving. They included military elements (both traditional and contemporary -- including continental -- military approaches to obedience, duty, loyalty and morality) but also a variety of non-military elements. These, arising from a mixture of social, economic, political and religious aspects of civilian culture, were crucial in shaping the ways in which the regiment cohered and how it interrelated with non-military society.

In particular, a fundamentally civilian ideal of gentlemanliness, grounded in traditions of aristocracy and Christianity, acted as a central guide to officers in their behaviour and opinions. It coloured their professional outlook, fostering both conservative and reformist impulses, especially through offering a vision of a stable, hierarchical social order based on leadership by men displaying a range of superior moral, intellectual and character qualities. This vision of a purified and dynamic gentlemanliness provided a strong thread of continuity in the history of the regiment

over many decades. It can be discerned in the founding regulations and in the approach of Sir John Moore and his circle, and it remained strong in ensuing regimental orders and in the experiments in organisation and discipline of Rifle Brigade officers of the mid-century. There were, certainly, shifts in emphasis and understanding in social rules (for example over duelling and in a growing sensitivity to the impropriety of heavy drinking) but the thread of continuity in shaping the regiment through principles of gentlemanly instinct and behaviour remained strong.

This outlook created links into civilian society. It bound officers to the values and aspirations of family and patronage allies, and, more fundamentally, it kept attitudes and behaviour in the regiment aligned with principles and customs current outside the army. Because the ideal of regenerated gentlemanliness, permeating so much of social, political and religious thought in the period (in its definitions of duty, the responsibilities of property, inheritance and so on) was an explanatory and creative idea for a broad section of society from the ruling to middle classes, it provided common ground between officers and a much wider civilian public. Rifle Brigade officers, imbibing current ideas and attitudes through many channels, including personal contacts, reading and religion (before, during and after service) approached their professional lives within a wider system of continually renegotiated social ordering. Their activities in furthering military morale and efficiency were consequently touched by shifting and fractured notions of morality, propriety, loyalty and justice that pervaded civilian society.

Concentrating on the ideal of gentlemanliness found in the Rifle Brigade provides a useful vantage point for the historian. It reveals the regiment as one section of society among many experimenting in the use of social power and in the evolution of a professional outlook. It reveals, too, something of the place of the army in the political nation (parallel, perhaps to that of the public schools) in developing in individual ruling- and middle-class men the attitudes, skills and experience to fill simultaneously many roles in society carrying social, political, economic and

religious power. From this angle, short army careers, careers that mixed the military with other interests and endeavours, and indeed, amateurism as a military ideal, do not appear as unprofessional (or anti-professional), nor as tending to isolate the army from important progressive movements in non-landed culture. On the contrary, they appear as mechanisms integrating the army into wider society and providing a contribution to the definition and realisation of notions such as manliness and responsibility.

Information is much less full and less easily interpreted for the other ranks than for the officer corps, and this is a significant limitation to this study. However, the evidence for their opinions and experience that does survive, though far from conclusive, points to certain continuities across the corps that reinforce the argument for the influence of gentlemanliness. Officers and men appear to have shared a frame of mind in their loyalties to the regiment, in a British identity, and in an understanding and acceptance of contemporary social hierarchy. This common ground seems to have been consolidated by parallel contacts with civilians and by reading, theatre, and for some at least organised religion, and it may also have been consolidated by living and working in close proximity over many years to men of diverse background. Differences in culture and behaviour between officers and men can thus be viewed as a deep division within the corps, but one that was bridged by ideas and customs fostered by contacts with civilian culture.

A further limitation to this study is the restriction of its attention to a single regiment. While the frequent transfer of officers between units, extensive contacts with other regiments, and the wide influence of general officers that have been found suggest that a number of avenues existed for the diffusion of methods and ideas between corps (and this view is reinforced by the spread of kin, friends and schoolfellows across the army), and while there are, as we have seen, advantages in the integration and depth of evidence in looking at a discrete regiment, this research nonetheless concerns only a small fraction of the service. The picture that has been drawn of social,

cultural and professional attitudes found in the Rifle Brigade opens up broader views of the relationship between the nineteenth-century army and society, but more research would undoubtedly add to it important depth and further insights.

This dissertation provides a focused account of one institution and one mixed group of individuals across time, that can be used to uncover part of the matrix of culture that shaped both military and civilian society in the nineteenth century. At base it aims to reconstruct aspects of the lives of these men and women within the context of their time, and so to make sense of their behaviour and experience.

Appendix 1: The Preparation of Data for the Analysis of the Careers of Rifle Brigade Officers

The information concerning the careers of Rifle Brigade officers presented in Figures 3 to 12 and Tables 7, 8 and 10 in Chapter 1 was based on data taken from Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century*, with supplementary facts (particularly for dates of death) from a range of sources including *The Rifle Brigade Chronicle*, Curtis, *A Rifle Brigade Register*, *Burke's Peerage*, and *Burke's Landed Gentry*, Walford, *County Families of the United Kingdom*, Hart, *Army List*, *The Dictionary of National Biography*, Crone, *A Concise Dictionary of Irish Biography*, *The Times* and *The Annual Obituary*. (Various editions and supplements were used as appropriate. See Bibliography below.) Included in the data were Rifle Brigade officers whose military careers began in or before 1870.

The format and content of Boyle, *Rifle Brigade Century* (which lists with other information, the names, promotions by rank with dates and units, and higher ranks of officers) were modified for computer analysis:

- Each promotion was entered with the appropriate name, regiment, rank, full or half-pay status, the date the officer began in the position and the date he left.
- Guards were entered by their highest rank, and captain-lieutenants were entered as captains.
- If exact information relating to day or month was lacking, it was entered as the first.
- Where information did not relate to a regimental appointment, the regiment was given as unattached (if appropriate), or as a non-regimental staff or other military appointment, with or without pay status, regiment or rank as was fitting. Thus the appointments of, for

example, general officers and colonels of regiments were included, often with overlapping dates when several appointments were held simultaneously.

- Surgeons, assistant-surgeons, paymasters, quartermasters and chaplains were excluded unless they served as combatant officers.
- Officers retiring, resigning, superseded or with an appointment cancelled were all entered as having retired, with dates of retirement, pay status, and, where known, death dates.
- Brevet, temporary, local and honorary ranks were excluded, as were appointments in the fencibles and in the yeomanry, militia and volunteers.
- Appointments in foreign and colonial regular regiments were included.
- Regiments were coded so that any which changed name or number during the period, or had several names simultaneously, was identified as a single unit.
- Each regiment was tagged with a description of its primary function: infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers or marines.

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