

THE RECRUITMENT OF THE
BRITISH ARMY 1807-1815

Kevin Barry Linch

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and
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Abstract

The French Revolution created the first era of mass warfare, and all the major European powers were forced to address the needs of this unprecedented level of mobilisation. Such demands have been recognised by historians and reflected in the work that exists on war and society between 1793 and 1815. Yet Britain has remained aloof from these trends, as it is generally assumed that Britain did not adopt mass warfare, and instead relied on a small, highly trained, professional army, in keeping with the warfare of the eighteenth century. Britain is seen as distinct and insulated from the experiences on the continent.

It is undeniable that Britain had peculiar strategic, structural, and political restraints that impacted on its military policy. Within the context of these, Britain was committed to fighting Napoleon, and so came under the same pressures to expand the army and address the means of supplying such a force, although compared to the continent to a more limited extent. However, Britain's army peaked at 250,000 men in 1813, compared to just over 100,000 in the American War of Independence, and a paltry 30,000 during peacetime in the 1780s. Such a significant increase in numbers is likely to have challenged the government, and forced changes in military policy.

This thesis explores the demands on Britain during its most intense years of warfare (1807 to 1815), and explores the choices made by the government. It then follows the implementation of its policy, and finally assesses the impact on the army. In doing so, it brings historical understanding of the British army during this period into alignment with studies of continental European states, and examines the response of an eighteenth century political system to the biggest military threat it had faced to its existence.

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Abbreviations

AG	Adjutant General
BL	British Library
CHA	Claydon House Archive
CJ	Journals of the House of Commons
EHR	English Historical Review
FG	Foot Guards
HO	Home Office
IFO	Inspecting Field Officer
JSAHR	Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research
KGL	King's German Legion
LD	Light Dragoons
NAM	National Army Museum
NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
OC	Officer Commanding
PRO	Public Record Office
SHC	Surrey History Centre
WO	War Office

Notes

Certain conventions have been used throughout this work with regard to contemporary military and geo-political terminology. The term 'regulars' means all the full-time forces under the control of the Commander in Chief, whilst the 'line' refers just to the numbered foot infantry regiments (or line regiments). Where a line regiment has more than one battalion, to signify the different battalions within the regiment the battalion number is given first, followed by the regiment; thus 1/6th refers to the first battalion, the 6th regiment of foot.

There were many different terms of service introduced during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the following terms have been standardised: limited-service refers to men limited geographically in their service (for instance to the UK); short-service signifies enlistment for a period of time; unlimited service is service without restriction geographically or in time; general service means soldiers enlisted to serve in the army, and not attached to any particular regiment.

Finally, there is a rather complex use of the term British. Although strictly speaking after the Union with Ireland in 1801 Britain refers to the UK, (hence British army refers to the entire regular military force of the UK), but many aspects of the Union were left incomplete, so there was a British Militia (the militias of England, Wales and Scotland) and an Irish Militia. So wherever possible when speaking of Britain the term the UK has been used, except in where this has been impossible (for instance the British army); otherwise Britain refers just to England, Wales and Scotland.

Introduction: British Military History and the ‘Scum
of the Earth’.

British military history of the eighteenth century has been dominated by one, often misquoted remark by the Duke of Wellington who described the common soldier as ‘the scum of the earth’¹. Although he qualified his statements by emphasising that they made good soldiers, his judgement has been repeated in the writings about British history in the eighteenth century, particularly in the case of the army between 1793 and 1815.² This is unsurprising, as the history of the British army has largely been divorced from the context of British social history. In eighteenth century Britain ‘War resembled a remote theatre in which spectators and actors were forever separated’³, and although the military provided Britain with its police force, and it is recognised that the re-invigoration of the militia from 1757 brought a more obtrusive military presence into British society, the emphasis of British history has been biased towards politics, society, and the economy. Work on this has produced some epic pieces of history and continues to generate debate,⁴ but has tended to dominate other subject areas. Typical of this is incorporating the wars into the period 1783-1832, thus encasing the wars in a political period. The impact of the French Revolution and the industrial revolution in Britain have received more attention than the almost continuous wars that Britain experienced during the same twenty-two years.⁵

In some respects the concentration on social and political history is justified. Economic history has received more attention as the financial power of Britain was used

¹ *Supplementary Dispatches, Correspondence, and Memoranda of Arthur Duke of Wellington*, Ed. By the Second Duke of Wellington, (London, 1858-72), X, 531, Earl Stanhope, *Notes of Conversations with the Duke of Wellington*, (London, 1888), pp. 14, 18.

² Gunther Rothenberg, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon*, (London, 1977), pp. 177-78; D. Gates, ‘The Transformation of the British Army, 1793-1815.’, in D. Chandler & I. Beckett (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the British Army*, (Oxford, 1994), pp.142-143.

³ P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727-1783*, (Oxford, 1989), p. 628.

⁴ Such as E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, (London, 1991 edition), J. C. D. Clark, *English Society, 1688-1832*, (London, 1985), John Rule, *Albion’s People, English Society, 1714-1815*, (London, 1992), J. Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1870*, (New York, 1979); a recent synthesis of high and low politics from 1783 until the Reform Act is provided in Michael J. Turner, *The Age of Unease: Government and Reform in Britain, 1782-1832*, (Stroud, 2000).

⁵ For instance, H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution*, (London 1989).

to fight wars, particularly subsidising other nations to fight, and this has further demoted the role of Britain's army.⁶ Moreover, Britain's first concern, as an island nation had to be the navy, which prevented any invasion of the country, and protected its overseas trade. The army always had a subsidiary role to the navy, and was also subjected throughout the period to a pervading anti-army ideology, which labelled it an offensive and absolutist weapon.⁷ Consequently, compared with the massive military presence in continental states such as France and Prussia,⁸ the presence of the military in Britain was largely remote, and 'offshore'. Its major point of contact with civilians was in a public order role, as an aid to the civil power, not as a military force. British history has propagated the attitudes of contemporary British society towards the military.

The military history of the period has traditionally focused on narrative accounts of campaigns, of which the epic J. W. Fortescue's *History of the British Army* (13 vols.; London, 1899-1930), and Sir C. W. C. Oman's *History of the Peninsular War* (7 vols.; Oxford, 1902-1930) remain classics. Although these works are important, they do not make reference to British society in general, nor to the problems and themes underlying Britain's prosecution of wars during a period of dramatic change in the organisation of military forces across Europe. Nowhere is this more apparent than with the continuing concentration on the campaign and battle of Waterloo, and the seemingly endless re-evaluations of the battle.⁹ British military history has also produced works on the large figures of the period, particularly Wellington,¹⁰ which, again, although useful in their

⁶ J. M. Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder: British Foreign Aid in the Wars with France, 1793-1815*, (Cambridge, MA, 1969).

⁷ Jeremy Black, *European Warfare, 1660-1815*, (London, 1994), p. 106; Lois G. Schworer, *No Standing Armies: The Origins of Antiarmy Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England*, (London, 1974).

⁸ John Gooch, *Armies in Europe*, (London, 1980), p. 6; Black, *European Warfare*, pp. 9-10.

⁹ Controversy over the battle emerged soon after 1815, with the publication of W. Sibourne's *History of the Waterloo Campaign*, (London, 1848, recently republished in 1990), recent contributions include D. Hamilton-Williams, *Waterloo: New Perspectives, The Great Battle Reappraised*, (London, 1993); John Hussey, 'At What Time on 15 June 1815 did Wellington Learn of Napoleon's Attack on the Prussians?', *War in History*, 6 (1996), pp. 88-116.

¹⁰ The number of studies on Wellington continues to proliferate, included among them are M. Glover, *Wellington as a Military Commander* (London, 1969), P. Griffith, *Wellington Commander. The Iron Duke's Generalship*, (Chichester, 1985), L. James, *The Iron Duke: A Military biography of Wellington*, (London, 1992), E. Longford, *Wellington, the Years of the Sword*, (London, 1969), and J Weller, *Wellington in the Peninsula, 1808-14*, (London, 1962).

own right, do little to contribute to the further understanding of Britain and its military organisations. This is particularly true for the years 1793 to 1815, as it produced some epic national heroes who died in their hours of greatest triumph, such as Nelson and Sir John Moore, and even to an extent Pitt, who died when it was apparent that Britain was safe from invasion.¹¹ To this was added a developing regimental tradition, which further deflected military history away from war and society.¹²

All of these trends - the concentration of historical focus on British society, and British military history being relegated to campaigns, battles and commanders - are emphasised for the wars between 1793 to 1815, despite its title as the Great War until 1914. This is because the underlying factors affecting the choice of historical subject are exaggerated during this period: the insular attitude of Britain was reinforced in these years. Britain relied on the navy for its defence, whilst the upheavals of the industrial revolution, and radical politics forced underground by a 'white terror' and transformed into a revolutionary threat, pointed to a bigger threat from inside Britain rather than outside it.¹³ The major emphasis of historical work for these wars has been radical politics, peace movements and the tax burden,¹⁴ so the military has lacked the requisite degree of investigation. The worst example of this is the often-recited fact that the same numbers of troops were needed to suppress the Luddites as Wellington had in the Peninsula.¹⁵ This is true superficially, but totally fails to examine Britain's military structure. The troops used in the Luddite disturbances were mainly militia regiments,

¹¹ This is also true for other countries, as G. Best points out the events of 1793-1815 provided an 'unusually rich harvest of national myths and figures.' (G. Best, *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe, 1770-1870*, (Leicester, 1982)).

¹² It is not surprising that soon after the Napoleonic Wars regimental histories began to be written, and the first official histories were R. Cannon, *Historical Records of the British Army, comprising history of every regiment in HM's service*, 70 vols., (1835-53).

¹³ Besides Thompson, *The Making*, a more thorough investigation is made in Roger Wells, *Insurrection: the British Experience 1795-1801*, (Gloucester, 1983).

¹⁴ J. Cookson, *The Friends of Peace: Anti-War Liberalism in England, 1793-1815*, (Cambridge, 1982); J. Bohstedt, *Riots and Community Politics in England and Wales, 1790-1810*, (Cambridge, MA, 1983); C. Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars, 1793-1815*, (London, 1979).

¹⁵ Asa Briggs, *The Age of Improvement, 1783-1867*, (London, 1976 edition), p. 182; Thompson, *The Making*, p. 617. Both state that there were 12,000 men used to put down the Luddite riots, which was 'a greater force than Wellington had under his command in the Peninsula', this is only true when comparing it to the force sent to Portugal in 1808. In 1812 there were approximately 50,000 British Army troops in the Peninsula (which admittedly would include foreign regiments in British service, such as the King's German Legion).

aided by cavalry, so any comparison with the force under Wellington is inaccurate.

These sorts of inaccuracies are not made in studies of continental powers because those societies were witnessing a war that was unparalleled in its demands upon them, and so detailed studies of the main continental armies and their societies exist.¹⁶ Conscription was taking large numbers of young men off to war, whilst large tracts of central Europe were constantly fought over, bringing the ravages of campaigning armies, and virtually removing normal government from parts of Europe. In some areas rebellions broke out against central authority, with its seemingly endless demands, and invasive penetration of traditional society, leading to the creation of guerrilla warfare, and a complex phenomenon of local resistance - which in some cases have been labelled national liberation movements – a subject which receives much historical attention.¹⁷

Modern historical attention has broadened the analysis of British military history, with more general studies of the British army's campaigns and detailed examinations of its training and operations. C. D. Hall's *British Strategy in the Napoleonic Wars*, (Manchester, 1992), and R. Muir's *Britain and the Defeat of Napoleon*, (London, 1996) are good examples of the former. Both of them, though narrative based, have a larger focus on the underlying themes and problems of Britain's military effort: Hall concentrating on the limiting influences on British strategy, and Muir concentrating on the government's diplomatic problems and policies, and the cabinet discussions over the deployment of the 'disposable force' of the British army.¹⁸ The studies of tactics and operation of the army have necessarily broken the traditional limitations of campaign narratives and regimental parochialism, expanding the horizons

¹⁶ Owen Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms*, (London, 1965); A. Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters: the French Army and Society during the Revolution and Empire*, (Oxford, 1989); S. Schama, *Patriots and Liberators: Revolution in the Netherlands, 1780-1813*, (New York, 1977).

¹⁷ All general surveys of the wars touch on this point, for instance M. Broers, *Europe Under Napoleon, 1799-1815*, (London, 1996); C. Esdaile, *The Wars of Napoleon*, (London, 1995); D. Gates, *The Napoleonic War, 1803-1815*, (London, 1997).

¹⁸ See also, G. Desmond, *Sicily: The Insecure Base, A Study of the British Occupation of Sicily, 1806-15*, (London, 1988); G. Bond, *The Grand Expedition: The British Invasion of Holland in 1809*, (Athens, Georgia, 1979); P. Mackesy, *The War in the Mediterranean, 1803-10*, (London, 1957); D. Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer: A History of the Peninsular War*, (London, 1986).

of British military history and placing it in a European context. D. Gates' *The British Light Infantry Arm, c. 1790-1815: its Creation, Training and Operational Role*, (London, 1987), provides an examination of the regiments created in the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars specifically to counter the change in tactics engendered by the French armies, and Richard Glover's *Peninsular Preparation: the Reform of the British Army, 1795-1809*, (Cambridge, 1963), details the Duke of York's transformation of the British army from a ramshackle collection of regiments into a efficient modern fighting machine.¹⁹ These works join a growing list of detailed studies of tactics in the Napoleonic Wars, which have exposed many myths and greatly added to historical understanding of the many battles of the period.²⁰

These works still preserve the distinction between army and society. However, recent works have sought to redress this balance. The earlier work of J. R. Western on the militia²¹ showed that military concerns did occupy the minds of the British during the eighteenth century. I. Beckett's *The Amateur Military Tradition, 1558-1945*, (Manchester, 1993) seeks to place government and local responses to wars into a wide time frame, concluding, as the title suggests, that Britain has a tradition of raising part-time emergency forces to counter overseas threats. To this has been added some studies on the part-time forces that were raised during the titanic struggle with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France,²² and more recently Cookson's *The British Armed Nation 1793-1815*, (Oxford, 1997), which, if in its title only, reveals much about the changes in

¹⁹ This work has been preceded by a study of the British army in the eighteenth century, in J. A. Holding's *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, (Oxford, 1981).

²⁰ J. Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, (New York, 1976) included a ground breaking chapter on Waterloo (predictably), and more general, and therefore definitive, studies have been made in John A. Lynn, *The Bayonets of the Republic: Motivation and Tactics in the Army of Revolutionary France*, (Chicago, 1984), Brent Nosworthy, *Battle Tactics of Napoleon and his Enemies*, (London, 1995), and Rory Muir, *Tactics and the Experience of Battle in the Age of Napoleon*, (London, 1998).

²¹ J. R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1965).

²² Nigel J. Arch, 'A Mark of Esteem for their Beloved Commander.', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 59 (1981), pp.201-06; J. E. Cookson, 'The English Volunteers Movement of the French Wars, 1793-1815: Some Contexts.', *Historical Journal*, 32 (1989), pp. 867-91; P. J. Haythornthwaite, 'The Volunteer Force, 1803-04.', *JSAHR*, 64 (1986), pp.193-204; K. B. Linch, 'A Geography of Loyalism?: The Local Military Forces of the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1794-1814', *War and Society*, 19 (May 2001), pp. 1-21; J. R. Western, 'The Volunteer movement as an anti-revolutionary force, 1793-1801.', *English Historical Review*, 71 (October 1956), pp. 603-14.

British society in the period 1793-1815. From these modern works, only two mention the recruitment of the army. Hall only devotes nine pages to the manpower demands and responses of the government, and so only provides a sketchy outline of recruitment policy. The only remaining work to consider army recruitment is *The British Armed Nation*, and although this allows a detailed introduction to the subject, it is firmly in the context of Britain's manpower mobilisation at every level, and the attempts to create a 'nation in arms'. It demonstrates that the British government, just like those of the continent, had to emulate France, although with their own adaptations, to meet the massive manpower demands of the wars. The experience of the Napoleonic Wars has been seen as instrumental in the development of national consciousness in Britain. In Colley's excellent and controversial *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707 to 1837*, (London, 1992), the volunteer movement, which mobilised 450,000 men in 1803-05, was an important means of creating a sense of British national identity, and participation in the regular military forces of Britain, although not examined by Colley, would undoubtedly assist in the development of nationalism.

For the continental powers it is undeniable that there was a military revolution created by the French revolution, to which they had to respond.²³ Yet the British army (and navy) are considered exceptions, and generally regarded as unchanging.²⁴ Any adaptations that were made in Britain are considered as the result of different factors than those that influenced continental states. But it is difficult to comprehend that an army that stood at 40,000 men in 1792 and expanded to a quarter of million men by 1813 – mirroring the increase of military forces in Europe – did not experience any changes, and that its social composition could still be categorised, without further examination, as 'the lowest classes of British society.'²⁵ The denial of any change in

²³ There is a debate as to the extent of the revolution, mainly concerning tactical details (see Brent Nosworthy, *Battle Tactics of Napoleon and his Enemies*; it is undoubted that a change in the scale of warfare took place, Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the rise of the West, 1500-1800*, (Cambridge, 1988), p. 153; Black, *European Warfare*, p. 76.

²⁴ Best, *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe*, p. 122

²⁵ Rothenburg, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon*, pp. 177-78.

Britain's military structure has also precluded any study of arguably the more important subject of the politics of army recruitment - the essential question that all European states had to address - and one that took up much parliamentary time. Contemporaries recognised that a radical change had happened in warfare, particularly in the state's ability to mobilise its manpower. Mr. Law, speaking in Parliament in 1813 urged the government to follow the example of the continent:

It was his firm opinion that without a radical change in our military system, millions might be thrown away without producing any benefit. A general change of military system has taken place in Europe during the last twenty years. Almost all the other powers had introduced conscription instead of enlistment. Was it possible that our system could proceed successfully against this change? We might as well say that the militia could contend against a regular army.²⁶

Wellington's description of the army has often been taken to assume that the soldier was primarily a criminal, and thus the study of their recruitment is of little use. However studies of the recruitment of the army in the eighteenth century suggest that the soldiers were more representative of the social structure of the UK at that time.²⁷ Both Colley and Cookson point out that very little is known of the character of the army between 1793 and 1815 and this thesis attempts to close this gap. In spite of Wellington's attitude, contemporaries also showed that they did not agree with the perception of the soldier as a social misfit, motivated only by the lash. Within the army a new spirit was emerging that viewed the soldier as capable of independent thought, and that officers should be closer to their men; an attitude embodied particularly in the light infantry regiments. Soldiers were encouraged to perform their duty, with tangible rewards for good conduct,²⁸ and officers were expected to be positive examples to the men under their charge, in keeping with the evangelical revival that stressed moral leadership.²⁹ It must be emphasised that such attitudes were not universal, although the

²⁶ *Hansard*, 1812-1813, XXVI, 890.

²⁷ S. R. Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, (Texas, 1981), p. 21. Steve Brumwell, 'Rank and File: A Profile of one of Wolfe's Regiments', *JSAHR*, 79 (Spring 2001), pp. 3-24.

²⁸ Gates, *The Light Infantry Arm*, p. 97.

²⁹ C. A. Stevens, 'The Rifle Brigade 1800 to c. 1870: A Study of Social, Cultural and Religious Attitudes', PhD (University of Sheffield, 1996).

95th was a modern, progressive regiment, an inspection of the 1/96th, whilst stationed in the West Indies, testifies the continuing existence of attitudes at a regimental level which viewed the soldier as worth very little:

No less than 30,000 lashes appear to have been sentenced on 106 persons, of which 10,163 have been actually inflicted; the men appear to have grown callous even to corporal punishment from its extreme frequency; [they] go from punishment to drunkenness and from drunkenness back to punishment.³⁰

The recruitment of the army is also important in the wider context of war and society studies. In Forrest's *Conscripts and Deserters*, conscription was the arena where state and local interests clashed,³¹ and there is little reason to doubt that army recruitment in Britain was of similar significance, particularly as objections to, and debates on, the government's military policy could be aired in Parliament. The large size of the army, and the existence of locally raised ancillary forces, also emphasise the need for a study of the changing roles and perceptions of the army.

Why 1807 to 1815?

A thorough study of the entire period would be far beyond the capacity of a PhD thesis, and the Revolutionary War has already been covered,³² so the later stages of the war have been chosen. After 1807, it was clear that the war would be a long one. Britain had no major allies and there was no chance of peace with Napoleon;³³ in effect Britain had to commit to fighting a large-scale war on the continent. Instead of a British army being an auxiliary force to one of the continent's major powers (Austria, Prussia and Russia), its army was now a principal fighting force, which could be supported by contingents from the smaller powers. Also in 1807 the return to power of a Pittite government signalled a renewed commitment to a continental strategy. That year a force was belatedly sent to Stralsund to support Russia and Prussia. A year later Britain began

³⁰ Public Record Office, War Office Papers, WO27/103, Inspection return of 1/96th, 12 May 1811.

³¹ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, p. viii.

³² J. R. Western, 'The Recruitment of the Land Forces in Great Britain, 1793-1799', PhD (University of Edinburgh, 1953); Glover, *Peninsular Preparation*.

³³ Hall, *British Strategy in the Napoleonic Wars*, p. 78.

its six year struggle with France in the Peninsula, although it was not immediately obvious that the small force landed under Wellington in 1808 would develop into the epic, and much written about, army that it became, it does represent a turning point. Before then Britain had largely concentrated on what were in essence large raids, and although another (the largest ever) was mounted on Walcheren in 1809, the government was mindful of the benefits derived by having an army in the Peninsula,³⁴ and continued to reinforce it. Only in 1810-11, when a massive French invasion of Portugal by Marshal Massena threatened the British army's foothold in the Peninsula, were thoughts of an evacuation entertained.³⁵

The return of a Pittite government in 1807 ushered in a series of governments that had a continuation of personnel, despite the splintering of political groups witnessed in this period, and the uncertainty of the longevity of these ministries. Robert Banks Jenkinson, Baron Hawkesbury, who became Second Earl of Liverpool in 1808, was Home Secretary under the Portland government of 1807 to 1809, and Secretary of War in Spencer Perceval's government of 1809 to 1812. He then went on to become Prime Minister himself. Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh and Earl of Londonderry, was Secretary of War in the Portland administration, and although a political outcast after the break-up of the Portland government and the disaster of 'his' Walcheren expedition, he returned as Foreign Secretary in the Liverpool government of 1812. For the army, 1807 also represents an administrative watershed. The office of Inspector General of Recruiting was abolished that year, and the responsibility given over to the Adjutant General, placing control of recruiting more firmly under the supervision of the Commander in Chief.

This period represents Britain's closest parallel to the continual campaigning

³⁴ Benefits included breaking the strategic deadlock, gaining new allies, and access to valuable ports (and potential hostile fleets), while absorbing many of Napoleon's troops thus reducing the chance of an invasion of Britain. It also provided a convenient excuse to avoid continental entanglements elsewhere.

³⁵ Muir, *Britain and the Defeat of Napoleon*, pp. 135-138.

that France endured, and justifies examination to determine if, and how, the recruitment of the army, and the character of the recruits obtained, adapted to meet the demands created by the massive increase in casualties (regarded by the army as any loss from the strength of units, not just deaths). As such the work will concentrate on the 'disposable force' of the army (those troops that could be spared for active service in Europe) and the army at home which provided drafts to these troops. The regiments used during this period remained fairly constant, although a major shift in the composition of this force occurred in 1815, when most of the Peninsular regiments were sent to fight in North America, and those used at Waterloo were either from the much reduced home garrison, or troops returning from colonial duty. In such a study no attempt is made to examine the combat capabilities, or campaigning conditions of the army. Detailed narrative studies of the fighting have already been made,³⁶ and although some syntheses of the general fighting abilities of the British army are required, this justifies the full attention of a separate study. This work will analyse the recruitment of the regular army (other than the artillery, which was a separate establishment under the Board of Ordnance and had separate records) from two different approaches: examining the measures for, and the outcomes of, recruitment between 1807 to 1815.

Aims and Themes

Firstly, an outline of Britain's military strength, its limits and constraints, and the size of the Napoleonic problem will be made. This will seek to demonstrate the full extent of the pressures that the government, and the army, were under in these eight years. In Chapter 1 the extent of the problem, and the political, strategic, and structural limitations on a solution are examined, with Chapter 2 making particular reference to the problems caused by the deployment of the army. A central theme of the Napoleonic Wars was that in order to fight the French on equal terms, all the major continental

³⁶ Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer, & The British Light Infantry Arm*; R. Glover, *Britain at Bay: Defence against Bonaparte, 1803-14*, (London, 1973).

powers had to imitate conscription, the administration needed to operate it, and the tactics used by the French and its allies. With this in mind the Chapter 3 will examine the measures proposed, and those adopted, and why drafts from the militia, rather than any conscriptive measure, was used to maintain the strength of the army. This work will then concentrate on the implementation of the government's recruiting policy, by first examining ordinary recruiting (Chapter 4), and then the implementation of the militia drafts (Chapter 5).

Secondly, a social examination of the regiments and the army's soldiers will be made in Chapter 6, but no attempt will be made to study the officers of the army. The complexities of patronage networks, and the probability that large number of personal histories could be reconstructed, mean that the officers require a separate study, perhaps, as in this thesis, to see if the officer corps was opening up under the pressure to fill commissions in a vastly expanded army. Finally, another glimpse of the character of the British soldier will be gained by studying desertion in Chapter 7, a problem that was also closely linked to recruiting. Desertion was one area where the government could decrease wastage, thus reducing the demands on recruiting.

This work will draw from the papers of the Home Office, and all the various departments that have collectively been catalogued as the War Office - the Secretary of War's office, the Commander in Chief's office, and to a lesser extent, the Secretary at War. Use will be made of the statistical evidence in the War Office records on the composition of the regiments, and to give these figures a human aspect through the many personal recollections of soldiers to illustrate the bare facts. However, it is recognised that an understanding of the soldiers themselves can relate to their fighting capabilities and it is hoped that further study of the latter will profit from this thesis.

It is intended that this thesis will reveal the massive impact of the Napoleonic Wars upon the British army, and British society. At present the Peninsular War and

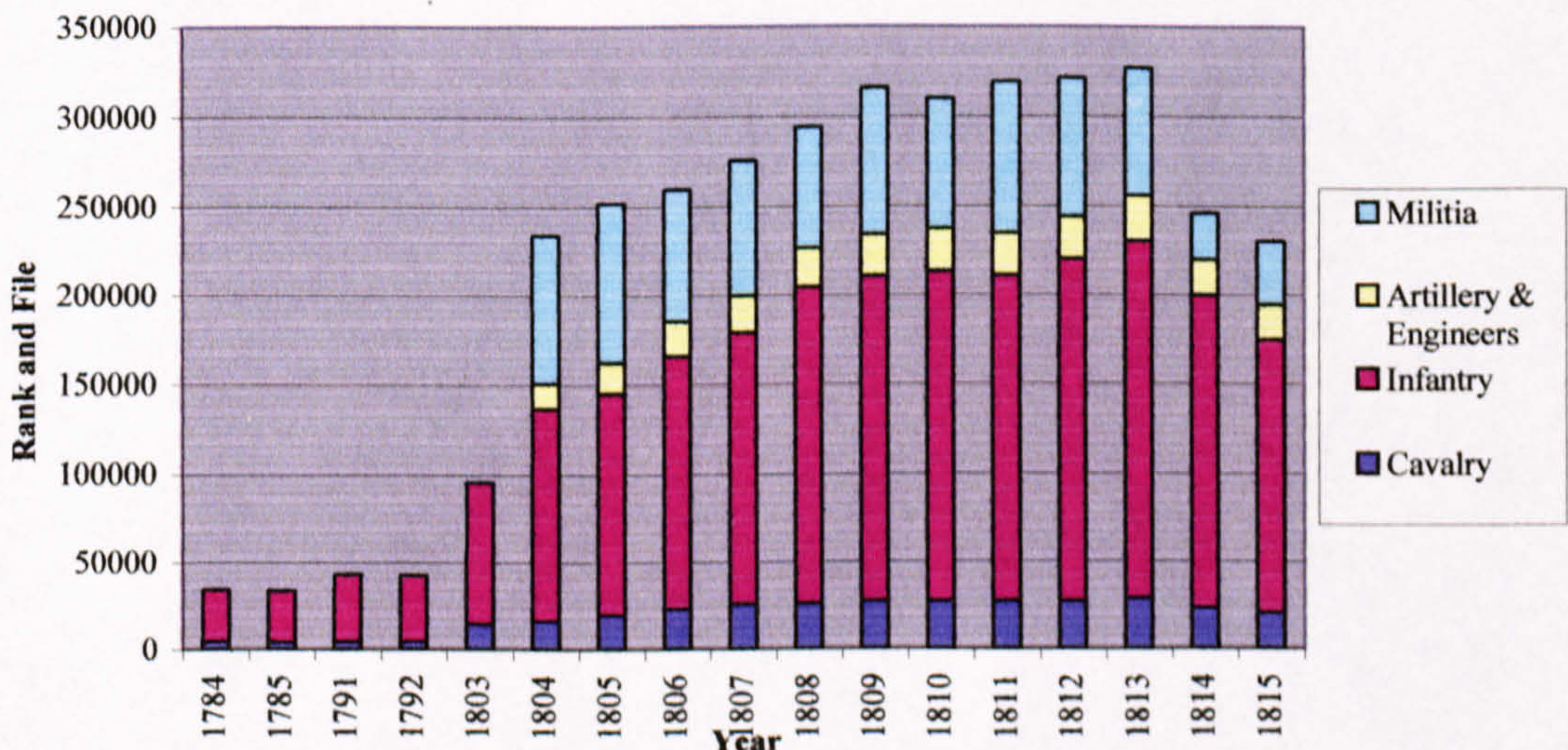
Wars upon the British army, and British society. At present the Peninsular War and Waterloo provide a large stock of the continuing regimental tradition of the British army clearly evident in many regimental histories, yet the wider impact, and the pressure to change the army, has been largely neglected. In this respect the thesis will perhaps find the origins of later reforms in the army, and show how the army changed from a minuscule almost part-time necessity, to a proud part of Britain's imperial system. Moreover, it will investigate the workings of the British state during a war that stretched its resources to the limit.

Chapter 1: The Political and Structural Limitations
on the Strength of the British Army

Introduction

Britain remained an exception in Europe during the Napoleonic Wars because it did not introduce conscription.¹ The continental powers all had to adopt similar military methods and organisation, and as Britain did not, it has been assumed that Britain was not subject to the same demands as faced on the continent. But, although they may not have been as great, the British army was under increasing pressure to find more men.² The British army on the continent totalled around 90,000 rank and file (known as the disposable force), to which must be added static troops in the UK and the colonies, and a navy of 145,000 men,³ all of which needed to be supplied from Britain's manpower resources. Judged by its own standards, the British army grew enormously from its

Graph I: Strength of the British Army (as at 1
January each year)



Sources: WO25/3225, Return of British Army, February 1815; *Journals of the House of Common*, 1813-14, XI, 1; 1814-15, IX, 23; 1816, XII, 419.

¹ Best, *War and Society in Europe*, pp. 63-109.

² Rothenburg, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Napoleon*, p. 241.

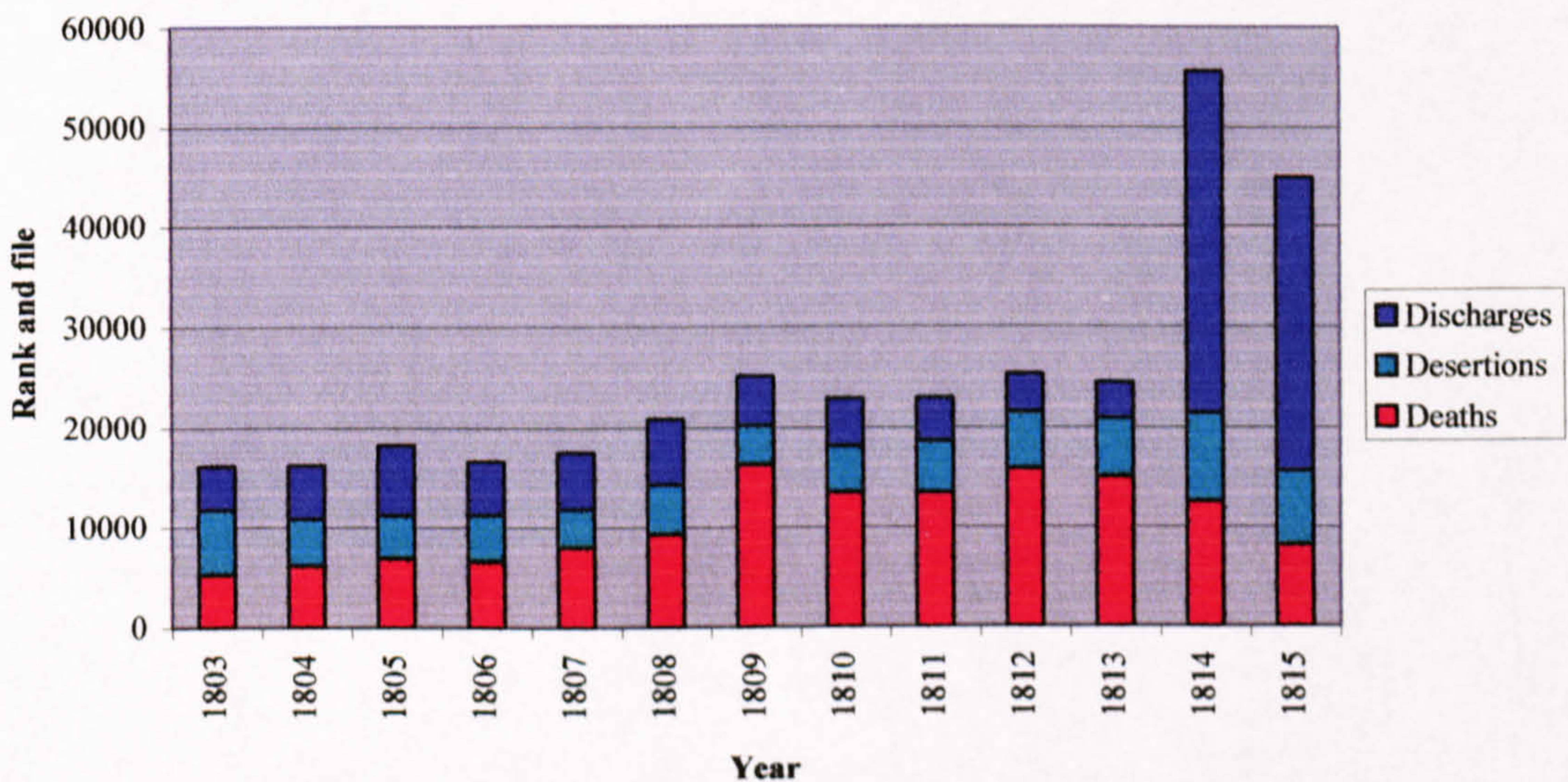
³ The British army only counted rank and file, Sergeants, Drummers and Officers would add about an eighth. Also the total does not include artillery, which was under the control of the Board of Ordnance. Hall, *British Strategy*, p. 11.

pre-war establishment: by 1812 it was over six times as large as it had been in 1792,⁴ including the militia.

The Problem: Casualty Levels

The remarkable growth of the army had to offset prodigious levels of casualties – an annual average of 22,695 men between 1807 and 1813 (1814 and 1815 are clearly exceptional because of the peace in those years), which mostly fell on the infantry. This equated to an average annual loss during the war years of 10.8% per year.⁵ The army's deployment into an active campaign in Europe, and the demands of the colonial garrisons inevitably increased the casualties the army suffered each year, and although discharges and desertions remained fairly stable at least until 1814, casualties remained a massive predicament in the period 1807 to 1815.⁶

Graph II: Casualties of the British Army



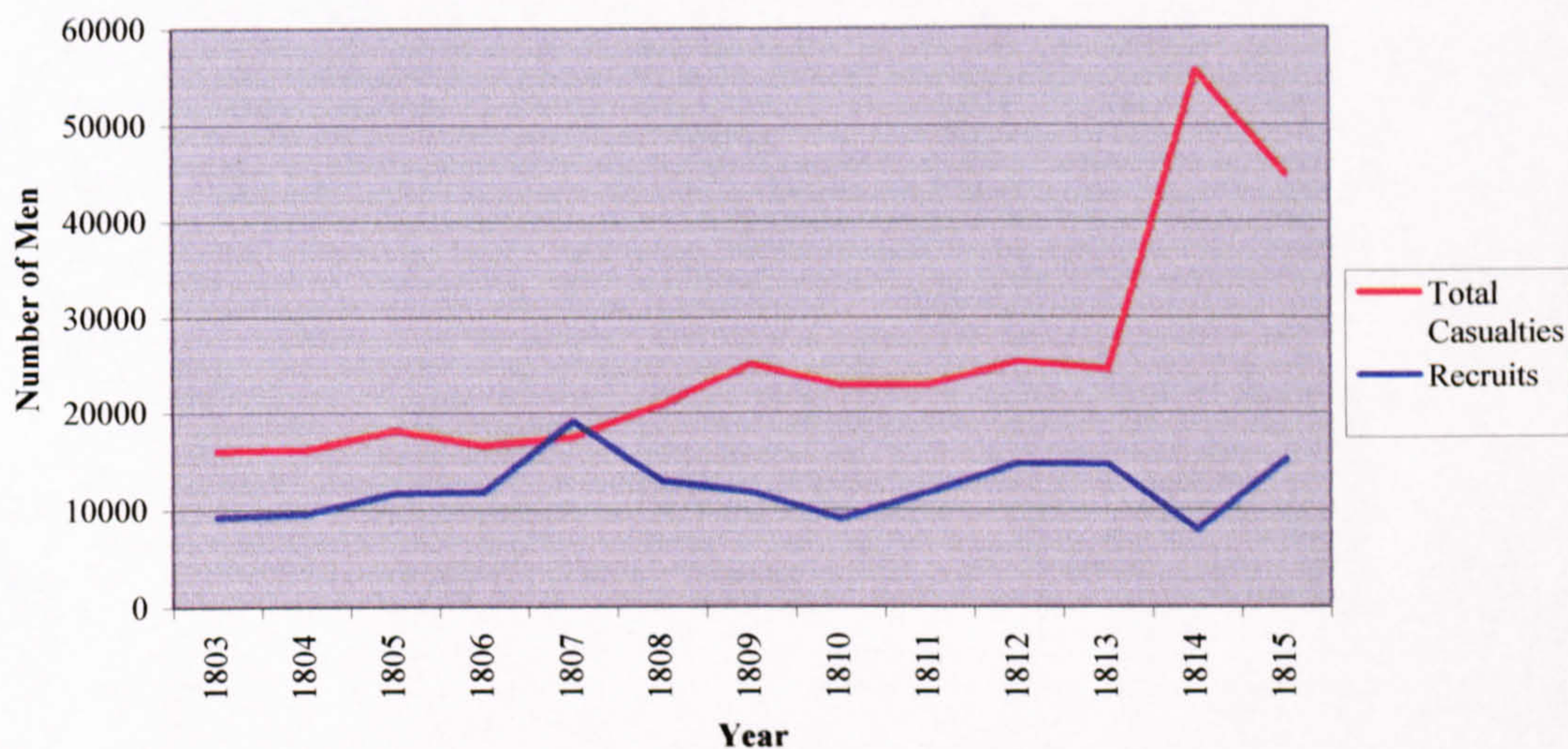
Sources: *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 261; WO162/326, Casualty Return for 1813; Casualty Return for 1815.

⁴ See Graph I and the restriction in note 3.

⁵ Comparing yearly casualties to the strength of the infantry and cavalry at the beginning of the year, for 1807 to 1813.

⁶ See Graph II and Graph III.

Graph III: Yearly Recruits compared with Yearly Casualties



Sources: WO1/946, Return of Recruits raised since 1803, 21 March 1811;
CJ, 1813-14, XI, 261; *CJ*, 1814-15, IX, 309, Return of Recruiting 1814;
CJ, 1816, XII, 423, Return of Recruiting, 1815.

The casualty problem was that on average annual losses were 8,000 men above the number of men obtained through recruiting;⁷ only in 1807 did recruiting by regimental parties alone cover casualties. There were periods of acute manpower shortages: in 1810 the Commander in Chief, Sir David Dundas, reported that there would be a shortage of 9,360 men that year;⁸ by 1813, the Duke of York (who returned to his previous position as Commander in Chief in 1811) estimated that there would be 41,000 casualties that year because of the unnecessary war with the United States, and the continued fighting in the Peninsula.⁹ Throughout the period in question, the government was urged to enact alternative methods to maintain the strength of the army, and the pressure to do so varied according to the fortunes of the war. However, the government and the army had to work with an entrenched military structure, contend with general hostility to the military, and take into account the view of interest groups in the formulation of its recruitment policy.

⁷ WO1/946, E. B. Littlehales to William Wellesley Pole, 3 February 1811, incl. Memorandum by Earl Liverpool.

⁸ WO25/3224, Sir David Dundas to Liverpool, 8 June 1810.

⁹ WO25/3225, Duke of York to Earl Bathurst, 31 January 1813.

The Structural Limitations of the Army

The organisation of the army was dominated by the regimental system, which restricted the options available to government in its recruiting policies. As all officers in the army belonged to a regiment, the regimental system permeated the military hierarchy. Even small encroachments on the traditional rights of the regimental colonels could arouse fierce opposition and suspicion. In 1808 the Duke of York received a curt letter from the Duke of Kent, Colonel of the 1st Foot, after orders were sent direct to brigade generals, and then to battalions, rather than passing through colonels (the order in question was the abolition of queues). Although Major General Harry Calvert, the Adjutant General, replied that the Duke of York looked to general officers to implement general orders, he reaffirmed the army's commitment to the regimental system. It was not the Duke of York's system 'to render regiments independent of their Colonels, on the contrary it is His Royal Highness's wish, as far as circumstances will permit, to draw that connexion as close as possible'.¹⁰

Far more serious was the dispute between the Secretary at War, Viscount Palmerston, and the Commander in Chief in 1810. Palmerston proposed that instead of receiving an allowance for clothing the regiment, the colonels could receive uniforms from government. Dundas immediately began arguing with the Secretary at War, perceiving this as an encroachment on a colonel's rights. In the course of the argument, the debate escalated into a broader disagreement on the position of the Secretary at War: the Horse Guards considered him under the control of the Commander in Chief; whilst Palmerston, and Parliament believed the post to be independent of army control. When the Duke of York, returned he had the same opinion as Dundas, and the matter was only resolved by the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool. The Secretary at War received a new warrant, establishing him as the financial officer responsible to Parliament, and paid the expenses of the Commander in Chief's office by parliamentary budget, rather than from

¹⁰ WO3/46, Calvert to Kent, 29 July 1808 & 1 August 1808.

the army's extraordinaries account, thus subjecting the Commander in Chief to closer parliamentary control. The supply of clothing by government was left as voluntary.¹¹ This demonstrated that governments could not impose terms on the army, especially when they related to regiments, and the command of the army was committed to maintaining this system.

The regimental system also affected recruitment, inasmuch as a recruit joined a particular regiment, and not the army. Previously, this had been overcome to some extent by raising units specifically to draft the men into other regiments, but in 1795 this led to disturbances in some units.¹² The Duke of York had strong feelings on the regimental system, and wanted to create and maintain regimental identities by avoiding drafts. Only three line regiments were added to the establishment between 1807 and 1815, the 102nd, 103rd, and 104th, but these were unnumbered units that were transferred to the line because it was considered inexpedient to draft them into other regiments.¹³ Consequently, some alternative was needed to improve recruiting within the regimental structure, and this was the second battalion system. In 1803 and 1804, the Addington and then the Pitt government tried different approaches to increase the army (the Army of Reserve Act and Permanent Additional Force Act),¹⁴ and this increase in numbers allowed the Duke of York to create second battalions for many regiments.¹⁵ Throughout the period, new battalions were added to regiments to sustain their numbers, in an effort to maintain the strength of regiments overseas. The logic was quite simple, the second battalions would be based in the UK, providing a defensive force there, and supplying

¹¹ Hew Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, (Oxford, 1997) pp. 54-55; K. J. Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army during the wars with France, 1793-1815', PhD (University of Durham, 1997), pp. 29-30.

¹² All regiments above the 100th were drafted, which caused riots by soldiers at Cork, Dublin and Sheffield; A. McNally, *The Irish Militia, 1793-1815*, (Dublin, 1949), p. 85.

¹³ The 102nd was formed from the New South Wales Corps when it was ordered back to the UK in 1808; the 103rd was created from the 9th Garrison Battalion after it also extended its services in 1808; the 104th was established when the New Brunswick Fencibles offered to serve anywhere in 1810. See entries in WO380/3.

¹⁴ The Army of Reserve Act of 1803 intended to raise 50,000 men by ballot for service in the UK; the Permanent Additional Force Act of 1804 asked for 20,000 men to be raised by parish officials. Hall, *British Strategy*, pp. 3-5.

¹⁵ See Appendix C for details of the raising of second battalions.

drafts to the first battalions overseas as and when needed. This principle was extended further with the establishment of recruiting companies, when a unit did not have enough men to justify a second battalion, but was ordered overseas and needed some means to keep up its strength. The cavalry also needed some means of support whilst campaigning, and therefore established depot squadrons when their units were ordered overseas.

The divergent demands on the second battalions did not always result in effective units for Britain's defence. In 1807, the 2/78th wanted to retain part of the detachment about to go to the first battalion, but this request was denied, as the first battalion was seven hundred men under establishment.¹⁶ The commanding officer of the 2/8th was in a similar situation; he wanted to improve the second battalion, to which Calvert replied

The expediency of keeping the 1st battalion constantly in a state fit for immediate service is so obvious, that it is to be trusted, that the commanding officer of the 2nd battalion will never suffice his exertions, nor those the officers under his command, to relax in affording necessary aid to the 1st battalion, in which the general Reputation and Character of the regiment is so intimately concerned.¹⁷

The continual supply of drafts made many of the second battalions small and inefficient, a situation worsened when first battalions were campaigning for any length of time. In 1810, with a large force deployed in Portugal, there were thirty-nine line battalions in England (excluding the Guards, Kings German Legion, veteran and fencible battalions), totalling 24,764, an average of 635 men per battalion, many of whom were recovering from Walcheren fever (7,677 were sick, equalling 31.0%), leaving only 17,087 men fit for duty.¹⁸ The situation was worse by 1811: out of 55,938 men in the UK there were only five battalions which could be sent to reinforce Wellington, the rest were weak second battalions, having transferred 6,353 men to their first battalions. The eight

¹⁶ WO3/44, Calvert to Maj. Gen. MacKenzie, 1 December 1807.

¹⁷ WO3/44, Calvert to Gen. Dundas (col. 8th), 16 October 1807.

¹⁸ WO25/3224, Return of British Army, 25 April 1810. Overall there were 69,280 soldiers in the UK (excluding artillery), of which 11,832 were sick (17.1%).

second battalions in Jersey only averaged 401 men per battalion.¹⁹ This was after the Irish and British Militias had been permitted to serve throughout the UK, allowing a reduction of the regulars in Ireland.²⁰ Despite the recognised need to reinforce Wellington in 1813, the Duke of York reported that 'Little or nothing remains that could be available for its augmentation.'²¹ Although there might be numbers, there were not units.

In 1807 it was suggested that second battalions should be disbanded, as they did not fulfil home defence requirements (i.e. being large and efficient enough to fight) and so were really an expensive recruiting service as they had a full complement of officers.²² During the 1810 retrenchment in army spending, it was again suggested that second battalions should be disbanded if they were not effective within six months.²³ But the utility of second battalions was recognised by the government, and although two-battalion regiments totalling less than 1,000 men had their second battalion reduced to six companies of thirty-three men under the command of a major,²⁴ new battalions were still formed throughout the period.²⁵ Forming second battalions turned oversize recruiting companies into useful corps: in the 2/41st's case, as a recruiting company, it was 'In a state of disorganisation from the great number of supernumeraries beyond the establishment.'²⁶ Lessons had been learnt from the 1790s, and the Commander in Chief always raised new battalions gradually, augmenting them two companies at a time, avoiding the expense and confusion of placing an entirely new battalion on the establishment and appointing all the officers, whilst there were no men for them to command.²⁷

¹⁹ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 7 December 1811.

²⁰ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 27 September 1811. It released 3,790 cavalry (from 9,566) and 5,140 infantry (from 17,450).

²¹ WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 30 August & 20 October 1813.

²² WO1/903, Memorandum to the Cabinet, 26 May 1807.

²³ WO1/645, Dundas to Liverpool, 30 December 1810; WO1/646, Lt. Col. Henry Torrens to Lt. Col. Henry Edward Bunbury, 10 January 1811.

²⁴ WO6/134, Bunbury to Torrens, 9 January 1811; WO1/646, Torrens to Bunbury, 10 January 1811.

²⁵ See Appendix C.

²⁶ WO1/652, York to Bathurst, 17 July 1812.

²⁷ This had been the problem in the early 1790s, see J. R. Western, 'The Recruitment of the Land Forces in Great Britain', PhD., pp. 46-47.

The regimental system did impose a theoretical limit to the size of the army. As mentioned above, the Duke of York was reluctant to raise additional line regiments, and also the Duke of York's policy on additional battalions was limited. The 1st and 27th both applied for extra battalions, because of their success in recruiting, but the Duke of York rejected them, considering them too unwieldy already (the 1st had four battalions, and the 27th three).²⁸ As the army had a limit of 1,200 rank and file per battalion, and the number of battalions per regiment was extremely unlikely to go beyond two, the line infantry had an upper limit of 249,600 rank and file. Although the total British line strength reached a maximum of just under 160,000 in 1813,²⁹ far short of the theoretical limit, the line regiments could not have expanded much more than they did, as some units failed to attract sufficient recruits to form a second battalion while Parliament was always concerned about the expense of army recruiting. Potential cavalry numbers were even more limited, and the proportion of cavalry in the army fell during from 14.7% in 1807 to 12.6% in 1813. Cavalry was vastly more expensive to maintain than the infantry, was difficult to transport overseas,³⁰ and the army was generally deployed in areas unsuited for large cavalry actions.

A large part of the army was formed of unnumbered corps, often raised for the duration of the war, and for specific duties. Many of these were foreign corps, either exile units, such as the King's German Legion (KGL), or units raised specifically to recruit foreigners, of which the 60th was the most famous. There were also units for deserters and criminals, typically deployed in the inhospitable climates of Africa (the Royal African Corps) and the West Indies (the Royal West Indian Rangers and the Royal York Rangers).

²⁸ WO1/640, York to Castlereagh, 16 January 1809; WO6/133, Hon. C. W. Stewart to Lt. Col. James Willoughby Gordon, 28 March 1809.

²⁹ *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 1, Return of the Effective Strength of the Army, 13 November 1813; WO25/3225, Effective strength of Foreign and Provincial Corps, 31 December 1812. On the 1st January 1813 the infantry totalled 201,538, of which 41,601 were foreign (excluding the 60th).

³⁰ The 20,000 infantry of the 1805 expedition to the Weser required 30,000 tons of shipping, the 2,000 cavalry 16,000 tons. Hall, *British Strategy*, p. 46.

The British army also had auxiliary reserve units. In 1802 the royal veteran battalions were created. As implied by the name, they were composed of old soldiers fit enough to be in the army, but not suitable for active campaigning. The veteran battalions were preserved for old and deserving soldiers (i.e. recommended by their officers), and five had specific roles. The 6th and 9th were for soldiers from Scotland, the 10th was for service in North America, and the 7th and 11th were only for guardsmen or cavalrymen.³¹ Garrison battalions were established in 1805 from men raised under the Army of Reserve and Additional Force Act who did not volunteer for the line, and so these units were formed just for duty in the UK. The roles of the nine battalions changed quickly,³² as no more men were raised under geographically limited terms. The Horse Guards began using them to relocate men who were temporarily unfit (from illness, etc.), and those who had not served a suitable length of time to be able to claim a place in a veteran battalion. However, this was not an official policy, and the boundary between garrison and veteran battalions lacked definition. Some men in the 5th and 11th Royal Veteran Battalions were reported to be fit for duty, and the Duke of York wanted an inspection of the battalions to determine if this was true, and if so, to return the men to their original regiments.³³ As late as 1811, Major General Henry Clinton, the Irish Adjutant General, suggested that the veteran battalions should be preserved for deserving soldiers, as one battalion in Ireland had increased rapidly by virtue of the malingerers offloaded onto it by line regiments.³⁴ When the Duc de Castries suggested that a veteran battalion for foreigners should be raised, Lord Liverpool was sympathetic,

³¹ WO380/1, Regimental Record Book. The royal veteran battalions were established on the 24 December 1802. Initially there were seven battalions, the 6th became the Royal North British on 11 February 1803, and the 7th was formed from men discharged from the cavalry and Foot Guards. Eventually the total reached thirteen: the 8th was raised 25 December 1804; the 9th was raised on 25 April 1805; the 10th formed on 25th December 1806 for service in North America; the 11th formed on the 25 April 1807, for cavalry and Foot Guards; the 12th was formed from men from the 4th who were unfit for service at Gibraltar, 25 June 1808; the 13th was formed 25 March 1813, from unfit men at the Lisbon depot. A. S. White, 'Garrison, Reserve and Veteran Battalions and companies.', *JSAHR*, 38 (1960), pp. 156-166.

³² The number of battalions was gradually reduced: the 7th was disbanded on 14 March 1810, the 8th 24 March 1810, and the 9th became the 103rd in December 1808; White, 'Garrison, Reserve and Veteran Battalions', *JSAHR*, 38 (1960), pp. 156-166.

³³ WO3/45, Lt. Col. William Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 9 March 1808.

³⁴ WO35/24, Clinton to Calvert, 6 November 1811.

but the battalion was never raised, although the KGL did have an invalid company.³⁵

Despite the confusion over the composition of the veteran and garrison battalions they fulfilled two important roles. They retained men in the army who would otherwise have received discharges, and kept the maximum proportion of the line and cavalry regiments ready for active service, both by taking over garrison duties and removing unfit soldiers from their ranks. The process for transferring men was quite simple. In the biannual inspections made by general officers, a return of unfit men was included in their reports, describing if they were suitable for a discharge, or for dispatch to a garrison or a veteran battalion. As the local general officer and the inspecting medical officer made this decision, it is little wonder that the boundary between a man suitable for a veteran battalion and one for the garrison battalion was unclear. No doubt the confusion in Ireland in 1811 was simply due to the fact there was a veteran battalion nearby, and the overriding concern was to remove unfit men from the regiment.

The final formations that supported the strength of the army were the units raised from local populations specifically to defend their communities. There were many of these units in the colonies, but the most important of this type was the English, Irish and Scottish Militias. The militia was different from the rest of the army, as it was not totally under the command of the army. Although once raised they were placed under the command of army generals, in all other matters (recruiting, establishment, general correspondence) the Home Secretary was the responsible government minister, and the Lord Lieutenant controlled each county's militia. The militia held a particular place amongst the constitutionally minded aristocracy, and Parliament. The militia brought benefits and problems to the army, as it provided more men for home defence, but the existence of a separate military force removed ultimate control over Britain's land forces from the army. Similarly, the various part-time local volunteers retained a great deal of autonomy, but with the establishment of the local militia in 1808, and the

³⁵ WO6/122, Liverpool to Duc de Castries, 22 February 1811.

willingness of most of these men and officers to comply with government wishes, they, and the militia, were gradually brought into some kind of integrated military system.³⁶

The Political Restrictions on the Size of the Army

The British army was always regarded with some degree of suspicion, born of Britain's experiences of military rule under Cromwell and later James II. Permanent, or standing, armies were the tool of despots which threatened British liberty, and the constitution.³⁷ Besides ideologically inspired scrutiny, the army also came under inspection because the armed forces were the major expense of any government in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. After every conflict, the army had to contend with a Parliament that wanted the size of the army reduced to its pre-war establishment. This explains why the army was so small in 1792, and why calls were made in 1814 to reduce the army to its 1780s establishment,³⁸ showing a total incomprehension of Britain's new position as the world's imperial power. Thomas Grenville, Lord Grenville's brother, declared that 'No one can have proposed a peace establishment of 19 millions but with the intention of changing the constitution of the country in such sort [sic], that it shall no longer continue a free country – to make this nation rank among the great military nations of Europe.'³⁹

The intellectual objections to a large army naturally abated during wars, but many members of Parliament still felt duty-bound to examine public expenditure minutely to insure that no more was spent than was necessary. This ethos had a powerful influence over what government ministers, and the army, regarded as possible. Every year the Secretary at War presented the army estimates to the House, in which he had to demonstrate that the funds to be voted were essential. This was no formality; in

³⁶ Much has been made of the localism of many part-time corps, (Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 85-90) but in some cases, local units were successfully militarised. See the author's article 'A Geography of Loyalism? The Local Military Forces of the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1794-1814', *War and Society*, 19 (2001), pp. 1-21.

³⁷ Schwoerer, *No Standing Armies*.

³⁸ *Hansard*, 1813-14, XXVIII, 666.

³⁹ *Hansard*, 1814-15, XXIX, 919.

1807, George Johnston questioned the large sums that the government had brought forward in the army estimates, without giving, in his opinion, enough details on them.⁴⁰ In 1810, with the war showing no signs of ending, the government embarked on a retrenchment programme to curtail the crippling drain on specie, and reduce costs, by however little. The establishment of some regiments was reduced, and twenty men per cavalry troop were dismounted, the latter saving a miserly £100,000 per annum.⁴¹ Parliament was also not afraid to investigate the army, and its workings. During the Napoleonic Wars, there were a series of often forgotten Committees of Military Enquiry, which looked into all aspects military bureaucracy.⁴²

Parliament's control over the army was particularly demonstrated in 1809 by the removal of the Duke of York from his position as Commander in Chief after a parliamentary inquiry into perceived abuses in purchasing commissions revolving around the Duke's mistress.⁴³ Although never judged guilty, he was forced into resigning, and was replaced with the aged Sir David Dundas. The allegations turned out to be a complete fabrication, and the Duke returned to his position, although with some objections. Yet, in the period 1809 to 1811 Britain's military policy drifted, without any major innovations, and during 1810, the army decreased in numbers for the first time after the resumption of the war in 1803.

Parliamentary uneasiness of the military was reflected in the diverse and disparate control of the armed forces that had developed since the Glorious Revolution. The army was headed by the Commander in Chief, who, with the rest of the higher offices of the army (Adjutant General, Quarter Master General), were responsible for the daily running of the army, officer appointments and promotions, and maintaining

⁴⁰ *Hansard*, 1806-1807, VIII, 453. In some respects this was a party tactic, as he agreed with the Pittites that the Talents had abandoned Windham's short service scheme and he believed full details of army expenditure would prove this. See entry in R. G. Thorne, *The House of Commons, 1790-1820*, (London, 1986), vol. 4.

⁴¹ *Hansard*, 1810, XV, 608, 657-672. £28.9 million was spent on the army and ordnance in 1810, B. R. Mitchell & P. Deane, *Abstract of British Historical Statistics*, (Cambridge, 1962), p. 396.

⁴² W. H. Greenleaf, 'The Commission of Military Enquiry', *JSAHR*, 41 (1963), pp. 171-181.

⁴³ For a detailed examination of the trial, see Alfred H. Burne, *The Noble Duke of York: The Military Life of Frederick Duke of York and Albany*, (London, 1949).

discipline and training in the army. The Horse Guards, as this organisation was collectively known, only had an advisory role to government on military policy, as any further powers had been stripped from the Crown and placed under parliamentary control in 1688.⁴⁴ The cabinet discussed strategy, with the Secretary for War and Colonies (created in 1794 and more usually known as the Secretary of War) particularly concerned with the army. The government gained financial control of recruiting from the colonels by the 1783 Pay Office Act, which accordingly expanded the concerns of the Secretary of War into recruitment policy.⁴⁵ The Secretary of War also oversaw the deployment of the army on active campaigns, and naturally co-operated with the Foreign Secretary, generals on campaign and colonial governors. The Secretary of State for the Home Department also had an involvement in military matters, as he was concerned with 'internal defence', whether that be anti-invasion plans, or policing the country. After reforms in 1782-83, the main concern of the Secretary at War was finance, but he was also the traditional point of contact between civilians and the army establishment in general, and had to sanction all troop movements within the UK.⁴⁶

There were also a host of other government departments involved in military matters, such as the Transport Board, and other autonomous military establishments, like the Board of Ordnance (the Master General of which was also a cabinet member). The ill-defined post-Union military establishment in Ireland compounded this lack of central military authority. The Commander of the Forces in Ireland, created after the separate Irish establishment and Commander in Chief were suppressed, reported both to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (who in turn answered to the Home Secretary), and to the military hierarchy based on the Horse Guards, which inevitably resulted in conflicts

⁴⁴ Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, pp. 44-47; Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, pp. 35-38.

⁴⁵ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, p. 111.

⁴⁶ J. L. Pimlott, 'The Administration of the British Army, 1783-1793', PhD (Leicester University, 1975), pp. 121-208.

between military and civil interests.⁴⁷ Such diversity meant that wide consultation was needed in government, even before considering Parliament, and ensured that no one department, or person, could have total control of the armed forces. This 'dual control' of the army was considered an essential part of the constitution, but it prohibited the army from implementing purely military solutions to its problems, and made the implementation of strategy, and the running of the army, personal and informal.⁴⁸

Parliamentary nervousness was easily aroused by the use of foreign troops, and led to particularly acrimonious debates on foreigners in the army during 1812 and 1813. Although this was a partisan attack on the government, it emphasised the constitutional objections to a standing army. The army was only permitted to have foreigners, and station them on British soil, with permission from Parliament. This dated back to the Act of Settlement in 1701, which forbade William of Orange to keep his Dutch troops, and like so much from the revolutionary settlement, became a cornerstone of the British constitution. In previous wars, the government had been allowed to recruit foreigners, and during the 1780s only one regiment was considered specifically foreign, the 60th (Royal Americans), but during the Napoleonic wars, the numbers of foreigners increased massively, as one of the remedies to Britain's manpower demands. By 1813 this was considered a threat to the constitution,⁴⁹ and only tolerated as a temporary measure. Palmerston declared:

He knew that many had an objection to employing foreign soldiers on constitutional principles. He thought however, of the times, as well as the constitution of the country, would not object to their being employed at present. If any man would look at the map of Europe, and see what a proportion of its population the enemy had forced into hostility against this country, if he were also to consider the limited population of these two islands, and the extensive colonies we had to defend, and the navy we had to support, it appeared to him hardly possible that such a man could now adhere to the idea of not employing foreigners in our service.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801-c.1830.', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, X, 6th Series (2000), pp. 329-351.

⁴⁸ Strachan, *The Politics of the British Army*, pp. 54-55; R. J. B. Muir & C. J. Esdaile, 'Strategic Planning in a time of small government: the wars against Revolutionary and Napoleonic France, 1793-1815.', in C. M. Woolgar (ed.), *Wellington Studies I*, (Southampton, 1996), pp. 3-79.

⁴⁹ *Hansard*, 1812, XXI, 908-910, 1242-1249; 1812, XXII, 24-29; 1812-13, XXIV, 258.

⁵⁰ *Hansard*, 1812-13, XXIV, 258.

Nevertheless, Palmerston had to further placate Parliament, and each year afterwards gave details of the number of foreigners in British regular regiments.

The traditional mistrust of the army perpetuated certain trends with the military. Firstly, it ensured that Britain had several different types of units raised for specific circumstances. Secondly, and more importantly, direction of the war and military policy was not concentrated in a single office, albeit that this dual control was essentially becoming civilian control. This meant that any political solution to Britain's manpower problems was heavily influenced by political considerations.

The Political Situation

The governments that had to deal with the problem of army recruitment were generally weak, and had uncertain tenures. Only the governments at either end of the period under question (the Ministry of All the Talents, 1806 to 1807, and the Liverpool government 1812 onwards) had significant parliamentary support, and none of them were broad coalition governments. No government between 1807 and 1815 had the backing that Pitt did in the 1790s. The Talents government only had a total majority of forty members, but most of the non-ministerial MPs were 'neutrals', and the Portland government fared better after the election of 1807 and increased its majority to 106 from a 'sure majority' of twenty-three votes.⁵¹ Around seventy of these members deserted the Perceval government over the Walcheren expedition, but fortunately, Perceval was able to rally some of these members during the committal of Burdett to the Tower, which frightened most wavering MPs back into the government's lists. The election of 1812 saw the government's overall majority rise to 142.⁵² Even still, such a majority was only half the number Pitt commanded during the Revolutionary Wars.⁵³

⁵¹ A. Aspinall (ed.), *The Later Correspondence of George III*, (Cambridge, 1968), IV, 571, Portland to the King, 24 April 1807.

⁵² Thorne, *The Commons*, I, 185, 192, 199-202, 235. The 1806 list is as follows: Ministers 349 (including Sidmouthites), Opposition (Pittites) 92, Neutral 208, Independent 9. For 1807 Ministers 388, Opposition 224, Independent 29, Doubtfuls 17, and Neutrals 12. For 1812, Ministers 400, Opposition 196, Independents 24, and Neutral 1 (the Speaker).

⁵³ In the 1796 general election Pitt had 424 supporters against which were 95 Whigs, and 39 independents or 'doubtfuls'; Thorne, *The Commons*, I, 149.

This political instability derived from the collapse of the coalition built up under Pitt. This formidable phalanx began to break down in 1801 after the Act of Union with Ireland. Pitt, and some members of the government, wanted Catholic Emancipation to form part of the Union, but after strong representations to the already receptive ears of the King, he refused to sanction this, and Pitt resigned.⁵⁴ The government then passed to Addington, but the split over Pitt's resignation had caused a dangerous political situation. Some pro-Catholic members of Pitt's governments, such as Castlereagh,⁵⁵ continued to work under Addington, whilst others, such as Grenville, who had been uncertain over the issue, resigned with Pitt. The political situation became more volatile when Grenville and his followers joined Fox and the Whig party in active opposition.

Such diverse elements in the conservative minded MPs, and a resurgent Opposition, meant there was a consistent lack of parliamentary stability. Between 1807 and 1815 there were four different ministries within five years, and also moments of high political drama.⁵⁶ The situation continued to be unstable; the duel between Canning and Castlereagh after Portland's death,⁵⁷ further fragmented the nascent Tory party, and their departure from the government, each with a small following of MPs, made the Perceval ministry appear impotent. Perceval even doubted that his ministry could carry on any business, and so opened negotiations with Viscount Sidmouth, and then the Whigs and Grenvillites to form a broader government, all of which failed.⁵⁸ It was clear that Perceval would have a difficult time in the Commons, as soon after the opening of the 1810 session, a motion for an investigation into the Walcheren expedition was passed.⁵⁹ The government then faced a new crisis caused by the continuing illness of

⁵⁴ B. W. Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties 1742-1832: From the Fall of Walpole to the First Reform Act*, (London, 1985), pp. 175-176.

⁵⁵ Castlereagh had been instrumental in bringing about the Union with Ireland, and although he initially resigned with Pitt, returned to government in 1802 as President of the Board of Control. Hawkesbury, the future Lord Liverpool, also remained in government.

⁵⁶ Hill, *British Strategy*, pp. 53-54.

⁵⁷ B. W. Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties 1742-1832: From Walpole to the First Reform Act*, (London, 1985), pp. 191-192.

⁵⁸ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, V, 356-362, Perceval to the King, 18 September 1809; 391, Perceval to the King, 7 October 1809; 417 & 421-422, Perceval to the King, 16 & 24 October.

⁵⁹ Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties*, pp. 192-194.

George III. The prospect of establishing a Regency went to the very heart of the status of Parliament in the constitution, and generated further uncertainty in the House.

Governments could influence the Commons either by political management, or, as in 1807, by having an election. However, the House of Lords was also an area of concern for British governments, especially after Grenville, one of the ablest debaters in the Lords, joined the Opposition. During Perceval's considerations on his government's majorities, he estimated that there were 110 Lords in opposition to government, whilst a list of 1807 only gave the government 176 supporters.⁶⁰ The character of the Lords had changed dramatically since 1784, with many creations and promotions (known as Pitt's peers), which despite the parliamentary splits from 1801, made the Lords an inherently conservative body. Provided the government was competent, and crucially had the King's backing, governments were not likely to be challenged there.

Although Tory governments after 1807 survived, this was largely as the result of the Opposition being even weaker and more disparate than the government, despite its numerical strength. Opposition to the government during wartime was always awkward, and often seen as unpatriotic.⁶¹ The death of Fox in 1806 ushered in an era of weak leadership in the Whig party, which also had its own schisms. The failure to inaugurate any major reforms during the Talents government resulted in some Whigs losing seats to radicals. Their call for reforms, which were rising in 1809, did not settle well with the aristocratic Grenville wing of the Opposition, who gradually drifted from their alliance with the Whigs.⁶² This was dramatically shown in 1815 when Earl Grey, the leader of the Whigs in the Lords, openly disagreed with Grenville over the resumption of the war in 1815.⁶³

Although the assassination of Perceval in 1812 led to another political crisis,

⁶⁰ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, V, 356-362, Perceval to the King, 18 September 1809.

⁶¹ Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties*, p 196.

⁶² Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties*, pp. 190-191 & 199.

⁶³ A. S. Turberville, *The House of Lords in the Age of Reform, 1784-1837*, (London, 1958), p. 160.

after a motion calling for a strong government, the Tories were better situated than before. During the Talents government Portland had begun organising a potential government of Pittites, and despite his death, the Tory party continued to develop. Although many MPs were not committed to a party, most were party orientated and very few were independents that voted outside party voting patterns.⁶⁴ In 1811 the Prince of Wales retained the Perceval ministry, and despite Lord Wellesley's resignation in 1812, the various groups of conservatives in Parliament began to reunite. Just before his death, Perceval negotiated Castlereagh and Sidmouth back into government, and although Britain was without a government for two weeks in 1812, the old ministers returned to their offices, and small gains were made in the election that year.⁶⁵

Despite such political machinations, there was some continuity in personnel within the governments from 1807. After the Talents, all the governments were Tory, with a core of ministers who continued to work in various capacities, some of whom had worked under Addington, or Pitt's governments. Hawkesbury, the future Lord Liverpool, had a particularly vast experience of government by the time he became Prime Minister in 1812. Under Addington, he had been Foreign Secretary, and was moved to the Home Office under Pitt's 1804 ministry. In the Portland government he returned as Home Secretary, and under Perceval he was Secretary of War. By 1812, when he became Prime Minister, he was particularly able to direct the war.⁶⁶ Similar can be said of Castlereagh, albeit that he was out of government between 1809 and 1812; he was also once the Secretary of War (from 1805 to 1806, and in the Portland ministry), and ably directed British foreign policy during the final coalition against Napoleon between 1812 and 1815.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Frank O'Gorman, 'Party Politics in the Early Nineteenth Century (1812-1832)', *EHR* 102 (1987), pp. 63-88.

⁶⁵ Hill, *British Parliamentary Parties*, pp. 197-198.

⁶⁶ Norman Gash, *Lord Liverpool: The Life and Political Career of Robert Banks Jenkinson Second Earl Liverpool, 1770-1828*, (London, 1984).

⁶⁷ Wendy Hinde, *Castlereagh*, (London 1981).

Within Parliament there were interest groups that could also subject governments to scrutiny, and whose needs required to be addressed if legislation that affected them was to be successful. This was particularly so with the militia, seen as the constitutional counter-balance to the royal army.⁶⁸ Although the ideological basis for the force had diminished,⁶⁹ some officers felt that it should be upheld as a separate force, as the county had to meet the cost of raising and maintaining its strength, and, moreover, because the militia regiments were a nexus of local patronage to the Lord Lieutenants and the militia colonels. The militia interest was always significant,⁷⁰ and besides the 300 plus MPs who were militia officers between 1790 and 1820,⁷¹ the militia's main strength resided in Lords. Obviously the Lord Lieutenants would have a voice there, but there were also many other peers who were connected with the militia. As the guardians of the constitution, they viewed any alterations to the balance of power extremely suspiciously, and they were particularly concerned about the militia. As many peers had direct access to members of the government and the King, they could raise their objections without saying anything in the Lords.⁷² If their views were still not taken into consideration, individual Lords could use their patronage in the Commons, potentially upsetting government majorities.

The strength of the militia interest was demonstrated in 1798, when the government ordered all the flank companies of each militia regiment to be detached and formed into composite battalions. After a meeting by the friends of the militia, headed by Earl Fitzwilliam, representations were made to the government, and the policy was abandoned, without ever being raised in the House. A more damaging incident occurred when the government proposed to fill up vacant militia officers in the same year.

⁶⁸ Schworer, *No Standing Armies*, p. 195.

⁶⁹ Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century*, pp. 438-440.

⁷⁰ Bartlett, 'Development of the British Army', PhD, p. 113, considers them an insignificant political force, but has failed to understand where their strength lied.

⁷¹ Thorne, *The Commons*, I, 300. Two thirds of them were either lieutenant colonels or colonels.

⁷² M. W. McCahil, *Order and Equipoise: The Peerage and the House of Lords, 1783-1806*, (London, 1978), pp. 168-174.

Besides rousing the usual friends of the militia (particularly Lords Carnarvon and Radnor), Grenville's brother-in-law Earl Fortescue, and the ministerial stalwarts, Lords Sydney and Powis, also objected.⁷³ The first militia transfer in 1799 horrified some militia colonels who had no wish to be 'drill sergeants' for the regular army.⁷⁴ The government could not ignore these men, and outside their political remit, no government legislation on the militia could be enacted without the active approval of the militia officers.

The militia interest was not a wholly obstructive group. Within their ranks were men of considerable expertise on the militia, and actively encouraged reforms in the force to make it effective.⁷⁵ From the 1780s militia legislation had passed from the preserve privately sponsored bills to executive proposals, and so government relied on militia officers as vital sources of information about the force and its composition.⁷⁶ Nor was the militia interest a politically homogenous body. In the 1807 list of political affiliations in the Lords, the Lord Lieutenants are fairly representative of the entire house.

Two particular examples serve to emphasise the diversity in militia officers. Earl Fitzwilliam was practically the defender of the militia interest. He was heir, both literally and politically, of the Marquis of Rockingham,⁷⁷ and so upheld the virtues of the militia as a counterpoise to the executive and the army. As a committed Whig, he opposed the Tory governments anyway, but his rhetoric was particularly vociferous when it was clear that they intended to use the militia to remedy Britain's manpower shortage. In contrast to Fitzwilliam was Baron Seaforth. One of Pitt's peers of the 1790s, he was created Baron Seaforth in 1797, and was Colonel of the Ross Militia. His ancestors had forfeited their estates in 1715 for complicity in the Jacobite rebellion, and

⁷³ McCahil, *Order and Equipoise*, p. 54.

⁷⁴ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 118.

⁷⁵ For instance, HO43/16, Hawkesbury to Marquis Buckingham, 27 July 1807, thanking Buckingham for suggestions on the militia volunteer bill.

⁷⁶ McCahil, *Order and Equipoise*, pp. 55, & 171-173.

⁷⁷ E. A. Smith, *Whig Principles and Party Politics*, (Manchester, 1975).

as part of the Seaforth's reconciliation to the government; he had raised a regiment in 1777, and also one in the Revolutionary wars,⁷⁸ and was a firm government supporter.

The varying opinions within the militia interest were shown in the responses to Castlereagh's suggestion of an annual draft from the militia to the line in 1807. Significantly some opposition Lords and MPs supported the measure. Baron Grantley, Colonel of the 1st Surrey Militia was listed as an Opposition peer, but he agreed with Castlereagh's annual draft. The Earl of Mansfield, Colonel of the Perth Militia, who was usually a government supporter, disagreed with Castlereagh. The militia interest was a diverse body, and lacked unity, particularly during the war, when many militia officers considered opposition unpatriotic. Yet the militia interest could not be ignored.

Theoretically, there should have been an army interest within the house, as there were always large numbers of MPs who were, or had been, army officers. Between 1790 and 1820 a fifth of all MPs had military experience in the regulars, and 135 military members were added between 1793 and 1815. But political affiliations usually came before any considerations as military men, and, given the length of the war, many of these MPs were on active duty. 100 members went to the Peninsula at some stage, besides those who served on the staff at home and elsewhere overseas. Only a third of the military members ever spoke in Parliament, and a third of these only spoke once or twice, often to acknowledge the thanks of the House.⁷⁹ As such, their influence on the political situation was minimal.

The final consideration for any government in deciding policy was the attitude of the King. Having caused two governments to collapse over Catholic relief, it is clear he was still a force in British politics. The army had always been a particular interest of the Hanoverian dynasty, and George III was no different in this respect.⁸⁰ In the early

⁷⁸ In 1793 he raised the 78th. Stephen Wood, *The Scottish Soldier*, (Edinburgh, 1987), p. 41.

⁷⁹ Thorne, *The Commons*, I, 306-311.

⁸⁰ The King had shown particular interest in reforming the East India Company Army and placing it under crown control, R. Callahan, *The East India Company and Army Reform, 1783-1798*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1972).

years of the War of American Independence, army mobilisation had been slowed by George III's reluctance to raise any new regiments.⁸¹ Although the King's feeling had been ignored when the Talents introduced limited service in 1806, governments after that, particularly as they were ideologically committed to the authority of the King, were bound to listen to his opinions.

The combination of political weakness in both houses of Parliament, the militia interest, and the King meant that government legislation on military policy often had a long gestation. Even though Castlereagh in 1807 advocated immediate measures to be taken during debates in the Portland cabinet, it was not until four months (and an election) later that a Militia Transfer Bill was introduced. It is not surprising that during 1810 the Perceval ministry hardly considered military policy, as it was preoccupied with its own survival.

Conclusion

The Napoleonic Wars continued the pattern of the growth of the British army during the eighteenth century. Successive wars in the 1700s had seen the British army increase from a peak of 62,373 in the War of Austrian Succession, breaking the 100,000 men mark in the American War of Independence.⁸² But the 300,000 men under arms in 1813 represented a massive leap from the 1770s, and with it came a sustained manpower problem to solve: casualties outstripped recruiting. In addressing this problem government was restricted by the army's structure, and the political situation. The Horse Guards had many diverse units, and men engaged under terms of service, under its command. The veteran and garrison battalions showed some flexibility within the regimental system, and occasionally men were transferred to other units, but beyond this the regimental system still dominated the army.

⁸¹ Stephen Conway, 'The Politics of British Military and Naval Mobilisation, 1775-83', *EHR* 112 (1997), p. 1182.

⁸² John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State, 1688-1783*, (London, 1989), p. 30.

Parliament's scrutiny of the army insured that government would never expand the army massively in the way that France did during the early 1790s. It also meant that the government tended to raise forces for specific duties, and situations. This reflected the permanent demands on the army to protect the UK, its colonies, and to provide a force for the continent. Within each of these strategic roles there were further divisions into the duties that troops were expected to perform, all of which further restricted the army. The governments from 1803 inherited a three-tier system, consisting of the regulars, a militia for each part of the UK, and local part-time forces. One answer to the manpower problem would have been to integrate Britain's existing forces, but UK governments had to work with the existing army structure, and also a fluctuating parliamentary situation. Accordingly military policy tended towards compromise; it sometimes ignored the advice of the Horse Guards, but it normally earned a broad measure of political support. However, these were not the only restrictions on the army, it was also limited in the way it was deployed.

Chapter 2: The Deployment of the Army

Introduction

The British Army was permanently subject to diverse demands on its slender numbers. Its roles varied from colonial garrison duty, protecting naval establishments, policing, besides trying to allocate men to wage war. This resulted in only small forces being sent to the continent, making Britain's military effort appear small in comparison to the other great powers. But, the duties that the army performed outside the Iberian peninsula were vital to maintaining Britain's war effort; they were not the result of British governments adhering to an outdated 'blue water' strategy which placed colonial conquests above defeating the enemy. Examining the deployment of the army reveals that the government sometimes took considerable risks in its commitment to fighting in Spain, and that the forces left elsewhere were, at best, at minimum levels, and usually below what the army considered sufficient.

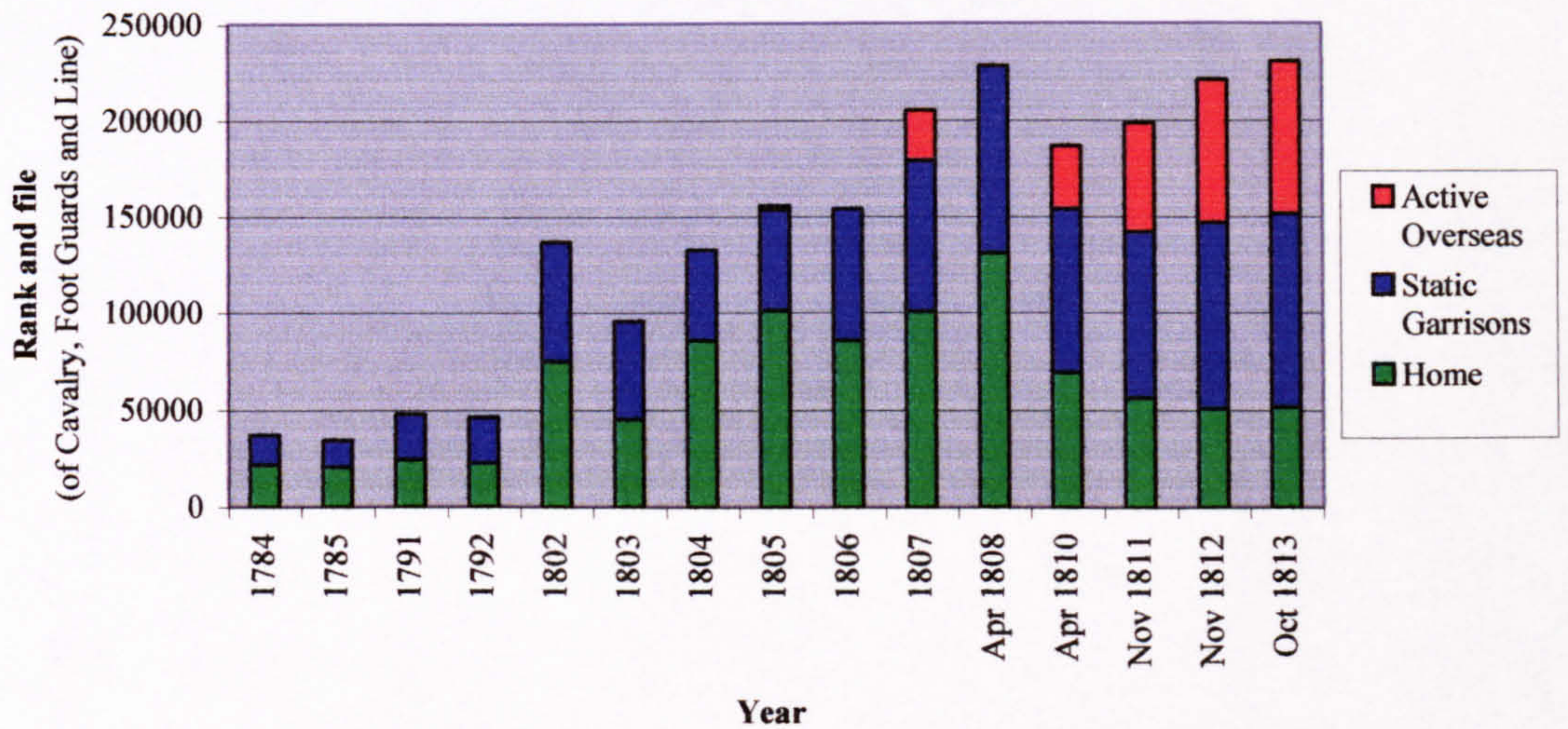
The Home Army

Superficially an overlarge proportion of the British army always remained in the UK,¹ but this was necessary to meet a range of disparate and conflicting duties. The army still had to perform its peacetime remit as a police force, and it also had separate wartime functions to fulfil. The army would be the mainstay of defence if an invasion occurred, and provided recruiting depots for the battalions overseas, either in colonial garrisons or part of the disposable force. These demands impaired the efficiency of units and ensured that the troops at home were not always available for active service.

The first priority of the army at home during the war was anti-invasion duty. It has often been assumed that after Trafalgar there was no invasion threat, but although Nelson's victory, the building of the Martello towers, and other improvements in

¹ See Graph IV.

Graph IV: The Distribution of the British Army,
1784-1813



Sources: WO25/3224, Return of British Army, 25 April 1810, 27 November 1811; WO25/3225, Return of British Army, 25 November 1812; Return of British Army, 1784-1802, 13 February 1815.

fortification removed the immediate threat of invasion by French invasion barges,² it did not remove the possibility of a later invasion. Although the Copenhagen expedition of 1807 thwarted Napoleon's attempt to unify the fleets of Europe against the UK, and the Peninsular War effectively removed the Spanish and Portuguese fleets from his control, France was still able to concentrate the resources of the continent into a massive building programme, both of ships of the line and naval bases.³

Fears of a future invasion were particularly acute in 1811. In that year Napoleon's domination of Europe was absolute: he had annexed Holland and the North German coast, placing it under the direct control of France, and boldly announced that very soon France would be able to command 150 ships of the line, fifty above Britain's fleet.⁴ Moreover, Britain's foothold in the Peninsula, the only scene of combat for the French, seemed a lost cause, as Wellington retired behind the fortified lines outside Lisbon in the face of a large French army. In January 1811 the Horse Guards prepared a

² See N. Longmate, *Island Fortress: the Defence of Great Britain, 1603-1945*, (London, 1991), pp. 274-283.

³ R. Glover, 'The French Fleet, 1807-1814: Britain's Problem; and Madison's Opportunity', *Journal of Modern History*, 39 (1967), pp. 233-52.

⁴ Glover, 'The French Fleet', *Journal of Modern History*, 39 (1967), p. 235.

report on the need to reform the army, with the aim of countering an estimated French invasion force of 160,000 men. As the author put it, ‘until an invasion is attempted he [Napoleon] will never rest’.⁵ France’s deteriorating relations with Russia, and the subsequent disastrous campaign for the French in 1812 removed the chance of invasion altogether, allowing Britain to reinforce Wellington in 1813, and send troops to North Germany and Holland.⁶

The militia, local military forces, and of course the navy, augmented the force needed to counter an invasion, but regular troops were still necessary. In 1804, when the possibility of an invasion was at its greatest, the Duke of York estimated that the British Isles needed 143,000 troops, with the added proviso that the 30,000 regulars in Ireland should not be Irish because they might not be trusted in case of an invasion. With the militia the UK would be defended by 205,000 men, of which a proportion would provide drafts for colonial garrisons (it was the army’s policy to rotate regiments on colonial duty and so it was necessary to allocate regiments in the UK to relieve them).⁷ Although this amount was not strictly adhered to, especially as the invasion threat diminished after Trafalgar in 1805, it was still felt necessary to keep a large force in Britain: in October 1813 there were 50,000 men stationed in the UK.⁸

Besides garrisoning the points of a possible large-scale invasion, the army also had to protect towns not under direct threat, such as Bristol, where in 1808 two militia regiments were despatched to increase the weak garrison.⁹ The landing of a small French force at Fishguard in 1797, and the subsequent panic that led to the suspension of cash payments by the Bank of England, demonstrated that small raids could have damaging effects.¹⁰ Consequently, the army had to deploy some of its troops in small

⁵ WO30/80, Defence Report, 1st January 1811.

⁶ Hall, *British Strategy*, pp. 199-203.

⁷ WO25/3224, York to Lord Hobart (Secretary of War in the Addington government 1801 to 1804), 13 January 1804 (copy).

⁸ See Graph IV.

⁹ WO3/45, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Tarleton, 27 April 1808.

¹⁰ Emsley, *British Society during the French Wars*, p. 132.

detachments along Britain's coast to prevent such raids, particularly in ports that were vital to Britain's trading interest, such as Liverpool, Glasgow, Hull, and most important of all London.

The exposed Channel Islands provided an example of the demands anti-invasion duty placed on the Horse Guards, and how, after 1805, it was not automatic that the home garrison could be reduced. In 1807 when two battalions were withdrawn, Lieutenant General Don (the commander at Jersey) only received one battalion as a replacement, and it was found that the garrison was too weak to mount guard on the coast and help construct the fortress.¹¹ The islands were particularly vulnerable and important. A survey of late 1807 recommended reinforcing the garrison, as, in the opinion of the naval officers consulted, the squadron there could not protect Jersey between the end of October and the end of April. Don also believed that Jersey was the key to the islands, and if it were taken, the other islands would soon be captured. Retaking the islands would be very difficult, and with them in French hands, any merchant ships in the Channel would only be able to sail in large convoys.¹²

The situation in the islands deteriorated as reports arrived between 1809 and 1811 of preparations by the French to invade the islands, those of 1810 and 1811 were particularly threatening as central Europe was quiet and Napoleon could direct his attentions to an invasion of the islands.¹³ Lieutenant General Doyle, the commander on Guernsey and Alderney, received reports from the long serving royalist spy, the Duke of Bouillon, that armaments were fitting out in Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk for an attack on the Channel Islands, yet he did not have half of the troops that he required in the garrison. Doyle, like his superior in Jersey, advocated that the garrison needed

¹¹ WO1/774, Gen. Don to Earl Spencer, 23 March 1807; HO50/171, Gordon to J. Beckett, 3 April 1807.

¹² Charles William Vane (ed.), *Correspondence, Despatches, and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh, Second Marquess of Londonderry*, 2nd Series, 7, (London, 1851), 81, Lt. Gen. Don to Hawkesbury, 13 August 1807.

¹³ HO50/411, Gordon to Beckett, 13 February 1809; HO50/417, Torrens to Henry Goulburn, August 1810; HO51/171, Goulburn to Torrens, 1 September 1810; HO51/172, Goulburn to Torrens, 14 October 1811.

increasing. Alderney was particularly vulnerable; it was only twelve miles from Cherbourg, which could not be closely blockaded, and so all that was needed was one easterly gale to bring an invasion force across. Communications with Alderney were regularly cut off by the weather (in 1809, at the beginning of the invasion fears over the Channel Islands, it was worryingly cut off for eighteen days)¹⁴, and the capture of the island could have serious political repercussions, depressing not only the Channel Islands assembly, but also the entire UK.¹⁵ Yet twice requests for more troops, to help complete the all-important fortresses and provide an adequate garrison for the islands, were turned down because of other manpower demands. Eventually the 2/32nd, was sent there, but this reinforcement still was not considered sufficient by local commanders.¹⁶

The war also brought more mundane and debilitating tasks for the army, such as guarding the increasing number of prisoners of war, both on ships, and at the two large camps at Norman Cross and Dartmoor. Fortunately, after some debate, it was ruled that militia regiments could serve on prison ships, thereby overcoming objections that this duty was not covered by their terms of service.¹⁷ The UK also became a depot for the army overseas, and retained many of the soldiers that were in no fit state for active duty, especially the long-term sick. At acute periods, such as after the Walcheren expedition, there could be huge numbers of troops in Britain who were too ill to do anything. In the winter of 1810, 4,766 men out of 25,237 were ill.¹⁸ From 1808 there were also outbreaks of ophthalmia, and the fears of spreading it through the population forced the army to try and remove afflicted regiments to barracks (such as the 1/88th moved to Maldon barracks in May 1808).¹⁹ Soon after, a specialist hospital at Selsea was established, and all cases were sent there.²⁰ Despite the hospital, there were recurrences of ophthalmia,

¹⁴ WO1/605, Doyle to Castlereagh, 6 February 1809.

¹⁵ WO1/1120, Doyle to Liverpool, 15 August 1810.

¹⁶ HO50/415, Torrens to Beckett, 7 April 1810; HO50/417, Torrens to Goulburn, August 1810 and 7 September 1810.

¹⁷ WO3/45, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Whetham and Lt. Gen. Sir George Ludlow, 5 April 1808.

¹⁸ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38361, ff. 22-23, Return of British Army, 28 November 1810.

¹⁹ WO3/45, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Fitzroy, 31 May 1808.

²⁰ WO3/195, Wynyard to Bgd. Gen. Taylor (OC Army Depot), 30 July 1808; WO3/46, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Somerset, 10 September 1808.

which prevented the Horse Guards from moving units where it wanted. In 1813 when five militia regiments reported men suffering from ophthalmia, a general order was given that such men were to be left behind if the regiment volunteered for service in the UK. This frustrated the plans of the Horse Guards to move these regiments to other garrisons under the terms of the Militia Interchange Act.²¹

The army continued to suffer the same health problems that it did in peacetime. In 1811 the 1/91st was reported to have a particularly large number of hospital patients, some had Walcheren fever, but the bane of eighteenth century health was also prevalent: venereal infections. This regiment was not unique: out of 5,816 sick men from the army and militia in December 1810, 1,190 had venereal diseases.²² Wartime improved the supervision of the health of the army, with the establishment of Inspectors of Hospitals, and frequent reports on the health of corps.²³ Of the 13,334 men that passed through military hospitals in Great Britain during December 1810, only 108 died, and 7,410 were discharged (the return does not indicate if they were discharged back to their regiments, or from the army).²⁴ Individual surgeons often came under close scrutiny, if there was any belief that they were incompetent. The Deputy Inspector of Hospitals was critical of the surgeon of the 1/91st, Mr. Douglas, as his was the most expensive medical account, yet the least successful. Many of the cases of syphilis and gonorrhoea must have been contracted whilst he was in charge of their health. It appeared that, understandably, men were reluctant to come forward with such complaints and were treating themselves with mercury. Only when the infection became severe did they seek help. The inspectors suggested 'frequent health inspections' which would both act as a

²¹ WO7/108, Circular, 7 May 1813. The five regiments were Northumberland, North Devon, Galway, Kilkenny and Kerry. See Chapter 3 for further details on the Militia Interchange Act.

²² WO17/837, Monthly report of the Sick of the Army on the Establishment of Great Britain, 1 January 1811.

²³ For instance, WO40/29, Medical Report for 1808, Pepys & Heale to York, 1 November 1808, reported that after its move the 88th's health had improved, but the 1st Surrey, Wiltshire and Ross militia had a large number of deaths that year.

²⁴ WO17/837, Monthly report of the Sick of the Army on the Establishment of Great Britain, 1 January 1811.

means of detection and encourage men to come forward at an early stage.²⁵

The army also had to fulfil its peacetime duties, especially its police role, although, as with the anti-invasion duties, the Horse Guards could use the militia. This duty was particularly detrimental to the army, and the war sometimes exaggerated this 'friction of peace'.²⁶ This was particularly so in Ireland, where the civil power was largely impotent, and every warrant required a military presence to execute it.²⁷ Ever since the rebellion in 1798 and Union in 1801, Dublin Castle had been deliberately using a sectarian policy to uphold its rule. By 1807, this was inflamed in the 'no popery' election after the collapse of the Talents, and the continued reliance of the Castle to uphold order with the Protestant yeomanry.²⁸ The situation was made more difficult by the fact that alongside sectarian outbursts, there were still republican organisations in existence. In 1807, the Adjutant General of Ireland warned a garrison that he had had information that there would be an attempt to storm the fort on the upcoming fair day.²⁹ Early in 1809 the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland warned that the withdrawal of another brigade would leave an inadequate force to aid the magistrates in any disturbances, and by 1810, he was calling for reinforcements because of disturbances in Tipperary. He could not strengthen particular areas 'Without endangering the post from whence such reinforcement must be drawn': a striking parallel to the French in the Peninsula.³⁰ The situation in Ireland resulted in troops there being considered on active duty: Lord Charles Fitzroy was informed that the 2/48th could not be withdrawn from Ireland to recruit in England because it was an effective battalion.³¹

Maintaining the force in Ireland was not always easy, and the Horse Guards were hampered in allocating a force for Ireland by the meteorological elements and

²⁵ WO7/107, ? to Grant (Deputy Inspector of Hospitals, Canterbury), 8 & 25 April 1811.

²⁶ Houlding, *Fit for Service*.

²⁷ McAnally, *The Irish Militia*, p. 279.

²⁸ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 163-164 & 168-170.

²⁹ WO35/24, Col. Robert Anstruther (Irish Adjutant General) to Calvert, 11 December 1807.

³⁰ WO1/640, Beckett to Gordon, 14 February 1809; HO51/171, Ryder to Dundas, 11 January 1810; Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 54-55 also notes this, and the possible influence it had on Wellington before he went to the Peninsula.

³¹ WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Lord Charles Fitzroy, 5 January 1807.

other government departments. In 1810, the Horse Guards were well aware of the need to get troops to Ireland, and five battalions were allotted to join the troops there. Yet two battalions had been waiting for transports across the Irish Sea for over two months.³² The situation was summed up in 1815, in the north, where there was evidence of republicanism, and the laws were everywhere resisted, even by armed force; in the south, disturbances had become habitual, although not prompted by any principles, but caused by exorbitant rents, and absenteeism amongst landlords.³³ Consequently the army was needed everywhere. The dispersal of troops to aid the civil powers in 1815, and the resumption of the war, meant that Ireland was 'almost defenceless.'³⁴

Civilian disturbances were not limited to Ireland, they were endemic in eighteenth century Britain,³⁵ and as always, the main burden of policing Britain fell to the army; a modern police force barely existed in London, and only Dublin had an efficient police presence.³⁶ During the Napoleonic Wars there were two particularly large-scale disturbances. The Burdett riots in London aroused great concerns over the lack of policing in the capital. Hon. Richard Ryder, the Home Secretary, was in constant communication with the Horse Guards as to the disposition of troops around London, and the army set up a series of command posts, with generals permanently available to command any troops that might be moved into the capital.³⁷ The Luddite disturbances of 1811 and 1812 were a magnitude greater than any previous disturbances, and they have been considered quasi-insurrectionary.³⁸ In late 1811 magistrates in Nottingham, the centre of the initial outburst of machine breaking, requested more troops for the area, and similar calls came from not only the north of England, but all over the country in

³² WO3/595, Torrens to Ryder, 26 July 1810.

³³ WO30/79, ? to P. Carry, 22 June 1815.

³⁴ WO30/79, Carry to Torrens, 23 June 1815.

³⁵ Bohstedt, *Riots and Community*.

³⁶ Clive Emsley, 'The Military and Popular Disorder in England, 1790-1801', *JSAHR* 61 (1983), pp. 10-21, 96-112; Stanley H. Palmer, *Police and Protest in England and Ireland, 1780-1850*, (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 56-69, 117-119, & 152-159.

³⁷ WO3/595, Torrens to Ryder, 2 April 1810

³⁸ Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 604-624

1811 and 1812, showing the general level of distress that Britain experienced.³⁹ Initially, the army felt that the number of troops in the affected areas was sufficient.⁴⁰ However, a year after this confident assertion, eight troops of cavalry, and three militia regiments were sent to the inland district alone.⁴¹ Under such circumstances the Duke of York reported that ‘The chief reliance for this defence (against an invasion) rests with the artillery, which has already suffered nearly as great a diminution as I can consider consistent with our security’. Out of six cavalry regiments, five were in the interior ‘Where there are still disturbances to an alarming extent’, and there were only 15,835 regulars in Britain with another 12,000 in Ireland which left the militia as ‘the chief effective force in this country’.⁴² Nor were difficulties like this unusual, although the scale of it was: magistrates in the Severn district wanted more troops in 1813, which were dispatched, but there was no more cavalry available, the preferred arm to quell civil disturbances.⁴³ Luddism reappeared around Nottingham in 1814, but the demands placed on the army by its policing duties were alleviated by the militia, and local military forces. When troubles arose around Cardigan in 1815 the local militia was called out, as the nearest cavalry regiment was in Manchester.⁴⁴

In such turbulent atmospheres the line regiments and the militia were not always well disciplined. In 1807 some Irish militiamen thought that their service had expired, and that they were due a discharge, so they refused to obey orders. This was caused by confusion in the oaths that the men took,⁴⁵ and this only served to confirm many of the suspicions held about the discipline of the Irish Militia. Similar problems arose with the

³⁹ HO51/172, Beckett to William Merry, 15 November 1811 (Nottingham); Beckett to Torrens, 3 April 1812 (Truro), 11 April 1812 (Birmingham), 14 April 1812 (Bristol), 20 April (Coventry), 23 April (Ashton under Lyme); Ryder to York, 29 April 1812, requesting 5,000 more troops for the north-west district.

⁴⁰ HO50/460, Dundas to Ryder, 26 February 1811.

⁴¹ HO50/460, Memorandum, Horse Guards, 7 February 1812.

⁴² WO1/653, York to Bathurst, 22 December 1812.

⁴³ For detailed surveys of the army’s police role, see L. Boyd, ‘The Role of the Military in Civil Disorders in England and Wales, 1780-1811’, PhD, (University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 1977), and K. O. Fox, *Making Life Possible: A Study of military aid to the civil power in Regency England*, (Kington, 1982).

⁴⁴ HO50/427, Torrens to Beckett, 19 April 1813; HO50/430, Torrens to Beckett, 8 August 1814; Torrens to Addington, 21 October 1814; HO50/432, Torrens to Beckett, 11 November 1815.

⁴⁵ McAnally, *The Irish Militia*, pp. 211-214.

Scottish Militia in 1813,⁴⁶ and rivalries between regiments could easily lead to violence. There were lingering doubts over the loyalty of troops when faced by rioters with whom they might have some sympathy.⁴⁷ Reports reached the Home Office that attempts were made to 'seduce soldiers' during 1810,⁴⁸ and some militiamen refused to fire on Luddites in 1811,⁴⁹ but, generally, the militia and the army proved obedient.

In addition, the army, like the navy, aided the Revenue Service, but this duty could impair the discipline of the units involved. Calvert warned Perceval that constant vigilance would be required 'to prevent this desultory sort of service interfering with the discipline of the Men.'⁵⁰ The Irish Militia, especially from 1806, was principally involved in the prevention of illegal distilling,⁵¹ and cavalry was also needed to prevent smuggling along the south coast of England,⁵² even sometimes at the expense of other duties. When a troop of the 14th Light Dragoons was required to protect an Ordnance depot at Dorchester, the local general officer was told 'the continuance of the Military in aid of the officers of the Revenue at Poole is necessary for the Public Service.' Calvert suggested that the Board of Ordnance build a proper depot, so that cavalry protection was unnecessary for it.⁵³ In fulfilling the functions of a police force, and aiding customs men, the troops were dispersed in small detachments to cover wide areas, which impaired their drill and battle efficiency.⁵⁴

The army still had its ceremonial duties. The Royal family perpetually had a military escort, and one militia regiment (the Staffordshire) was permanently stationed at Windsor, effectively removing it from any deployment schemes the Horse Guards

⁴⁶ HO51/28, Addington to Lt. Col. Gordon (OC Inverness Militia), 20 January 1813; Sidmouth to Adjutant General, 15 February 1813; Sidmouth to Lt. Col. Gordon, 25 March 1813.

⁴⁷ Emsley, 'The Military and Popular Disorder', *JSAHR* 6 (1983), pp 96-110.

⁴⁸ HO43/16, Beckett to Sir David William, Post Office, Whitechapel, 8 May 1810; HO51/71, Beckett to Torrens, 8 May 1810.

⁴⁹ HO43/20, Goulburn to OC South Hampshire Militia, 15 May 1812.

⁵⁰ Claydon House Archive, 9/101/2, Calvert to Perceval, 12 October 1807.

⁵¹ McAnally, *The Irish Militia*, p. 197.

⁵² WO3/195, Wynyard to Taylor, 30 July 1808.

⁵³ WO3/42, Calvert to Cumberland, 4 April 1807.

⁵⁴ McAnally, *Irish Militia*, p. 197.

devised.⁵⁵ As an example of the ceremonial functions, the Duke of York required that 200 guardsmen and a captain's guard of Life Guards should be present when the foundation stone of a new theatre in Covent Garden was laid.⁵⁶ State funerals, and jubilee celebrations all required a military presence as part of the pageantry of the event.

The army's billeting showed the differing effects of the war on troops in the UK. Before the wars, Britain only had seventeen permanent barracks, but early in the Revolutionary Wars, a massive barrack building campaign was begun. Initially cavalry barracks were built near large industrial towns, as a police measure, but, after 1795, large infantry barracks were built which allowed troops to be concentrated and gave them the ability to practise large scale (i.e. above normal company drill) manoeuvres.⁵⁷ In 1794, barracks existed, or were being built, for 8,408 cavalry and 54,736 infantry;⁵⁸ by 1807, the total barrack capacity for Great Britain was 16,162 cavalry and 137,427 infantry (NCOs and privates).⁵⁹ But this did not mean that troops were always concentrated, fully trained, and that conflicts of interest with civilians did not occur. At Guildford, an important stop between London and Portsmouth, with barracks that could accommodate 537 horses, the army still needed to billet troops in the town. Each year during the annual fair troops stationed in local public houses were removed, so that there was sufficient accommodation for people coming to the fair.⁶⁰ Billeting in public houses could disperse troops very widely. Captain Gordon's troop of seventy-four men and eighty horses were stationed at twelve different locations in Guildford, with some men's arms, and even horses, kept at different locations from their billets.⁶¹ Guildford's example could be repeated across the county at similar towns stationed on the main

⁵⁵ Michael R. Haley, 'Civilian Soldiers in Staffordshire, 1793-1823', PhD (Sheffield Hallam University, 1995), pp. 37. Only in 1812 did the Staffordshire Militia move from Windsor.

⁵⁶ WO3/47, Calvert to General Lord Heathfield, 28 December 1808.

⁵⁷ Emsley, 'The Military and Popular Disorder', *JSAHR*, 61 (1983), pp. 17-18.

⁵⁸ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37891, f. 16, Statement of Barracks in Great Britain, 30 December 1794.

⁵⁹ WO40/26, General Return of Barracks in Great Britain, 1 April 1807.

⁶⁰ Surrey History Centre, BR/QS/5/32, Draft letter to Secretary at War, 22 April 1807, 29 April 1808; Merry to Mayor of Guildford, 12 July 1811; draft letter to Secretary at War, 17 November 1810; Merry to Mayor of Guildford, 2 October 1810; Merry to Mayor of Guildford, 3 May 1811.

⁶¹ SHC, BR/QS/5/33, List of quarters of Capt. Gordon's troop, 19 October 1809.

military arteries of the UK.

As noted above, health concerns prompted the removal of soldiers from contact with civilians, but there were also other calls for soldiers to be relocated. This particularly applied to captured deserters and criminals who were awaiting transportation or were destined for service in one of the penal units. In 1808, it was suggested that a permanent arrangement be made for the removal of these men of 'desperate character' as their numbers were growing to alarming levels, and tying down troops to police them.⁶² In 1809, the 2/60th was sent as a reinforcement to the Channel Islands, to replace the 39th which had left for Portugal, but this regiment, as Doyle argued, is 'instead of being a reinforcement, it is in truth an embarrassment to me, as it requires other troops to watch them': in six days six had deserted. The regiment had enlisted some French sailors, who absconded to France, prompting Doyle to beg that the remainder be given to the navy.⁶³

Service at home also encouraged officers, and in some cases men, to take leave, and it was difficult to refuse when they had been fighting overseas. However, this further reduced the fighting capacity of the unit, and limited the options available to the Duke of York and the government. The system of inspection reports insured that the Horse Guards had reasonably accurate information on the state of the army, and so could take remedial action if needed. For instance, the 2/67th stationed at Alderney was particularly bad in 1808, because of the lack of officers, and so it was removed to Guernsey, where the local general was told to improve the unit.⁶⁴ Fortunately it did improve, and so Calvert did not have to carry out his threat to bring it to the Duke of York's attention. In 1808, the commander of the 20th received a warning that his regiment had too many unfit men in it, the implication being that it was not receiving sufficient attention. The regiment was threatened with a special inspection to determine

⁶² WO3/195, Calvert to Gordon, 21 May 1808.

⁶³ WO1/605, Doyle to Castlereagh, 6 July 1809.

⁶⁴ WO3/46, Calvert to Doyle, 16 & 17 July 1808.

if they should be removed.⁶⁵

Finally, the army had to recruit on a larger scale than in peacetime, requiring the dispersal of troops in recruiting parties spread across the UK in an effort to attract more men. The seven recruiting parties from the 2/6th in 1812 provide a typical example of their dispersion across the UK: it had parties at Blackburn, Manchester, Cambridge, Stamford, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Royston and Tunbridge. The 4/1st's quest for men ensured it had thirty-one parties out, from Inverness to Truro, from Hackney to Roscommon. This made the transfer of units from the home army to overseas or even Ireland slower, as they had to assemble the units first. When the 2/34th and 2/39th were chosen to go to the Peninsula, they had to go first to a port in England where they could pick up the recruits they had gained.⁶⁶ The units also needed to acquire accoutrements and equipment for their new establishment, caused by their success in attracting men, which meant involving the Ordnance and civilian contractor, and often resulting in delays. Heavy recruiting could mean that some units would be mostly composed of recruits in training, and so unfit for active campaigns. In 1808 the 2/36th was reported as having many young men in its rear and centre ranks who 'have not sufficient strength to undergo much fatigue.'⁶⁷ Bringing recruits up to standard was a time consuming process. In the report on the 2/8th for 1810, 400 men were 'daily improving in strength and size; in two or three years they will be capable of any service.'⁶⁸ The 4/1st was particularly bad with respect to its training, as it supported three battalions overseas. In 1812, only 562 of its 1,279 privates could exercise with the battalion (i.e. had learnt to use a musket and march in company formations).⁶⁹

The interaction of the different deployments, contradictory priorities, and the use of the UK as a depot for unhealthy troops severely impaired the efficiency of the army

⁶⁵ WO3/45, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Forbes (Canterbury), 11 February 1808.

⁶⁶ WO3/197, Calvert to Gordon, 2 June 1809.

⁶⁷ WO27/94, Inspection Report of 2/36th, 8 June 1808. The battalion had 430 privates.

⁶⁸ WO27/98, Inspection Report of 2/8th, May 1810.

⁶⁹ WO27/106, Inspection report of 4/1st, 15 June 1812.

in the UK, and produced difficult choices for the Horse Guards. In 1810, although a large part of the disposable force was at that time in Britain, adding to the potential number of troops available, the effects of its use in that role meant most of them were ill with Walcheren fever. Consequently, the calls for troops in Ireland were only answered with two battalions (the 2/59th and 75th), although it was hoped that 3,500 would soon be sufficiently recovered to join them. Although these hopes proved premature as the number of sick actually increased, the government decided to send troops over anyway, trusting that a change of air would aid their recovery.⁷⁰ It is not surprising that the Militia Interchange Act was so important to the government and the army, as it allowed the army to use British Militia regiments to supply the manpower demands of Ireland in the absence of regulars. At home, the army also interacted with, and had plans affected by, the demands of the troops overseas, giving the army difficult decisions to make. In 1810 the 2/35th was due to fulfil its role as a second battalion and give its fit men to the first battalion, but the draft was reduced to 300 men, as the battalion was required in Ireland, and it needed to be ‘tolerably efficient.’⁷¹

The Static Garrisons Overseas

The force overseas can be divided into two categories: those on colonial duties or in static garrisons, and those who were part of the ‘disposable force’. On account of the numbers of troops committed to overseas garrisons, Britain struggled to deploy a large force on the continent.⁷² The colonial garrisons grew enormously, settling at around 80,000 during the Peninsular War, which seems an excessive amount compared with pre-war numbers,⁷³ but these troops were not committed because of imperial ideology. Commerce was crucial to Britain’s war effort, but it required massive

⁷⁰ HO51/171, Ryder to Dundas, 6 March 1810, 27 March 1810; HO50/415, Torrens to Beckett, 13 April 1810, 4 May 1810; HO51/171, Beckett to Torrens, 7 August 1810.

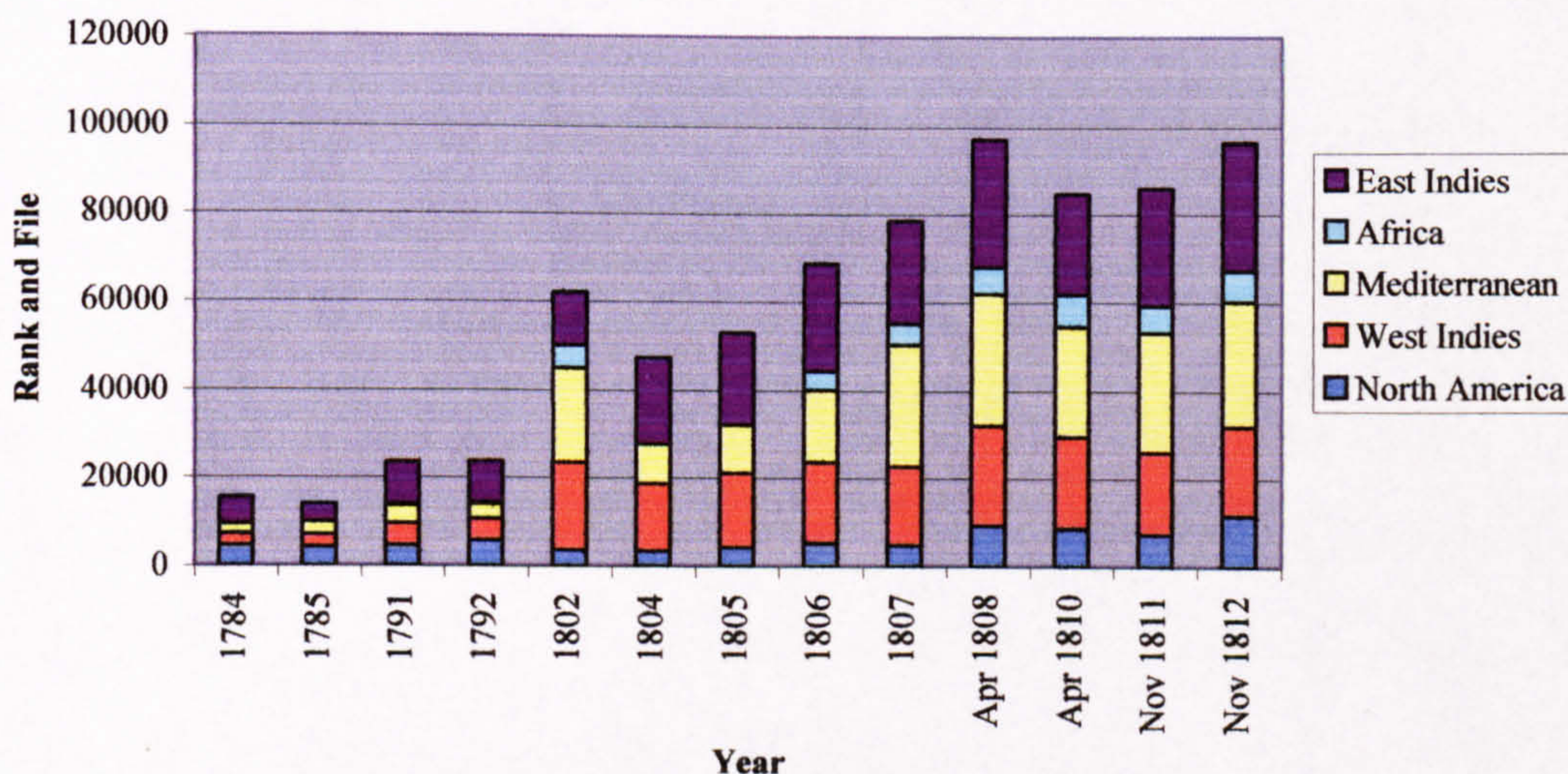
⁷¹ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 14 April 1810.

⁷² Hall, *British Strategy*, also shows the difficulties that existed in concentrating a British army in continental Europe.

⁷³ For a detailed breakdown see Graph V.

resources to protect it, and resulted in a large portion of the army being subordinate to the requirements of the navy.⁷⁴ The navy was the principal defence of British trade, and the maintenance of British naval supremacy was the overriding aim of Britain's wartime strategy. However the navy needed bases, not only to service its ships, but also to supply them. One of the reasons for the large military force in the Mediterranean was to supply the naval blockade of southern France and Italy. The occupation of Sicily meant that the blockading fleets were more easily supplied, and the vital base at Malta received regular provisions.⁷⁵

Graph V: The Distribution of Static Garrisons



Sources: WO25/3224, Returns of British Army, 25 April 1810 & 27 November 1811; WO25/3225, Return of British Army, 25 November 1812, Return of British Army, 1784-1802, 13 February 1815.

Like the need for troops in the UK there was the same mentality regarding raids and privateers in the colonies. There was a constant fear that Napoleon would use overseas bases to attack British merchant ships. In some cases this was justified, and it was felt that the capture of the remaining French and Dutch stations would also have the benefit of releasing some troops from colonial duty, as it would totally remove the

⁷⁴ Hall, *British Strategy*, p. 76.

⁷⁵ Hall, *British Strategy*, p. 87. One of the arguments for a colony at Botany Bay was the strategic threat it posed to Spanish Pacific possessions, Robert J. King, 'Ports of Shelter and Refreshment: Botany Bay and Norfolk Island in British Naval Strategy, 1786-1808', *Historical Studies* 22 (1986-87), pp. 199-213.

threat of other colonies being attacked.⁷⁶ As always there was the usefulness of captured colonies as bargaining counters in any peace negotiations. This powerful combination of arguments prompted the attacks on Martinique in 1809, Mauritius in 1810, and Java in 1811, leaving Britain as the sole European colonial power. However, these acquisitions did little to alter the number of troops required overseas, as each conquered colony required a new garrison, and the war with the United States from 1812 meant no troops could be taken from the Caribbean.⁷⁷ Significantly operations outside Europe were made with troops already in the vicinity, and only after the war ended in 1814 did Britain transfer large numbers of its troops outside Europe, to prosecute the war with the USA.

The Horse Guards was also pressured by interest groups into deploying soldiers to the colonies: in the case of Mauritius, the East India Company repeatedly represented the mischief that French raiders operating out of the islands did to trade.⁷⁸ The Jamaican charter specified that it had to have a garrison of 3,000 white troops, and the Jamaican assembly was not afraid to deny funds to uphold this point.⁷⁹ In a further concession to the West Indian interest, two thirds of every garrison in the Caribbean had to be white, ensuring that the black regiments did not predominate in any single place.⁸⁰ Moreover, the colonies had occasional disturbances and mutinies that led to troops being dispatched. The Vellore mutiny in 1806 was particularly disturbing, as it was not over the usual traditional 'industrial' claims of pay arrears, but religious issues.⁸¹ The spread of 'the spirit of insubordination' prompted Castlereagh to recommend sending a

⁷⁶ French possessions in the Indian Ocean proved especially troublesome, Patrick Crowhurst, *The Defence of British Trade, 1689-1815*, (Folkestone, 1977), pp. 243-245; for the policy of denying Napoleon access to colonies, C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830*, (London, 1989), pp. 103-105.

⁷⁷ American privateers swarmed throughout the Caribbean in 1812, Donald R. Hickey, *The War of 1812: A Forgotten Conflict*, (Urbana, 1989), p. 97.

⁷⁸ WO3/597, Torrens to Bunbury, 2 June 1810.

⁷⁹ WO25/3224, Memorandum on the Duke of York's letter of 7 December 1811; for details of the Jamaican assembly, see Roger Norman Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats: The British West India Regiments, 1795-1815*, (New Haven, 1979).

⁸⁰ Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats*, p. 30.

⁸¹ T. A. Heathcote, *The Military in British India: the Development of British Land Forces in South Asia, 1600-1947*, (Manchester, 1995), p. 62.

reinforcement of 3,000 men to India.⁸² There were further disturbances, even involving some officers, at Seringapatam.⁸³ Finally, there were open conflicts in the colonies: between 1805 and 1814 India was relatively quiet after Wellesley's conquests, but war broke out with Nepal in 1814, lasting two years.⁸⁴ The most disruptive 'colonial' war involved hostilities with the USA between 1812 and 1815.⁸⁵

When Britain became the only colonial power in 1811, the demands on the army were still large. In the Defence Report of that year, it was estimated that 55,000 infantry and six regiments of cavalry were required for colonial garrisons,⁸⁶ and after further consideration the Duke of York felt that all the colonial garrisons were at a minimum, and the deteriorating situation with the United States meant that a reinforcement would probably be needed in the West Indies and North America, further stretching the army's manpower.⁸⁷ By 1813 the war with the United States had worsened the situation, and the colonies needed reinforcing urgently. The Duke of York reported that 'It is impossible to say that the Leeward Islands are left in a state of safety': out of 13,521 men, 3,922 were black, 3,927 foreigners, and 2,124 ex-deserters.⁸⁸ The new strategic burden of an expanded empire was confirmed after the war, and the establishment of the colonial garrisons was set at 66,300, a number not substantially different from the wartime total especially considering some colonies were returned.⁸⁹

Britain's colonial duty imposed many of the same restrictions on troops as the home army. Canada, at one stage, resembled the situation in Ireland. The local general wanted an Irish regiment (the 98th) removed because of democratic agitation, believed to be French inspired in the province, and because the catholic bishop was thought to

⁸² Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 52-53, Minute for Cabinet, May 1807.

⁸³ Heathcote, *The Military in British India*, p. 64.

⁸⁴ Heathcote, *The Military in British India*, p. 66.

⁸⁵ For an account of the war from the USA's perspective, see Hickey, *The War of 1812*.

⁸⁶ WO30/80, Defence Report, 1 January 1811, p. 17.

⁸⁷ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 7 December 1811.

⁸⁸ WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 31 January 1813.

⁸⁹ WO25/3225, Memorandum on the Establishment, by York, 16 May 1814. In 1817 he reckoned 50,576 were required for colonial garrisons.

have 'too great a sway amongst them.'⁹⁰ More damaging was the effect of climate and deployment in the colonies. This could debilitate corps very quickly, and although the army tried to maintain its rotation system, inevitably demands elsewhere took priority, and units usually remained in inhospitable garrisons until they were wrecks. This was particularly true of corps in America and the West Indies. The 1/91st was deliberately ordered to Canada from the West Indies because the climate was healthier there, after the 8th had 'effected a wonderful recovery' from a similar move.⁹¹ When more units were shipped to North America from the Caribbean during the war with the USA, it revealed the effects of the Caribbean climate on European troops. The general at Halifax, Nova Scotia, feared that the North American winter would prove fatal to many men of the 64th, recently moved there, despite the comforts of its garrison.⁹² The 13th was in a similar state in 1815.⁹³

In the Caribbean, the British army faced the dual problem of an unhealthy climate, and unit dispersion. The effects of the climate are well documented, and it is estimated that there were 352,000 casualties in the West Indies between 1793 and 1815, including all sick, wounded, missing or dead: less than ten per cent of these horrific figures were battle related.⁹⁴ Unit dispersion also incapacitated units. The local colonial assemblies wanted troops to guard every possible point of attack and watch over their plantations. This ensured that a battalion could have companies spread over a wide distance, and in some cases spend several years apart from their headquarters. It was not uncommon for separate companies of the same battalion to be stationed on different islands, and although the army wanted to rotate such detached units, so that each company would spend some time with the headquarters, the general shortage of

⁹⁰ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38244, ff. 234-35, Craig to Liverpool, 24 March 1810.

⁹¹ WO7/107, ? to Grant, 1 May 1811.

⁹² WO27/117, Inspection report of 64th, 22 September 1813.

⁹³ WO27/133, Inspection report of 13th, 25 May 1815.

⁹⁴ Roger Buckley, 'The Destruction of the British Army in the West Indies, 1793-1815: A Medical History.', *JSAHR*, 56 (1978), p. 80; these figures have been questioned, see the response of D. Geggins in the same volume, pp. 238-240.

transports ensured that this rarely happened. Consequently, the whole unit effectively ceased any training, and discipline became lax.⁹⁵

There were also structural problems that affected the colonial army. Many of the units in those garrisons did not have second battalions, and so received very few new troops, if any. The 65th, stationed at Bombay, had no means of support at home, and by 1810, although it was well acclimatised, it was so reduced in numbers as to be almost useless.⁹⁶ Otherwise, units in the East Indies were generally better, as they had troops transported to them each year, allowing them to keep up their strength. However, because of the huge distances, and the length it took to sail there, the army had to be careful when, and whom, it sent to India. Units in India were allowed to recruit lads and boys, and they were chosen specifically to reinforce local forces. Hopefully their youth meant that they could better withstand the climate, and serve the army for many years.⁹⁷ The West Indies were slightly different, and the official policy was to select men fit enough to serve there, which probably meant having some experience of being a soldier, but also not being too old.⁹⁸

The army therefore sought alternatives to provide for colonial defence. One option was to send penal units to areas such as the Caribbean and African coast where desertion was difficult, if not impossible. This was actively taken up, and, in 1807, a separate corps was created for garrison duty on the African coast, and a large proportion of the troops in the West Indies were deserters and criminals. A second alternative was to raise colonial corps, in a repetition of the local forces in the UK. In the West Indies, there were the West India regiments raised in Africa,⁹⁹ and the 60th was composed of foreigners which besides the fifth battalion, was used exclusively in the West Indies and

⁹⁵ Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats*, pp. 108-109.

⁹⁶ WO27/99, Inspection report of 65th, 14 March 1810.

⁹⁷ WO3/45, Calvert to Whetham, 9 April 1808, informing Whetham to select all the lads and boys from the 2/89th to reinforce the first battalion in India.

⁹⁸ WO3/49, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Leighton, 29 November 1809, informing Leighton to select men for the 1/96th and 1/25th from their second battalions.

⁹⁹ Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats*, p. 96.

America.¹⁰⁰ Because of the large number of battalions it had (eight eventually) the individual battalions were used in rotation, ensuring that the battalions in the colonies were always kept up to strength, and each unit had a backbone of experienced soldiers.¹⁰¹ In Canada, fencible units were raised, and there were similar local units at the Cape of Good Hope and Ceylon. It was even suggested that a corps of cavalry could be raised from French deserters for service at the Cape of Good Hope, along with a colonising corps of 600 to 700 highlanders to help protect the frontier there, thus releasing some regular troops.¹⁰² The prime example of the use of local populations to provide for colonial defence was India. In this period, the East India Company's army expanded massively, reflecting the company's growing militarism. In 1805, the East India Company controlled 150,000 men; by 1813 there were approximately 300,000 troops there, with the British army only accounting for 40,000.¹⁰³ Such a mobilisation was exceptional, and unlikely elsewhere because of local hostility to the raising of native troops.¹⁰⁴

The distances involved created immense transportation problems for the Horse Guards. In 1810, the French conquest of Andalusia and the consequent need to reinforce the Mediterranean coincided with calls from the commanding officer in Malta that two units there needed to be relieved. It also coincided with a re-organisation of troops in the East Indies and the Cape. So, the 2/30th and 2/47th were moved from Gibraltar to the East Indies (their first battalions were already there), to replace the corps coming home. To get them to India, they were to move to Madeira and be picked up by the annual

¹⁰⁰ The third and fourth battalions of the 60th were raised in 1787 specifically for service overseas, Pimlott, 'The Administration of the British Army, 1783-1793', PhD, p. 228.

¹⁰¹ WO3/595, Torrens to Edward Cooke, 5 October 1809. The 2/60th as sent out, after completing its numbers from Germans captured at Walcheren, and the 1/60th returned, as it had been longest in the Caribbean.

¹⁰² WO25/3225, Memorandum of the Duke of York's letter of 7 December 1811.

¹⁰³ Philip Lawson, *The East India Company: A History*, (London, 1987), pp. 133-142. Put another way, the number of Sepoy infantry battalions increased from 85 in 1803 to 122 in 1813, Heathcote, *The Military in British India*, p. 74.

¹⁰⁴ For the West Indian interests objections, see Buckley, *Slaves in Redcoats*, p. 105; Native Americans were used in Canada, but were not trained as an army, Hickey, *The War of 1812*; R. Allen, 'His Majesty's Indian Allies: British Indian Policy in the Defence of Canada, 1775-1814', PhD (Aberystwyth, 1991).

India convoy.¹⁰⁵ It was felt that the climate at Gibraltar might be better for some of the remaining Walcheren regiments, so the 2/4th and 1/28th would move from the UK to Gibraltar. Torrens had hoped the reinforcement at Gibraltar would be sufficient to meet the crisis in Spain, and although he knew the benefit of moving old corps from garrisons, Malta would have to wait: 'it cannot counterbalance the injury we do the service, and the Individual regiments in particular, by moving from the country, the corps which are little better than in Hospital.'¹⁰⁶ All he could suggest was to wait and see if Corfu was occupied, and if troops could be made available from Sicily to replace those at Malta. The choice was to relieve the Mediterranean garrisons, or have a few disposable men in Britain. Even then, troops for the Mediterranean would have to come from the Channel Islands, which, as seen above, were fearful of an invasion.¹⁰⁷ Eventually, as a last resort, the Horse Guards suggested placing a garrison corps there, which was not approved by government.¹⁰⁸ Such troop movements also tied up manpower: in December 1807, 12,736 soldiers were on passage, and in November 1811 the figure was only down to 7,892 men.¹⁰⁹

The 'Disposable Force'

It is evident that the restrictions placed by the home and colonial garrisons had serious repercussions upon the size of the army that could be deployed in Europe. Ministers were keen to have such a force for a number of reasons: in aid of its allies (for example the expedition to Stralsund in 1807), or to maintain its naval predominance (the Copenhagen expedition), or a combination of both (such as Walcheren).¹¹⁰ However, providing an active force seriously compromised the strength of the home and colonial garrisons. In 1807, a memorandum presented to the Cabinet highlighted that

¹⁰⁵ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 10 January 1810.

¹⁰⁶ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 8 March 1810.

¹⁰⁷ WO3/598, Torrens to Liverpool, 17 October 1810.

¹⁰⁸ WO3/600, Torrens to Calvert, 9 July 1811.

¹⁰⁹ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38359, f. 281, Abstract of the British Army, 1 December 1807; WO25/3224, Return of the British Army on Foreign Stations, 27 November 1811.

¹¹⁰ Hall, *British Strategy*, pp. 154-155, 158-162, 177-179.

sending a relatively small force of 16,000 to the continent would leave only eight battalions of over 500 men in Britain (totalling 7,787 men, including the always large Foot Guards battalions), and sixteen battalions in Ireland (10,966 men). At the same time the colonial garrisons were 10,000 men short of their establishments,¹¹¹ which also needed to be supplied from the home army. At the end of 1807 the disposable force had been reduced to 10,077 men, of whom 3,909 were Guards.¹¹²

The size of any British army deployed on the continent was therefore a political decision, judged on the advantages gained versus the risks involved in reducing garrisons. The figures given by the Horse Guards were always hedged with provisos and warnings.¹¹³ In 1812, the Horse Guards transmitted a return of the number of men available in an emergency, but Torrens warned 'In returning these numbers, His Royal Highness has not been guided in any degree by the necessity of reinforcing troops for the defence of this country and Ireland. It will therefore remain for the government to consider how far any contingency would warrant the embarkation of the whole effective force now disposable for service.'¹¹⁴ At one point the Duke of York questioned the wisdom of the commitment to Portugal: although it tied down a French army, it had reduced the home garrison by 63,000 men, which might not compensate for Napoleon's expansion into northern Europe, and the threat that posed to Britain.¹¹⁵

From 1809, a system of consultation emerged between the army and government to establish what troops could be sent to reinforce Wellington's growing army. In that year conversations were held between Torrens and Bunbury, with Torrens providing the necessary details on the state of troops (i.e. strength, efficiency, etc., all from the inspection returns), which Bunbury would then use to decide which troops were to be sent to the Peninsula. In 1809, they had no difficulty finding the 5,000 infantry and a

¹¹¹ WO1/903, Memorandum to the Cabinet on the Military Force, 26 May 1807.

¹¹² WO1/636, York to Castlereagh, 1 September 1807.

¹¹³ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 7 December 1811.

¹¹⁴ Historic Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of Earl Bathurst preserved at Cirencester Park*, (London, 1923), p. 186, Torrens to Bunbury, 15 July 1812.

¹¹⁵ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 7 December 1811.

cavalry regiment that had been requested by Wellington.¹¹⁶ However, it was not always that simple. In February 1810, two units were selected as potential reinforcements to Wellington, but the 2/67th was about to make a draft to its second battalion in India, and the other corps, the 2/38th, only had five hundred men, which Torrens thought would be totally inefficient after six weeks service. Consequently Torrens recommended that the 2/38th be kept at home.¹¹⁷

Massena's advance against Wellington in 1810, and the retreat of Wellington's army back to the lines of Torres Vedras forced the government and the army to consider the total force available in an emergency. In August 1810, five units were considered fit for field service in an emergency (4th, 5th, 50th, 68th, totalling 2,750 men plus the Brunswick corps).¹¹⁸ By November 1810 the units available had been revised, and preparations were made to concentrate them around Portsmouth and Cork.¹¹⁹ A week later, orders were given for the concentration of a force at Portsmouth, consisting of the 2nd, 1/36th, 51st, 2/52nd, 68th, 85th and 1st and 2nd KGL Light Dragoons. Torrens added that the Guards could possibly give another 1,000 men. They were ready by early December, a quite creditable achievement.¹²⁰ The calculations made in 1811 for an emergency force demonstrated the benefit of the militia interchange. Torrens calculated that from England and the Channel Islands 9,562 men were available, in Scotland 2,977 and Ireland 2,702 (all exclusive of Foot Guards). In this memorandum, he also drew the distinction between units that could go without any inconvenience (5,600 men), and those that could be used in an emergency (an additional 9,450). However, once again, he warned that using this force would only leave two weak battalions, 'none of which could be rendered available to service abroad at present.'¹²¹ The development of such

¹¹⁶ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38244, f. 63, Bunbury to Liverpool, 2 December 1809.

¹¹⁷ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 21 February 1810.

¹¹⁸ WO3/597, Torrens to Bunbury, 2 August 1810.

¹¹⁹ WO3/598, Torrens to Bunbury, 21 November 1810; they were 2nd, 1/26th, 1/32nd, 51st, 2/52nd, 68th, 75th, 77th from Britain; 1/5th, 1/38th and 76th from Ireland.

¹²⁰ WO3/598, Torrens to Bunbury, 27 November 1810 & 28 November 1810.

¹²¹ WO3/599, Torrens to Liverpool, 23 May 1811.

consultation between the army and government, enabled Britain to respond more effectively to crises and opportunities, but it placed control over the size and deployment of Britain's disposable force firmly in the hands of the government.

Giving control over the organisation of the disposable force to government meant that the army's ideal deployment of a first battalion serving overseas being supplied by the second battalion at home was not always maintained. As many of the first battalions were incapacitated during 1809 and 1810 after Corunna and Walcheren, second battalions were sent to reinforce Wellington in the Peninsula during those years.¹²² This created problems later, as the Horse Guards wanted to adhere to the ideal deployment of a regiment, whilst Wellington wanted to retain second battalions as they were seasoned and experienced. A compromise was agreed that if the regiment was sufficiently strong (for a two-battalion regiment over 1,600 men), the Commander in Chief allowed both battalions to be on active service. So, in 1808, the 2/5th and 2/40th remained in the Peninsula, whilst the 2/38th and 2/71st came back to the UK.¹²³ Often when the first battalions were sufficiently recovered they were sent to the Peninsula, the men of the second battalion were drafted into the first, and the skeleton of the second battalion sent back to recruit in the UK.

In 1811 the Duke of York requested that all second battalions should be returned to recruit in Britain and the number of squadrons in cavalry regiments in the Peninsula should be reduced so that they could have a good depot in the UK.¹²⁴ Although Wellington complied with the latter request, he formed small second battalions into provisional battalions, and kept them for the duration of the Peninsular War, despite the Duke of York's requests to have them returned to recruit. Some second battalions also belonged to regiments with battalions on colonial duty, and they were needed at home

¹²² For instance the 2/34th and 2/39th went to Portugal in 1809, WO1/641, Gordon to Robinson, 2 June 1809.

¹²³ WO1/637, Gordon to Stewart, 21 March 1808.

¹²⁴ WO1/647, Calvert to Bunbury, 1 May 1811; WO1/648, York to Wellington, 28 August 1811.

to preserve the efficiency of their first battalions (namely the 2/24th, 2/30th and 2/53rd). The plight of single battalion regiments, which were also formed into provisional battalions, was similar to that of second battalions. The Duke of York wanted them home to recruit when they were reduced in numbers, and advised against dividing single battalion regiments, after the experience of the 85th had resulted in ‘A degree of irregularity, contention and every species of indiscipline.’¹²⁵

Conclusion

The deployment of the British Army clearly showed that it was subservient to a number of interests, but these interests were not necessarily detrimental to Britain’s war effort, they were crucial to Britain’s position as a military power. As government relied exclusively on public credit, it was necessarily at the mercy of public perceptions of its protection of British interests. In a climate where a small invasion in Wales could cause a panic, it was hardly surprising that the British army had to be deployed everywhere, and to defend everything. Britain’s financial strength was crucial to its continued commitment to the war, and although the tax burden within the UK had increased after the introduction of the income tax in 1798, customs from overseas trade were a major component of government finance. The navy was the mainstay of commercial defence, but it required bases across the world, which the army had to protect, and of course the army had to protect overseas possessions from whence the valuable cargoes emanated.

In such circumstances, control over the deployment of the army was bound to pass to politicians, as the decision made on the strength of troops in a particular location could not be made purely on military grounds. The transfer of control of the army to the politicians has been seen as one of the crucial developments during the Napoleonic Wars, but it was almost inevitable given the scale of British commitments and the size of its military resources. Judged from a continental military perspective (as it often has

¹²⁵ WO1/654, York to Wellington, 13 January 1813.

been), the deployment of the army during the Peninsular War was flawed, but this fails to understand the reality of Britain's war effort.

Chapter 3: The Politics of Army Recruitment

Introduction

In 1812 Marquis Wellesley testified to the importance of the politics of army recruitment by leaving the Perceval ministry because he claimed that the government's efforts in the Peninsula were conducted 'on an inadequate and imperfect scale'.¹ Between 1803 and 1811 the UK's various ministries tried five different methods to increase the army, and replace the increasing casualties. In framing these measures, they were influenced by the strategic and parliamentary circumstances. The Addington government raised an Army of Reserve in 1803, a force raised by ballot for service in the UK and organised into new battalions, which were later incorporated into the regular army as second battalions. Pitt's government of 1804 to 1806 passed the Permanent Additional Force Act which placed the onus on raising men on parish officials, each parish having a quota to fulfil, again for service in the UK and incorporated into the second battalions. The Talents repealed both of these measures in 1806, and chose to try to increase recruiting through making soldiering attractive. After the collapse of the Talents in 1807, Parliament had three choices: to continue with Windham's short service system; to use the militia to supply the deficiencies in the army, and integrating Britain's existing military forces into a general system; or to consider more radical reforms of the army, raising a force similar to the Army of Reserve.

The Ministry of all the Talents: Windham's Short Service Plan

The Talents Ministry that came to power in 1806 held very specific opinions on supplying the army. Both the new Secretary of War, William Windham, and the Secretary at War, Hon. Richard Fitzpatrick, had previously advocated the introduction of short-service into the army. They believed balloting for the armed forces, either for

¹ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38247, ff. 267-276, Minutes by Wellesley on a conversation with Liverpool, 17 May 1812.

the regulars or the militia, merely raised bounties and encouraged desertion. Short-service would stimulate ordinary recruiting, and if accompanied by a compulsory pension, would make soldiering more competitive in the labour market.

The main points of the short service scheme, which were incorporated into the 1806 Mutiny Act, were enlistment for seven years, after which a soldier could obtain his discharge or re-enlist for another seven years at a higher rate of pay. He could re-enlist for a maximum of two more periods making the maximum length of service twenty-one years. A pension was provided as an automatic right, guaranteeing a soldier some remuneration for his time in the service. The plan meant that a soldier was not signing away his life, and he would not be destitute if he was unfit to work again after his term of service. Windham wanted the army to cease being composed of 'those who were easy to be acted upon by the arts of crimps, or the immediate temptation of a high bounty.' and to be filled with a 'thoughtful, considerate and undebauched class of men'.² By this measure, Windham hoped to present a choice to the 'bargain making part of society ... that is, on thoughtful and considerate men, who looked somewhat to futurity.' This was an admirable act of enlightened social policy, recognising that the state had some responsibility for those who served it. As Windham emphasised in defence of his scheme during 1807, it was not just about recruiting men; 'it was a bare act of justice due to the brave men who had spent their lives in the service of the country'.³

Despite the intentions of Windham's system, it failed to produce sufficient numbers quickly, and became a party issue – one by which the recently ousted Pittites could embarrass the Talents. Castlereagh, as Secretary of War in Pitt's last administration, was the obvious choice to lead such an attack. In early 1807, as the annual renewal of the Mutiny Act approached, he called for returns of the effective

² *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 472.

³ *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 472.

strength of the regulars and the militia, hoping to humiliate the Talents Ministry, and strengthen his campaign to discontinue limited service. Although the returns were not produced, because such information would immediately be transmitted to Napoleon,⁴ it signalled the opening of deliberations on Britain's military recruitment policy.

A complex and lengthy series of debates on Windham's system ensued before the passing of the 1807 Mutiny Act. Castlereagh had two objections to the system: first, that it was not producing a sufficient number of men; second, that it provided an automatic right to a pension regardless of the length, or the record, of a soldier's service. On the issue of numbers, Castlereagh pointed out that Parliament was being asked to vote for 293,000 men, yet there was a deficiency of 37,000 men, which the Talents showed no vigour in trying to remedy. In fact, he asserted that the strength of the army was only preserved in 1806 by measures introduced in the previous government (the Permanent Additional Force Act, which was in operation in early 1806, and the annual Irish Militia transfers), and that 'It did not appear that one man more had enlisted from the temptation of the right honourable gentleman's system.' This was a particularly effective criticism, as Windham had previously condemned the Addington and Pitt governments on the performance of their military policies. Castlereagh closed his speech by highlighting the fact that Windham had not discharged the soldiers with over twenty-one year's service, as he had promised to do, demonstrating that even Windham was losing faith in his plan.⁵

Windham's main defence was that he 'never expected, from the adoption of the it, any sudden effect, but rather a gradual amelioration in the recruiting of the army, leading finally to the most beneficial effects'. The system was only fully established in October, and he expected better results the longer it was in operation. Appealing to the ever-present desire in Parliament to see improvements in public spending, Windham

⁴ *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 438.

⁵ *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 472-507.

hinted that he would eventually be able to withdraw the bounty altogether. He criticised Castlereagh's preference for militia transfers, as 'like a dram given to the country, which for the moment might increase its power, but which would be followed by greater languor and debility'.⁶

The subsequent debate showed the party divisions on this issue. Perceval duly agreed with Castlereagh; Whig support for Windham came from Lord Howick (soon to be Earl Grey), and Lord Henry Petty. Significantly, Windham had support from outside the obvious government supporters. Sir John Doyle, closely connected to Earl Moira and the Whig faction of the Prince of Wales, presented facts on the success of Windham's system in some of the garrison battalions under his command in Guernsey,⁷ and H. Thornton (Wilberforce's cousin, and one of the 'Saints') also supported short-service. The scheme was even defended by some future supporters of the Portland government.⁸ Consequently, Castlereagh's proposal to allow men to enlist for life was easily defeated by 179 votes to 60.⁹

During these debates in early 1807, some of Windham's support in the House, was qualified: they believed that Windham's system was a long-term solution, but another measure was also required to cover the army's immediate needs. Windham received similar views from outside Parliament. Lieutenant General Lord William Bentinck praised the short service scheme, but added 'The only point in which I felt disappointed was that the completion of the military establishment was still left to chance and uncertainty. We must have sooner or later have recourse either to conscription or ballot.'¹⁰ Windham's system might have been admired, but its support was qualified by the practicalities of maintaining the strength of the army.

⁶ *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 472-507.

⁷ In the six months previous to Windham's system being introduced, in one battalion, 147 men volunteered for general-service, in the six months following, 334 men volunteered. In another battalion, the figures were 1 and 264 (out of 400 men).

⁸ Sir James Pulteney (the next Secretary at War), and Colonel John Maxwell Barry, who owed his seat to the Wellesley interest in Ireland, and was Colonel of Cavan Militia. See entries in Thorne, *The Commons*.

⁹ *Hansard*, 1806-07, VIII, 536-549; 1807, IX, 63, 102-105.

¹⁰ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 174-177, Bentinck to Windham, 12 March 1807.

After the collapse of the Talents, Castlereagh was keen to discontinue short-service, and although he had the Duke of York's and the King's approval,¹¹ given the support for Windham, Castlereagh proceeded cautiously. Firstly, he waited until a new Parliament had convened, which increased the number of MPs supporting the ministry by encouraging and utilising 'Church and King' feeling in the country during the election.¹² Despite this victory for the government, Castlereagh still advocated caution, to avoid 'unnecessary difficulty on the first meeting of Parliament'. He recommended that the proceedings on the military that session 'should be confined as much as possible to the simple provision of increasing our disposable force, reserving all more disputable regulations of military detail for future decision'.¹³ Secondly, he was mindful that the 1807 Mutiny Act had received the King's assent, and so it was better to wait until its renewal in 1808.¹⁴ Any further changes in recruitment policy were left until the next session, as Castlereagh warned 'it will be more prudent to manifest no impatience abruptly to subvert it (Windham's system), but reserve such alterations as, from full deliberation may appear to be expedient to be proposed in the subsequent session.'¹⁵

Castlereagh wanted to change the Talents' military system, and also test the strength of Windham's supporters. To this end, in the Militia Transfer Bill of 1807, Castlereagh introduced a clause during the committee stage of its passage allowing militiamen the choice to serve for life or enlist under Windham's system. Adding an important clause in such a manner was initially disconcerting to many MPs, but, after a long discussion, the clause was passed by 73 votes to 10. When this amendment was presented to the house, it was again passed, but with a narrower margin of 96 to 46. The

¹¹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 122-123.

¹² Before the 1807 election the Portland ministry had a 'sure majority' of 23; after the election it could count on 388 ministerial MPs, against 224 opposition, 29 independent, 17 doubtful and 12 neutral, giving the government a clear majority of 106. Thorne, *The Commons*, I, pp. 188-192.

¹³ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 55-56, 'Measures proposed for Improving the State of the Military Force', 12 May 1807.

¹⁴ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, IV, 552, Castlereagh to the King, 3 April 1807.

¹⁵ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 56, 'Measures proposed for Improving the State of the Military Force', 12 May 1807.

passage of the Militia Transfer Bill,¹⁶ meant that Windham's system was closer to being undone. Windham even suggested that the clause re-introducing unlimited service was the reason behind the Militia Transfer Bill.¹⁷

Before the Mutiny Act of 1808, the Duke of York presented a long memorandum in which he concurred with Castlereagh's view of short-service. Although recruiting in the last quarter of 1806 had been generally better, and desertions were reduced, the system of pensions and pay had proved almost impossible to administer, and the automatic right to a pension removed any encouragement for a soldier to be obedient. Overall the Duke thought eighteen months was a long enough trial, and he called upon the government to repeal the measure 'which has not only been found incompetent to the purpose for which it was enacted, but replete with inconvenience and detriment to His Majesty's service'.¹⁸ The King also approved of re-introducing unlimited service.¹⁹

Despite this endorsement of its policy, the Portland ministry still had to present it to a potentially hostile Parliament, where the opposition were likely to mount a serious attack on the issue. The government again proceeded cautiously, and it was not until March that Windham had 'the first intimation ... of an intention to attack the military system of last year' and this information was only extracted 'out of observation'.²⁰ The clause allowing men to choose a term of service was, like the similar clause in the 1807 Militia Transfer Act, introduced in the committee stage, and so the Mutiny Bill of 1808 was contested. Although the re-introduction of unlimited service was passed in quite a full house (169 to 100, and 189 to 116 in the second reading),²¹ the strength of support for Windham's system was demonstrated, especially considering

¹⁶ 47 Geo. III, session 2, c.55 & c.57.

¹⁷ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 860-906, & 931-967.

¹⁸ WO1/637, York to Stewart, 1 February 1808.

¹⁹ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence George III*, V, 26, Castlereagh to the King, 29 February 1808, & 27, King's reply.

²⁰ H. Baring (ed.), *The Diary of the Right Honourable William Windham, 1784-1810*, (London, 1866), p. 475.

²¹ *Hansard*, 1808, X, 923; 980-991 & 1080-1084.

that the supporters of the Talents administration had lost seats in the recent election. Those who voted against Castlereagh in the Commons were sufficiently incensed to print a list of the minority,²² and this evidence showed that Windham retained support from outside the Grenville-Whig opposition. For instance, Lord Sidmouth and some of his followers continued to vote with the Talents, as they had done when they were in power.²³ There was also support from independent members, such as Ralph Myddelton-Biddulph, who sat for his wife's family seat of Denbigh, and considered himself independent of party. He was a member of the select committee on public spending, which probably explains his support for Windham's measure. William Eliot, despite having had no interest in the Grenville ministry, and a Lord of the Treasury in the Portland government, voted for the motion to preserve Windham's system.²⁴ The passing of the clause in the Commons effectively ended the debate, and so all that could be done in the Lords was an official protest, written by Windham,²⁵ from the Whig Lords Holland, Grey, Jersey, Essex, and Cawdor.²⁶

Shrewdly, Castlereagh did not abolish Windham's system entirely, pitching his objection on the 'prescriptive nature of Windham's system, which enforced limited service even when the men were perfectly satisfied, and desirous to enter without limitation'. This allowed those moderate supporters of Windham's system, to consider the passing of the Mutiny Bill of 1808 not as a choice between Castlereagh and Windham, but to allow the soldier the decision. In the Lords, Baron Borringdon, otherwise a government supporter, summarised this attitude: he considered himself a friend of short-service, but thought unlimited service was needed to fulfil the different

²² *Hansard*, 1808, X, 1084.

²³ They were Sir George Bowyer and Benjamin Hobhouse. Sidmouth supported Windham's system in the Lords, *Hansard*, 1808, X, 1181.

²⁴ Although defining political allegiance is difficult in this period, other independents who supported Windham, and the Opposition generally, were William Adam, George Anson, Henry Bankes, James Buller, N. Calvert, Nicholas William Ridley Colbourne, James Craig, William Frederick Elliot Eden, Maurice Fitzgerald, Lord Henry Fitzgerald, Philip Gell, Benjamin Cooke Griffenhoofe, Henry Arthur Herbert, William Hoare Hume, Charles Lemon, Sir William Lemon, Steven Lushington, Richard Power, Sir Matthew White Ridley, H. Shelley, William Taylor, John Henry Upton Viscount Templeton. See entries in Thorne, *The Commons*.

²⁵ Baring (ed.), *Windham Diaries*, entry for 16 March 1808, p. 476.

²⁶ *Hansard*, 1808, X, 1179-1183.

requirements of colonial defence. The Marquis of Buckingham endorsed this view, despite his brother's alliance with the Whigs in opposition.²⁷ Castlereagh's re-introduction of unlimited service also postponed discussion of the short service scheme, and the limited service men, until 1813, and the King was particularly pleased that the government was 'relieved of further discussion on that subject.'²⁸ For Windham, his short service scheme ceased to be a solution to army recruiting. During the negotiations to form a coalition government in 1809, Windham informed Grey that although they could repair some of the damage done to their system, 'Part, as I have often told them [Castlereagh and the Duke of York] can never be repaired – being the destruction of confidence which is no more to be restored than lost virginity.'²⁹

This was not, however, entirely the end of efforts to improve the soldier's terms of service. When the Duke of York informed the Talents in February 1807 that the short-service system was not working, he also included proposals of his own, which were shown to the Portland cabinet in March 1808. Short-service would be replaced by other benefits: a family allowance to a soldier's wife and family if they remained at home whilst he was sent abroad; an extra two pence a day after fourteen years good service, and a pension at full rate after eighteen (but with a liability to serve in the veteran battalions).³⁰ Such proposals were not an attempt to improve recruiting; they were part of the efforts by the Horse Guards to make soldiering a profession.³¹ They would also make a soldier's service closer to that of the privileged militiaman, and thus facilitate volunteering from that force, as it was clear that the Portland government, and those that succeeded it, saw transfers from the militia as the means to fulfil the army's manpower demands.

²⁷ *Hansard*, 1808, X, 1179-1180.

²⁸ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, V, 26, Castlereagh to the King, 29 February 1808, & 42, King to Perceval, 15 March 1808.

²⁹ The Earl of Rosebury (ed.), *The Windham Papers*, (London, 1913), pp. 356-358.

³⁰ WO1/637, Memorandum by York, 25 February 1807, & 26 March 1808.

³¹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 123-124.

The Portland Government: The Militia Transfers of 1807 and 1809.

The Portland government, with Castlereagh as the new Secretary of War, had to increase the size of the army. As it was committed to intervention on the continent, in support of the coalition with Prussia and Russia, the government needed to augment the army. Yet the regulars were 35,000 men below the funds voted for them, and the second battalions in particular were very weak: fifty-four battalions only totalled 14,098 men, an average of 260 men apiece. The state of the second battalions was not simply a concern of having unfilled ranks, but was fundamental to the organisation of the army. They had a full complement of officers, which cost the government £911,869 annually, but only had an average of 16,000 recruits added to them each year, equating to an extra £55 per recruit above the bounty paid per man. The number of second battalions ensured that these 16,000 men were useless as military units because they were so dispersed,³² but to complete each of these second battalions to a useful 700 men apiece would require 23,000 men. The combination of improving the UK's offensive capabilities and improving the second battalions meant Castlereagh had to introduce 'some decisive measure for the augmentation of our Army'.³³ The withdrawal of 16,000 troops from the UK for the expedition against Copenhagen made the situation even worse.³⁴

In the context of the pressing need for men, government military policy developed slowly. During May Castlereagh presented the options to the cabinet: they could either 'ballot for men direct for the regular army, or to submit to a ballot for men for the militia, with the view of our drawing from the militia that aid which the incomplete regiments of the line required'.³⁵ Castlereagh had previously shown his

³² Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 64-65, Memorandum respecting the State of the Military Force, 26 May 1807.

³³ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 53-54, Measures proposed for Improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

³⁴ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 62, Memorandum respecting the State of the Military Force, 26 May 1807.

³⁵ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 862-863.

preference for using the militia during his last tenure as Secretary of War, overseeing a large militia transfer in 1805, and in 1806 introducing an annual draft to the line from those Irish Militia regiments who accepted an augmentation of fifteen men per company.³⁶ There were also particular advantages to drawing men from the militia rather than balloting directly for the line. Firstly, it increased the disposable force within a few weeks, as the militiamen were all well trained. Secondly, balloting for the militia, as opposed to balloting for the line 'had become congenial to the habits of the country'. Finally, there were some militiamen whose service was about to expire whom Castlereagh wanted to tempt into the army.³⁷

It was not sufficient to simply transfer men from the militia, as this would leave the militia massively reduced. So, Castlereagh proposed to raise 30,000 men for the British Militia and 5,000 for the Irish, which would be sufficient to cover the draft, and leave some supernumerary men to cover casualties for a few years. Such a large ballot was also intended to placate the militia and county interest in two ways. It was hoped that ballots would not be necessary for several years,³⁸ and it would increase the size of the militia regiments, meaning more patronage for the militia colonels.³⁹ The resultant bills were complicated, with two linked parts: the militia transfer itself (two fifths of the British Militia, and half of the Irish), whilst at the same time balloting for 36,000 men in Britain and 8,000 in Ireland. The Copenhagen expedition filled Castlereagh's attention during June, and so it was not until July that the measure was finalised, over three months after the Portland government came to power.⁴⁰

Besides the protests to Militia Transfer Bill over the inclusion of a clause allowing militiamen to choose their terms of service, it also received other objections,

³⁶ 45 Geo. III, c. 31 & c. 38 (1805 militia transfers); 46 Geo. III, c. 124 (21 July 1806). The augmentation act was 44 Geo. III c. 33.

³⁷ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 860-867 & 1106 (Hawkesbury repeating the arguments in the Lords).

³⁸ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 865-867.

³⁹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 117.

⁴⁰ The King assented to the measure on 11 July, and the bills were presented on 22 July 1807, a month after the opening of the new Parliament. Castlereagh had planned to present them on the 17 July, but was too exhausted to do so. Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, IV, 602, Castlereagh to King, 10 July 1807, & King's reply, 11 July 1807; 605-606, Perceval to the King, 17 July 1807.

again voiced by the Opposition, and some independent MPs. These centred on three points: the traditional objections to the disruption of the constitutional force, especially when there was no apparent need to do so; the need for such a large ballot; and the rejection of balloting directly for the line. There were always the friends of the militia who objected to the tampering with the constitutional force (such as William Frankland, a Grenvillite, Earl Fitzwilliam's son Lord Milton, and the tenaciously independent John Pollexfen Bastard, Colonel of the East Devon Militia), principally militia officers who sat in the House, but they were joined by more pragmatic opinion. In late 1807, it appeared that Britain's last continental allies were on the verge on making peace with Napoleon, and so fears of an invasion were again aroused. A draft from the militia to the line implied that the militia was not sufficient for home defence, moreover such a draft would damage a major proportion of Britain's defensive force.⁴¹ This view was confirmed by the fact that the previous militia transfers had been used to increase the disposable force for specific objects (in 1799 for the invasion of Holland, in 1805 to land a force in North Germany), but in 1807 the government had no allies to help, nor any expeditions to launch or mount.⁴²

The Sidmouthites also voiced restrained disapproval of the government, by calling for a ballot directly for the line. Their position recognised the need for compulsion in providing men for the army, but they objected to the means,⁴³ and Spencer Perceval felt this was the real question for the House to debate.⁴⁴ They feared leaving the completion of the army to chance, whilst at the same time disrupting a large part of the defensive force of the country. 25,000 men would leave for the line, and the remaining 50,000 militiamen would have 44,000 recruits grafted upon them. The junction between the ex-Talents and the militia interest produced some unexpected

⁴¹ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 881, speech of Charles Bragge Bathurst (a Sidmouthite). Sir Robert Williams, a Grenvillite, said similar (1062).

⁴² *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 873, speech of Sir George Warrender.

⁴³ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 1111-1117, speech of Sidmouth in the Lords.

⁴⁴ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, IV, 609, Perceval to the King, 23 July 1807.

results. For example, Colonel Edward Lord Stanley, a vociferous detractor of militia transfers, stated that 'he would rather the noble lord had brought forward a proposition for annihilating the militia altogether, than degrading it by making it subservient to the recruiting of the army'.⁴⁵ Samuel Whitbread went further, 'let us not practice it (conscription) indirectly but more partially and oppressively, by beating up the militia, and then allowing it to feed til it filled itself, in order to devour it.'⁴⁶ They were joined by similar speeches from Lord Henry Petty, John Bastard, and John Calcraft. This alliance of views was centred on the fact that a militia transfer would perhaps destroy the constitutional force altogether, for an increase of 28,000 men.⁴⁷

Finally there were objections to the possible effects of the ballot. Charles Philip Yorke agreed to the militia transfer and recognised the need to supply the army by some form of compulsion, but objected to the large ballot; Sir Thomas Turton, saw the ballot as an unequal tax, and wanted the disparity of it to be remedied first. It would also entail a considerable amount of work by the county Lieutenancies, undoubtedly encouraging some MPs, such as George Henry Fitzroy, Earl Euston, (whose father was Lord Lieutenant of Suffolk), to support the opposition.⁴⁸ The supporters of short service felt ballots would destroy Windham's system, as they raised the price for substitutes in the militia, and so the lower bounties offered by short-service would not be able to compete.⁴⁹ Windham had the last word in the debates in the Commons, accusing Castlereagh of fattening up the militia for his own use; 'Ballot and bounty were indeed the only resources that seemed ever to have been thought of.'⁵⁰

In the new Parliament, however, the government always had its supporters, such as Thomas Wood, Colonel of the East Middlesex Militia and brother-in-law of

⁴⁵ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 932, speech of Col. Stanley. He was colonel of the 2nd Lancashire Militia, son of 12th Earl Derby, and supported the Talents.

⁴⁶ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 945, speech of Whitbread.

⁴⁷ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 935-940 (Calfcraft and Bastard), 962 (Lord Petty) & 1181 (Sidmouth).

⁴⁸ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 933. He was also Colonel of the West Suffolk Militia, until 1808. His father, the 4th Duke of Grafton, originally supported Pitt, but came to terms with Grenville during the Talents ministry. Thorne, *The Commons*.

⁴⁹ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 1065, speech of Lord Folkestone.

⁵⁰ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 883.

Castlereagh, or Thomas Hamilton, Lord Binning, who spoke in favour of the government. General William Loftus' speech was probably typical of the large military presence in the House, supporting the measure as it had given the army some of its best NCOs and adjutants.⁵¹ But as the debate became centred on means, the army's urgent need for men discouraged opposition, and encouraged undecided MPs to approve of the Bill. The independents Henry Willoughby, John Ingram Lockhart, and Baron John Henniker all spoke in support of the measure.⁵² Thomas Babington spoke for the 'Saints' (who had decided to judge the Portland ministry on each measure), indicating that Wilberforce's followers approved of the militia transfer.⁵³ The government could also rely on the MPs' desire to perform their patriotic duty and acquiesce in the government's plans. Lord Mulgrave thought that there was 'no room to hesitate between the two plans (militia transfers and direct balloting)',⁵⁴ and moderate views ranged from Davis Giddy, who supported the bill as the majority of the House did, and Henry Bankes, who proclaimed that he was not blind to the inconveniences of the bill, 'but did not feel it warranted opposing'.⁵⁵ Even Colonel Stanley went as far as to say that 'If, however, the bill should pass into a law, he would not throw any impediment in the way of its operation.'⁵⁶ The Whig-Grenville alliance was not united in opposing militia transfers, Earl Temple and Thomas Grenville were conspicuously absent from the first division on the Bill.⁵⁷

Castlereagh also smoothed the passage of the Bill by declaring that this militia draft would be unique: 'the ordinary recruiting, with the aid of the improvements now in progress, may, during the war, preserve them [the second battalions] in a state of

⁵¹ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 1063.

⁵² *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 932 (Willoughby), 934 (Lockhart), 964 (Henniker).

⁵³ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 982.

⁵⁴ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 1183.

⁵⁵ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 980 (Giddy) & 1062 (Bankes). Both were independent, and Bankes was Chairman of the Committee of Public Expenditure, and had reformist views.

⁵⁶ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 932. Mr Bastard said similar (940).

⁵⁷ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, IV, 610, Perceval to the King, 28 July 1807.

efficiency, and, through them, the Army at large'.⁵⁸ As a result the bill was enacted, but with divisions; it passed through the Commons 187 to 90, and 76 to 19, and in the Lords 42 to 15.⁵⁹ Windham recognised the significance of the passing of the Bill, as 'If it was once admitted that we had a right to plundering the Militia, it was a mere mockery to say that a recurrence of the assured necessity of plunder would not happen.'⁶⁰ Within eighteen months he was proved right, as the government would have cause to use the militia again.

By late 1808, it was clear to the government that there was a new need for extraordinary measures. The large disposable force created by the 1807 transfer was sent to Spain, and although Sir John Moore's campaign may have saved Spain from total conquest, it cost the army dearly. In addition, Austria appeared to be taking advantage of Napoleon's involvement in Spain, and the Portland government was determined to assist this potential ally in any way possible. As Castlereagh put it, 'whilst so large a British Force as 45,000 men is exposed to the hazards of war on the Continent, it seems indispensable to provide in due time adequate means as well for repairing the waste inseparable from military operations, as of providing for home defence, should the army in Spain and Portugal unfortunately sustain any more serious disaster'. Having decided to use militia drafts as a means to supply deficiencies in the army in 1807, Castlereagh again advocated using a militia transfer, but also proposed to allow the British Militia to recruit before resorting to a ballot, in this way hoping to avoid the detrimental effects of balloting on recruiting.⁶¹ This idea had long been in

⁵⁸ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, p. 65, Memorandum on the military force, 26 May 1807.

⁵⁹ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 967, 1044, 1127. It became 47 Geo. III, session 2, c. 54 (for Britain) and c. 57 (Ireland), 13 August 1807. The Militia Completion Acts were 47 Geo. III c. 56 (for Ireland) and c. 71 (Britain).

⁶⁰ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 1065.

⁶¹ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 127, Memorandum on increasing the Military Force. This memo is placed amongst the correspondence of 1807, but it should be dated late 1808. Firstly it mentions the 1806 militia transfer, when there was not one, and so this could refer to either 1805 or 1807. But as it also mentions a ballot as part of the transfer, this means Castlereagh must be referring to the 1807 transfer. He also mentions the local militia, which was not created until 1808, and, in the quote used above, mentions troops being in Spain, where British troops were not committed until 1808. The mention of serious disaster befalling the army in Spain gives a likely date of late 1808, after Moore had begun his winter retreat to Corunna.

Castlereagh's mind as it had always been an accepted fact in the Irish militia (he was Colonel of the County Down Militia). He had initially advocated the extension of this scheme to the British Militia in 1807.⁶²

As militia drafts were accepted in 1807, the 1809 Militia Enlistment Bill had an easier passage. A division on the first reading was forced by the over zealous Lord Milton, which was duly defeated 77 to 26, and then passed through parliamentary stages unopposed,⁶³ but some MPs did object to the measure. The changes made in the recruitment of the militia inflamed the opposition of the militia purists, as much as the misuse of the constitutional force to provide men for the regulars. What incensed the militia supporters so much was that Castlereagh had broken his pledge that militia transfers would not become a regular system to supply the army, yet within six months of the end of the 1807 militia draft, he was asking again for more men from the militia. George Tierney, one of the opposition's principal spokesmen, simply wanted to know what had happened to the force given to Castlereagh in 1807.⁶⁴ Earl Temple concurred with Windham's appraisal of two years earlier, and decried the use of militia drafts in anticipation of an emergency, 'So that this was now to become a regular system from year to year.'⁶⁵ Lord Milton and Sir Thomas Turton raised their objections, Milton commenting that it appeared that militia drafts were being adopted 'as a regular system for supplying the army,'⁶⁶ and Turton stating that it was 'changing constitutional principals [sic] of the militia of the country'.⁶⁷ Earl Fitzwilliam went further in the Lords, expressing 'considerable regret, that the principle of the militia had in modern times been so much departed from, and that the militia regiments should have been

⁶² Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 59, Measures for Improving the state of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

⁶³ Aspinall (ed.), *Later Correspondence of George III*, V, 176, Perceval to the King, 25 January 1809. Some of the votes against the measure were only given out of duty to the Whig party. *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 159-167.

⁶⁴ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 162. John Calcraft demanded details of the deficiency in the army, supporting Tierney's call to explain what had happened to the force raised in 1807-08, *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 165.

⁶⁵ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 323.

⁶⁶ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 163.

⁶⁷ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 323.

made a recruiting, or perhaps, if he might use the expression, a crimping fund for the supply of the army'.⁶⁸

Besides these usual howls from the militia die-hards, the principle of drafting from the militia had been largely accepted, and the debate in the House shifted to the effectiveness of the militia drafting system. Castlereagh, again supported by Colonel Wood who was becoming the pro-government militia representative, declared that militia transfers were 'the most effectual, and by far the most expeditious means of supplying a deficiency in the regular military forces of the country', and that 'it would give the country in the least possible time the largest possible force'.⁶⁹ Militia drafts did create a temporary weakness in the defensive force, but this was acceptable. Castlereagh pre-empted the Army of Reserve supporters by stating that such a force would do the opposite, it would massively increase the defensive force, and reduce the efficiency of the offensive troops.

This did not prevent some MPs from questioning the means adopted by government. William Eliot, one of Baron Eliot's sons and usually a government supporter, thought that it would injure 'morality throughout the country; for such would be the effect of high bounties given to the recruits from the militia to the line, and the substitutes who were to fill their places in the militia ranks'. He had previously considered that militia drafts were a 'fraudulent system of taxation'.⁷⁰ Sidmouth's supporters also voiced their views; Charles Shaw Lefevre declared himself against the bill, because of the severity of the ballots, and Sir George Warrender preferred all the militia going to the line, and balloting directly for the line.⁷¹ Sidmouth admitted the necessity of militia drafts and did not oppose the bill, but 'He could not approve of the practice of enlisting men for one species of service, and afterwards seducing them into

⁶⁸ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 805. The Marquis of Douglas supported him

⁶⁹ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 159-191; for Wood's speech supporting Castlereagh, 315-316.

⁷⁰ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 167, & 313.

⁷¹ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 653-654.

another.’⁷² During the debate on the Militia Completion Bill, Daniel Giles went further, observing that there were three modes of raising men: increasing the bounty, balloting, or reducing service either in time or in space. The government had chosen none of these: ‘He [Castlereagh] proposed to raise men first by ballot and then by bounty;’ he estimated that the last draft had cost £726,000; a third each paid from general taxes, from the landed interest, and from individuals subjected to the ballot.⁷³ But, as Castlereagh observed when he brought in the bill, balloting in some form was necessary, and it was better to ballot for the militia, and then draft men into the line, than balloting directly to the line.

The Perceval and Liverpool Administrations: The 1811 Militia Transfer Act and the Integration of Britain’s Military Forces.

Fortunately for the Perceval ministry the 1809 transfer act lasted for a year,⁷⁴ which allowed the government to deal with its immediate survival, and the Militia Completion Act⁷⁵ gave the counties a year to try and recruit men to replace those who had volunteered for the line. But by summer 1810 it was clear that the army again needed reinforcing. General Dundas informed Liverpool that the means of supplying the army were inadequate, and that there would be a shortfall of 9,360 men during the year. Many of the battalions in Britain were ‘wracked with Walcheren fever’ and so he pressed Liverpool for ‘Some strong legislative measure ... with a view of establishing such a connection between the different branches of the Armed Forces of the Country as may secure the permanent means of recruiting the Regular Regiments.’⁷⁶ He did not receive any reply to this, from a government preoccupied with the Regency crisis, and in December 1810 he again reiterated the need for action, also raising the prospect of

⁷² *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 841.

⁷³ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 803.

⁷⁴ 49 Geo. III c. 4 & c. 5.

⁷⁵ 49 Geo. III, c. 53.

⁷⁶ WO1/644, Dundas to Liverpool, 8 June 1810.

having to reduce the second battalions, as had been suggested in 1807.⁷⁷

During this period, Liverpool turned his attention to the possible measures the government could adopt, and considered that 'No other means present themselves but drafts from the Militia.'⁷⁸ In a long memorandum, he outlined the problem and proposed establishing a permanent annual transfer from the militia. From figures given by Dundas, the army had an annual shortfall of around 8,000 men, which he proposed to remedy by an annual intake from the militia. At that time the militia had an establishment of 96,715, and was 12,395 men deficient, which Liverpool proposed to call on the counties to rectify. Then the militia would be reduced to 76,000, but gradually through the militia drafts. This would mean that the militia would not have to ballot for at least three years, during which time they would be allowed to recruit, as they had done in 1809, thus avoiding ballots and not impairing ordinary recruiting or the regulars.⁷⁹ Castlereagh had considered the idea of permanent militia transfers in 1807,⁸⁰ and his plan was remarkably similar to Liverpool's, inasmuch as he proposed to reduce the militia to 60,000, and allow a sixth to volunteer each year. Castlereagh's plan was probably modelled upon the successful Irish annual militia transfer, in which fifteen men from each company of 100 men could volunteer for the line. The Irish system had also demonstrated the success of allowing militia regiments to recruit perpetually to replace the volunteers. As Liverpool developed his ideas, they came even closer to Castlereagh's plan, reducing the militia to 70,000, and allowing 10,000 men to transfer each year.⁸¹

As Liverpool sat in the Lords, it fell to Palmerston to bring the measure to the

⁷⁷ WO1/644, Dundas to Liverpool, 30 December 1810. Another copy is in BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38378, ff.106-107.

⁷⁸ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38361, ff. 70-80, Memorandum on the demands of the Army, and Militia Transfers, 1810. It is likely this is from the summer of 1810, as it mentions calling on the counties to fulfil their militia quotas, i.e. it would be before the expiration of the 1809 Militia Completion Act.

⁷⁹ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38361, ff. 65-69, Draft Measure for keeping up the Regular Army.

⁸⁰ WO1/1116, Militia Transfer Plan, 5 June 1807. Twenty-one colonels supported the plan, twelve were against.

⁸¹ The Irish militia transfer took 15% per year; the proposals by Liverpool 14.3%. BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38361, ff. 65-69, Draft Measure for keeping up the Regular Army.

Commons. He outlined the problem, and the reason for an annual transfer: 'it would be advisable to recur to the means which experience had shewn [sic] to be so successful, namely to allow a certain proportion of the militia to volunteer into the line'.⁸² Castlereagh added that 'It was extending to the British militia a principle which had long been acted upon in Ireland with the greatest advantage.' He had two suggestions for the government: that the militiamen would need some compensation for the loss of their family allowance, and that balloting should be avoided for the militia, and militiamen should be raised by recruiting parties instead.⁸³ The Horse Guards had always advocated the former, and the government adopted the latter.

Two points especially concerned the House, namely the permanency of the bill, and the fear that perpetual ballots would be used to fill the ranks of the militia. Daniel Giles declared in the subsequent debate that he would accept a single draft from the militia to reduce it to its new establishment, but objected to giving the government 10,000 men annually, especially when it was not clear how these vacancies were to be filled.⁸⁴ He spoke again, in the first debate on the Militia Enlistment Bill (1 April 1811), against the permanency of the bill,⁸⁵ which increased the antagonism of the supporters of Windham's system. William Eliot declared that 'If Mr. Windham's system had been preserved in, they would not now have occasion to resort to such a measure as this. It could not but disgust the militia officers, who were converted into instruments for recruiting the regular army.' He conceded that if it was temporary, he probably would allow it to pass, but as it was a permanent measure, he encouraged the House to pause before they 'placed in the hands of ministers a power of perpetual balloting'.⁸⁶ Lord Holland believed it would destroy Windham's system by creating competition in recruiting.⁸⁷

⁸² *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 194.

⁸³ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 215.

⁸⁴ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 326.

⁸⁵ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 665.

⁸⁶ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 665.

⁸⁷ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 737.

The fears about future ballots were secondary to the permanency of the drafts, but nonetheless required some management. Ellison declared that he would allow the bill to pass if there were to be no ballots, and Henry Banks proposed that no ballots should take place until 1813. Castlereagh answered these concerns by highlighting the large numbers of supernumerary men who would be kept, so obviating the need for ballots. To placate such views, the act specified that militia ballots should be suspended until 1 July 1813.⁸⁸ Colonel Wood again supported his brother-in-law and the government, declaring that it would be easy for the militia to recruit the seventh of their strength that each year would be drafted into the line. Castlereagh also answered the silent supporters of balloting directly for the line, as ‘the militia gave habits which prepared men for entering the line, and that it was the natural colour of the mind of man to prefer home service’.⁸⁹

There were some final technical objections to the bill. Daniel Giles and Samuel Whitbread questioned the ‘double jump’ system it would set up, whereby a man could enlist into the militia for one bounty, then soon after transfer to the line and receive another.⁹⁰ John Bastard raised the old cry that it would damage the discipline of the militia, and in the Lords, Earl Rosslyn believed that the government’s calculations were not correct, and it would still be insufficient. However, the Home Secretary, Ryder, challenged those who objected to present a bill of their own to solve the recruitment problems of the army. No alternative was presented, and so the bill passed without a vote.⁹¹

The paucity of ideas on army recruitment was echoed in the Lords. Sidmouth gave his support to the bill because of ‘indispensable necessity’ and the lack of an alternative.⁹² There was a debate on the measure during the 1813 Army Estimates (8

⁸⁸ 51 Geo. III c. 20, clause 22.

⁸⁹ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 667, 670.

⁹⁰ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 666, 668.

⁹¹ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 669-670; 736 (Rosslyn in the Lords).

⁹² *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 736.

March 1813), but the criticism over the two bounties was easily answered by John Hiley Addington, and Castlereagh (recently returned to office as Foreign Secretary) who declared that Britain's military pre-eminence 'was owing in a great measure to the system of recruiting from the militia regiments, which he had felt it his duty (at that time disagreeable), to bring forward. No other plan would have proved so effectual'.⁹³ The lack of an alternative, and the acceptance of militia drafts tacitly given in 1807 and 1809, ensured that annual militia transfers were permitted without too much trouble.

Increasing the size of the army, or maintaining it, was only one way of improving Britain's military force. The Liverpool government also integrated the existing forces into a better-organised system, able to cope with the scale of Napoleonic conflict. Besides transferring men to the line, the government sought other ways to utilise the militia, particularly focusing on gaining more flexibility in its deployment. During the Irish rebellion of 1798 some militia regiments volunteered to serve in Ireland, and after the Act of Union in 1801 there were calls to make this a permanent arrangement by having an UK militia. As with much of the Act of Union, particularly relating to the military, the matter was left unresolved, and the UK continued to have two militias.⁹⁴ Henry Arthur Herbert consistently championed this idea in the Commons during the first decade of the nineteenth century,⁹⁵ and his cause received powerful support in 1811 from Castlereagh when, in discussions on the permanent militia transfer, he also suggested a common militia as this was the only point where the military system was failing.

The army supported such a measure, both from the Irish Militia's detractors and supporters. One of the former, an anonymous staff officer at Athlone, informed Windham in 1807 that he did not 'consider them a force fit to be entrusted with the

⁹³ *Hansard*, 1812-1813, XXIV, 1163-1187. Bennet and Hon. Edward Law (a Sidmouthite, and son of Baron Ellenborough) raised objections to it.

⁹⁴ Allan Blackstock, 'The Union and the Military, 1801-c.1830', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th Series, X, (London, 2000), pp. 329-351.

⁹⁵ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 906; 1809, XII, 164.

defence of this part of the United Kingdom, either for the purpose of repelling a foreign foe, or for the purpose of crushing internal rebellions'. By interchanging them with British regiments, the Irish Militia 'when in England, separated from their priests, would make, what they will never prove here, good soldiers'.⁹⁶ During the review of military policy in 1810, the Horse Guards drew up a large exposition of a militia interchange. Besides returning to the argument that the Irish militia would be better out of Ireland, it also suggested that such an arrangement would have important political results, as it 'would unquestionably lead to an acknowledgement of each other as part of the same Empire; which not be generally admitted either in England or in Ireland at present!!!'⁹⁷. The memorandum presented an arrangement for this, which was largely adopted by government. In future all militia recruits, however they were obtained, served in the Militia of the United Kingdom, whilst those already in the militia could volunteer for the new force, and receive a small bounty.

The Militia Interchange Bill was brought before Parliament on 14 May 1811, and, like the militia transfers previously, was strongly opposed by supporters of the militia, for similar reasons. Earl Temple and Lord Stanley declared that it would negate the militia's constitutional role. There were also practical concerns. John Bastard believed that it gave the men the power to decide where they wanted to serve, reversing the chain of command, and forcing the officers to accept the men's decision or quit the regiment. Wynn⁹⁸ observed that the government may as well send the militia to Europe, and the use of the militia in this manner was so objectionable to Lord Hamilton, that he preferred the militia be disbanded than used in such a way.⁹⁹

An interchange between the Irish and British Militias also raised the thorny

⁹⁶ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, f. 68, A Staff Officer (Athlone) to Windham, 20 February 1807.

⁹⁷ WO3/596, Memorandum on Irish and British Militia Interchange, 20 March 1810. No author is given, but it is likely to be from the Adjutant General's department. These views were repeated in the Commons, *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 218.

⁹⁸ It is not clear of this was Charles Watkin Williams Wynn (MP for Montgomeryshire), who spoke later against the measure, or Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, MP for Denbighshire, Lord Lieutenant of Merioneth and Denbigh, and Colonel of Denbigh Militia. Both were Grenvillites.

⁹⁹ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XX, 132-133, 200-201, 292-295.

problem of Catholics in an avowedly Protestant army. Many of the Irish Militia regiments were overwhelmingly Catholic, and supporters of Catholic relief saw the militia interchange as a means to give permanent legality to Catholic worship in Britain. Tighe first raised this in the Commons; Sir John Cox Hipperley, Sir John Newport and Grattan joined him, and even Ryder conceded that a clause should be inserted allowing Catholic worship into the Militia Interchange Bill. Lords Stanhope, Moira and Buckingham pressed Catholic claims in the Lords, but the clause was rejected.¹⁰⁰

The militia interchange allowed the deployment of a larger force in the Peninsula, as the English and Scottish Militias replaced the role of the regulars in Ireland. This was facilitated by the terms of the act which allowed up to a quarter of the British Militia could go to Ireland (approximately 18,000 men), whilst a third of the Irish Militia could cross the Irish Sea (7,500 men), releasing over 10,000 regulars.

When the Liverpool government re-examined its military policy in 1813, the Duke of York warned that the novelty of militia volunteering had ended, but the demands of the army had increased: a deficiency of 10,500 was predicted.¹⁰¹ Once again, the government turned to the militia to make a final sacrifice to achieve victory; Bunbury, under secretary for war, outlined the problem, and a possible solution:

The means of the Regular Army are exhausted (at least in the Infantry). The volunteering of the militia into the Regular regiments has become extremely slack, and any measure for augmenting the militia, with a view to subsequent volunteering into the line require so much time that the season of action would be lost. At the same time it is believed that a great Enthusiasm exists in the country:- and that the old militia would freely extend their service if they were employed with their own officers and to retain their peculiar advantages.¹⁰²

As seen in the debates on the militia transfers and interchange, such views had been expressed before, usually by disgruntled militia officers. The improved parliamentary situation and Wellington's successes meant the government was able to bring such a radical measure before the House. Castlereagh introduced it, and although

¹⁰⁰ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XX, 132-133, 329-332, 643-645. The issue had been debated earlier that year during the Mutiny Bill and rejected then, so it was unlikely to be passed in a separate clause specifically for the Irish Militia.

¹⁰¹ WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 31 January & 20 October 1813.

¹⁰² WO25/3225, Bunbury to Bathurst, 30 August 1813.

not part of his remit as Foreign Secretary, he was more popular than ever and a recognised expert on military matters. In this bill, he declared that the militiamen and officers wanted to serve actively, not passively, and that the government wanted to give them that choice. So the quota of volunteers for the line would be doubled for that year, and, with the arrears due, 26,000 men would be added to the regulars. He appealed to house to overcome its traditional prejudices against the use of the militia in such a way: ‘All the difficulties which frightened our ancestors, and which were important at one time in point of privilege, ought now to be lost and swallowed up in the necessity for exertion imposed on us by the present times.’¹⁰³

To make this large transfer possible, a variety of options were given to the militia, with generous benefits to get the 30,000 men. Firstly, men could volunteer as before for service in the line, and a proportion of officers would be appointed. Secondly, militiamen could volunteer in whole companies, and be formed into provisional battalions under the command of militia officers, for service in Europe. Finally, up to three-quarters of a militia regiment could volunteer for service in Europe as a complete and separate regiment. In the last two options, the men would still be militiamen and so retain the family allowance. This was particularly aimed at the Irish and Scottish Militias. As part of this ‘New Military System’, the government also received powers to call out the local militia for twenty-eight days beyond its own county, to provide for home defence.¹⁰⁴

The government generally had support for this bill, but some MPs deplored the use of the militia in this way. Charles Wynn pointed out that the officers would want men to volunteer for the line, so that they could get regular rank, whilst the men would want to volunteer as militiamen for Europe.¹⁰⁵ But, there was general support for this measure as the need for such actions was indisputable, and the government’s popularity

¹⁰³ *Hansard*, 1813-14, XXVII, 91.

¹⁰⁴ 54 Geo. III c. 1 & c. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Hansard*, 1813-14, XXVII, 85-94, 114-119, 158-191, 174-177 & 285 (Lords).

ensured its speedy passage, with minimal debate. The Duke of Norfolk epitomised this support, as he was ‘anxious that not the slightest obstacle should be thrown in the way of the progress of this Bill, which he thought it was essential to pass without delay’.¹⁰⁶ It became law in late November 1813, and although it was implemented in 1814, very soon the war was over, and most of the military system established by Castlereagh, the Duke of York, and Liverpool, was allowed to lapse.

Plans for Major Reforms of the Army

It was clear from the Pittite’s return to power in 1807 that short-service would not be continued as a policy to supply the army, but throughout the period the government did have another option available besides transfer from the militia. The major flaw of the militia transfers was its voluntary nature, which made predictions about the strength of the regiments difficult. The government had to wait for regiments to have adequate numbers, and be sufficiently well trained before they could be sent overseas. The debates in the House also highlighted the fact that they were altering the constitutional arrangement of the military forces of the country, and doing so in a way that left many questions about the new arrangements unresolved. As John Cartwig observed in a letter to the Secretary of War, ‘It is not possible for me to conceive you can rest satisfied with our present system of Defence:- if system that can be called which equally violates constitutional and military principals [sic] and for its inefficiency is a disgrace to the councils of our country.’¹⁰⁷ Examining these alternatives reveals the reasons why the government chose to use the militia rather than implement any radical reform of the army.

The Horse Guards consistently presented alternative plans to maintain the army, and there was support for such measures in Parliament. The principal measure advocated was to supply the army by a mechanism similar to the Army of Reserve of

¹⁰⁶ *Hansard*, 1813-1814, XXVII, 177.

¹⁰⁷ WO1/1114, John Cartwig, (Sussex) to Castlereagh, 10 July 1807.

1803. The Horse Guards gave detailed proposals for re-introducing ballots for the line. In February 1807 the Duke of York proposed to the Talents that the second battalions be maintained by a ballot but limited to home service,¹⁰⁸ and, in 1809, Calvert presented a more detailed version of this, in a memorandum for 'New Modelling the Army'. He proposed to create a true territorial army of 100 regiments, each of two battalions: the first battalions for unlimited service geographically, thus providing a disposable force of 100,000 men, and the second battalions maintained by ballot, for service in the UK. The rest of the military force would be in the local militia, volunteers and yeomanry, all of whom should be trained to be fit to act with the line. These part-time troops would assume the identity (i.e. name and regimental distinctions) of the county regiment. In essence the plan would encourage enlistment into first battalions by establishing a real connection between regiments and counties, and the militia would be 'What it ought constitutionally to be, the Basis of our National Force.' He further warned that 'Every measure adopted for the Encrease [sic] of our Military Force, which does not place it on an assured and permanent Footing, is illusory and inadequate to the object.'¹⁰⁹ The plan appealed sufficiently to Castlereagh for him to present it to the King.¹¹⁰

In 1810 the same idea was presented to the Perceval government. The end of the militia volunteering, and the need to 'take account of the military force and the means of supporting it' prompted another initiative. The plan was a more refined version of Calvert's proposed in 1809, in which every regiment would have a second battalion created by reducing the existing ones to eight companies and one field officer, thereby providing the means for the army to receive 30,000 men. It was also clear to the Adjutant General that the compulsion was necessary, and that the ballot could be made less obnoxious by restricting it to limited service, but with the option of extending

¹⁰⁸ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 83-84.

¹⁰⁹ WO25/3224, Scheme for New Modelling the Army by Calvert, November 1809.

¹¹⁰ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 193-197.

service at any time.¹¹¹ Significantly, the status of the militia was not mentioned.

In the following year, the Adjutant General's department again advocated balloting for the army with a wide-ranging and comprehensive defence report, written at a time when it again appeared that Napoleon would turn his attention to invading Britain. It was recognised that Napoleon would only attempt an invasion with an overwhelming force, estimated at six armies of 40-50,000 (three against Kent and Sussex, two against the North and East, and one against Ireland), with a smaller force of 20-25,000 against Cornwall and Devon. The prospect of such a massive force necessitated a major reform of the army. The militia would be disbanded, the men and officers going to the regular army, as 'In the old militia the original institution is completely worn out. By the introduction of a general substitution, and by the term of enrolment having become indefinite namely the war, the great object of gradually training the population of the country to arms is entirely frustrated.' Consequently, the local militia would replace the militia as the constitutional force. A separate colonial army would be created by giving higher bounties to recruits who agreed to serve as such, and although recruiting would continue, a ballot would furnish any deficiency in the army. This ballot would only be for the infantry, and confined to unmarried men between 18 and 25. Significantly, substitution would not be allowed, but there would be fines, and each man would serve for five years in the UK unless he volunteered for service overseas. The author admitted that filling up second battalions with men that could only serve in the UK would have its limitations, but felt that the only alternative was conscription.¹¹²

Balloting for the line clearly had support from the army, which is not surprising. Furthermore, the members of the Addington government, who introduced the Army of Reserve in 1803, advocated a return to it from 1807. Lord Melville expressed succinctly

¹¹¹ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38244, ff. 207-210, Lt. Col. Theophilus Pritzler to Bunbury, with comments by Calvert, 24 February 1810.

¹¹² WO30/80, Defence Report, 1 January 1811.

the Sidmouthite view: 'It is astonishing to me that, among all the projects for keeping up the army, there never has been the good sense to revert back to the system of the Army of Reserve. By that system you could receive a supply of 30,000 men by *ballot*, which I am sure, is more than the most sanguine of you can look for from any new attempt upon the Militia.'¹¹³ So why did the government ignore such respected opinions?

The government chose militia volunteering for several reasons. In 1807 and 1809, Castlereagh was particularly keen to get trained men into the army; balloting for the line would take time, and then these men would need training.¹¹⁴ Militia drafts were also the only alternative source of manpower that would not affect ordinary recruiting.¹¹⁵ The failure of the Army of Reserve, which had lapsed with the demise of the Addington ministry, was still a recent memory during the Portland government and so there were doubts about the possible success of a similar law. Castlereagh informed the cabinet in 1807 that

With respect to success of such a measure, had it even received the sanction of Parliament, very considerable doubts must be entertained, when the contempt into which fines have fallen, from their enforcement having always been neglected, and latterly wholly abandoned by an express enactment, is considered: and it is clear that a recurrence to such a system at present would be productive of the utmost resistance and dissatisfaction both in and out of Parliament.¹¹⁶

From a political perspective, a new Army of Reserve bill could not have been passed, and implemented at that time. The collapse of both the Portland government, and its weak successor, the Perceval ministry, made such an attempt even more unlikely, especially when it was preoccupied with the inquiry into Walcheren, and then the establishment of the Regency.

Apart from these political considerations, there were other powerful reasons for

¹¹³ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 79, Lord Melville to Castlereagh, 16 July 1807.

¹¹⁴ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 863; 1809, XII, 159

¹¹⁵ WO1/906, Memorandum of Militia Volunteering, 1811.

¹¹⁶ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 55, Measures proposed for Improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

the government's reluctance to consider conscription. Much has been made of two issues that were thought to stop direct balloting for the line: the administrative limits of the British state, and the 'manpower ceiling'. It has been asserted that direct balloting for the armed forces would have been difficult, if not impossible in Britain, because its administrative machinery could not cope with its rapidly growing and mobile population. To some extent this is true, as the militia relied on the counties finding men, preferably by ballot, but other means were acceptable. This was particularly true in Ireland, where in some places the parish authorities needed to execute ballots hardly existed, and in large manufacturing districts, where dense populations simply precluded fair and quick ballots.¹¹⁷ It is unlikely that the proponents of balloting for the army ever thought direct personal service could be enforced, hence the use of the term balloting, rather than conscription, but it was clear that counties could be forced to raise men. Therefore, the government chose to raise men via the militia ballots, and later militia recruiting, rather than direct intervention.

The 'manpower ceiling' has been put forward recently as an explanation,¹¹⁸ and the argument has supporting evidence. Both Castlereagh and Liverpool believed that the army, navy and part-time forces were reaching their limits from 1807. Castlereagh said as much in Parliament in 1807, and when Liverpool was drawing up his plans for the annual militia transfers in 1811, he wrote that the army was 'as large a force, combined with the Regular Militia and Navy as the Population and Finances of the Country could well support'.¹¹⁹ But the 'manpower ceiling' was not simply demographic; it was also financial. In 1810, Britain's finances were trimmed back in recognition that the war was likely to be sustained for some considerable time. Liverpool felt that the commitment to Portugal could be maintained indefinitely if it cost £3,000,000 a year. In 1810, when

¹¹⁷ Western, *The English Militia*, pp. 277-285.

¹¹⁸ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, particularly Chapter 4, pp. 95-125.

¹¹⁹ *Hansard*, 1807, IX, 864; BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38361, ff. 65-69, Draft Measure for keeping up the Regular Army, (late 1810?).

10,000 men were sent to bolster Wellington during the French invasion, it had cost £6,000,000, a massive increase in expense, for a relatively small reinforcement.¹²⁰ Although the financial situation improved from 1812, and Wellington was reinforced, the government could still not afford to expand the army by a sufficient level to justify the introduction of balloting for the armed forces.

The overriding concern from 1810 was to preserve Britain's military strength, and allow it to continue fighting until events in central Europe raised the prospect of a quick victory. In effect, the manpower ceiling was imposed on the government by Britain's war aims and strategy. This explains why the government chose to ignore the plans emanating from the Horse Guards and Parliament. As Liverpool explained in a letter to Wellington on 10 September 1810,

The question in short, must come to this. We must make an option between a steady and continued exertion upon a moderate scale, and a great and extraordinary effort for a limited time, which neither our means, military or financial, will enable us to maintain permanently.

If it could be hoped that the latter would bring the contest to a speedy and successful conclusion, it would certainly be the wisest course; but unfortunately, the experience of the last fifteen years is not encouraging in this respect.¹²¹

Rather than a 'manpower ceiling' it was more of a resource ceiling. True to his word, Liverpool did enact extraordinary measures in 1813, and in that year, 30,000 men were added to the regular army.

Conclusion

It is unsurprising in an era of high political drama that the mundane parliamentary history of recruitment policy has been overlooked. Making military policy a low-key affair also appears to be one of the aims of the post-Talents governments. Only Windham's short-service scheme aroused any partisan debates, and significantly short-service was not abolished, just sidelined. The governments after 1807 de-politicised the debate on maintaining the army until the 1811 annual transfer passed

¹²⁰ Charles Duke Young, *The Life and Administration of Robert Banks, Second Earl Liverpool*, (London, 1868), pp. 364-367, Liverpool to Wellington, 20 February 1811.

¹²¹ Young, *Life of Liverpool*, p. 337, Liverpool to Wellington, 10 September 1810.

without a division. This meant that the arguments became increasingly centred on effectiveness, and balloting for the army only had support from the easily ignored army, and the small group of Sidmouthites, who were never openly critical of government, and joined Liverpool in 1812. It also explains why some government supporters were openly against militia transfers, whilst members of the opposition remained quiet. The acceptance of militia transfers was such that the Marquis of Buckingham, who, as Earl Temple, had spoken out against militia transfer in 1807 and 1809, went on to command the militia brigade in France.

Maintaining Britain's war effort provided governments with some tough choices but rather than military efficiency, it was the immediate practicalities, both military and politically, which determined government policy. Consequently, those who advocated any form of conscription were ignored, and the government chose to use what it had, namely the militia. The militia transfers have the appearance of a short-term remedy, but the UK's governments did not have the luxury of being able to plan ahead; the continued fighting in Iberia meant that nothing could be done to disrupt ordinary recruiting for any considerable period of time. Rather than the 'manpower ceiling' or administrative limits, it was the immediate situation that resulted in conscription being discarded as an option, and the immediate situation was never dire enough to justify such drastic action.

The dismantling of the British military machine after 1815 has hidden the debates that took place on military policy, and has obscured Britain's plans for conscription. The debates and acts of the governments that managed to sustain a war on the continent for seven years, were, in some cases literally,¹²² left on the shelf, and when the debate was returned to in the mid-nineteenth century, warfare had entered the

¹²² Many of the War Office papers were considered as a library for any future Commander in Chief or Secretary at War, to relay the experience of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. (They now form WO30.) The need to reform the army in the beginning of the twentieth century prompted a closer look at the material in them, and J. W. Fortescue's *County Lieutenancies and the Army, 1803-14*, (London, 1909) was written very much as a historical lesson.

industrial age. The political story of military policy shows how the government steered a course between the obvious needs of the army and the obvious needs for their political survival. This explains why using the militia eventually triumphed over the other options available. In doing so, the government effectively de-politicised the recruitment policy, whilst the Opposition's attempts to turn militia transfers into a constitutional issue failed.

Chapter 4: Ordinary Recruitment

Introduction

Between 1807 and 1810 successive Secretaries of War felt that with improvements voluntary enlistment would be sufficient to cover casualties. Windham based his short service scheme on this assumption, and Castlereagh introduced the 1807 militia transfer as a temporary remedy. By 1810 it was clear that a more permanent solution was needed to cover the shortfall in recruiting, as increased casualties occurred in the Peninsular War. Behind the quest for a solution to Britain's manpower demands, the Horse Guards consistently strove to improve recruiting, and their efforts were successful. Voluntary enlistment, however, always had its limits as the provision of more recruiting parties had to be balanced by the adverse effects of removing so many officers and NCOs from their regiments. Yet voluntary enlistment of men provided the bedrock for the maintenance of the British army: between 1807 and 1815 117,275 men enlisted for the army through ordinary recruiting. Furthermore, from 1809 voluntary enlistment was used to recruit the militia, which added another 51,373 to Britain's military force. Although not as public as the debates on militia transfers, ordinary recruitment was an important aspect of Britain's military policy.

Ordinary Recruiting

The system of voluntary recruitment in the UK had changed little since the establishment of a permanent army in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. It was infamous for the recruiting sergeant's dastardly methods, and synonymous with drunkenness. Recruiting was conducted by parties - a small detachment from a regiment - which had received a Beating Order, allowing the officers and men to recruit and request billets. The parties were usually composed of an officer, a few NCOs, sometimes some privates, and drummers. Therefore the presence of some of the

regiment in the UK from which a party could be drawn was crucial to recruiting. Besides the depots and second battalions permanently stationed in the UK, recruiting during the Napoleonic Wars was aided by the Army Depot on the Isle of Wight, where regiments without a presence in the UK could have a few officers and NCOs stationed to provide for recruiting.¹ As an example, in 1807 all spare officers at the Army Depot from the 19th Light Dragoons, 75th, 77th and 94th were sent out recruiting, before the regiments returned from East India.²

The demands of recruiting meant that the establishment of a unit could be critical to the success of the regiment, as the extra officers and NCOs could be utilised on the recruiting service. This conflicted with the government's financial strictures on the army, and explains the Horse Guard's rejection of requests to have establishments increased when there were vacancies in the regiment's battalion overseas.³ Recruiting success was rewarded in the augmentation of a regiment, which necessarily resulted in promotion and new officer vacancies being created. After an earlier request was refused to augment the 1st, six months later 'to ensure the success of recruiting' the fourth battalion was increased to 1,200 rank and file.⁴ Regiments without a recruiting establishment suffered severely. The 16th, 46th, 54th, 55th and 70th had little success in recruiting and the units were wasting away because their recruiting establishment was 'totally inadequate'. These units were consolidated into six companies, and the remaining skeleton companies were ordered home, providing more NCOs and officers to form recruiting parties and a regimental depot.⁵

The mechanics of obtaining a civilian, and making him a legal soldier were quite fixed. A recruit would take the 'King's shilling' from a member of the party, and at least

¹ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 17 August, 16 October, 21 November & 15 December 1807, etc.

² WO3/193, Wynyard to Inspector General of Recruiting, 2 February 1807.

³ For instance, WO3/46, Calvert to Kent, 17 June 1808, rejecting an augmentation of the 1st, and WO3/49, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Fitzroy, 18 January 1809, for the 25th.

⁴ WO3/47, Calvert to Kent, 18 January 1809.

⁵ WO3/197, Memorandum to York by Calvert, 9 October 1809; WO3/198, Wynyard to Torrens, 13 December 1809.

twenty-four hours later he would then be brought before a magistrate to be attested, where the recruit had the right to refuse to join either if he could prove he was an apprentice, or if he could repay the party. Once attested, he would receive a medical examination, and then if he passed the medical, he became a member of the regiment and subject to the Mutiny Act. For each recruit the party was issued levy money (usually in advance from the regimental agents), most of which went to the recruit as a bounty, but some of which went to party itself. The recruit would probably remain with the party for some time, the Horse Guards encouraged this so recruits would spend their bounties before they reached their regiment.⁶ The new recruit might even find himself recruiting: a militia volunteer recruited a man whilst he was still with a party of the 95th and received £2 as the 'bringer', a massive increase in his income from the meagre one shilling a week he received as a recruit.⁷

From 1796 the Duke of York set about increasing supervision of the recruiting service. Recruiting districts were established,⁸ each with a commanding officer (Inspecting Field Officer), an adjutant, two staff sergeants and medical officers. They set physical examinations for all recruits, and generally supervised recruiting in their districts.⁹ Initially, they only had jurisdiction over parties of regiments that were overseas, but later their authority was extended to all parties. In 1798 a district paymaster was added to the recruiting district establishment, who dealt with all financial transactions, further increasing the Inspecting Field Officer's (IFO) power.¹⁰ By 1807, the IFOs were the senior officers in the area and no officer in their jurisdiction could leave without their permission, although they could not interfere in internal regimental matters.

The district staff intermediately approved all recruits, giving them a portion of

⁶ WO3/585, Circular, by Darling, 16 December 1812.

⁷ Anthony Brett-James (ed.), *Military Memoirs of Edward Costello*, (London, 1967), p. 2.

⁸ See Appendix D for recruiting districts in 1809.

⁹ Western, 'The Recruitment of the Land Forces', PhD, pp. 130-134.

¹⁰ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 194-199, Fitzpatrick to Windham, 25 March 1807.

their bounty and a medical examination before they went to their regiments where, if approved by the regiment, they received the rest of their bounty.¹¹ In 1812, the IFOs had to be permanently at their head-quarters, and needed the Commander in Chief's permission to leave their post, so that recruits could be brought to them at any time.¹² In the same year the IFOs were asked to report on defective recruiting officers and NCOs, an already established practice.¹³ Lieutenant Andrews of the 53rd received particular attention in 1808; he was recruiting at Richmond whilst absent with leave, but had only obtained two recruits who immediately deserted. Calvert judged that he had no claim to an extension of his leave, and he was ordered to the Isle of Wight to be transported to his regiment in India.¹⁴

Further reforms came in 1807, when the office of Inspector General of Recruiting was abolished. His original role - inspecting recruits for regiments abroad (he was also commandant of the infamous Chatham barracks, where recruits were sent before going overseas) and making up the muster rolls for them - had been superseded by the district IFOs, and the rest of the work was transferred to '2-3 clerks in the Quarter-Master-General's department'.¹⁵ In 1812, IFOs were given command of all parties in their district, and the regimental officers were returned to their regiments. This meant that recruiting was overseen by men 'well calculated for that service ... instead of young officers who accepted the task rather as a leave of absence than a service.' The rewards to the NCOs were also increased (they received more of the levy money) 'upon whose exertions the success in recruiting must in a great measure, depend, however active and diligent their superior officers might be'.¹⁶

The tightening up of the regulations governing the recruiting service also

¹¹ *CJ*, 1806-07, IV, 175; WO25/3224, Memorandum on Recruiting, 19 October 1809.

¹² WO3/585, Circular to IFOs, by Calvert, 13 March 1812.

¹³ WO3/585, Circular to IFOs, by Calvert, 3 November 1812.

¹⁴ WO3/47, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Abercromby, 24 November 1808.

¹⁵ Historical Manuscripts Commission, *The Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue preserved at Dropmore*, (1892-99), III, 185, Grenville to Windham, 1 January 1807.

¹⁶ *Hansard*, 1812-13, XXIV, 1160. Palmerston was speaking during the Army Estimates of 1813.

extended to the parties themselves. In 1810 detailed instructions were given to each regiment, requiring particular attention to be paid to the selection of the recruiting party. The soldiers had to be fit, not only because ill men created a bad impression (seeing a wounded soldier was not likely to encourage enlistment), but because recruiting required activity and exertion.¹⁷ In 1813 married men were disqualified from the recruiting service, probably because they would not give their full attention to recruiting,¹⁸ and by 1814 the IFOs had the power to reject any man they thought unfit to form part of a party.¹⁹

Generally, the recruiting service came under closer supervision. In 1807, Calvert wanted to know why the recruiting parties of the 2/45th employed so many privates.²⁰ Calvert also upheld a complaint from a recruit that he was enlisted under undue pressure, and allowed him his discharge provided he repaid his bounty.²¹ Other irregularities also caught the Duke of York's attention; NCOs were forbidden to keep shops for the sale of necessaries for recruits, another source of income for the recruiting party.²² The cavalry was particularly prone to keep shops, as equipping a trooper cost much more than an infantryman, and some men of the 1st Dragoons were actually in debt to the regiment before they joined the regiment,²³ a situation that encouraged desertion.

Recruiting needed closer supervision because of wartime expansion. This inevitably resulted in high concentrations of recruiting parties in particular areas, duplication of effort, and competition between regiments. Such rivalries encouraged recruiting parties to depart from the physical standards set for recruits, and openly exceed the bounties set by government.²⁴ The financial arrangements encouraged the

¹⁷ WO3/585, Circular to Regimental Officers, 1 December 1810.

¹⁸ WO3/585, Circular by Darling, 1 December 1813.

¹⁹ National Army Museum, 6807/276, Circular, by Darling, 25 February 1814.

²⁰ WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Pigot, 16 January 1807.

²¹ WO3/584, Calvert to Joseph Gascoigne, 12 September 1807.

²² WO3/585, Darling to IFOs, 26 March 1811.

²³ WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Lord Cathcart, 16 January 1807.

²⁴ Western, 'The Recruitment of the Land Forces', PhD, pp. 73-102.

party to break regulations, as for every man raised they received, in effect, commission. The party could also increase its profitability by making surreptitious deductions from the recruit's bounty. Legitimate deductions were made from the bounty for necessities (such as knapsacks), but, as many men were ignorant of what were legitimate necessities, the party could make their own deductions.²⁵ These evils were the source for the continual hostility to recruitment, and the army generally, under this system:

Officers drew money from agents and frequently drew over allowances, creating much abuse of false attestations, etc. Most of the time, recruits were left to drunken Recruiting Sergeants and of Crimps, with who [sic] they were connected.²⁶

The regulations needed to be stricter and enforced more effectively because irregularities in recruiting were endemic, and the army's reforms had not changed the underlying financial arrangement which created different priorities between the parties and the army. For the parties, the more recruits they obtained the more money they made, whilst the army wanted recruits fit enough to undergo training immediately and be soldiers in as short a time as possible. This inevitably resulted in the parties ignoring, or trying to circumvent the recruiting regulations. The 1st Foot was a particularly bad example: among its various irregularities, it ignored the opinion of the London district surgeon in 1807 and approved two men.²⁷ More often individuals simply ignored recruiting regulations: Corporal Norman enlisted four men in the Taunton district, two of whom paid smart money (paying money direct to the party before the recruit was attested so that he could leave - a trick prohibited in 1807) while the other two proved unfit. The profit motive also encouraged collusion between the party and the recruits, and many young men were enlisted as boys because they were not tall enough. One sergeant recalled being told by the recruiting sergeant to lie about his age, so he could enlist as a 'lad' in the light dragoons.²⁸ Accordingly the IFOs were told to examine

²⁵ The Recruiting Regulations for 1806 specifically ban such deductions, *CJ*, 1806-07, IV, 175

²⁶ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 194-199, Fitzpatrick to Windham, 25 March 1807.

²⁷ WO3/43, Calvert to Kent, 28 April 1807.

²⁸ *Jotting from my Sabretache, by a Chelsea Pensioner*, (London, 1847), p. 12.

recruits 'Entirely apart from the Bringer and Party enlisting them'.²⁹ By 1814 they could reject any recruit they suspected of lying about his age.³⁰

As the IFOs were crucial to recruiting, they were called to account if irregularities occurred under their supervision. The IFO at Nottingham had to explain why a thirty-six year old man who was only 5' 4" was enlisted in 1807,³¹ and the London IFO received particular attention after he approved a wounded ex-marine.³² The IFOs, as the agency of the Horse Guards' authority, were also scrutinised. Colonel Dacres, the IFO at Athlone, was warned that if he did not cease ignoring the recruiting regulations, the Commander in Chief would order an investigation 'which will produce embarrassing results' for him.³³ Lieutenant Colonel Clay (Manchester district) passed twenty men for the 1st Foot who were not strictly up to standard, but with the colonel's approval.³⁴ The regimental surgeon who obviously did not know of the deal later rejected them, and Clay was called to explain himself to the Duke of York.³⁵ Clay later approved a recruit that the surgeon refused to pass on medical grounds, but again was fully supported by the Duke of Kent.³⁶ Collusion between Clay and the Duke of Kent was commonplace; Clay obtained an ensigncy for his Sergeant Major after he recruited one hundred men for the 1st,³⁷ which raises the possibility that such extensions of patronage were prevalent throughout the UK. Clay also received particular attention over his claims for allowances.³⁸ In the IFO's defence, they were probably under a great deal of pressure to ensure that the army secured as many recruits as possible.

Naturally differences of opinion between the recruiting staff and the regiments arose over the definition of a fit soldier, and IFOs had discretionary powers to enlist lads

²⁹ NAM, 6807/276, Circular by Darling, 23 March 1814.

³⁰ NAM, 6807/276, Circular by Darling, 1 January 1814.

³¹ WO3/192, Calvert to Inspector General of Recruiting, 16 January 1807.

³² WO3/193, Calvert to Inspector General of Recruiting, 26 February 1807.

³³ WO35/24, Nicholls to Col. Dacres, IFO Athlone, 31 August 1812.

³⁴ NAM, 7409-8, Kent to Clay, 2 March; Clay to Kent, 13 December 1807.

³⁵ NAM, 7409-8, Clay to Kent, 13 December 1807.

³⁶ NAM, 7409-8, Clay to Kent, 13 November & Kent to Clay, 15 November 1811.

³⁷ NAM, 7409-8, Clay to Kent, 5 November, Kent to Clay, 6 November 1813.

³⁸ NAM, 7409-8, Darling to Clay, 6 December 1810.

and boys within half an inch of the height standard.³⁹, and undoubtedly if a recruit was slightly under standard, with regular meals and exercise many recruits were later fit enough to become soldiers.⁴⁰ In the Gloucester district three men were accepted by the district surgeon but were later rejected by the regimental medical officers,⁴¹ a difference in interpretation that often occurred in the cavalry. Frederick Hildebrand proved to be unfit to be a dragoon, but was suitable for the infantry, and as he was determined to join the army, he was transferred to the 20th Foot, at his request.⁴² Not all such incidents were as easily resolved, and so it was decided that if an unfit man was approved, those responsible for his enlistment would have to bear the costs.⁴³ If a recruit was found to be ill, he was usually assessed at the York Hospital, to ascertain if he was unfit when intermediately approved, so blame could be apportioned to the IFO or the regiment.⁴⁴ Lieutenant Colonel Belson overrode the opinion of a surgeon and approved a man, but later had to repay his bounty, as the recruit was unfit.⁴⁵

The final defence against irregularities in recruiting was the biannual regimental inspections. Conducted by general officers, and military medical officers of high standing, they revealed the extent of the evasion of the recruiting regulations, and the gulf between what the army wanted and what it obtained. The Duke of York was astonished that men 'being evidently incapable of actual service' got into the 2/23rd in 1807, and then remarkably were transferred into the first battalion.⁴⁶ Eight men of the 2/87th were discharged in 1808, but

As the services of the men have been so short and their complaints evidently of longer standing, it will be necessary, in the first place, to account for their admission into the 87th regiment for the duty of which they do not appear, at the time of their enlistment, to have been by any means adequate.⁴⁷

³⁹ WO3/585, Circular, by Darling, 4 June 1812.

⁴⁰ For instance, WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 29 August 1808.

⁴¹ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 16 August 1808; see also, Calvert to Taylor, 16 March and 3 August 1808.

⁴² WO3/49, Calvert to Duke of Cambridge, 9 December 1809.

⁴³ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 2 September 1808.

⁴⁴ WO3/584, Calvert to Col. Burnett, York Hospital, 29 March 1808.

⁴⁵ WO3/192, Wynyard to Inspector General of Recruiting, 27 January 1807.

⁴⁶ WO3/42, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Fisher, 12 February 1807.

⁴⁷ WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 17 May 1808.

There was a similar report on the 2/84th that year.⁴⁸

More remarkable were the cases in the 2/50th of a sixty year old who had only served one year and nine months and a soldier who had an ulcer for four years yet had only been in the army for three.⁴⁹ The 2/25th received attention in 1808 because of the large number of invalids it had, and the Duke of York ordered an enquiry into their enlistments.⁵⁰ These cases were extreme, and recruits could become sick once they had arrived in their regiments. An investigation was ordered into the 13th to ascertain if two men who were discharged were unfit when they enlisted or if their ailments resulted from 'improper Medical treatment since their reception into the 13th Regiment'.⁵¹ In 1811 the Medical Board issued an instruction on the treatment of recruits, prompted by high levels of illness at Radipole Cavalry depot (where all cavalry recruits were sent if their regiments were overseas):

Young men are often first weakened by this new life, ... and extremely susceptible of the slightest impression capable of producing derangement in the system, and it is their seasoning, as it were, to the habits they must acquire as soldiers, the training to which requires the nicest management both by the Military and medical officers. [They are] not to be made tender by too much care and confinement, while at the same time the discipline should be mild and conciliatory, and the men at first as little exposed to sudden changes and crowding together.⁵²

A recruit was not usually well treated until he reached the regular and ordered life of his regiment. On arrival at the Army Depot, Dr Lamprice, the physician to the forces, recommended that recruits should be stripped, washed, receive new clothes, and be kept in separate barracks, as 'frequently young soldiers arrive there after long marches in a dirty condition'.⁵³

Recruits Obtained and Factors Affecting Recruitment

The voluntary enlistment system did not produce huge numbers of recruits, but

⁴⁸ WO/46, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Vyse, 31 October 1808.

⁴⁹ WO3/47, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Campbell, 17 January 1809.

⁵⁰ WO3/44, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. F. Dundas, 9 January 1808.

⁵¹ WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. England, 2 February 1808.

⁵² WO7/107, Medical Board to Burrow, Deputy Inspector of Hospitals, 31 December 1811.

⁵³ WO7/108, Dr. Lamprice, Physician to the Forces at the Army Depot, 16 July 1813.

the number of recruits varied significantly,⁵⁴ with spectacular results in 1807, a good yield in 1812 to 1813, and 1810 standing out as a very poor year. On average 13,031 recruits per annum were enlisted between 1807 to 1815. From the variation in the figures it is clear that generalisations about the recruiting cannot be made based on averages.⁵⁵ Firstly, in late 1814 and early 1815 recruiting was massively cut with the onset of peace. For the first six months of 1814, an average of 1,023 recruits per month was obtained; for the second half of the year the average fell to 295 recruits a month. 1815 produced similar, but reversed figures.⁵⁶ The extremes of 1807 and 1810 have specific explanations. The high number of recruits raised in 1807 reflected the instructions sent out in December 1806 that all officers who were not on active regimental duty should recruit. Battalions of less than 600 men were ordered to obtain 200 men, or the battalion would be reduced, effectively forcing officers to recruit to keep their rank (the fifty-four second battalions alone raised 8,035 men).⁵⁷ The dip in 1810 was caused by the militia recruiting in Britain, which generated competition with the regulars, followed by a ballot in the second half of the year. The militia recruiting was initially unsupervised, and although the militia recruited from 1811 onwards, it is clear from the figures that the army had gained control over it. Balloting always affected recruiting, producing a monthly average of recruits during balloting of 942 men per month, 12% lower in the absence of ballots.⁵⁸

⁵⁴ See Graph VI.

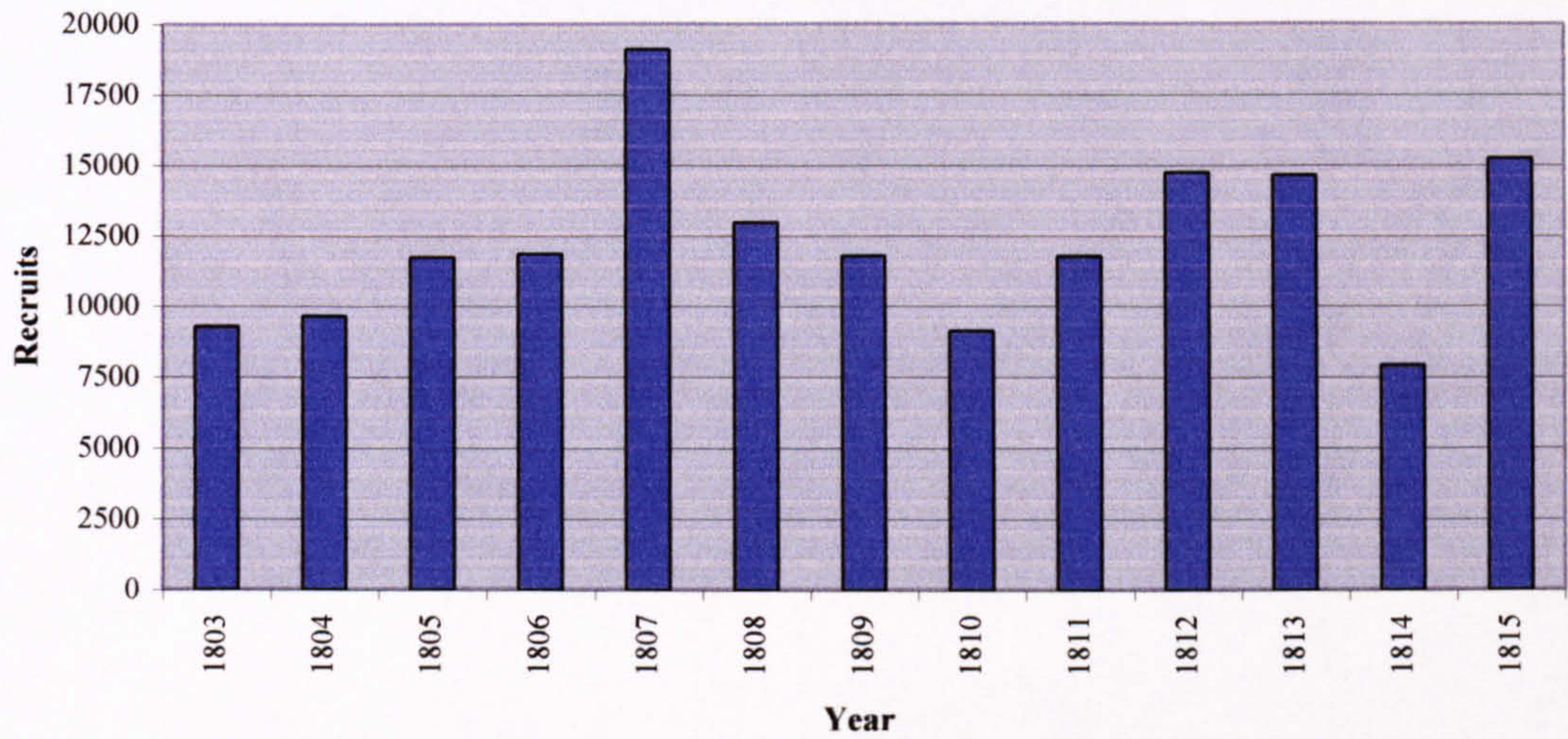
⁵⁵ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 100.

⁵⁶ The figures for the first three months of 1815 are 533 recruits per month, 1,586 for the second quarter, then 1,482 and 1,479.

⁵⁷ *CJ*, 1807, IV, 332, Circular to Regiments below 600 men, 8 December 1806.

⁵⁸ The average whilst not balloting was 1,073 men per month. Both are based on the figures for 1803 to 1813.

Graph VI: Number of Recruits per Year



Sources: WO1/946, Return of recruits raised since 1803, 21 March 1811; WO25/3225, Recruiting return for 1812 and 1813, August 1813; *CJ*, 1814-15, IX, 301, Return of recruits for 1814; *CJ*, 1816, XII, 423, Return of recruits for 1815.

Because of these anomalies, a more accurate average can be taken from the years 1808, 1809 and 1811 to 1813, which produces a figure of 13,184 recruits a year, representing a 7% increase above the average yearly recruits for 1803 to 1815. More importantly the recruiting reforms of 1812 appear to have contributed to the increased recruiting intake. Both years produced close to 15,000, and the first six months of 1814 produce a similar amount proportionally. Although the worsening economic conditions may have contributed to these returns, the consistency of the results (an average of 1,197 recruits per month) and the poorer results in 1811 – a worse year economically – suggest the improvement largely derived from the Horse Guards' efforts.

As mentioned earlier the number of parties limited recruiting. On average a party produced sixteen recruits a year, but increasing the number of parties affected the army in different ways. In the second half of 1808, 819 parties (an average for six months) produced 6,197 recruits, and similar results were produced in the first half of 1809.⁵⁹ In 1807 over 1,100 parties produced the 19,114 recruits, but the increased

⁵⁹ WO25/3224, Return of Average number of Regimental Parties from 25 June 1808 to 24 June 1809, AG, 19 October 1809. For the first half of 1809, 845 parties recruited 7,026 men.

number of parties 'Was highly injurious to the Service and Expensive', and obviously took NCOs and officers from duty with their units.⁶⁰ In 1809 the 84th was prohibited from sending out more parties, as it already had fourteen out, and its discipline was suffering.⁶¹

The army concentrated recruiting parties in the growing urban areas of Manchester, Birmingham, and Leeds, and it always got large numbers of recruits from London.⁶² Although these districts had considerable rural areas, they were recognised as successful recruiting areas because of the large towns within them. This concentration resulted in the urban areas actually producing fewer recruits per party than rural areas, but overall yielded more men: Carlisle's parties were particularly successful, obtaining 112 recruits from its seven parties, and although Leeds' parties were less successful individually, the district recruited 545 men, dwarfing Carlisle's contribution. The data also shows that Ireland had a high yield per party, but more interestingly Scotland was being targeted for recruitment, albeit not very successfully in this year. On average Ireland had 217 parties, which roughly equals the proportion of Irish population to the UK, producing an average of twenty-two recruits per party a year. Scotland had 181 parties, over double the number of parties to population ratio, which only produced eight men per party. Wales and the bordering counties also did not produce many men per party.⁶³

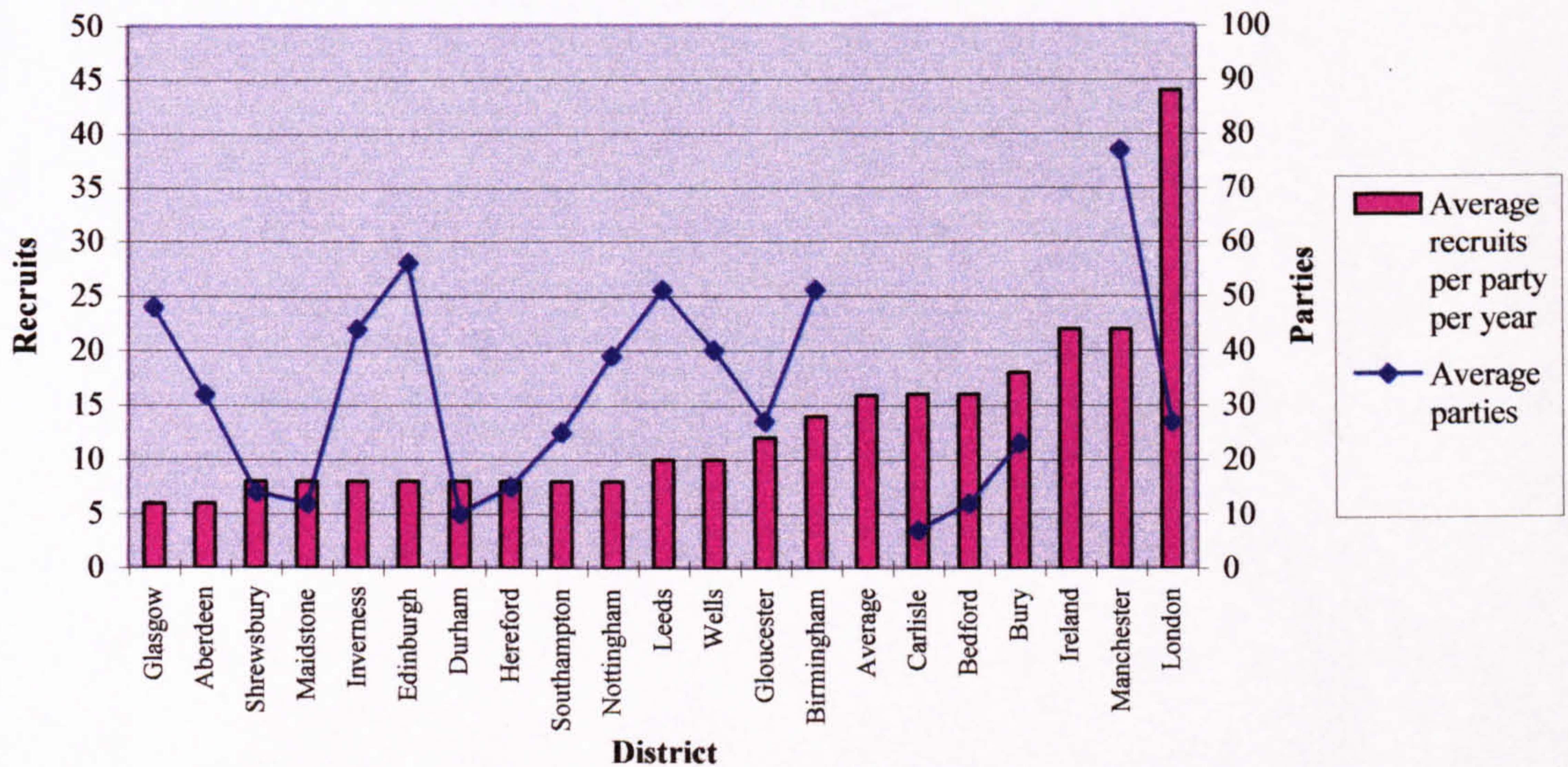
⁶⁰ *CJ*, 1808, VII, 163.

⁶¹ WO3/47, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Bernard (C.O. 84th), 21 September 1809.

⁶² See Graph VII.

⁶³ Ireland's population amounted to 33% of the UK's, and as there were a total of 832 parties in the UK, by Ireland's population it would have 217 parties. Scotland's population amounted to 10%, so using this ratio it would have 83 parties. Wales (counted as the Hereford and Shrewsbury districts) only had thirty parties, which produced nine men per party per year. England had 405 parties, producing seventeen recruits per party per year, roughly the average for the UK. WO25/3224, Return of average number of regimental parties from 25 June 1808 to 24 June 1809, AG, 19 October 1809.

Graph VII: Comparison of Recruits and Number of Parties by District, June 1808 to June 1809



Source: WO25/3224, Return of Average number of Regimental Parties from 25 June 1808 to 24 June 1809, AG, 19 October 1809

Comparing the district recruiting figures with their male population as recorded in the 1811 Census raises many more questions than answers,⁶⁴ and the conclusions drawn from this data have been hedged by qualifications. In particular, the population figures assume that the demography of the male population in each recruiting district was similar. Even considering such inaccuracies, the figures highlight the productivity of England's urban areas for the army. Not only were they producing large numbers of recruits, but they were also extracting a high proportion of the male population. The poor results in the south of England – the Southampton and Maidstone districts – can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the south had a seafaring tradition, and so naval recruitment was probably extensive in the area, accounting for the small number of recruiting parties deployed per population (this was also probably true in the Durham district). Secondly, most of the 3,576 recruits who joined at regimental headquarters probably enlisted at the many units stationed in the south-east, or migrated to London and then enlisted. Finally, agricultural wages generally increased during the wars,⁶⁵ and

⁶⁴ See Appendix E.

⁶⁵ E. L. Jones, 'The Agricultural Labour Market in England 1793-1872', *The Economic History Review*, XVII (1964-65), pp.323-324.

the south probably experienced the greatest increase because of the demands of London, and the large military presence in the region. The last two factors could account for the results in the Bedford district. The few recruiting parties in Wales were unproductive, resulting in a very small proportion of the male population of the Hereford and Shrewsbury districts joining the army. It may be inferred that the army had given up recruiting in Wales, because it was not worth deploying large numbers of recruiting parties there for such small returns. In Scotland, the highlands stand out in contrast to the pattern in England, but as seen above it required considerable resources to recruit men in this area as the population was dwindling, although the ratio of recruits to population was high the actual number of recruits is small. No conclusions can be drawn about recruitment in Ireland, beyond the fact that it was more successful than the average for the UK.⁶⁶

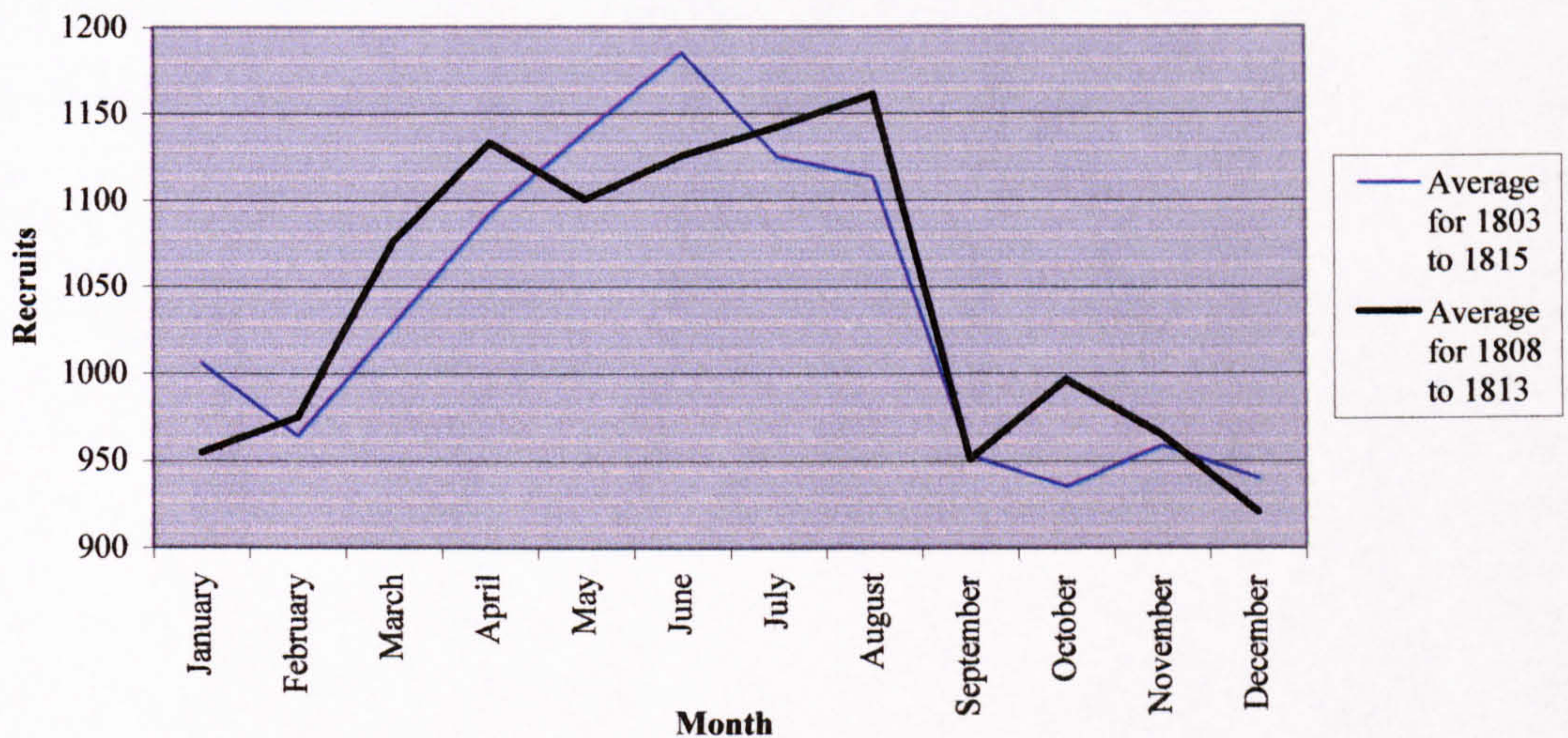
It was generally believed that more recruits were obtained in the winter months, and this suited the army as it gave the army more men before the campaigning season began in spring. In November 1807 the Horse Guards sent out a circular urging parties to increase their efforts as ‘The season is now approaching which generally proves most favourable to the recruiting service,’⁶⁷ but the evidence from monthly recruiting figures does not bear this out; on average more recruits were obtained in the summer.⁶⁸ This suggests that recruiting was concentrated in urban areas where the annual agrarian cycle was less of an influence on employment. It is possible that the rural unemployed, rather than join the army immediately, would move to the towns over winter, and then join the army in the towns, accounting for the number of recruits obtained in the summer. The results in London tend to support this conjecture.

⁶⁶ See Appendix E. The UK raised 1.7 recruits per 1000 males, whilst the ratio in Ireland was 2.1 per 1000.

⁶⁷ WO1/612, Circular from Horse Guards, November 1807.

⁶⁸ See Graph VIII.

Graph VIII: Monthly Average Recruiting Figures



Sources: Sources: WO1/946, Return of recruits raised since 1803, 21 March 1811; WO25/3225, Recruiting return for 1812 and 1813, August 1813; *CJ*, 1814-15, IX, 301, Return of recruits for 1814; *CJ*, 1816, XII, 423, Return

The location of parties could be very important to the success of recruiting. Under the recruiting regulations, recruiting officers had the power to take a party to any 'Fair, Wake or Place of Public resort within 25 miles of their station,' which 'In general, are supposed to hold out the best prospects of success'. Recruiting was thought likely to prosper if parties were sent to the county that the regiment was named after (if it had a county designation), where the regiment was originally raised, or where it was stationed for a length of time. In essence anywhere where the regiment might have established a permanent interest with the local inhabitants. Moreover, if any officers had any particular influence in certain areas, they could go there. It was recommended that the men composing the party should also have similar connections with the area, so as to be well acquainted with the country and general character of the inhabitants 'Whom they should endeavour to conciliate by their conduct, so as to gain their good opinion and confidence'.⁶⁹ Hence, when the depot companies of regiments were ordered into barracks in 1811, they left a party behind 'With a view to preserving the interest which

⁶⁹ WO3/584, Circular to Recruiting Service, 1 December 1810.

it is presumed the Corps has established from its long residence in that place'.⁷⁰ Local connections could radically bolster recruiting. The 14th's successful recruiting (with Calvert as its Colonel) was a result of its connection with Buckinghamshire, managed through the influence of the Marquis of Buckingham (the Lord Lieutenant), and the county gentry.⁷¹

Regimental prestige also helped recruiting, one man walked from Inverness to Edinburgh

With no other intention than to enlist in the 71st. His father had been a soldier in it, and was now living at home, after being discharged. Donald called it 'his' regiment, and would not have taken the bounty from any other.⁷²

It was for this reason that the Duke of York was reluctant to reduce the establishment of corps that were under strength after they had returned from active service. It was penalising them for their professionalism, and the extended establishment meant there would be more spare officers and NCOs to form recruiting parties.⁷³ Accordingly the 3rd and 7th Dragoon Guards and the 4th Dragoons were not reduced in 1811, despite pressure from the government to save money, as they were 'Looked to with that degree of national pride which has hitherto secured their popularity'.⁷⁴ It is clear that regimental identity aided recruiting. 3,579 men were recruited at all the regimental headquarters in the UK between July 1808 and June 1809, testifying to the connections that these regiments had established in their local communities.⁷⁵

Some regiments were very popular and caused particular problems for the Horse Guards. The 27th recruited an average of fifteen men a party per week in 1809, resulting in the recruiting company having an unwieldy 543 men. The Earl of Moira (the Colonel) wanted a fourth battalion so that recruiting could continue as 'Many of these men ... would not enlist in any other Regiment, the Enniskillen being a popular Corps'.

⁷⁰ WO3/585, Circular OC Depot companies, 3 September 1811.

⁷¹ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/1, Calvert to Buckingham, 29 October 1814.

⁷² Constable (ed.), *Memorials of the Late War*, 'Journal of a Soldier', (Edinburgh, 1828), p. 29.

⁷³ WO25/3224, York to Liverpool, 25 December 1811.

⁷⁴ WO25/3224, Torrens to Bunbury, 10 January 1811.

⁷⁵ WO25/3224, Return of men raised at regimental headquarters, 19 October 1809.

The 1st was in a similar situation, but neither were awarded additional battalions.⁷⁶ Other regiments were increased, probably as a reward to those officers who recruited successfully, accounting for many of the formations of second (or third) battalions during the period. The 84th was rewarded with a second battalion in 1808 because otherwise recruiting would have to stop (its establishment being complete), thus ‘Removing that spirit of exertion in the Country where the men have been generally raised, which it would be difficult to revive’. Similar was said of the 11th, 56th and 1st Foot Guards, although in the latter’s case the companies were augmented by fifteen men rather than the addition of another battalion.⁷⁷ Such augmentations preserved the connections that these regiments had in the communities they were recruiting from.

The army needed to foster close connections with the community to overcome the traditional prejudices against the army, and to be able to compete in the labour market. As recruiting was always balanced against the loss of men to the economy, apprentices could not be enlisted. An apprentice had to be bound for seven years to claim this protection, but in Scotland most indentures lasted three years, or four to five occasionally. Naturally petitions from the Scottish manufacturing towns were duly sent in to the government adverting the harmful effects of the army’s stipulation of a seven year term for an apprentice. This rendered all apprenticeships in Scotland void, ‘Which must be highly prejudicial to the manufacturing and trading interest of this part of the Empire’ and the Mutiny Act had to be changed.⁷⁸ Yet the army could lay claim to a man after his apprenticeship had expired: Thomas Charlton was informed that unless his friends could find a substitute for him, the army would claim him after his apprenticeship.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ WO1/640, York to Castlereagh, 16 January 1809; WO6/133, Stewart to Gordon, 28 March 1809.

⁷⁷ For 84th, WO1/637, York to Castlereagh, 6 January 1808; for 11th, WO1/638, York to Castlereagh, 28 June 1808; for 56th, WO1/656, York to Bathurst, 30 September 1813; for 1st Foot Guards, WO1/651, Torrens to Bunbury, 2 June 1812.

⁷⁸ WO1/132, Castlereagh to York, 30 May 1807. WO6/160, Castlereagh to John Lanie, Esq., 1 June 1807; Castlereagh to Lord Provost of Glasgow, 3 June; Castlereagh to Peter Anderson (Inverness) 19 June 1807.

⁷⁹ WO3/43, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Vyse, 18 July 1807.

Besides competition with the labour market, army recruitment also had to contend with recruitment from other quarters. The Duke of York tried to maintain a monopoly of recruitment for the military, and between 1807 and 1815 the government was bombarded with offers from individuals to raise regiments, but stubbornly refused to accept any of them. The offers ranged from a corps of Riflemen to serve in South America,⁸⁰ a company raised in Scotland for service in America,⁸¹ and a more serious offer which Arthur Wellesley (when he was Military Secretary to the Irish Lord Lieutenant) forwarded onto the government offering an Irish fencible legion of two battalions and four cavalry troops.⁸² Using civilians to raise men had been used extensively in the early years of the Revolutionary Wars, and the Duke of York felt it seriously undermined the officer corps, and relinquished the army's control of recruiting. Private contracts to raise men were not under the jurisdiction of the army, as the under Secretary of War replied to the Irish fencible offer:

it is not the intention of HM government to avail themselves of offers of this description, as the raising of such corps would create a competition in the recruiting for the Regular Army, and be attended with many other objections which it is unnecessary to detail.⁸³

Similar words were used in the rejection of other offers.⁸⁴

Through this policy, the army reduced competition in recruiting between 1807 and 1815, with the important exception of the navy. But there were little signs of competition with the senior service as recruits who were seamen were handed over to the navy,⁸⁵ and the army sources do not record any incidents of clashes between the military and the navy. The army faced a difficult decision when it fulfilled its manpower

⁸⁰ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 28-30, Robert Johnson to Wynyard, 6 February 1807.

⁸¹ BL, Bathurst Papers, Loan 57/5, f. 476, Capt. MacDonald (Glengary Fencibles) to Bathurst, 26 June 1812.

⁸² WO1/61, Sir A. Wellesley to Castlereagh, 18 December 1807 & HO50/406, WO to HO, 20 August 1807. Other offers were a regiment from Bristol and Ireland (WO1/1119, I. A. Vesey to Cooke, 19 August 1809); a general-service corps (WO6/120, Cooke to Maj. Parry, 29 April 1807); fencible regiment for Prince Edward Island (WO6/120, Cooke to Townsend, 29 January 1808); an offer from Col. Robinson (WO6/123, Bunbury to Col. Robinson, 31 August 1811); and an offer from Mr. MacDonald (WO6/133, Castlereagh to York, 24 May 1808).

⁸³ WO6/120, Stewart to Sir A. Wellesley, 21 December 1807.

⁸⁴ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 22 November 1809.

⁸⁵ WO3/584, Calvert to Howard, 21 November 1808.

shortfall by militia transfers. The militia's strength would have to be kept up, but the ballot affected recruiting severely. Therefore the army and the government faced a choice, either reinforce the militia by balloting, which besides affecting recruiting was not very popular, or allow the militia to recruit as the army did. The lesser evil of losing the monopoly on recruiting was chosen from 1809, but under strict conditions: the militia bounty was regulated, and the militia could only recruit in their own counties.

Having given up the recruitment monopoly, the supervision of militia recruiting was initially inadequate. Some militia regiments recruited in the more lucrative industrial areas outside their counties under various pretences. The London regiments (the Middlesex and Tower Hamlets militias) were particularly bad in this respect, as the ballot was never used there, and their men were routinely raised by normal recruiting methods in London. In 1808 and 1809 there were reports that the Middlesex Militia was recruiting in Manchester, 'To the prejudice of the Recruiting of the Regular Army', and also in the Marlborough, Leeds and Birmingham districts. The IFO at Leeds confined James Holmes, a private of the West Middlesex Militia, and 'On examining Holmes' pass it appeared very irregular one and he manifested much reluctance in shewing [sic] it to me': it was a pass to look for deserters.⁸⁶ The army gradually improved supervision over militia recruitment, but occasionally the rules were still ignored: complaints came from Coventry, Nottingham and Leicester, where it 'In a great measure account[ed] for the difficulty we have experienced for some time past to obtain recruits'.⁸⁷ The army managed to make an example of the Colonel of the Tower Hamlets Militia, because of his repeated disregard for the regulations on militia recruiting, amongst other misdemeanours, dismissing him from the service, an extremely unusual and drastic act.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ For Manchester, WO1/637, Wynyard to Stewart, 9 March 1808; for Marlborough, WO1/637, Wynyard to Stewart, 15 March; for Leeds, WO1/638, Calvert to Stewart, 23 April 1808; for Birmingham, HO50/411, Gordon to Beckett, 20 May 1809.

⁸⁷ For Coventry, HO50/422, Gosselin (IFO) to AG, 15 October 1811; Nottingham, 2 November; for Leicester, 1 November, incl. Hayhide (Capt. 17th) to Gosselin, 29 October 1811.

⁸⁸ HO50/429, York to Sidmouth, 25 January 1814.

Increasing Recruitment

The easiest and traditional measure to increase recruiting was to augment the bounty. Money was the lubricant of recruiting, and the financial attraction of the bounty was a primary consideration for many in joining the army. In 1808 an infantry recruit received £16.6s as a bounty for unlimited service or £11.11s for short-service, which was increased to £16.14s (short-service) or £23 (unlimited) in 1813,⁸⁹ which undoubtedly aided the improvement in recruiting during the last years of the Peninsular War.⁹⁰ The influence that bounties had on recruiting was demonstrated between 1814 and 1815. Immediately the war had finished in 1814, bounties were reduced to £4 4s for the cavalry and £6 6s for the infantry, and recruiting, which produced 6,081 in the last six months of the war, plummeted to 2,537 for the six months after the war. When men were needed in early 1815, the Horse Guards increased bounties by half, with a commensurate improvement in recruiting.⁹¹ The financial rewards of those involved in recruiting also received attention. The Horse Guards ordered that the final approval of all recruits be forwarded immediately so that the 'bringer' and the party got their rewards quickly.⁹² There were limits to the extent of this policy, as it was recognised that increasing bounties further only encouraged desertion.⁹³

Alongside improving the levy money, the physical standards for recruits were reduced. In 1808 a recruit for the line had to be thirty or under, and at least 5' 5" tall,⁹⁴ but by 1812 the age limit was increased to thirty-five, although men between thirty and thirty-five could only enlist for unlimited service,⁹⁵ and the height restrictions were reduced to 5' 4".⁹⁶ The physical standards set for recruiting almost certainly deprived the army of potential recruits. During nine months in the Nottingham district, 120 men

⁸⁹ WO3/585, Memo by Calvert, 10 February 1813.

⁹⁰ See Graph VI.

⁹¹ WO1/660, York to Bathurst, 22 March 1815; WO6/134, WO to Torrens, 26 March 1815; WO1/660, Bathurst to York, 27 March 1815.

⁹² WO3/585, Circular, by Darling, 4 April 1812.

⁹³ See Chapter 7.

⁹⁴ WO25/3224, Standards of Recruits, 19 October 1809.

⁹⁵ WO3/585, General Order by Calvert, 25 September 1812.

⁹⁶ WO3/585, Memo by Calvert, 10 February 1813.

were rejected out of total of 730, although these rejections could have been for many reasons,⁹⁷ and, in first four months during 1811, 242 recruits were rejected from a total of 4,975.⁹⁸ A captain of the 51st went further, believing that if men between 4' 11" and 5' 2" were taken as riflemen for each battalion, it might furnish 900 men in four months, and maybe 10,000 men in total.⁹⁹ But there were sound reasons behind the maintenance of physical standards. The drill regulations prescribed a specific sized pace, which short men would have had difficulty in attaining during drill, and generally they would have been unable to keep up with their taller comrades. The physical burden of being a soldier on campaign, carrying large amounts of equipment, long marches, etc., also encouraged the army to maintain physical standards.

This did not preclude recruiting short men for specific duties outside normal duties, such as staff or guards.¹⁰⁰ In some cases, ignoring standards was allowed. In 1810, an undersized and over aged man was allowed to transfer from the 4th Garrison Battalion, and some militia volunteers were below the recruiting standards.¹⁰¹ The physical standards were circumvented by the militiamen and limited service men transferring their services, as men raised in such a way had a separate, and lower, physical standard. Because the Royal African Corps and West Indian Rangers were never likely to participate in active campaigns, they were allowed to enlist men as short as 5' 1",¹⁰² and Lt. Col. Halkett was given discretionary powers to enlist 'stout and able bodied highlanders' an inch below the standard.¹⁰³

Nevertheless, physical standards were under severe pressure. The Horse Guards had to remind the recruiting service that physical standards were at a minimum in 1812, as they were still being ignored.¹⁰⁴ Generally, the heavy cavalry and foot guards were

⁹⁷ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff.226-227, Grey to Windham, 30 March 1807.

⁹⁸ WO1/647, Return of Enlistments for the Cavalry and the Line, 1 July 1811.

⁹⁹ WO1/1116, Capt. Roberts (51st) to Windham, 21 January 1807.

¹⁰⁰ WO35/34, Clinton to Calvert, 20 November 1809.

¹⁰¹ WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Leighton, 11 January 1810. See chapter 5 for details of militia volunteers.

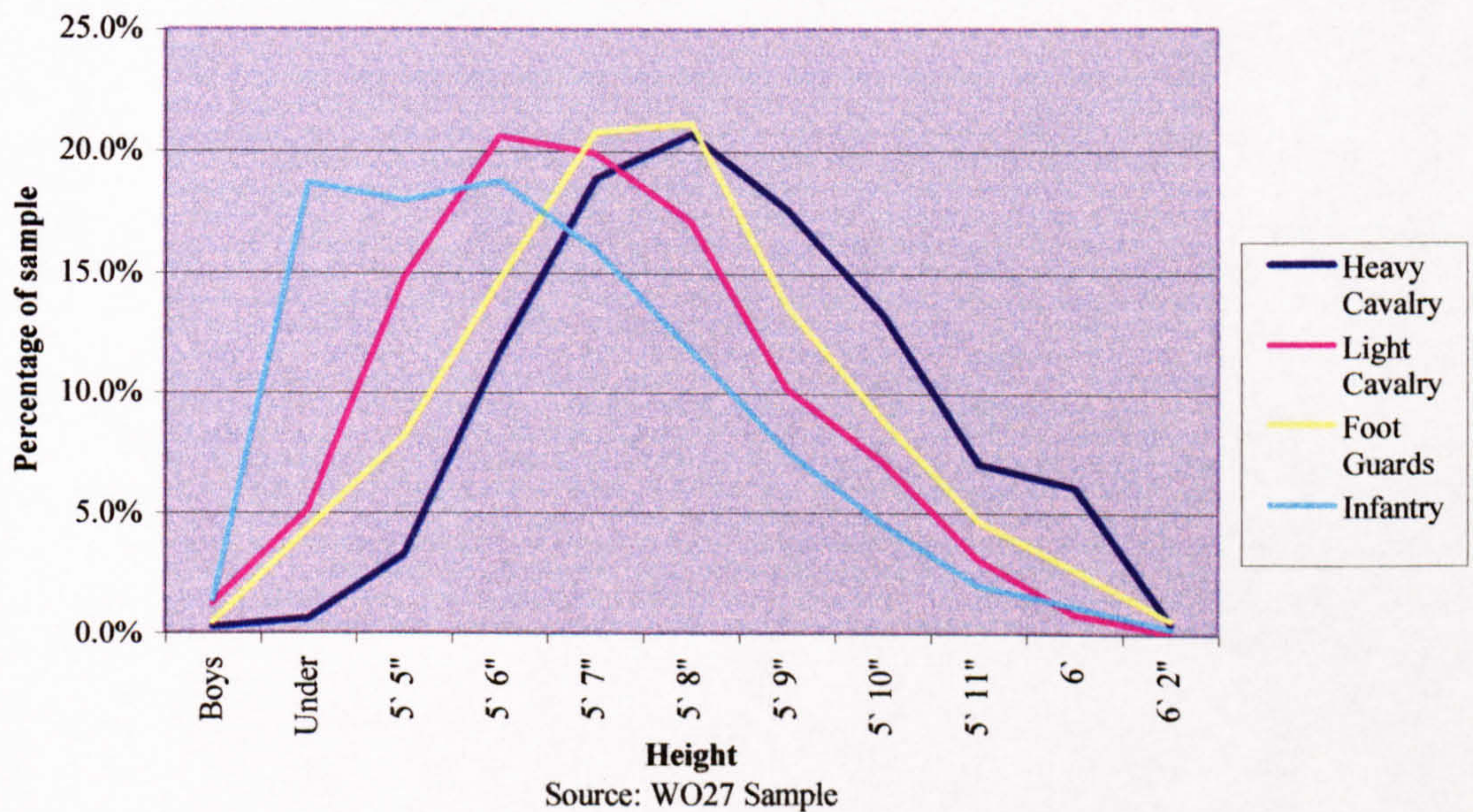
¹⁰² WO3/193, Wynyard to Inspector General of Recruiting, 21 March 1807.

¹⁰³ WO3/192, Wynyard to Inspector General of Recruiting, 24 January 1807.

¹⁰⁴ WO3/585, Circular by Darling, 4 June 1812 and 1 September 1812.

able to maintain the physical standards, whilst the light cavalry and infantry tended to have most of their men at the lower end of the physical standards.¹⁰⁵ The army continued to have a proportion of men undersized in the army, particularly in the line regiments, demonstrating that the physical standards were regularly evaded, despite being as low as the army were prepared to allow.¹⁰⁶

Graph IX: Heights of Soldiers by Type, 1807 to 1815



Governments after 1806 inherited the men balloted under the Army of Reserve and Permanent Additional Force which had raised 53,700 men (38,000 and 15,700 respectively) only for service in the UK.¹⁰⁷ Many of these men had volunteered for overseas service, but those remaining in the garrison battalions provided a pool of potentially trained men for the regulars. In July 1806 a bounty of ten guineas was offered to these men if they extended their services, and, by July 1807, 15,913 had taken the opportunity to join the regulars, leaving only 6,242 still serving on geographically limited terms. A year later, only 4,218 were in the garrison battalions.¹⁰⁸ The 1st and 2nd

¹⁰⁵ See Graph IX.

¹⁰⁶ See Table 1. Boys have been excluded from the calculation.

¹⁰⁷ WO25/3225, Memorandum, (no date, but probably 1808); Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 115, gives the figures as 37,136 and 15,000 respectively.

¹⁰⁸ *CJ*, 1806-07, IV, 332, Circular to Gen. commanding districts, 12 July 1806; 1808, VII, 183, Return of men limited geographically, 10 August 1807; WO25/3225, Memorandum, (no date, but probably 1808).

Table 1: Percentage of Soldiers Under Minimum Height Standard

Year	Heavy Cavalry	Light Cavalry	Foot Guards	Infantry
1807	4.8%	5.3%	N/A	21.1%
1808	5.1%	5.5%	N/A	19.1%
1809	3.8%	2.6%	1.5%	18.1%
1810	2.0%	6.6%	2.7%	17.9%
1811	2.9%	5.5%	1.0%	20.6%
1812	0.3%	1.4%	1.7%	17.6%
1813	6.8%	4.3%	3.5%	13.3%
1814	0.1%	13.0%	0.1%	23.0%
1815	5.0%	1.8%	19.1%	16.7%
Average	3.4%	5.1%	4.2%	18.6%

Source: WO27.

Garrison Battalions were particularly prolific in the number of men who extended their service, which turned the army's attention to the lacklustre performance of the 3rd Garrison Battalion. It was on orders to go to Ireland, and Calvert suggested to the district's general that this would be a good opportunity to encourage men to transfer.¹⁰⁹

At the same time as the limited-service men were being offered a chance to transfer to the line for a bounty, the garrison battalions were starting to be used as hospital corps. This inevitably caused confusion, as some unfit men who were sent to the 2nd Garrison Battalion from the 3rd Foot then volunteered for the 2/90th.¹¹⁰ Some men from the 2/91st were transferred to the 2nd Garrison Battalion because they were limited service men, who then wanted to transfer specifically back to the 2/91st, but were told they could only transfer to the 91st.¹¹¹ Detailed explanations then followed from the Horse Guards over who was entitled to a bounty for transferring their services, although they took some time to implement fully.¹¹² The overall success of the extension of service supports the Duke of York's assertion that 'Great difficulty has always been

¹⁰⁹ WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. England, 10 January 1807.

¹¹⁰ WO3/42, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Sir George Prevost, Bt., 5 January 1807.

¹¹¹ WO3/42, Calvert to Prevost, 19 January 1807.

¹¹² WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. England, 5 February 1807; WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Don, 26 January 1808, and WO3/46, Calvert to Don, 11 November 1808; WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Leighton, 11 January 1810.

made to make a man first engage in a military life, after which he is easily induced to extend his services unlimitedly',¹¹³ but as there were no more soldiers raised under limited service terms, it was a unique policy.

Other units also offered to extend their services, but often as whole units. Inspired by the patriotic stand of the Spanish against Napoleon, some militia regiments offered to serve in the Iberian Peninsula.¹¹⁴ Such offers were rejected, as many offers had conditions attached, and different terms of service inevitably resulted in misunderstandings.¹¹⁵ The offer of the Flintshire and Pembroke militias in 1808 stated that they would only serve with the 2/43rd; the Buckingham Militia's offer in 1811 stated they would not be separated from their officers or their colours.¹¹⁶ To be acceptable, offers to extend services had to fit in with the Horse Guards' policies: when Colonel Imhoff offered to extend the service of the 4th Garrison Battalion in 1811, he thought that it would be more successful if it formed a new regiment, thus preserving its identity. The Horse Guards wanted it as a second battalion, confirming its aversion to the raising of any more new regiments throughout the period. Although the soldiers had a high opinion of Colonel Imhoff, because of his care and attention to their families, the general commanding them was unsure if 'It will have sufficient influence to gain the extension of their services'. His uncertainties were proved correct; only twenty-one privates, four corporals and seven sergeants offered to extend their services from a total of 680 men.¹¹⁷

The greatest experiment in recruiting was Windham's short-service scheme. Its demise was political,¹¹⁸ yet Windham's belief that it was more productive was supported

¹¹³ WO1/634, Memo by York, 15 February 1807.

¹¹⁴ The offers were Flintshire and Pembroke (HO50/409, Pulteney to Hawkesbury, 12 July 1808), Merioneth (1 August 1808), Carnarvon (3 August 1808), Durham (16 August 1808). Royal Buckingham (HO50/420, Torrens to Bunbury, 11 June 1811).

¹¹⁵ This had particularly been the case with highland regiments, see John Prebble, *Mutiny: Highland Regiments in Revolt, 1743-1804*, (London, 1977).

¹¹⁶ HO50/409, Pulteney to Hawkesbury, 12 July 1808; HO50/420, Torrens to Bunbury, 11 June 1811.

¹¹⁷ WO1/650, Torrens to Liverpool, 1 January 1812, incl. Doyle to Torrens, 25 November 1811; Imhoff (Col. 4th Garrison Battalion) to Doyle, 18 December 1811.

¹¹⁸ See Chapter 3.

by some IFOs. In Nottingham, Windham was informed by Lieutenant Colonel Grey that during the nine months in which it had operated there, the area had raised a seventh of total recruits of the country, and Grey attributed this to the removal of ‘ the Dread of a neglected, scoffed and starving old age, or mutilation acquired in the service’.¹¹⁹ But, it was also realised that Windham’s system took time to implement. Initially the new terms of service were not well known, crimps were still used, and it suffered from competition with militia ballots.¹²⁰ Consequently, the results of short-service are impossible to judge fully, especially in view of the 1806 order forcing spare officers to recruit. The reintroduction of unlimited service halfway through 1808 gave soldiers a choice of terms to serve under, and from the data available most recruits chose the higher bounty and unlimited service.¹²¹ Prior to this, from 1806 short-service was compulsory and was reinstated as such for thirty to thirty-five years olds in 1812.¹²² The figures show some stability between the years 1810 and 1813,¹²³ and these men might not have normally joined. Although their numbers, around 173 men a month between 1811 and 1813, may not have been massive, the scheme should not be discounted as a total failure. Between April 1808 and September 1812 (when limited service was made compulsory for men over 35), 13,992 men deliberately chose short-service, and after this until 1815 another 3,600 recruits were enlisted as short-service men.

¹¹⁹ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 226-227, Grey to Windham, 30 March 1807.

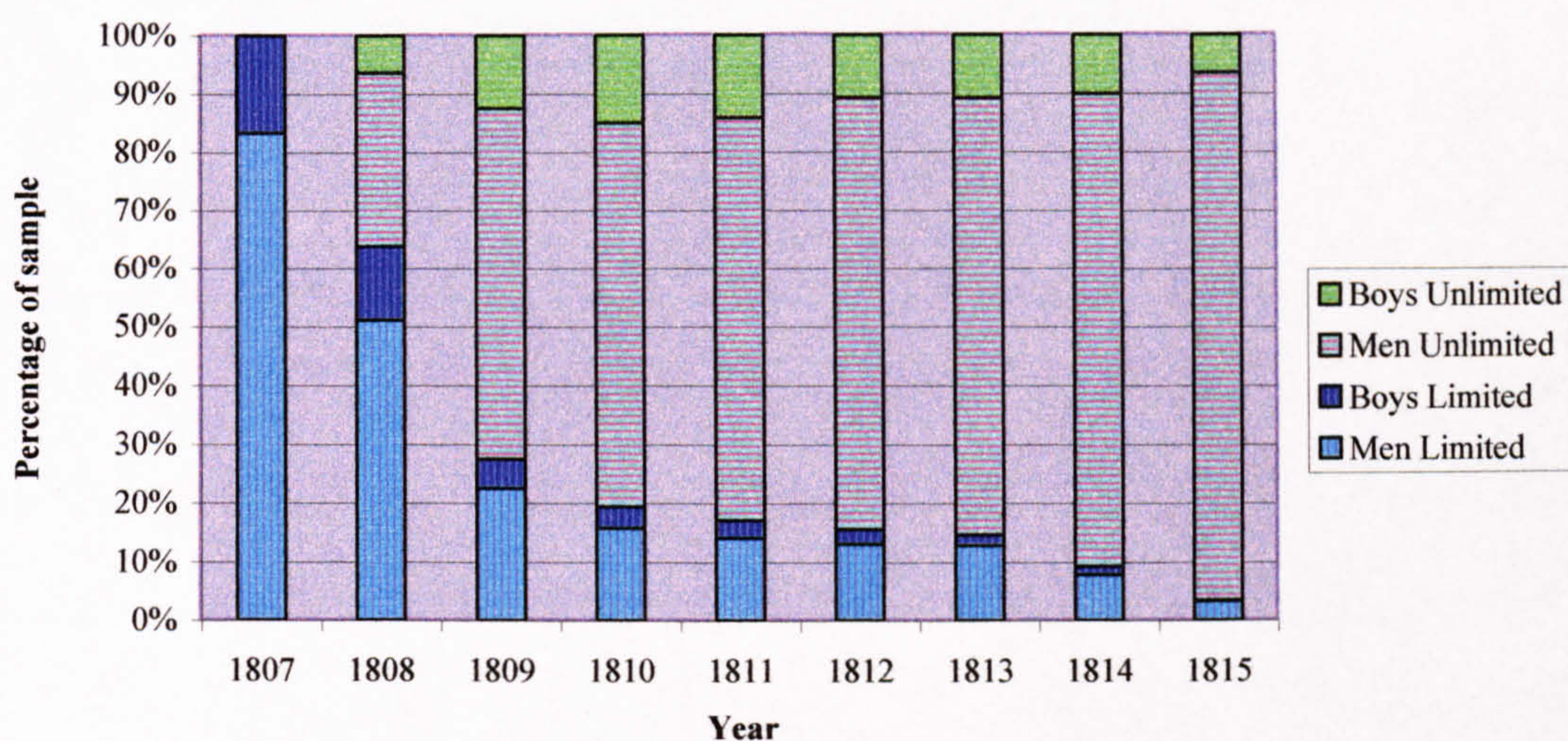
¹²⁰ BL, Windham Papers, Add Mss. 37886, f. 248, Fauvian (half pay officer, 5th Garrison Battalion) to Col. Robinson, 20 April 1807.

¹²¹ See Graph X. Monthly figures are used so that a meaningful comparison between different sets of figures can be obtained.

¹²² WO3/585, General Order by Calvert, 25 September 1812.

¹²³ In 1810 19.4% of recruits chose limited service, in 1811 17.1%, 1812 15.7%, and in 1813 14.8%.

Graph X: Terms of Service of Recruits 1807 to
1815



Sources: WO25/3224, Recruiting return 1807 to 1810, 5 April 1811;
WO25/3225, Recruiting return for 1810-1812, 31 December 1812,
Recruiting return for 1812-1813, August 1813; *CJ*, 1814-15, IX, 309;

As it was recognised that increasing the number of parties was not a particularly effective means of increasing recruiting, successive Secretaries of War looked for ‘some arrangement which will cover the country more generally, which may enable us to draw a supply of men from those parts of it which are less frequented by recruiting parties’.¹²⁴ The aim was to ‘spread the recruiting system over the Kingdom generally’.¹²⁵ The Talents allowed half-pay and volunteer officers to recruit (known as Extra Recruiting Officers), and the Portland government permitted volunteer NCOs to do the same,¹²⁶ but these efforts were generally unsuccessful. By June 1807 there were 449 extra recruiting officers (EROs), yet by December 1807 they had only raised 1,869 men: the results from the 2,081 volunteer NCOs were dire; they merely enlisted 605 men.¹²⁷ From the outset they also caused problems: some EROs complained that they were not given due respect from officers under them, whilst the Horse Guards had to tell another that they would not tolerate EROs interfering with regimental recruiting parties.¹²⁸ Beating orders

¹²⁴ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 2nd Series, 7, 49, Memorandum for Cabinet, March 1807.

¹²⁵ WO40/27, Circular, by Beckett, 23 May 1807.

¹²⁶ WO40/27, Circular, by Beckett, 23 May 1807.

¹²⁷ *CJ*, 1808, VII, 175, Recruits raised, 7 March 1808.

¹²⁸ WO3/583, Whitelocke (Inspector-General) to Col. Loft, Louth, 20 January 1807; Pritzler to Richard Sanders, Colnbrook, 14 April 1807.

were misused, and one ERO was jailed after taking £50 from a man and promising to provide him with two militia substitutes; neither men nor money were forthcoming.¹²⁹ The Horse Guards had no powers to discipline volunteer NCOs, but it was feared that they were 'Introducing the Spirit of Crimping into the Country'.¹³⁰

Although Calvert thought the failure of these efforts was due to 'A want of exertion',¹³¹ its major flaw was financial. From the outset high bounties were expected, and sometimes paid, yet remuneration was not forthcoming, despite a warning that 'Without which the Recruiting Service cannot be carried on with even a chance of a successful result'.¹³² As the EROs worked on their own, they were inconvenienced when they did recruit someone, as they then had to take him to the district head-quarters that could be some distance away.¹³³ Colonel Robinson, the London IFO, summarised the effort: 'We only increase the number of Recruiters and decrease the benefit expected from the Bringing Money; Officers and Gentlemen are entirely dependent on the lower classes for every recruit', and although he, and others, suggested some reforms,¹³⁴ the government began taking back beating orders from those who had not raised any recruits and so the effort slowly died.¹³⁵ Fortunately they were not paid (they received five guineas a recruit), and so the experiment was not too expensive for the government.

The idea of using members of communities who were in local military forces to recruit for the army was invigorated by the establishment of the local militia. It was believed that the local militia would 'become a permanent source of Recruiting our Regular Armies'.¹³⁶ The Duke of York shared this opinion, and in 1811 suggested that adjutants of the local militia be allowed to recruit, which 'If zealously directed, may

¹²⁹ WO1/638, Calvert to Stewart, 9 May 1808.

¹³⁰ WO1/636, Calvert to Stewart, September 1807.

¹³¹ WO1/636, Calvert to Stewart, 6 July 1808.

¹³² WO1/637, Calvert to Cooke, 4 January 1808, incl. John Grey (IFO Nottingham) to AG, 31 December 1812.

¹³³ WO1/1115, H. Kelsey to Windham, 2 January 1807.

¹³⁴ WO1/774, Powle (Lt. Col. 9th Battalion Norfolk Volunteer Infantry) to Hawkesbury, 26 May 1807; WO1/1116, Robinson to Castlereagh, 19 May 1807.

¹³⁵ WO1/639, Calvert to Stewart, 4 June & 6 July 1808; WO1/640, Calvert to Castlereagh, 11 January 1809; WO1/642, Calvert to Liverpool, 7 December 1809; WO3/585, Darling to Cathcart (AG of Scotland) & AG of Ireland, 20 September 1811.

¹³⁶ WO1/1118, William Stewart (Maj. 3rd) to Castlereagh, 15 May 1808.

prove extremely advantageous in obtaining recruits for the army'. As they, and their sergeants, were part of the permanent staff of the local militia, they were already being paid, and had no need for securities.¹³⁷

It was later suggested that the adjutants should recruit for regiments named after their respective county, and also for any of the light regiments or rifle corps, which were gaining considerable reputations from their exploits in the Peninsula.¹³⁸ Hence, the Lincolnshire local militia regiments recruited for the 10th (North Lincoln) and 69th (South Lincolnshire) regiments; the Nottinghamshire local militias the 45th (Nottinghamshire) and 59th (2nd Nottinghamshire). Some counties were also allocated non-county titled corps: the Derbyshire local militias were allocated the 2nd (Queen's Royal) and 4th (King's Own Lancaster).¹³⁹ To encourage enlistments by these methods, ensigncies in the regulars were offered when fifty local militiamen transferred, the colonel of the regiment having the patronage to name an officer to be commissioned.¹⁴⁰ Nevertheless, the attempt faltered because the local militiaman had to pay back the bounty he received for joining the local militia, before he joined the regulars,¹⁴¹ and only a few thousand a year volunteered for the line.¹⁴² It also showed that despite their experience as part-time soldiers, local military forces remained remarkably impervious to attempts to recruit from them.

Extraordinary Sources of Manpower

In wartime the army had always relied on extraordinary sources of manpower: the recruitment of boys, recruits for general-service, the enlistment of convicts, and the use of foreigners. As part of the reduction of physical standards for admission into the army, boys were allowed to enlist. Initially only regiments in the East Indies could

¹³⁷ WO3/585, Darling to IFOs, 30 March 1811.

¹³⁸ WO3/585, Darling to York, 5 November 1811.

¹³⁹ WO3/585, Circular to IFOs, 2 July 1811.

¹⁴⁰ WO1/165, Bunbury to Goulburn, 3 May 1811.

¹⁴¹ WO1/646, Calvert to Bunbury, 25 March 1811.

¹⁴² No precise figures are available, but Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, gives a figure of 2,600 to 4,000 per year between 1809 and 1813. Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, p. 125, gives 2,700 to 3,500 per year, or fifteen men per local militia regiment.

recruit boys, up to ten per company, on the assumption that by the time they reached the India they would be of an age and have sufficient strength to be useful soldiers.¹⁴³ This soon changed, and in 1808 other regiments were added, including regiments that formed part of the disposable force, such as the 95th.¹⁴⁴ EROs were also allowed to recruit one boy in every ten recruits for a bounty of two guineas,¹⁴⁵ and it was suggested that they join garrison battalions first, and then later choose which regiment they wanted to join.¹⁴⁶ The number of regiments permitted to recruit boys increased from nineteen in 1811 to forty-five in 1812, but each regiment could only have fifty boys (i.e. five per company).¹⁴⁷

The recruitment of boys generally benefited the army, as some of them were the children of soldiers anyway or from the Royal Military Asylum,¹⁴⁸ and they were encouraged to attend a regimental school, learning to read and write with the aim of making them future NCOs. In 1807 boy recruits had to be at least fifteen, and 5' 2" tall, and could only enlist for general-service, but with the expansion of the recruitment of minors, the lower age limit was raised to sixteen, but the height restriction was reduced to 5'. The recruitment of boys was not always an advantage to the army. Lieutenant Colonel Grey at Nottingham, always keen to offer his opinion, thought that 'they very frequently disappoint the Expectations of their Growth', and so were discharged.¹⁴⁹ When the Duke of Kent asked for some boys from the veteran and garrison battalions for his regiment, he was told they were to remain in their corps, presumably because they were not fit enough for active duty.¹⁵⁰ 13,796 boys were recruited into the army between 1808 (the first return that differentiates men and boys) and 1815, and up to

¹⁴³ WO3/585, Circular by Calvert, 17 June 1811.

¹⁴⁴ WO40/29, Calvert to Francis Moore, 11 November 1808. The other regiments were the 4th, 34th, 35th, 68th, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 84th, 85th and 94th.

¹⁴⁵ WO3/192, Memorandum for the Military Secretary, 27 January 1807.

¹⁴⁶ WO35/24, Clinton to Calvert, 21 October 1809; WO1/643, Calvert to Liverpool, 22 January 1810.

¹⁴⁷ *CJ*, 1806-07, IV, 175, Recruiting Standards and Bounties; WO3/585, Memo by Calvert, 1 July 1811; Memo by Darling, 28 May 1812; Memo by Calvert, 10 February 1813.

¹⁴⁸ WO3/42, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 4 May 1808.

¹⁴⁹ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 138-139, Grey to Windham, 4 March 1807.

¹⁵⁰ WO3/42, Calvert to Kent, 17 January 1807, Deputy Adjutant General to Kent, 29 January 1807.

1813 this source provided roughly 2,000 recruits per year. But the Commander in Chief was particularly strict on their numbers, reflecting their usefulness to the army. Only in small numbers, and with the aim of becoming NCOs, were boy soldiers permitted.

General-service recruits were a more recent introduction, and were particularly useful to the army, as the army could send them to whatever regiment it felt was necessary. For instance, in 1807, all general-service recruits at the army depot were sent to join the 2nd Foot,¹⁵¹ and in 1810 forty general-service recruits were selected to be NCOs in the 4th Ceylon Regiment.¹⁵² The origins of recruiting for general-service lay in the 1790s, when the East India Company lost its right to recruit, yet needed some means to maintain the strength of its European regiments. Consequently, the physical standards were less demanding.¹⁵³ The regimental system insured that general-service never really achieved any great success, and became synonymous with substandard recruiting. It encroached on the colonel's traditional rights, and often confused potential recruits when the British army was well known for its regimental identity. When Kelsey, an ERO in Berkshire, tried to recruit a man for general-service, the prospective recruit wanted to know what sort of regiment it was.¹⁵⁴ The recruiting district headquarters recruited for general-service, and often men who deserted and were recaptured were allocated to general-service, which allowed the army to send them to regiments in unhealthy stations, such as the Royal African Corps. Most general-service men, however, were given to the East India Company;¹⁵⁵ between 1807 and 1811, 4,619 men were sold to the East India Company at £40 a man.¹⁵⁶ As a measure to increase recruitment, it only fulfilled its original function of recruiting for the East India Company, albeit with the important advantage of preserving the army's recruiting

¹⁵¹ WO3.43, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 25 June 1807.

¹⁵² WO3/198, Calvert to Taylor, 27 April 1810.

¹⁵³ WO3/585, Memorandum by Calvert, 10 February 1813. The minimum height was 5' 3" (compared to 5' 4" for the line), and the recruit had to be under forty (thirty-five for the line).

¹⁵⁴ WO1/1115, H. Kelsey (ERO, Whitchurch near Reading) to Windham, 2 January 1807.

¹⁵⁵ WO25/3224, Memorandum showing the manner in which ordinary recruiting works, 19 October 1809.

¹⁵⁶ WO1/654, Return of men transferred to East India Company, 24 December 1812.

monopoly.

General-service recruits did provide a means for the army to process the convicts, prisoners and especially the deserters that rapidly filled up the prison hulks. General-service allowed the army discretion over where these men were sent, which allowed the army to create penal corps. Transferring these men to such regiments regularly emptied the Dido prison hulk at the Isle of Wight;¹⁵⁷ however, it is difficult to determine how many of these men were felons. In drafts to the Royal York Rangers and the Royal Africa Corps in 1808, seventy-two were civilian felons from 153 prisoners.¹⁵⁸ Between 1808 and the end of 1809, only seven convicts in civilian gaols were specifically offered pardons to serve in the army. Even then, these men still had to undergo a medical examination to see if they were fit enough to serve as soldiers.¹⁵⁹ There is the possibility of less formal arrangements between magistrates and recruiters, and of course some men joined the army because they were in trouble with the law. But as the law had the option of transportation to New South Wales, it seems likely that convicts formed a minuscule component of recruiting.¹⁶⁰

Inevitably penal corps gained an unenviable reputation. The Royal African Corps was particularly bad in this respect: in 1810 there was a 'near mutiny' in the regiment, and fifteen men were hanged. The investigation of the regiment found that 'not one man has ever yet been enlisted for that Corps', whilst the Royal York Rangers and Royal West Indian Rangers had some enlisted general-service men.¹⁶¹ This was the consequence of creating specific penal regiments, but it was better than allowing these

¹⁵⁷ WO3/192, Wynyard to Inspector General of Recruiting, 9 January 1807, transferring the men in the Dido to the Royal West Indian Rangers; WO3/195, Calvert to Taylor, 13 July 1808, transferring sixty-three men to the Royal York Rangers, and twelve to the Royal African Corps.

¹⁵⁸ WO1/638, Return of Pardoned Felons, Deserters, etc, 9 May 1808.

¹⁵⁹ WO3/45, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Lord Southampton, 5 March 1808; WO3.47, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Hon. Jonathan Hope, 17 March 1809; WO3.47, Calvert to Duke of Cambridge, 6 April 1809; WO3/48, Wynyard to Cathcart, 19 August 1809; WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Pigot, 28 September 1809; WO3/49, Calvert to Whetham, 28 September 1808; WO3/49, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Whetham, 11 December 1809.

¹⁶⁰ One of the reasons convicts were recruited into the army during the American War of Independence was the breakdown of the machinery for disposing of felons. S. R. Conway, 'The Recruitment of Criminals into the British Army, 1775-81', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 137 (May 1985), pp. 46-58.

¹⁶¹ WO3/598, Torrens to Bunbury, 26 December 1810.

men to serve in the regular regiments of the army, and ensured that their impact was as minimal as possible. Convicts were not a particularly welcome addition to the army, and even some captured deserters were transported, rather than transferred to penal corps in the army.¹⁶²

The other extraordinary source of manpower for the army was the use of foreigners, and the years 1807 to 1815 saw a massive increase in their numbers, peaking at just over 20% of the army in 1813.¹⁶³ Before the Napoleonic Wars the army had generally hired foreign troops to increase its strength, such as the Hessians in the American War of Independence. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars this ceased to be an option as there were no troops to buy. Consequently dedicated foreign regiments were established. The army already had one such regiment, and although the 60th expanded massively during the wars, with a seventh battalion added from German prisoners of war taken during the Walcheren expedition,¹⁶⁴ the tendency was to expand foreign recruitment into specific unnumbered corps. Originally the 97th had been a foreign corps, but in 1807 it was considered British,¹⁶⁵ and generally foreigners in the line regiments met with disapproval. This did not prevent some line regiments from having foreigners in their ranks, and an average 3.4% of the rank and file of line regiments were foreigners. Most of these men were 'men of colour' serving in regimental bands.¹⁶⁶ Typically, the 1st Foot came to the Horse Guards' attention because of the number of foreigners it had,¹⁶⁷ and the Duke of Kent was specifically told that foreign recruits were not permitted in any line regiment, especially 'a corps so distinguished as the Royal Regiment of Foot'.¹⁶⁸ The 44th also received official disapproval for enlisting foreigners.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶² See Chapter 7.

¹⁶³ See Table 2.

¹⁶⁴ WO6/133, WO to Gordon, 23 April 1809; for the formation of the 7/60th, WO6/134, Bathurst to York, 4 August 1812.

¹⁶⁵ WO3/43, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Grosvenor, 23 April 1807.

¹⁶⁶ CJ, 1812, IX, 203, Return of Foreigners in the Army, 10 April 1812.

¹⁶⁷ WO3/42, Calvert to Bgd. Gen. Dyott, 23 March 1807.

¹⁶⁸ WO3/42, Calvert to Duke of Kent, 8 January 1807.

¹⁶⁹ WO3/46, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Fraser, 22 October 1808.

Table 2: Proportion of Foreign Troops in the British Army

Year	Strength of British Army (Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery)	Total Foreign Troops	Composition of Foreign Contingent		
			KGL	Provincial	Foreign
1804	150,593	17,639 (11.7%)			
1805	161,956	22,375 (13.8%)			
1806	185,119	26,643 (14.4%)			
1807	199,457	35,816 (18.0%)			
1808	226,429	37,217 (16.4%)			
1809	234,176	36,947 (15.8%)			
1810	237,452	38,890 (16.4%)	27.3%	37.1%	35.7%
1811	234,594	40,343 (17.2%)	27.3%	36.9%	35.8%
1812	243,885	45,881 (18.8%)	26.8%	36.0%	37.2%
1813	255,876	52,737 (20.6%)			
1814	219,662	N/A			
1815	194,251	25,826 (13.3%)			

Sources: *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 155; WO25/3224, Effective strength of Foreign and Provincial Corps for 1810 and 1811, 29 November 1811; WO25/3225, Effective strength of Foreign and Provincial Corps, 31 December 1812.

Foreigners were therefore concentrated in unnumbered units.¹⁷⁰ There were distinctive types, ranging from those initially raised as *émigré* corps, such as the Swiss regiments and the Chasseurs Britanniques, and the 'armies in exile', such as the famous King's German Legion and the Brunswick corps. But with no chance of recruitment on the continent after 1808,¹⁷¹ these units increasingly came to rely on deserters and prisoners of war to fill their ranks. In 1808 Baron de Roll wanted any Swiss conscript prisoners to join his regiment,¹⁷² and by 1811, Wellington informed Liverpool that the Brunswick corps was principally composed of French deserters, and suggested sending it to Gibraltar.¹⁷³

The use of foreign deserters and prisoners of war was virtually forced on the government after 1807, when the KGL left Germany for the last time, and it was inevitable that the quality of these units would suffer, and concerns be raised in

¹⁷⁰ R. C. Yapple, 'Foreign and Miscellaneous regiments in the British Army', *JSAHR*, L (1972), pp. 10-28.

¹⁷¹ WO1/668, Moshem to Lukin, 2 September 1808, on the closure of the foreign recruiting depot at Gothenburg. The KGL landed in Germany in 1807, and did not return to Hanover until 1814. For details on the KGL's recruitment problem, Daniel Savage Gray, "Prisoners, Wanderers and Deserters" Recruiting for the King's German Legion 1803-15', *JSAHR*, LIII (1975), pp. 148-58.

¹⁷² WO1/1117, Baron de Roll to Cooke, 25 October 1808.

¹⁷³ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38246, Wellington to Liverpool, 4 January 1811.

Parliament about their loyalty. But manpower was needed, and every deserter recruited from the French represented a loss to Napoleon, and a gain for Britain. Similarly, every prisoner of war that joined a foreign regiment represented one less man that the British army had to guard and the government feed. The York Light Infantry Volunteers were allowed to recruit from prisoners of war (but not French) in 1808;¹⁷⁴ three years later an officer was sent on a mission to Spain to encourage German troops to desert, offering a bounty of \$5 for a private, and \$20 for an officer;¹⁷⁵ and, in 1813, an Italian Legion was formed from 1,000 prisoners of war, but 'on no account to take Neapolitans'.¹⁷⁶

There were limits to foreign recruiting, as the debates in Parliament on the issue showed, and some offers, like the proposals to form new British regiments, were rejected.¹⁷⁷ The army was particularly upset by Sir John Stuart's raising of a Calabrian Levy without any reference to London.¹⁷⁸ It was even proposed to add Portuguese and Spanish companies to regiments in Iberia,¹⁷⁹ but the army was quick to dispel such rumours in 1811.¹⁸⁰

Counted amongst the foreign units were troops raised overseas for local defence (they were counted as foreign because they did not make any demands on the manpower of Britain), and they constituted a substantial amount to the foreign contingent in the army.¹⁸¹ The West India regiments, composed of black soldiers, represented the most successful application of this policy, releasing thousands of troops from the unhealthy garrisons of the West Indies, and the American Fencibles released troops from Canada.

¹⁷⁴ WO3/46, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Hewgill, 15 October 1808.

¹⁷⁵ WO1/413, Merck to Bunbury, 20 July 1811. He obtained four lieutenants, twenty-one sergeants, and 337 corporals and privates. 214 later joined the British army. A similar mission was rejected in 1808, WO6/121, Cooke to Baron Hompesch, 5 August 1808.

¹⁷⁶ WO1/916, Alexander Levy (Transport Office) to Goulburn, 21 October 1813, Maj. Baurenis (60th) to Torrens, 26 December 1813, Torrens to Baurenis, 3 December 1813.

¹⁷⁷ WO1/1117, Baron Eben to War Office, 12 July 1808, offering a foreign rifle corps; WO6/120, Stewart to Mon. de Kruges, 10 March 1808; WO6/122, Bunbury to Bgd. Gen. De Tartaz, 22 February 1811; WO6/124, Bunbury to G. Jones Esq., 14 March 1813 (offering a German Rifle battalion).

¹⁷⁸ WO3/595, Torrens to Bunbury, 8 December 1809.

¹⁷⁹ WO1/647, Memo by York, 13 July 1811; WO1/651, Torrens to Bunbury, 13 June 1812.

¹⁸⁰ WO6/123, Bunbury to Bridges Barret Esq., 20 December 1811.

¹⁸¹ Between 1810 and 1812 the provincial troops contributed 36.7% on average of the total foreign contingent. WO25/3224, Effective strength of Foreign and Provincial Corps for 1810 and 1811, 29 November 1811; WO25/3225, Effective strength of Foreign and Provincial Corps, 31 December 1812.

However, the contribution that troops raised in places that Britain controlled, such as Sicily and the Greek Islands, are more difficult to assess, and were generally regarded as unreliable. Provincial regiments filled local needs for manpower thus releasing the regulars for more active duties, but they were not really considered for anything more. Overall, they demonstrated the expanse of Napoleonic conflict for Britain; in its quest to find more men, it took into its service units ranging from the Maltese Fencibles, the Greek Light Infantry Regiment, and the Bourbon Corps in Mauritius.

Although not strictly a source of manpower for the army, raising men for the militia constituted an increase in Britain's military force, and was the most successful. Between 1807 and 1815 the militia raised 56,873 by ballots and 51,373 by recruiting,¹⁸² dwarfing the contribution from boys, convicts, and foreigners, and nearly equalling the numbers raised by the army. Initially, these men were not openly recruited for the army, but with the annual transfers of 1811 onwards, it was clear that the militia became a separate recruiting establishment. It developed into what the Horse Guards hoped the local militia would become, a means of spreading recruiting across the country without increasing the number of recruiting parties. It also had the advantage of being subject to some compulsion: if militia regiments were not kept up to establishment, then ballots could be ordered to fill their ranks. It proved a very effective means of bolstering Britain's recruiting.

¹⁸² See Table 3.

Table 3: Total Recruits Raised by the Army and the Militia.

Year	Army Recruits	Militia Recruits	Total raised by voluntary enlistment	Militia Ballots	Total
1807	19,114		19,114	41,305	60,419
1808	12,963		12,963		12,963
1809	11,780	9,635	21,415	377	21,792
1810	9,095	11,214	20,309	10,524	30,833
1811	11,772	4,796	16,568	3,994	20,562
1812	14,756	9,564	24,320	417	24,737
1813	14,647	10,705	25,352	253	25,607
1814	7,911	5,428	13,339		13,339
1815	15,237		15,237		15,237
Total	117,275	51,373	168,648	56,873	225,521

Sources: See Graph VI for details of the army's recruiting figures and sources. WO1/904, Memorandum, AG, 10 May 1808; WO162/326, Return of Men raised by the Militia; *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 154, Militia recruits raised by Beat of Drum, May 1809 to October 1813, 1814-15, IX, 323, Militia recruits raised by Beat of Drum, 25 December 1813 to December 1814.

Conclusion

Despite all the efforts of the Horse Guards army recruitment was still insufficient. But great progress was made in improving recruiting during the period. The Horse Guards' reforms essentially 'nationalised' the recruiting service, transferring control of it from the regiment to the state, and was 'well calculated, by the effectual and immediate checks it affords to the officer's charges, to guard the public in a great degree'.¹⁸³ All the usual measures the army adopted in wartime served only to increase recruiting fractionally, and the extraordinary sources of manpower, although generally more productive, could not provide the answer to Britain's manpower problems. All the army's remedies had restrictions and limits, and all had been reached.

Using the militia to fill the casualty gap proved remarkably effective. Their enlistment figures suggest that the army was correct in assuming that more men could be obtained through ordinary recruiting. To manage this it had to give up its monopoly of raising men. The results fully outweighed the risk, and only in 1810 did the army's ordinary recruiting suffer severely. But the army then had to persuade the militiamen to

¹⁸³ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37886, ff. 194-199, Fitzpatrick to Windham, 25 March 1807.

volunteer to the line

Chapter 5: The Militia Volunteers

Introduction

The volunteers from the militia provided the answer to the manpower problems of the British army and enabled Britain to prosecute the war. The 1807 transfer (47 Geo. III c. 55 and 57) allowed the dispatch of a force to support Spain and Portugal, and that of 1809 (49 Geo III c. 4 and 5) repaired the devastated 'disposable force' after the Corunna campaign allowing Britain to support its growing army in the Peninsula and provide a large force to attack Walcheren. Once again, a militia transfer was used to repair a weakened army in 1811 (51 Geo III c. 20), and more importantly established a permanent means of supplying the army in the Peninsula. Finally, in 1814, three combined militia regiments were formed for service in Europe, confirming the militia's new status as an integral part of Britain's military machine.

The number of soldiers provided by the militia was considerable:¹ 94,000 militiamen transferred to the army under the various acts between 1807 and 1814, compared with just over 100,000 men recruited between 1807 and 1814. Without the soldiers from the militia, the war could not have been prosecuted against France. The militia volunteers also had a wider impact on the army; during these seven years militiamen were, at various times, allowed to join the line regiments, Foot Guards, Royal Artillery, Royal Staff Corps, Royal Military Artificers and the Royal Wagon Train.² Only the cavalry did not receive any militiamen, although this was suggested.³ Some militiamen even transferred to the Royal Marines, and the government had to specifically prohibit transfers to the navy.⁴

¹ See Table 4.

² WO1/904, Return of militia transfer, 1 July 1808; HO50/406, Calvert to Beckett, 8 September 1809; HO50/420, Torrens to Goulburn, 24 July 1811; HO50/421, Calvert to Beckett, 2 November 1811; HO50/425, Chapman to Addington, 27 February 1813.

³ WO1/636, Aylett (IFO Ipswich) to AG, 30 December 1807.

⁴ HO51/28, Sidmouth to Col. Douglas (Forfar Militia), 12 February 1813.

Table 4: Militia Transfer Acts and their Yield.

Years	Act	British Militia Volunteers	Irish Militia Volunteers	Total for each Act
1807 to 1808	47 Geo. III, c. 55	18,784		
	47 Geo. III, c. 57		8,353	27,137
1808	48 Geo. III, c. 64		3,378	3,378
1809 to 1810	49 Geo. III, c. 4	15,974		
	49 Geo. III, c. 5		4,879	20,853
1810	49 Geo. III, c. 56		2,914	2,914
1811 to 1814	51 Geo. III, c. 20	21,579		30,294
	51 Geo. III, c. 30		8,715	
1814	54 Geo. III, c. 1	8,285	1,318	9,603
Total		64,622	29,557	94,179

Sources: Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 118 (gives 19,152 from the British Militia in 1807); WO1/904, Volunteers from the Militia, 1 July 1808; WO1/946, Return of Militia Volunteers, 24 May 1810 (which gives 17,612 from the British Militia in 1807 and 1808); WO25/3225, Return of Men volunteered from the Militia, 15 October 1813; *CJ*, 1814-15, IX, 327, Return of Militia volunteers for 1814, 14 March 1815.

This achievement belies the difficulties that the government had in executing these acts. To use the militia in this way the government had to appease the militia interest and entice the militiamen themselves into service in the line. In both cases this required a compromise between the interests of the army and the militia. It was not a simple matter of asking for militiamen and getting them, the militia volunteers highlighted the problems that Britain had with its military establishment, and the limited solutions it could offer.

Quotas and Yield

Each of the transfer acts stipulated the number of militiamen that were allowed to volunteer for the army, and these figures were always considered as a quota that each regiment should fulfil. The 1807 transfer was particularly successful, but those afterwards increasingly struggled to achieve the targets set by government. Only 1,775 men were still due from the militia at the end of the 1807 transfer from a quota of

29,243,⁵ but the 1809 transfer provided 20,853 men, or 73.2% of the quota.⁶ On the 1809 deficiencies, Calvert informed the Home Office that there was 'no probability, at present, of the Militia Regiments which have not yet completed their quota of volunteers to the Regulars, furnishing the Quota required'.⁷ Quota deficiencies were a problem that emerged as soon as militia transfers began. The government expected some deficiencies as both the transfer acts of 1807 and 1809 permitted the militia colonels to refuse any more discharges if they obtained five sixths of their quota within the first thirty-day period nominated for volunteering. If all the volunteers were obtained in this period, and the colonels exercised their rights, 83% of the quota would be fulfilled, which emphasises the success of the 1807 transfer, and mitigates the lower results in 1809.

From an analysis of individual militia regiments, there are patterns in how they responded to the demands for volunteers.⁸ In 1807, the Irish and Scottish Militias had a higher deficiency rate than the total English figures (8.0% and 12.3% compared with 3.1% respectively), and their deficiencies were spread throughout the regiments: over half of the Scottish regiments did not fulfil their quota, whereas a third of the Irish corps did not, and only eight English regiments failed to meet the government's requirements. On closer examination, the Welsh militia regiments also had an average deficiency equal to Irish levels, and a quarter of the regiments failed to meet their quota.⁹

This pattern was repeated in the 1809 transfers and the annual transfers from 1811. In the 1809 transfer, fourteen out of fifteen Scottish Militia regiments did not fulfil their quota, nor did a quarter of the Welsh regiments, and seventeen out of sixty-

⁵ The quotas are calculated from HO51/25, Instructions for militia transfer, 17 August 1807 and WO1/612, Arrangement for the Inspection of Volunteers from the Irish Militia, 23 September 1807.

⁶ See HO51/26, Militia Transfer Instructions, 23 March 1809 for the quotas; for the number of volunteers, HO50/416, Return of Militia Volunteers, Adjutant General's Office, 10 July 1810 & Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 118.

⁷ HO50/416, Calvert to Beckett, 31 July 1810.

⁸ See Appendix F.

⁹ WO1/904, List of Regiments not furnished quota, 25 April and 1 June 1808. It is possible that the some regiments gave the remaining volunteers before the expiration of the act in August 1808, but the total deficiency from the 1 June return is 1,775 men, not substantially different from the final deficiency of 1,432. Also, the regiments still with a deficiency at the end of the volunteering have to be from this list.

four English regiments were deficient. The cumulative effects of the quota deficiencies exaggerated this trend: the British militia had a 32% deficiency in 1812, whilst the Irish militia only filled half of its volunteer quota.¹⁰ In the British Militia, England, Wales and Scotland all saw their level of deficiency increase; Wales continued to be worse than England and Scotland worse than Wales.¹¹ This is particularly significant as Scotland and Ireland's military contributions are usually seen as proportionately larger than that of England and Wales, yet the proportions are reversed for the militia volunteers. This trend of a diminishing yield and the government's inability to rectify it was confirmed in 1811. Although the militia managed 70.8% of its quota in 1811, the proportion fell to 70% in 1812 and to 61.5% by 1813.¹² By 1812 Torrens considered that militia volunteering was not 'an available resource for the augmentation of the line',¹³ and in 1813 the Duke of York informed Earl Bathurst that all the militia volunteers (British and Irish) had fallen short of their target by 9,355 men,¹⁴ over 4,000 men more than in September 1811. Militia volunteering was not producing the men expected, but the fortuitously timed improvement in the war allowed the government to introduce a new way for the militia to serve the country, neatly avoiding the embarrassment of having to continue increasing quotas, despite diminishing returns.

¹⁰ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 119, n. 119.

¹¹ See Table 5.

¹² HO51/28, Militia Volunteer Instructions, 1811; WO3/585, Circular, by Darling, 25 April 1812; WO3/585, Special Instructions on Militia volunteering, 1 March 1813. Unfortunately, no separate returns exist for the Irish annual militia transfers from 1811, but they probably provided the same percentage of volunteers, if not less.

¹³ WO3/604, Torrens to Addington, 28 December 1812.

¹⁴ WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 20 October 1813.

Table 5: Militia Quotas and Deficiencies, 1807 to 1813.

Years	England		Wales		Scotland		Ireland		Total	
	Quota	Deficiency	Quota	Deficiency	Quota	Deficiency	Quota	Deficiency	Quota	Deficiency
1807-1808	15,101	3.1%	1,297	7.4%	4,156	12.3%	8,689	8.0%	29,243	6.1%
1809-1810	16,776	9.7%	1,331	16.1%	3,654	56.2%	6,708	27.3%	28,469	20.1%
1811	7,199	11.7%	653	18.1%	3,192	44.0%	5,096	46.0%	16,140	29.2%
1812	6,477	20.0%	557	32.0%	2,551	63.0%	6,543	51.0%	16,128	38.5%
1813	6,668	25.0%	622	36.0%	2,745	77.0%	7,546	N/A	N/A	N/A
Average		19.7%		29.0%		61.3%		48.5%		34.8%

Sources: HO51/25, Instructions for militia transfer, 17 August 1807; WO1/612, Arrangement for the Inspection of Volunteers from the Irish Militia, 23 September 1807; WO1/904, List of Regiments not furnished quota, 25 April and 1 June 1808; HO51/26, Militia Transfer Instructions, 23 March 1809; HO50/416, Return of Militia Volunteers, 10 July 1810; HO51/28, Militia Volunteer Instructions, 27 April 1811; WO3/585, Circular, by Darling, 25 April 1812; WO3/585, Special Instructions on Militia volunteering, 1 March 1813; HO51/28, Circular, by Sidmouth, 24 March 1814.

The Quota System

Part of the problem of deficient volunteers lay in the workings of the militia transfer acts. The quota for the 1807 was the excess number of men above three fifths of the establishment, meaning that if every regiment were close to its establishment, about 40% of its strength would be expected to volunteer. In the orders executing the act in 1807, Hawkesbury explained the quota in the much simpler terms of two fifths of the establishment, which would have been correct if every regiment were up to strength,¹⁵ but this was not the case. In 1806 the Talents government suspended the militia ballot and so the militia regiments had no means of replacing any casualties suffered.¹⁶ Just before the suspension of the ballot, there was a militia transfer act along with a reduction in the establishment of the militia,¹⁷ so if a regiment did not complete its quota in 1805, in 1807 it was likely to be over its establishment. It also worked the other way. Lord Fortescue informed the government that little could be expected beyond the eighty

¹⁵ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Commanding Officers of Militia Regiments, 17 August 1807.

¹⁶ 46 Geo. III, c. 91.

¹⁷ 45 Geo. III c. 31. The act allowed the excess above the 1802 militia quota to volunteer.

men obtained from the South Devon Militia in 1807, because Fortescue had found a considerable number of volunteers in 1805, and consequently the regiment was much reduced in strength.¹⁸ This resulted in the 1807 transfer taking a varied proportion of each regiment's strength: the average was 38.2%, but the burden fell heaviest on the Scottish Militia which had to provide 44.3% of its men. The highest proportion demanded was 54.9% expected from the Forfar and Kincardine Militia, whilst the lowest was the 2nd Surrey Militia's 13.9%.¹⁹

Colonels Frankland and Lovedon highlighted such inequalities during the debate on the 1809 transfer in the Commons. As the ballot in 1807 had raised men in proportion to the 1802 militia quota, without any reference to their actual strength, a repetition of the variations of 1807 was possible. The bill would actually penalise regiments that were up to strength, whilst it would be easier on a corps that had been negligent in completing its establishment.²⁰ The act did attempt to rectify this by stating that if the regiment's strength was below its establishment then the quota was two fifths of its establishment; if the regiment had more men than its establishment, then the quota was the excess above three fifths of the establishment. This meant that every militia regiment's quota should be at least forty per cent of its strength, but, as in 1807, this did not prevent some regimental quotas from being a larger proportion of their strength.

The 1807 ballot to replace the militiamen who volunteered made the quota system potentially more inequitable in 1809. The intention of the ballot was to add three quarters of the original 1802 militia quota to each regiment (47,642 men), but overall the ballot only raised 32,500 men in Britain.²¹ So, as in 1807, regiments varied in their strength compared to their establishments. Unfortunately, the instructions for the 1809

¹⁸ HO51/26, Lord Fortescue to Hawkesbury, 15 December 1807. In fact his regiment only had to provide 37.7%, compared to the East Devon's 50.5% and the North Devon's 50.3%.

¹⁹ HO51/25, Instructions for militia transfer, 17 August 1807; WO1/612, Arrangement for the Inspection of Volunteers from the Irish Militia, 23 September 1807; WO1/904, List of Regiments which have not furnished quota, 25 April and 1 June 1808. All the figures are calculated from the 1 June 1808 figures, the last available return before the act expired in August 1808.

²⁰ *Hansard*, 1809, XII, 651-652,

²¹ WO1/904, Memorandum, AG, 10 May 1808. Ireland raised 8,805 out of 9,905 ordered.

transfer do not include details of militia regiments' strength, perhaps to avoid militia regiments' determining how their quotas were calculated. Using returns from the 8 March 1809 for the British militia, only a few weeks before the transfer, it appears that the excess of their strength above their new establishments determined only fourteen regiments' quotas.²² Most were simply allocated two fifths of their establishment fixed in 1805, which as all the regiments were augmented in 1807, meant most had to supply under 40% of their strength. Only nine militia regiments were under their 1805 establishments, and because of this had to furnish over two fifths of their numbers.²³ This resulted in a fairer distribution of volunteering, with a similar average to 1807 (37.6% of every regiment). The smallest proportion was the 1st Yorkshire West Riding's 30.1%, which reflected the fact that its large new establishment was incomplete (1,299 rank and file, and 1,128 effectives) compared with its 1805 establishment of 810. The highest proportional quota belonged to the Cardigan Militia, which was due to provide 47.9% of its strength to the line, but it was not even up to its 1805 establishment, and so was effectively being punished for this deficiency.

Despite such clever mathematics, the interaction of the quota, strength of the regiments, and the counties' success in balloting, did not increase the quota of those regiments that had fallen short in 1807. In that year, the East Devon Militia's quota was 324; although it produced only 153 men volunteers for the line, its quota in 1809 was actually reduced to 212. The Carmarthen Militia did suffer for its performance in 1807, and its quota rose from 134 men in 1807 (of which only 66 men were supplied), to 170 in 1809. The complex interaction of strength, establishment and volunteer quotas was sufficiently bewildering for Lord Stanley and Earl Fitzwilliam to check with the

²² WO162/326, Return of the Effective Strength of the British Militia, 15 March 1810; HO51/26, Militia Transfer Instructions, 23 March 1809. They were Denbigh, Flint, 2nd and 3rd Lancashire, Leicestershire, East Middlesex, Nottingham, Aberdeen, Argyll & Bute, Dumfries, Lanark, Perth, and Renfrew Militias. The Buckinghamshire Militia's quota of 289 is above 2/5ths of their 1805 establishment (252), but not equal to the excess above 3/5ths of their 1809 establishment (302).

²³ WO162/326, Return of the Effective Strength of the British Militia, 15 March 1810; HO51/26, Militia Transfer Instructions, 23 March 1809. They were Cardigan, West Kent, West Middlesex, 1st & 2nd Surrey, Sussex, 1st & 2nd Tower Hamlets.

government that their respective quotas were correct, as both of them were so large.²⁴

It was such anomalies that prompted a much clearer statement on what the army expected from each militia regiment in 1811. The 1811 act, based the volunteer quota on the 1802 establishment, which benefited those regiments that were successful in recruiting from 1810 and in providing their volunteer quotas. Regiments that had difficulties in obtaining men found the volunteer quotas an increasing burden. When Lieutenant Colonel Mulberry of the Sussex Militia – a regiment that always furnished its quotas - complained about this, the Home Office replied that the quota was made, as he already knew, with ‘no reference to present numbers’.²⁵

A fixed quota system made the strength of the militia even more critical than before. Although the militia proved adept at recruiting overall, there were huge variations in individual regiment’s success. Between the end of the 1809 act and the end of 1813, each militia regiment should have raised just under its 1802 quota,²⁶ and most regiments raised the men required. Some regiments stand out particularly badly: the Forfar and Kincardine Militia only managed to raise 45.2% of the men required, followed by Cumberland at 53.8% and Aberdeen at 45.2%. Countering these, other regiments were particularly successful at recruiting: the West Kent Militia recruited 1,121 men between May 1809 and October 1813, 150.9% of its recruiting target.²⁷ As a result particular regiments had strict limits placed on the number they could enlist.²⁸ Some regiments in 1813 were warned that they were not maintaining their strength, and were advised to have one party per company, composed of their best men. If the party failed to raise men, Sidmouth suggested recalling it; he also suggested that any militiaman on furlough who recruited a man should have his leave extended.²⁹

²⁴ HO51/26, Liverpool to Lord Stanley, 1 April 1809; an identical letter was sent to Earl Fitzwilliam the same day.

²⁵ HO51/28, Goulburn to Lt. Col. Mulberry, 4 May 1812.

²⁶ Thirteen-fourteenths precisely, one half raised in 1809-10, and a seventh for each year 1811 to 1813

²⁷ WO162/326, Return of Men raised by the Militia, 13 December 1813.

²⁸ HO51/28, Circular, by Ryder, 26 December 1811.

²⁹ HO51/28, Circular, by Sidmouth, 12 January 1813. The regiments were East Middlesex, East and West Kent, Isle of Wight, East and West London, Oxford, Pembroke, Dumfries, Forfar, Lanark, Renfrew, East Suffolk and the Cornish Miners Militias.

Pembroke did not even have a recruiting party in 1813.³⁰ Recruiting by the militia was limited, and was regulated by the regiment's success in volunteering, consequently, although the Forfar and Kincardine Militia's recruiting totals were bad, at the end of 1813 it was well above its establishment because it had not filled its volunteer quotas, and similar can be said for the Aberdeen Militia. However, the Cumberland Militia was in the dire position of having poor recruiting results and not filling its volunteer quotas, and so by the end of 1813 it only had 572 rank and file on an establishment of 645.³¹

The militia volunteer quota was considered a 'charge against the regiment, til the whole number are completely supplied' since 1807,³² and in 1811 this became an open, strictly applied policy: the annual volunteer quota from 1811 was one seventh of the regiment's 1802 militia quota, plus any deficiencies from the previous years, including any men due from the 1809 act.³³ By compounding the deficiencies year on year, some regiments incurred very large quotas as the annual transfers progressed. For instance, out of the Cumberland Militia's establishment of 615 privates, it was expected to supply 255 men in 1811 (eighty-eight men as one seventh of the 1802 militia quota and 167 men deficient from 1809), which rose to 262 in 1812, 335 in 1813, and a quota of 346 in 1814, all due to the compound effect of not meeting its targets each year. By then, the Forfar and Kincardine Militia was expected to furnish 70% of its 1802 establishment, which can be attributed to the regiment's large numbers in 1807,³⁴ and its failure to fulfil its rather unequal share of the militia volunteering. The Pembroke Militia was in the incredible situation of its volunteer quota exceeding its establishment in 1814 (the quota was 127 men, whilst its 1802 quota was 101 privates).

It is difficult to disentangle the combination of the militia's strength, its recruiting yield, and volunteering, and it certainly does not explain the results obtained

³⁰ HO51/28, Bathurst to Col. Phillips, 5 August 1813.

³¹ WO162/326, Return of the Size, Age and Height of the militia, 13 December 1813.

³² Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 73, Heads of Plan for Increasing the Military Force, 12 July 1807.

³³ HO51/27, Circular by Ryder, 27 April 1811; HO51/28, Circular by Sidmouth, 27 January 1813.

³⁴ On the 20 May 1807 it had 864 privates, and an establishment of 647 (WO27/91).

from the militia volunteering. It does not always follow that if a regiment was under strength because of poor recruiting, that it failed to meet its volunteer quotas, nor that poor recruiting was due to its establishment being capped as a result of the failure to meet its draft for the line. The Perth Militia illustrates this point: it met its quota in 1807, but only managed 72% in 1809, met this shortfall and its quota in 1811, but after that slid to only fulfilling 57% in 1813.³⁵ Overall, the Irish Militia proved the most successful in obtaining men, but this did not translate into good volunteering results.³⁶ The root causes behind the militia's responses to volunteering lay with the officers, and the men.

Placating the Militia Interest

Besides parliamentary opposition, any militia transfer required the militia officers' acquiescence to work. In most cases the government could rely on the public spirit of the officers, to execute any law that had the sanction of Parliament, and the government was keen to convey its congratulations to regiments that filled their volunteer quotas quickly.³⁷ Relying on such motives has been demonstrated to be the key to most of the workings of the British state.³⁸ The army also encouraged volunteering by compensating the militia officers, and accommodating their concerns.

Despite the army's and the government's efforts, some militia officers did not accept the terms of the militia transfers, and this was reflected in their regiment's performance. As every volunteer needed the commanding officer's permission to enlist, if the latter did not agree with the militia being used in this way he could cripple the transfer very effectively. When the idea of transfers was suggested to the militia

³⁵ See Appendix F.

³⁶ The Irish militia raised 98.6% of its recruiting quota. WO162/326, Return of Men raised by the Militia, 13 December 1813.

³⁷ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to commanding officers of North Lincoln, West Middlesex, Westminster, 2nd Surrey and Hertford Militias, 4 September 1807 (three days after the transfer began); Hawkesbury to East Middlesex, 1st Surrey, Carnarvon and West Kent Militias, 21 October 1807; HO51/27, Goulburn to Maj. Boatin (North Hampshire Militia), 6 May 1811; HO51/28, Goulburn to Capt. McKell, 12 May 1812, & Goulburn to Lt. Col. White (East Suffolk), 8 May 1812.

³⁸ Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1698-1798*, (Oxford, 1991).

colonels in 1807, some were against the measure and later demonstrated their objections through not fulfilling the quotas set.³⁹ The worst English example was the 1st Yorkshire West Riding Militia, which had nineteen extra regiments added to its list in 1807 in an attempt to entice men to join, in spite of Fitzwilliam's objections. In the 1809 transfer, the 1st West Riding only completed 28% of its quota and there were only four regiments worse than this, all of them Scottish. In the volunteering from 1811 it was consistently bad, made worse by the rolling over of the deficiencies onto next year's quota.

The 2nd Lancashire Militia provided examples of the obstacles commanding officers could create. During the 1807 volunteering, the officer in charge of supervising the parties recruiting from the Lancashire militia was praised for keeping his parties in order, 'Which prevented Lord Stanley from taking advantage of any misconduct which might otherwise have happened on their part.' Yet by refusing to discharge militiamen until the quota had been filled, forty-two men withdrew their offer. He also refused to allow a man to volunteer because he was drunk, improperly dressed, and appeared with a sergeant of the 84th.⁴⁰ After the furore with Lord Stanley, Hawkesbury made an inquiry to the law office about the colonel's right to refuse to discharge militia volunteers. The opinion was that the clause was unclear, but a militiaman was 'entitled to his discharge as soon as he has notified his intention to enlist'.⁴¹ Hawkesbury trusted that Stanley would discharge the men. In the East Devon Militia, the officers were told not to assemble the men and read out the volunteering instruction.⁴² Other militia commanders were not above interpreting the transfer act in their own way. During the 1812 volunteering it was discovered that the Colonel of the Waterford Militia was only allowing men to volunteer into the 88th, which would 'Be attended with the most serious consequences to the public service', and so an explanation was demanded from the

³⁹ WO1/1116, Memo, 5 June 1807.

⁴⁰ HO50/408, extract of Maj. Gen. Thornton to AG, 23 January 1808.

⁴¹ HO51/26, Hawkesbury to Lord Stanley, 8 July 1808.

⁴² HO51/26, Hawkesbury to Maj. Hayes, 22 July 1808.

Marquis of Waterford.⁴³

Conversely, the officers could cajole the men into volunteering, one Irish militiaman recollected the day the volunteer instructions were received:

The militia would be drawn up in line, and the officers of the regiments requiring volunteers would give a glowing description of their several corps, describing the victories they had gained, and the honours they had acquired, and conclude by offering the bounty. If these inducements were not effectual in getting men, coercive methods were adopted. The militia colonel would put on heavy and long drills and field exercises that were so tedious and oppressive that many men would embrace the alternative and volunteer for the regulars.⁴⁴

It was therefore necessary to court the militia officers' influence. In August 1807 Calvert informed Lieutenant General Wenyss that because the current transfer act drew so much from the militia, it was 'necessary that the feelings of the officers in the command of the militia regiments should be consulted as far as circumstances will admit'.⁴⁵ Not only did the army and government need to be mindful of the attitude of the militia officers, they also had to compensate them for loss of their men. It soon became established practice for this patronage to be extended during the transfers by allowing the militia colonels to nominate a proportion of their officers for commissions in the line. This compensated the militia colonels for the loss of investment in the militia that occurred when the regiments had their establishment reduced.⁴⁶ Castlereagh considered such recommendations as compensation for 'their exertions in promoting this levy',⁴⁷ but Torrens considered it 'an evil by which the great and acknowledged advantages of the Volunteering System have been purchased.'⁴⁸

The usual ratio for officer recommendations was one ensign in the line for every fifty men who volunteered, but the army was not above using officer nominations to reward some militia colonels. The North Lincoln Militia received such bonuses in 1807

⁴³ HO50/425, Calvert to Beckett, 21 December 1812.

⁴⁴ Harris, *Recollection of Military Service in 1813, 1814 and 1815*, (London, 1845), pp. 8-9, quoted in McAnally, *The Irish Militia*, p. 290.

⁴⁵ WO3/43, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Wenyss, 29 August 1807.

⁴⁶ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 117.

⁴⁷ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 62, Measures for Improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

⁴⁸ WO3/604, Torrens to Addington, 28 December 1812.

and 1809. In 1807, the commanding officer was informed that he could nominate three officers, although the regiment's quota was only 138 men.⁴⁹ In 1809, the Colonel obtained an extra officer at the suggestion of Beckett, the Under Secretary at the Home Office, as a reward for the speed at which the regiment had completed its quota.⁵⁰ The Earl of Berkeley (Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire) was given a similar reward for the performance of the South Gloucester Militia.⁵¹ When the government asked for the final sixth of the volunteer quotas in 1807,⁵² Beckett reminded Lieutenant Colonel Firth of the North Hampshire Militia that completing the full quota would allow him to recommend another officer.⁵³

To placate the militia interest further the transfers of 1807 and 1809 were accompanied by larger augmentations to the militia, allowing the militia colonels to appoint more officers, and to keep any officers and NCOs above the establishment as supernumeraries, thus preserving the colonel's 'interest'.⁵⁴ In addition, clerks, drummers, and members of bands were not allowed to volunteer to the line without the explicit consent of the colonel, so maintaining any arrangements they may have made to fill these posts.⁵⁵ This inevitably resulted in the army investigating the strength of bands, where it was feared the militia colonels were hiding men above the establishment, and strict orders were sent out to district general officers to stop this practice.⁵⁶

The government was shrewd enough not to reward regiments that did not fulfil their quotas, and used the establishment of regiments to penalise deficient regiments. The militia stalwart Earl Fitzwilliam was informed that the new establishment of the West Riding's regiments was approved on the supposition that 244 men would

⁴⁹ HO51/25, Beckett to Gordon, 10 September 1807.

⁵⁰ HO51/26, Beckett to Gordon, 7 April 1809 & Liverpool to Lord Milsintown, same date.

⁵¹ HO51/26, Liverpool to Earl Berkeley, 11 April 1809, & 11 May 1809.

⁵² The request was sent on 22 March 1808 (HO51/26, Circular, 22 March 1808).

⁵³ HO51/26, Beckett to Lt. Col. Firth, 3 April 1808.

⁵⁴ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38191, f. 24, Castlereagh to Beckett, 20 September 1809; HO51/27, Circular, by Ryder, 17 September 1811.

⁵⁵ 47 Geo. III, sess. 2, c. 57, sec. 11; in 1809 this privilege was extended to armourers and artillerymen, 49 Geo. III c. 4, sec. 12; as a result of this, the number of men who could claim this exemption was fixed at twenty in 1811, 51 Geo. III, c. 20, sec. 12.

⁵⁶ WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Nicholls, December 1809. Calvert was particularly referring to the Royal Buckingham, Warwick and Montgomery Militias.

volunteer for the line; as all three regiments did not furnish their quotas, the regiments were always over establishment, and so Fitzwilliam's arrangements for them were temporary.⁵⁷ Fitzwilliam's request for another regiment was consequently rejected,⁵⁸ but he was allowed to appoint a second lieutenant colonel.⁵⁹ In 1809 he was refused the appointment of a second adjutant for the 3rd West Yorkshire Militia (a crucial position in maintaining the regiment's efficiency),⁶⁰ and in 1811 the Forfar Militia, whose strength considerably exceeded its establishment due to a lack of volunteers, was denied an increase in the regiment to ten companies.⁶¹ These refusals to increase the establishment of a regiment to match its strength resulted in particularly large and unwieldy companies, without sufficient numbers of officers and NCOs, impairing the regiment's efficiency, and a constant reminder of its failure.

The government also addressed practical concerns raised by militia officers, particularly regarding the efficiency of their regiments. Many militia officers took pride in the martial spirit of 'their' regiments, and invested considerable time in obtaining the best staff, and in developing their units' discipline, training and drill. They were thereby maintaining the militia ideal, making the militia as good as the army. Earl Fitzwilliam's 1st West Yorkshire embodied this attitude, and was a model regiment, its men described 'as a body the finest I have ever seen, young tall and active'.⁶² It was also a consistent defaulter in fulfilling its volunteer quotas. Interestingly, in the 2nd West Yorkshire Militia, which did meet the government's demands for men, there was a 'fatal disagreement amongst the officers, and consequent parties form'd which is very detrimental to the general system of the regiment'.⁶³ When the East Devon Militia was inspected, another consistent defaulter whose Colonel (Bastard) had spoken out against

⁵⁷ HO51/26, Hawkesbury to Fitzwilliam, 14 November 1807.

⁵⁸ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Fitzwilliam, 22 October 1807.

⁵⁹ HO51/26, Hawkesbury to Fitzwilliam, 18 January 1808.

⁶⁰ HO51/27, Ryder to Fitzwilliam, 1 July 1810. Lord Aboyne received a similar blunt reply to his request for extra NCOs, HO51/27, Ryder to Lord Aboyne, 13 October 1810.

⁶¹ HO51/27, Ryder to Col. Douglas, 5 October 1811.

⁶² WO27/95, Inspection Report of 1st West Yorkshire Militia, 1 May 1809.

⁶³ WO27/101, Inspection report of 2nd West Yorkshire Militia, 1 October 1810.

the transfers, what struck the general was 'in this battalion, the attachment of the men appear to feel towards it, which must be certainly spring from the care and attention bestowed upon them by those in the government of it'.⁶⁴ The privates of the Forfar and Kincardine Militia were described as 'the finest set of men possibly to be seen',⁶⁵ and although its commander never objected openly to the transfers, he obviously had hard-line militia attitudes. However, the efficiency of the regiment, and the input from the officers, were not the only factors affecting quota fulfilment. The 1st Lancashire was reported to be 'uncommonly steady under arms', and despite the objections of its Colonel, Lord Stanley, the regiment fulfilled its quotas.

Generally, militia officers disliked the disruption caused by transferring men to the line, regardless of their political views on the measure, and the government was keen to emphasise that 'It has been the anxious endeavour of His Majesty's Ministers so to frame this law in all parts as to protect the Discipline of the Militia, and to consult the feelings of that service, as far as appeared to them compatible to rendering the proposed measure effectual to its purpose.'⁶⁶ Consequently, between 1807 to 1811 a system developed for the enrolment of militia volunteers that minimised disruption to both the militia and the regulars.

In 1799 the militia establishment was reduced first, resulting in a large number of men over establishment, and then recruiting parties were sent to tempt men to join the line, resulting in general confusion and disruption.⁶⁷ In that transfer and the 1805 draft, the militia was further disrupted by line regiments sending parties wherever they thought they might be successful. Inevitably this created competition between line regiments, in which all the tricks of recruitment were unleashed on militiamen.

⁶⁴ WO27/95, Inspection report of East Devon Militia, 27 April 1809.

⁶⁵ WO27/95, Inspection report of Forfar and Kincardine Militia, 31 May 1809.

⁶⁶ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to commanding officers of militia, 17 August 1807. Similar was written in the orders for the 1809 Transfer, HO51/26, Circular to commanding officers of militia, 23 March 1809.

⁶⁷ For the West Riding's militia regiments, see Sheffield City Archives, Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments, Y16/59, Fawkes to Fitzwilliam, 29 September 1799; /60, 2 October; /62, 7 October; /73, Major Dixon to Fitzwilliam, 13 November 1799.

From 1807 transfers became more orderly, and the government addressed the particular problem of recruiting parties tampering with the militia. When Castlereagh drew up his proposals for a militia draft in 1807, he suggested that each militia regiment should be allocated specific regiments to which it could send volunteers. This would 'put an end to the struggle between different corps of the line for me at the moment of volunteering, and the expense of sending numerous recruiting parties to a distance, upon the chance of getting men'.⁶⁸ He had experienced such difficulties in the Londonderry Militia, when during the first annual Irish militia transfer in 1806, forty-two parties competed for 150 men. Castlereagh developed his ideas further before the transfer act in 1807, after a suggestion from Colonel Anstruther that 'It would render the Measure of supplying men for the Line more acceptable to the Colonels of the Irish Militia if they were permitted themselves to furnish the required number of men, without the discipline of their regiments interrupted at the period of volunteering by the tampering of the Recruiting Parties with their men.'⁶⁹ These ideas were rejected, however, as it was thought that allocating particular militia regiments to line regiments would benefit the army by targeting weak corps and possibly creating some connections between the two branches of the service.⁷⁰ And so the recruiting parties were sent out to their allocated regiments to collect the volunteers.⁷¹

As the course of the volunteering went on, it was apparent that restricting the choice of regiments that militiamen (and the officers recommended by their colonels) could join was detrimental to the speed of the transfer. After two months the quota was 8,071 deficient;⁷² accordingly, the army asked the militia regiments to suggest the

⁶⁸ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 57, Measure proposed for improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

⁶⁹ WO1/164, Castlereagh to Hawkesbury, 4 April 1807.

⁷⁰ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 56-57, Measure proposed for improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807; WO1/634, Draft letter to York, 7 August 1807.

⁷¹ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to commanding officers of militia, 17 August 1807; WO3/155, Calvert to Moore, 23 September 1807.

⁷² WO1/636, Memo by Calvert, 20 November 1807.

regiments to which their men would like to transfer,⁷³ and canvassed the line regiments for lists of militia regiments where they might be able to obtain men. The commander of the 75th asked to be added to the Berwick Militia's list, as they were quartered together, and the commander had a personal interest in the county.⁷⁴ The men of the Renfrew Militia wanted to join the 94th.⁷⁵ The 43rd thought that it might have some success in the West Riding regiments, as they had done well in the 2nd regiment and had established an interest there, and the 81st had similar hopes in the Cardigan militia.⁷⁶ Typically the Duke of Kent was keen to get the 1st on the list of as many regiments as possible.⁷⁷ Consequently, by early 1808, an extra 440 regimental recruiting parties had been sent out to the militia regiments,⁷⁸ and this logic led to the militiamen from deficient regiments being allowed the privilege of volunteering into the Royal Artillery, Royal Staff Corps, and the Royal Marines.⁷⁹

Yet these enticements were still not enough. The recruiting parties, though designated as mere receiving stations, had still not abandoned their old habits.⁸⁰ The 48th was offering 'some pecuniary inducements' to militiamen,⁸¹ and there were problems between the 1st Lancashire militia and the 11th, which was not on the Lancashire's list. An officer of the 11th was trying to tempt men to join his regiment, offering them drink and suggesting that they wait thirty days before volunteering, after which the 11th might be added to Lancashire's list. On account of this interference, the 11th was banned from

⁷³ For instance, WO3/43, Calvert to Lt. Gen. England, 31 August 1807; WO3/44, Calvert to England, 21 September 1807, & Calvert to Lt. Gen. Vyse, 29 August 1807.

⁷⁴ HO50/407, Calvert to Beckett, 20 November 1807.

⁷⁵ HO51/25, Beckett to Calvert, 19 August 1807; WO3.43, Calvert to Sussex district commander, 20 August 1807.

⁷⁶ WO3/44, Calvert to Gen. Smith (Col. 43rd), 21 September 1807; HO50/407, Calvert to Beckett, 25 November 1807, incl. Procter (Maj. 2/43rd) to AG; Wynyard to Beckett, 18 December 1807, incl. Lt. Kingsbury (81st) to Secretary at War, 12 December 1807.

⁷⁷ WO3/43, Calvert to Kent, 15 August 1807 (asking to be on the 3rd Lancashire's list); in 1809, the 1st was allowed to get volunteers from all deficient militia regiments, before the order allowing them to volunteer to any line regiment, WO3/48, Calvert to Kent, 4 August 1809.

⁷⁸ Compiled from HO50/406 and /407.

⁷⁹ For volunteering into the Royal Marines, HO51/36, Circular to deficient militia regiments, 22 March 1808. For the Royal Artillery, WO3/194, Calvert to Beckett, 2 April 1808 and HO51, Circular to militia regiments, 2 April 1808. The Aberdeen, Carmarthen, East Devon, Dumfries, Forfar, Lanark, 2nd Lancashire, Renfrew, Warwickshire, and 1st West Yorkshire Militias were allowed this volunteer to the Royal Artillery but with a minimum height requirement of 5' 7" and under thirty years of age.

⁸⁰ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Lord Stanley, 21 October 1807.

⁸¹ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/2, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Fitzroy, 18 August 1807.

enlisting men from the 1st Lancashire Militia, and the Commander in Chief apologised to officers of 1st Lancashire Militia,⁸² and asked Lieutenant Colonel Plumber what line regiments he would like to have on the 1st Lancashire's list.⁸³ This incident was not unique; the 11th was also removed from the South and East Devon's lists, by which time Calvert was becoming exasperated with the commanding officer Foster's 'want of information and anxiety to complete his regiment'.⁸⁴ The 11th was then allocated to receive Irish militia volunteers, as their actions had ruined any chance of it being completed from English militia regiments.⁸⁵ By November Lord Stanley was again complaining of interference,⁸⁶ the 83rd was reprimanded for its conduct towards the 3rd Lancashire Militia,⁸⁷ and Lord Montagu was assured that measures had been taken to insure line parties acted within their orders,⁸⁸ all of which resulted in Calvert banning the receiving parties from taking steps 'With a view to engage any Militia Soldier to extend his services in the Line, without the previous concurrence and approbation of his Colonel or commanding officer'.⁸⁹ As the increasing number of recruiting parties compounded these problems, it was decided in 1808 that militiamen could volunteer for any line regiment, except the 60th and 98th to 101st.⁹⁰ By April, the deficiency of volunteers had been reduced to 1,725 from the British militia regiments.⁹¹

The 1809 act did not specify which line regiments individual militia regiments could volunteer to join, but the 1st, 27th, 30th, 48th, 53rd, 60th, 83rd, and 98th to 103rd were

⁸² HO50/406, Calvert to Beckett, 7 September 1807; WO3/44, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Sir George Nugent, 17 September 1807; HO50/406, Calvert to Beckett, 17 September 1807; HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Plumber, 18 September 1807; HO50/407, Gordon to Beckett, 3 October 1807.

⁸³ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Plumber, 8 September 1807.

⁸⁴ HO51/25, Beckett to Lord Rolle, 22 August 1807; WO3/43, Calvert to Lt. Gen. England, 19 August 1807.

⁸⁵ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/2, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Asgill, 29 August 1807.

⁸⁶ HO51/26, Hawkesbury to Lord Stanley, 26 November 1807. Foster's conduct resulted from being told that the 11th would not be augmented unless its numbers increased considerably, R. E. R. Robinson, *The Bloody Eleventh: The History of the Devonshire Regiment, vol. 1, 1685-1815*, (), p. 301.

⁸⁷ WO3/44, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Champagne, 19 September 1807. Lord Rolle also raised objections to another line officer, BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38320, Hawkesbury to Lord Rolle, 7 August 1807.

⁸⁸ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to Lt. Col. Lord Montagu, 12 October 1807. The 1st Somerset held a court martial for a corporal who drank with some militia volunteers, but no details are given if this was a corporal in the line, or militia, WO3/44, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Hugonin, 30 September 1807.

⁸⁹ HO50/407, Circular, by Calvert, 2 October 1807.

⁹⁰ HO51/26, Hawkesbury to deficient regiments, 4 January 1808; HO50/406, Calvert to Beckett, 15 February 1808. It was extended to the Irish Militia in August, HO50/409, Gordon to Jenkinson, 2 August 1808.

⁹¹ WO1/904, List of regiments not yet furnished quota, 25 April 1808.

not allowed to receive volunteers,⁹² and, once line regiments were complete, they were not permitted to receive any more militiamen. Popular corps completed their establishments quickly,⁹³ resulting in the remaining line parties repeating their actions of 1807: militia regiments complained of interference.⁹⁴ Quotas were not being completed, and in July 1809, Calvert again advocated opening up the volunteering to any regiment regardless of whether their establishment was complete, as 'By this arrangement fresh vigour will be given to the volunteering, and it is possible that some additional men may be obtained who have formed a predilection for those corps which were originally excluded'.⁹⁵ His advice was accepted in October,⁹⁶ but not until after they attempted to stimulate volunteering by allowing militiamen to volunteer to the prestigious Foot Guards, the Royal Staff Corps and even the 9th Garrison Battalion,⁹⁷ or letting the deficient militias from the north of England enlist into the 7th.⁹⁸ Opening up the choice of line regiments to the militia inevitably resulted in popular corps receiving large numbers of volunteers, and so ruining the systematic connection between the line and the militia and filling up under-strength line regiments that Castlereagh had wanted to achieve. The 95th received so many volunteers that it formed an additional battalion.⁹⁹

The transfer act of 1811 recognised the importance of giving the men maximum choice and the officers least interference from the line. This was achieved by placing the enlistment of militia volunteers in the hands of the generals commanding the military

⁹² WO3/47, Memorandum, 20 March 1809.

⁹³ The 2nd, 4th, 7th, 13th, 14th, 20th, 24th and 95th were ordered not receive any more volunteers within three weeks of the volunteering commencing, WO3/47, Calvert to Cathcart, 5 and 12 April 1809; HO51/26, Beckett to officers commanding militia corps, 5 April, 1809.

⁹⁴ The Royal Buckingham Militia complained about the 8th, W03/47, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Somerset, 10 April 1809; A general warning was issued in the Sussex district, WO3/47, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Hugonin, 3 April 1809.

⁹⁵ WO1/641, Calvert to Castlereagh, 1 July 1809; HO50/406, Calvert to Beckett, 9 September 1809.

⁹⁶ HO51/26, Circular to commanding officers of militia, 23 March 1809.

⁹⁷ HO50/412, WO to HO, 21 July 1809 & HO51/26, Liverpool to commanding officers of deficient militia regiments, 26 July 1809; the men had to be at least 5' 8" and under 28. For the Royal Staff Corps, HO51/26, Liverpool to commanding officers of deficient militia regiments, 5 April 1809. For the 9th Garrison Battalion, HO51/26, Jenkinson to commanding officers of deficient militia regiments, 9 August 1808.

⁹⁸ HO51/26, Liverpool to Westmoreland, 1st & 3rd West Yorkshire, and North Yorkshire Militia, 17 May 1809. The West Riding's limited service men in 1803 were allocated to the 2/7th. See Appendix C.

⁹⁹ WO1/641, Dundas to Castlereagh, 3 May 1809. The regiment had 1,282 volunteers by that time.

districts, rather than regimental recruiting parties.¹⁰⁰ Initially deficient regiments were also allowed to join the Foot Guards, following the pattern of 1807 and 1809, although after some debate between the government and the army, the army believed that it would interfere with volunteering to the line regiments, and so height and age restrictions were set.¹⁰¹ In the instruction issued from 1811, no officer was to enlist, or persuade a man, without the commanding officer's permission, and 'No parties of the line (were) to interfere, if they do they will be held to account as disobeying orders.'¹⁰² To emphasise the disruptive effect that recruiting parties could have on militia regiments, they were used as a threat: militia regiments that had not fulfilled their quota in 1813 were informed that recruiting parties would have free access to them.¹⁰³

The government also curtailed the impact of volunteering on the militia regiments by reducing the period that volunteering occurred. The army's needs conflicted with the militia's concerns: the army wanted the maximum number of volunteers preferably in one draft, whilst the militia wanted to minimise the disruption to their units. Initially, the army's view prevailed. In the 1807 act, a thirty-day period was allocated for volunteering immediately after the instructions were sent out, during which time if the regiment provided five sixths of its quota, then the draft was considered complete. After the first period of thirty days, a further period of ten days was allocated; thereafter there was no volunteering for at least three months, after which three days were nominated for volunteering, and so on, until the quota was complete, or the act expired.¹⁰⁴

The 1809 act modified this process slightly in the army's favour, by reducing the interval between the initial volunteering period and the second volunteering to one

¹⁰⁰ HO51/27, Circular by Ryder, 27 April 1811.

¹⁰¹ WO6/134, Liverpool to Dundas, 10 April 1811; WO1/646, Dundas to Liverpool, 12 April 1811; WO6/134, Bunbury to Torrens, 17 April 1811; WO1/647, York to Liverpool, 22 July 1811; WO6/134, Liverpool to Torrens, 23 July 1811.

¹⁰² WO3/585, General Orders for officers employed for militia volunteering, 20 April 1811. These were the standard orders for the next three years.

¹⁰³ HO50/428, Circular to militia regiments, by Darling, September 1813.

¹⁰⁴ 47 Geo. III sess. 2, c. 57, sec. 5-7 (British Militia) & 47 Geo. III c. 55, sec. 5-7 (Irish Militia).

month; after that volunteering could only take place at intervals of three months.¹⁰⁵ The 1811 act reversed this trend, and, as with much of the 1811 transfer act, its provisions were drawn from the annual Irish militia transfer. In 1806 two periods of ten days were allowed for volunteering, which were reduced in 1808 to six separate periods of three days between 24 August and 24 February each year, with the government having to give ten days warning before the volunteering period.¹⁰⁶ By the terms of the 1811 act, two days after receiving the order for the beginning of transfer, the regiment was assembled and drawn up, and the terms of the act explained. The names of volunteers were taken immediately, and if the quota was not met, a book was opened in which militiamen wishing to volunteer could enter their names during the next seven days. If further periods of volunteering were needed, the government had to give ten days warning, but the volunteering only had to be fourteen days after the last period.¹⁰⁷

Finally, the militia was reassured by the measures taken to maintain their strength. As seen above, the establishment of the regiment was crucial to the patronage of the colonel, and so the 1807 and 1809 transfer were both accompanied by increases in the size of the militia. In 1809, this measure was made more attractive by allowing the militia regiments to recruit first, before a ballot was held to fill any vacancies. This benefited the militia in two ways. Firstly, recruiting allowed militia regiments and the counties to dispense with the time-consuming and costly ballot. Secondly, the militia received a small amount from government, which could be distributed as the colonels wanted,¹⁰⁸ and the regiment could maintain closer supervision over the standard of recruits. The parishes and the regiments were in conflict as the parishes' overriding concern was finding men, regardless of their physical standards, whilst the militia's emphasis was on finding fit men. Recruiting for the militia, though breaking the army's

¹⁰⁵ 49 Geo. III c.4, sec. 6-8 (British Militia) & 49 Geo. III c. 5, sec. 3-8 (Irish Militia).

¹⁰⁶ 46 Geo. III c.124, sec. 3; 48 Geo. III c. 64, sec. 2.

¹⁰⁷ 51 Geo. III c. 20, sec. 6-8.

¹⁰⁸ HO51/26, Liverpool to commanding officers of militia, 21 June 1809. Each recruiting party received two guineas per recruit.

monopoly of recruitment, did have benefits for the army. The army felt that ballots generally affected army recruitment,¹⁰⁹ and the maintenance of the physical standards of the militia insured that the militiamen were physically eligible to volunteer for the line. The ballot in 1807 resulted in totally unfit men joining the Warwickshire, East Middlesex and East Kent Militias,¹¹⁰ and Wynyard lamented that the balloting system did not 'effectively insure the Ranks of the Militia being filled with men of a proper description for the duty of soldiers'.¹¹¹

Recruiting for the militia had been used extensively in Ireland because in some areas the machinery of local government below the county did not exist, so it was easier for the regiments to find men. Moreover, when the Irish Militia was raised in 1793, widespread rioting had been provoked by fears of balloting.¹¹² The success of maintaining the Irish Militia by voluntary enlistment prompted its introduction into Britain. In 1807 Castlereagh advocated militia recruiting,¹¹³ although he admitted it was 'an innovation upon the strict militia principle,' but by May 1807 he, and the cabinet, had changed their minds and wanted an immediate ballot. Castlereagh relied on the shortness of the ballot not affecting recruiting too severely,¹¹⁴ and thus avoiding any confrontation in Parliament over the issue. It was clear that balloting as a 'militia principle' was firmly held by some Lord Lieutenants and militia colonels. In Ireland, despite the fact that the ballot was optional, some counties, such as County Down, preferred balloting to recruitment.¹¹⁵ However, generally balloting was a discouragement, and the government used the threat of a ballot if the militia did not recruit enough men. During 1807, although Wellesley was not entirely sure how

¹⁰⁹ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/2, Memorandum, 21 November 1807.

¹¹⁰ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/2, Calvert to Beckett, 16 March 1808. Calvert also mentions that 'others' were in a similar situation.

¹¹¹ WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Fitzroy, 30 March 1808.

¹¹² Thomas Bartlett, 'An End to the Moral Economy: The Irish Militia Disturbances of 1793', *Past and Present*, 99 (May 1983), pp. 41-64.

¹¹³ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 59, Measures proposed for Improving the State of the Military Force, 12 May 1807.

¹¹⁴ Vane (ed.), *Castlereagh Correspondence*, 65-66, Memorandum respecting the State of the Military Force, 26 May 1807.

¹¹⁵ McAnnally, *Irish Militia*, p. 222.

successful the recruitment of the militia had been, he agreed that if two thirds of the men ordered to be raised were not complete by 1808, he would order a ballot, despite the fact that it would be unenforceable in Kerry, Tipperary, Limerick, and Waterford.¹¹⁶

The use of recruitment and the threat of a ballot were applied to all of the UK in 1809,¹¹⁷ and became part of the annual transfer in 1811. The militia was also allowed to recruit up to its 1802 establishment plus one seventh of that establishment,¹¹⁸ and some regiments were allowed to recruit boys in keeping with the practice in the regulars.¹¹⁹ Recruiting became part of the package of annual transfers: when annual transfer acts were passed for the Cornish Miners and the Tower Hamlets Militias, they were also allowed to recruit openly. In 1813, the militia was allowed to recruit an extra half of its 1802 quota, and every regiment was allowed to have five boys per company.¹²⁰

The attitude of the militia officers, and their acceptance of the terms offered by the government and the army, influenced the results obtained by their regiments. But the political attitude of the colonel was not the determining factor in the success of the militia transfers. The Colonel of the Yorkshire North Riding Militia was against the plan in 1807, but in 1809 the regiment completed its full quota, admittedly after a slow start.¹²¹ More interesting were the regiments that supported the 1807 plan, yet failed to fulfil their quotas, and to a lesser extent those that offered no opinion on transfers, yet struggled to meet their quotas. These outcomes demonstrate that the attitudes of the men were also important, accounting for the disparate grouping of regiments that were

¹¹⁶ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38242, ff. 131-134, Wellesley to Castlereagh, 9 December 1807. Wellesley also added that Clare, Longford, Roscommon, Sligo and Donegal would probably not be able to have a ballot either.

¹¹⁷ HO51/26, Liverpool to commanding officers of militia, 1 June 1809.

¹¹⁸ HO51/27, Circular, 15 July 1811.

¹¹⁹ HO51/27, Circular, 15 July 1811. The boys had to be fourteen, and only a quarter of the number raised could be boys. The regiments were Anglesey, Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Cheshire, Dorset, Durham, Glamorgan, Hereford, Hertford, Huntingdon, Merioneth, Monmouth, Montgomery, Northampton, Northumberland, Oxford, Radnor, Shropshire, Sussex, Warwickshire, Wiltshire, Worcester, North Yorkshire, East Yorkshire, Fife and Ross.

¹²⁰ HO51/28, Sidmouth, Circular, 8 July 1813. Only the London, Rutland and Isle of Wight Militias were exempt from this.

¹²¹ By the 20 May only 42% had volunteered, two months later no more had volunteered. By August 1809 the regiment had fulfilled 77% of its quota. WO1/904, Return of militia volunteers, 20 May and 21 July 1809 & HO50/416, Return of militia volunteers, 10 July 1810.

always deficient.

Encouraging the men

Whatever the opinions of the officers, the government still had to encourage the militiamen to volunteer. As with recruiting, men were offered a bounty to transfer, but like ordinary recruiting there were physical standards that potential volunteers had to pass. This meant that despite some militiamen's desire to volunteer, they were ineligible because they were too small, or too old. This derived from the fact that there were differing standards for the militia and the regulars: to join the militia a man had to be at least 5' 2" tall, and between eighteen and forty-five; for the regulars the height standard was 5' 4", and under thirty-five. From a sample of the inspection returns of militia in 1807, this did have a variable impact across the militia regiments. On average 15% of militiamen could not volunteer because of their age, whilst another 9% were ineligible because of their height. However, there were considerable variations across the country; the age data had a range of 12% above and below the average, ranging from East Norfolk and the West Middlesex Militias which both had 27% of their regiments ineligible because of their age, down to the Forfar and Ayr Militias 4% each (the Scottish Militia had better figures for ages because only men between eighteen and thirty could join). The height data shows as much variation (a range of 13%), with the East Middlesex Militia the worst at 25%, whilst the Berkshire, Durham and 3rd West Yorkshire Militias had all of their militiamen above the regulars' standard.¹²²

There were no inspections of the militia in 1808, and most of the regiments inspected in 1809 occurred after the militia transfer began, so often exaggerating the proportion of the regiment unfit for the regulars. From 1811, the interaction of militia recruiting, and constant transfers being made to the regulars, make any conclusions on the information in these years unreliable. Only the second half of 1810 was a quiet

¹²² See Appendix G, for details of militia regiments that have been sampled. Henceforth, this source will be referred to as WO27 Sample, Militia Regiments.

period for the militia, and the small sample from that year shows that the percentage of militiamen ineligible to volunteer because of their height had risen to 15% (the range had also widened to 15%), whilst the proportion excluded because of their age had fallen to 12% (the range also falling, down to 5%).¹²³ A complete survey of the militia was made in October 1813, and by then 18.2% of militiamen were too short to volunteer for the line, and 30% were either too old or young.¹²⁴ It is unlikely that these two groups of data were mutually exclusive; there is very little chance that none of the 19% of the East Suffolk Militia who could not volunteer because of their height were not also some of the men who could not volunteer because of their age.¹²⁵ This, however, makes quantifying physical standards as an influence on militia volunteering difficult to assess, and there is no way to extrapolate from the data, as it is only given in separate tables. All that can be said is that the quality of the men joining the militia may have had an impact on that regiment's ability to fulfil its quotas to the line, and perhaps in some regiments as many as a quarter of the men could not volunteer. Also it is clear that the situation got worse between 1807 and 1813, and so contributed to for the worsening results in the period.

Admittedly the army waived the regulations in particular cases. Two volunteers from the Hereford Militia were allowed to volunteer despite one being 5' 3" and the other over thirty-five, because they were good soldiers,¹²⁶ and some lads (i.e. under eighteen) were allowed to transfer from the West Middlesex to the 73rd, if the general inspecting them thought they would become good soldiers.¹²⁷ The army also allowed a reduction in the standards for volunteers for particular units. In 1807, volunteers for the Royal Marines were allowed to be as short as 5' 2",¹²⁸ and, in 1811, regiments that had not completed their quotas were allowed to volunteer men between 5' 2" and 5' 4" for

¹²³ WO27 Sample, Militia Regiments.

¹²⁴ WO162/326, Return of the size and age of the militia, 13 December 1813.

¹²⁵ WO27/91, Inspection return of East Suffolk Militia, 9 May 1807. .

¹²⁶ WO3/44, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Fitzroy, 2 September 1807.

¹²⁷ WO3/47, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Whetham, 17 April 1809.

¹²⁸ HO51/26, Beckett to Col. Cooke, 6 January 1808.

the Royal Wagon Train, addressing the height discrepancy between the militia and the regulars.¹²⁹

Some men used the discrepancy between the militia laws and the recruiting standards. During the 1807 transfer the inspecting officers in Ireland were specifically told if they were not sure of a volunteer's age or height, they were to refer to the regimental books.¹³⁰ In 1809 men under thirty-five and over 5' 4" could transfer, but, by the recruiting regulations, a man had to be less than thirty and over 5' 5". In Scotland, men were actually using this to their advantage, John Hope the IFO at Glasgow, rejected a man as a recruit because he was not up to the standards, only to see him later enlisted into the militia, and transferring to line. For this he also obtained two bounties, and the practice seemed widespread in Scotland.¹³¹ The use of the recruiting districts during volunteering helped to police this practice by ensuring that officers and surgeons, who knew the recruiting standards, inspected recruits.¹³²

The major problem for encouraging the men was the militiaman's family allowance. A militiaman's family received an allowance of 2s 6d for his wife, and 1s for each child, when he was stationed outside the regiment's county, but as soon as the man enlisted into the regulars he lost the entitlement, and it was repeatedly highlighted how injurious this was to militia volunteering.¹³³ The Duke of Kent believed that it would 'Prevent the volunteering more than anything else,' though, in a telling line about the militia officers, he believed that the militia colonels would not confirm this point.¹³⁴ The Duke of Kent's concerns were echoed by Castlereagh in his 1807 memorandum on

¹²⁹ HO51/28, Circular, by Ryder, 9 December 1811; Sidmouth to commanding officers of regiments not furnished quota, 24 September 1812.

¹³⁰ WO1/612, Particular Instructions for the General and Field Officers Appointed to Inspect Volunteers, 23 September 1807.

¹³¹ WO1/641, Calvert to Castlereagh, 15 September 1809, incl. John Hope to Calvert, 4 September 1809; Wynyard to Bunbury, 18 December 1809.

¹³² WO3/47, Memorandum, by Calvert, 20 March 1809. Assistant Adjutant Generals were also sent out to inspect volunteers, at Exeter (for militia regiments in Devon and Cornwall) and Beverley (for units in Yorkshire). WO3/47, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Hugonin, 30 March 1809; Hugonin was allowed to use line surgeons, because he did not have enough staff surgeons.

¹³³ WO1/1116, memo, 5 June 1807; WO25/3224, Bgd. Gen. Clinton to Horse Guards, 2 April 1810; Memo on York's letter of 7 December 1811; WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 31 January & 20 October 1813.

¹³⁴ WO1/634, Gordon to Stewart, 8 August 1807.

militia volunteering. Without a general family allowance, he argued 'The militia regiments will consist of married men who will be deterred from entering the Line.'¹³⁵

Extending the family allowance would not only have increased militia volunteering but it was also humane. Mention has already been made of the Duke of York's ideas on how to improve recruiting. Clinton echoed his views in a comprehensive memorandum. He believed that it would stop wives accompanying men on campaign thus reducing the tonnage required to transport the troops abroad. Families on active service made the situation worse when provisions were short on campaign, which promoted plundering, and left them 'exposed to the miseries of active service'. If wives and children remained at home, they were faced with similar miseries: they had to rely on other family members or the poor rates to support them, while in Scotland and Ireland (where there were no poor rates) many were reduced to begging.¹³⁶ The Duke of York was convinced a family allowance was 'Absolutely necessary to give popularity among the men of the Militia to the service of the Line;' and the improvement for soldier's wives and children would increase the popularity of the army generally by removing the sight of wives begging because their husband had enlisted.¹³⁷

Calvert actually derived a plan for its administration, establishing regimental depots where wives could receive assistance and the boys learn military habits at a regimental school. It would also provide a 'Real and intimate connection to the Regiments with the county of which they bear the name'.¹³⁸ Clinton went as far as to work out the cost after analysing the number of wives and children from a sample of different battalions. From this he estimated that for an army of 50,000 it would cost £85,371. Later estimates for just extending the family allowance to these militiamen who enlisted would cost £8,580 per 1,000 men per annum and £216,112 per annum for

¹³⁵ WO1/1116, Memo, 5 June 1807.

¹³⁶ WO25/3224, Clinton to Horse Guards, 2 April 1810.

¹³⁷ WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 31 January & 20 October 1813.

¹³⁸ WO25/3224, Calvert to Clinton (extract), 8 December 1810.

a general provision for wives and families.¹³⁹

Despite widespread support at the Horse Guards, the proposal was never adopted. A limited extension of the provision to just militiamen who had volunteered would have been unfair, and it would have encouraged men to join the militia first, then volunteer for the army, so reducing ordinary recruiting. A general extension of the family allowance may have been too costly, and, in 1813, the government's suggestion to send militia regiments to Europe neatly avoided the issue. But the influence of the family allowance may explain the reluctance of Irish and Scottish militiamen to volunteer. The family allowance to these men was crucial to their families, whilst the English militiamen could take some comfort from the fact that if his family returned to his parish they would not be destitute.

The men were compensated for the loss of the family allowance by the bounty. Like recruiting, the bounty was intended to be the principal attraction to volunteering. In 1807 the bounties were fourteen guineas for unlimited service, and ten guineas for short-service, for men who were in the militia before the passing of the act. If a man joined the militia after the act, and then volunteered, he would receive ten guineas (unlimited) and six guineas (short-service).¹⁴⁰ These terms were repeated in 1809 and 1811.¹⁴¹ This was an attempt to encourage experienced militiamen to volunteer and stop men joining the militia and immediately volunteering, thus getting two bounties.¹⁴² However, this policy had to be abandoned in the face of mounting shortfalls. In 1812 it was raised to fifteen guineas (unlimited service) and ten guineas (short-service), and the different bounty rates for those who joined the militia after transfer act were scrapped, because men were holding back from volunteering until they could get the full bounty.¹⁴³ Militiamen volunteering were in the curious situation of being treated as

¹³⁹ WO1/946, Memo, (no date, but probably 1810).

¹⁴⁰ HO51/25, Hawkesbury to commanding officers of militia, 17 August 1807.

¹⁴¹ HO51/26, Circular to commanding officers of militia, 23 March 1809; HO51/27, Circular by Ryder, 27 April 1811.

¹⁴² HO50/416, Torrens to Goulburn, 13 August 1810.

¹⁴³ HO50/427, Darling to Addington, 14 October 1813.

normal recruits, as their service in the militia counted for nothing, and it was suggested that their service in the militia be recognised so they would be entitled to higher rates of pay, limiting it to men under thirty and a maximum of seven year's service. The officer who suggested the idea knew of men who had served in the militia for ten or twelve years but probably would not volunteer otherwise.¹⁴⁴

The army also offered distinct inducements for militiamen to volunteer. In 1807, militiamen were allowed to volunteer into the Foot Guards, where they would receive higher rates of pay than in the line, an obvious advantage to any potential volunteer. When some militia regiments were allowed to volunteer into the Royal Staff Corps in the same year, Calvert was keen to highlight the benefits of joining the corps: a sergeant received 2s.7d a day, whilst the privates were divided into three classes, a first class private received 2s.1d, second class 1s.7d and third class 1s.4d. It also gave men with skills a chance to practise them, as only properly qualified carpenters, bricklayers, smiths, stone masons and wheelwrights could join.¹⁴⁵

The culmination of this policy occurred in 1813. Desperate to increase the number of volunteers from the Scottish Militia, the Duke of York proposed that they should be allowed to volunteer for units in Canada because of 'The known inclination of the Scotch Population to emigrate to America will probably overcome the repugnance which has hitherto been manifested by the militia of that country to volunteer their services to the Line'.¹⁴⁶ Although the Home Office objected to these special terms, the needs of the army were more important,¹⁴⁷ and so when the annual volunteering for 1813 began in May, all the Scottish militias, except the Ayr Militia, were allowed to volunteer to the 49th. The volunteers were only to serve in north America, and six months after peace, they would be discharged and receive a grant of land - fifty acres

¹⁴⁴ WO1/946, An officer to Beckett, n.d., probably 1811.

¹⁴⁵ WO3/43, Calvert to commanding officer Kent district, 19 August 1807.

¹⁴⁶ HO50/427, York to Sidmouth, 2 May 1813. A second battalion for the 49th would be established.

¹⁴⁷ HO51/28, Addington to Goulburn, 22 March 1813.

for a private, sixty for a corporal, and seventy-five for a sergeant. As a further incentive their wives and children were shipped to Quebec, and they received subsistence for a year after they had been discharged, but when they volunteered they only received half the normal bounty.¹⁴⁸

The army and the government also faced problems between the men and the militia itself. The counties sometimes hampered militia volunteering. In 1807 some volunteers' accounts from the Durham Militia could not be settled as they had had stoppages for knapsacks from their pay, but had not actually received them.¹⁴⁹ To expedite the 1809 transfers, the district recruiting staffs, who were well versed in the intricacies of military finance, dealt with the accounts of the militiamen volunteering.¹⁵⁰ In 1811, some men in the Cardigan Militia could not volunteer because they had not received all their enlistment money, and their accounts had to be settled before they could get a discharge. It happened again the following year.¹⁵¹ Such problems, coupled with administrative faults, such as not indicating where the militia volunteer got his bounty from,¹⁵² militia regiments being on the march during the volunteering periods,¹⁵³ or being unable to release their volunteers because they were guarding prisoners of war,¹⁵⁴ can further account for the failure of some regiments to provide the requisite volunteers.

To facilitate volunteering, the government mixed incentive with punishment. It was felt that the stationing of a militia regiment near to its home county lessened the chance of men volunteering, a fact apparently exemplified by the Irish and Scottish Militias. The Devon Militias, along with all the other factors that influenced its performance, were stationed in Devon during 1807 and 1809.¹⁵⁵ The army also found

¹⁴⁸ HO51/28, Circular, by Sidmouth, 14 May 1813; Sidmouth to Scottish militia regiments, 15 June 1813.

¹⁴⁹ WO3/44, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Earl Chatham, 10 December 1807.

¹⁵⁰ WO3.47, Memorandum, 20 March 1809.

¹⁵¹ HO50/419, Lt. Gen. Nicholls to Torrens, 2 May 1811; HO50/424, Calvert to Beckett, 1 July 1812.

¹⁵² WO1/774, Earl Temple to Hawkesbury, 19 August 1807; HO50/419, Merry to Goulburn, 2 May 1811.

¹⁵³ HO50/425, Darling to Addington, 19 March & 14 May 1813.

¹⁵⁴ HO50/406, York to Hawkesbury, 20 August 1807.

¹⁵⁵ WO27/91, Inspection returns of East, North and South Devon Militias, 12 March, 15 & 16 April 1807, & /95, 27 April, 4 & 24 May 1809. .

that the Irish Militia regiments provided more volunteers if they were stationed away from their counties, but when they were close to home, they recruited better.¹⁵⁶ Another benefit of the militia interchange act, was that it was hoped that moving Irish Militia regiments to Britain would improve their volunteering, and that more would come from the Scottish regiments if they were stationed outside Scotland.¹⁵⁷ Ties to home may also explain the results from the Tower Hamlets Militia, as they could only serve in London.¹⁵⁸ An anonymous letter to the War Office suggested that the deficient regiments should be stationed as far away as possible from their counties, and put on prison duty, whilst 'Those who readily furnish their quota go to their county for a time'.¹⁵⁹

There were a multitude of other events and influences that could affect volunteering. In 1807 the volunteering period in Scotland was extended because of the late harvest.¹⁶⁰ In the same year a ship was wrecked off Dublin, which was carrying 300 Irish militia volunteers and their families from the South Mayo and South Cork Militias to their new units; their bodies were washed up on the beaches around Dublin, a grim reminder of the risks of joining the line.¹⁶¹ Some regiments in the south west of England during 1809 had the misfortune to catch typhus from the army returning from Corunna, an occurrence that was hardly likely to encourage militiamen to join these regiments.¹⁶²

Conclusion

The significance of the militia's contribution to Britain's military effort is apparent, but the contribution of different parts of the United Kingdom appears to contradict the trends in ordinary recruiting. England and Wales proved most compliant,

¹⁵⁶ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38242, ff. 131-134, Wellesley to Castlereagh, 9 December 1807.

¹⁵⁷ WO25/3224, Memo on York's letter of 7 December 1811.

¹⁵⁸ HO51/28, Sidmouth to Earl Moira, 12 March 1813. The Tower Hamlets Militia was 'in a very inefficient state because of its limited service'.

¹⁵⁹ HO50/420, Merry to Goulburn, 11 June 1811, incl. extract of anonymous letter, 20 May 1811.

¹⁶⁰ BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38191, f. 21, Castlereagh to Beckett, 20 September 1807. The thirty days volunteering period were counted from the 15 September, not the 1st as in England.

¹⁶¹ McAnnally, *Irish Militia*, pp. 27-28.

¹⁶² WO27/95, Inspection return of 1st West Yorkshire Militia, 1 May 1809; North Devon Militia, 4 May 1809; North Hampshire Militia, 6 April 1809; 1st Lancashire, 3 May 1809.

whilst Scotland and Ireland provided a smaller share of volunteers. In exploring the deficiencies in the militia volunteer quota, and the possible reasons for them, it is apparent that there is not one single explanation for them. There were a multitude of reasons which coalesced in particular units at particular times, but, in essence, they reflected the loose contractual nature of the relationship between the army, government and the militia, which epitomised the eighteenth century state. The militia was essentially in the strongest position as they had what the army wanted – trained men. Despite widespread support (as it is easy to overemphasise the problems, rather than the successes), or at least compliance to the government's terms, the transfer system did not address the requirements of the men. The growing deficiencies by 1813 may simply derive from the fact that the militia was increasingly filled with men who had already decided that they did not want to volunteer, and certainly some of them would have had plenty of opportunity to do so before then. This appears to be particularly the case in the Scottish Militia. It did not have a high turnover in manpower because men refused to volunteer, and so no new men could be recruited in to the regiment. Testifying to the strong collective identity that many regiments had are the offers to serve in Spain in 1808, and to serve in Europe in 1814. It may also be significant that the Scottish and Irish regiments were more 'clannish' than English regiments, binding officers and men together in a pact the government was unable to penetrate. This shows that although many militiamen may have objected to the means of enlistment, they were soldiers, and they did not object to the ends of military service.

Chapter 6: Rank and File - the Social Composition
of the Army

Introduction

Only a few historical works have touched upon the subject of the common soldier during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Western's PhD thesis on army recruitment between 1793 and 1799, makes a passing mention of the types of men recruited,¹ but this was written before modern computing made powerful databases and analysis with the reach of the historian. Sylvia Frey's *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, devotes a chapter to the social composition of the rank and file in the American War of Independence,² and Cookson's *British Armed Nation*, has made use of the large amount of statistical data on nationality, age, and service in the army, contained in the regimental inspection reports conducted during the Napoleonic Wars.³ However, these only provide grouped data (for instance they give the number of men between 18 and 20), and as each table is distinct, making no reference to each other, they do not provide detailed information about soldiers. For further information on the 'average' soldier, this chapter has sampled some regimental books, which give a soldier's place of birth, age, place of enlistment, and any other details the regiment thought worthy to keep (usually his physical appearance). The chapter also uses some of the biographies of soldiers written after the Peninsular War, some of which are famous and easily obtained, but others are rare, and a few are still manuscripts. Finally, regimental histories have been utilised, where they contain any details relating to the men that filled their ranks during the Napoleonic Wars.

¹ Western, 'The Recruitment of the Land Forces', PhD, pp. 220-222.

² Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America*, Ch. 1.

³ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 126.

Sources and Sampling

The different sources utilised in this chapter have peculiar restrictions that require preliminary explanation. The inspection returns provide a broad picture of the state of a corps, each return giving the nationality of the men, their ages, their time in the army, their heights, and their terms of service left. A procedure was inaugurated in 1798 that created a regular system for inspecting troops: printed forms were used so that all data was standardised, and comments on the regiment were made under specific headings. This meant that inspection reports were transformed from personal letters between the inspecting general officer and the Horse Guards into a useful tool for the army, and the historian.⁴ Inspections were supposed to take place every six months, in the spring and autumn, thus allowing the Adjutant General to ascertain the state of a regiment before the campaign season, and after any service. But these orders were not strictly adhered to, especially by the units involved in the protracted campaign in the Peninsula.

As every unit was not inspected each year, entering all the data from the inspection returns would be unrepresentative, and so a sample has been used. Ideally, a sample would mirror the different types and locations of units, making the sample representative. However, given the unevenness of inspections, this is difficult to achieve, and so it is necessary to note where and how the sample differs significantly from the army as a whole. Firstly, the unnumbered and foreign corps have been ignored, as this sample seeks to examine the units which recruited in the UK and those that could receive militia volunteers.⁵ The exceptions to this are the 60th and the Royal West Indian Rangers, as they formed a large part of the West Indies garrison and have been selected to provide a view of troops in the colonies. The first selection in the numbered regiments that can be easily be made is by the type of units. Basically there were six

⁴ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, pp. 54-56.

⁵ See Appendix G for details of the WO27 Sample. For referencing purposes, these sources will be cited as the WO27 Sample

distinct forces in the British army: the household cavalry, foot guards regiments, the heavy cavalry units, the light cavalry, infantry and light infantry. The cavalry (household, heavy and light) formed 13% of the army (not including artillery and militia), but they were inspected more often and so are over represented in most years. Only in 1812 and 1815 do the proportions in the sample match those in the army.⁶

Table 6: Percentage of Cavalry and Infantry in the WO27 Sample

	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815
Cavalry	21%	20%	20%	20%	17%	14%	20%	19%	13%
Infantry	79%	80%	80%	80%	83%	86%	80%	81%	87%
Total Sample	24,415	27,008	26,168	20,042	22,182	22,334	17,386	13,402	16,787

Source: WO27 Sample.

The number of mounted regiments stabilised after 1801 at three household regiments, twelve heavy cavalry regiments and nineteen light cavalry regiments. The Royal Horse Guards had an undefined status during this period, being somewhere between household troops and the army, but for the purpose of the sample they have been counted as household cavalry, as their recruitment policy was outside the jurisdiction of the Commander in Chief. If the size of a cavalry regiment was roughly equal regardless of type, then approximately one in ten of the regiments should be household cavalry, four out of ten heavy cavalry, and the remaining half light cavalry.⁷ Although the individual establishments and strength of the units varied, on average the proportion between cavalry types remained consistent. In April 1810, 1,779 troopers were in household cavalry regiments, 6,937 in heavy cavalry regiments, and the light cavalry regiments totalled 12,579 men; although by November 1811, the totals had changed to 1,716, 8,620, and 13,361 respectively, overall the proportion between the types had not changed significantly.⁸

⁶ See Table 6.

⁷ The exact proportions are 3/34ths (9%) for the household, 12/34ths (35%) for the heavy and 19/34ths (56%) for the light cavalry regiments.

⁸ WO25/3224, Return of the British Army, 25 April 1810, Return of the British Army, 29 November 1811. The two regiments of Life Guards were not included in these returns, and a figure of 600 men each has been used. The proportions in 1810 are 8.4% Household Cavalry, 32.6% heavy cavalry and 59.1% light cavalry; in 1811 the figures are 7.2%, 36.4% and 56.4% respectively.

To be a representative sample of the cavalry, the proportion between the different regiments should not vary significantly from the average. However, in common with all the King's personal troops, the household cavalry was inspected very infrequently (the two regiments of Life Guards never sent inspections reports according to the regulations), and so they have been sampled when returns are available, regardless of proportion. Generally, the sample is limited by the inspections that were made, and the returns that survived or are complete. Consequently, the cavalry sample is not representative of the British army's cavalry arm in each year, but is spread over the period between 1807 and 1815.⁹

Table 7: The Proportions of Cavalry in the WO27 Sample.

	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	Average
Household Cavalry	12%	0%	11%	0%	0%	0%	12%	0%	0%	4.6%
Heavy Cavalry	39%	43%	48%	37%	41%	25%	24%	34%	42%	38.2%
Light Cavalry	49%	57%	41%	63%	59%	75%	64%	66%	58%	57.2%
Total Cavalry Sampled	5,206	5,508	5,275	4,036	3,852	3,131	3,554	2,490	2,151	

Source: WO27 Sample.

Similar problems are encountered in the selection of the infantry. There were minor changes in the proportions between foot guards, infantry and light infantry in 1808 and 1809 caused by the conversion of the 51st, 68th, 71st, 85th regiments to light infantry, and the establishment of a third battalion for the 95th. These augmentations increased the light infantry corps by six battalions (the 71st had two battalions), but nonetheless seven line regiments had additional battalions raised,¹⁰ and overall the line regiments still formed the overwhelming majority of the infantry. Including the converted regiments as light infantry, which they were throughout most of the period in question, there were seven battalions of foot guards (4%), 169 line battalions (89%), and thirteen light battalions (7%) out of 189 battalions. The variations in strength were considerably more diverse than in the cavalry, with battalions ranging from 400 to 1,200

⁹ See Table 7.

¹⁰ See Appendix C.

rank and file, but because the strength of the line regiments predominated, the proportions of the different infantry types did not vary much. Two detailed returns, one in April 1810 and another dated November 1811, show that the strength of the line regiments remained at 87.8% of the infantry, the foot guards increased from 4.7% to 5.2%, whilst the light infantry dropped from 7.5% to 7%.¹¹ As with the household cavalry, the foot guards were not inspected frequently or even according to the regulations, and so they have been sampled when details are available, skewing figures for individual years. The light infantry are slightly over represented but as these units often provided a large part of the disposable force, they have been deliberately over sampled.¹²

Table 8: Proportions of Infantry in the WO27 Sample

	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	Average
Foot Guards	0%	0%	6%	4%	6%	4%	8%	9%	7%	5.0%
Infantry	86%	87%	85%	91%	84%	87%	79%	84%	93%	86.2%
Light Infantry	14%	13%	9%	5%	9%	9%	14%	7%	0%	8.9%
Total Infantry Sampled	19,209	21,500	20,893	16,006	18,330	19,203	13,832	10,912	14,636	

Source: WO27 Sample.

Furthermore, the different stations of the regiments can affect the reliability of the sample. For instance, if there are a large number of troops sampled from the home garrison, it is likely that these units would have large numbers of men unfit for service; they would either be young recruits or older men, which would affect both the ages and length of service data. Conversely, the troops active abroad would consist of the fittest men in the army, and would not be representative of the army as a whole. Accordingly the location of the regiments sampled needs to be known, and, for simplicity, these locations have been organised into the strategic roles already used earlier (home, active

¹¹ WO25/3224, Return of the Force on Foreign Stations, 25 April 1810, Return of the British Army, 29 November 1811. The detailed figures are 6,212 foot guards in April 1810, 116,545 line infantry, and 9,955 light infantry; in November 1811 the amounts were 6,904, 116,677, and 9,237 respectively.

¹² See Table 8.

abroad, Mediterranean, West Indies, North America, Africa and East Indies). Invariably it was the troops at home that were reviewed regularly, and so these units form the bulk of the survey. In 1812 and 1813 units in the Peninsula were inspected, and so they have been deliberately targeted as they were not inspected in other years. The large percentage of the sample serving in North America in 1815 reflects the transfer of many of the Peninsular units to that theatre during the war with the USA, unfortunately no survey was made of the Waterloo regiments.

The strength of the army at overseas stations varied, making average figures for troops abroad difficult to calculate. For instance, in 1807 there were hardly any active service abroad locations; apart from the small number of troops in South America, the only other active force was the corps sent to Stralsund and Copenhagen in late 1807, whilst the inspections were made in the spring. In effect, the active part of the army was at home that year. 1811 was a fairly typical year, and 26% of the army was deployed at home, 26% active overseas in the Peninsula, 16% in the Mediterranean, 3% in Africa, 11% in the West Indies, 4% in North America, and 14% in the East Indies.¹³ Comparing these actual figures to the sample, overall the colonial army is underrepresented.¹⁴

Table 9: Location of Regiments in WO27 Sample

Location	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	Average
Home	55%	68%	71%	48%	47%	34%	26%	30%	13%	47%
Active Abroad	0%	0%	0%	13%	4%	39%	56%	20%	6%	13%
Mediterranean	19%	0%	7%	7%	12%	13%	0%	13%	7%	9%
Africa	12%	6%	3%	4%	5%	4%	0%	15%	0%	5%
West Indies	8%	12%	0%	13%	6%	8%	5%	8%	7%	7%
North America	6%	7%	4%	5%	3%	0%	3%	0%	39%	7%
East Indies	0%	7%	14%	11%	24%	4%	10%	14%	28%	12%

Source: WO27 Sample.

Comment is also necessary on the accuracy of the data in the inspection returns. It is not clear whether soldiers were asked details and counted on the day of the

¹³ WO25/3224, Return of the British Army, 29 November 1811.

¹⁴ See Table 9.

inspection, or if the tables were compiled from regimental books. Either way, there are likely to be inaccuracies in these returns: for instance, soldiers may have lied about their age when they enlisted, and so had to continue this pretence, and clerical errors were likely in an era when everything was hand written and calculations were based on mental arithmetic. Moreover, the definitions of the categories used are not specified anywhere, and so it is difficult to know, for example, how Henry Kinkman, a Sergeant Major of the 1st Dragoons, would have been categorised, when he had German parents, but was born in England, and spent the Revolutionary Wars in the Austrian army as an *aide-de-camp* to General Melas in Italy.¹⁵

The regimental books and surviving attestations provide far more detail than the inspection returns, and allow a closer examination of the place of birth of soldiers, and their occupations before enlisting. As with the inspection returns, the details in them are not always clear; in particular, it is not apparent if the ages given in these books refer to when the book was begun, or the soldier's age at his enlistment. The sample from these books includes the 3rd Foot Guards, 20th Light Dragoons, 2/6th, third and fourth battalions of the 1st, and 2/32nd. In addition there are some entries in the books of the 8th and 2/34th Foot which relate to the period, but they are untypical as the men entered are boys who enlisted in the Napoleonic Wars and survived until the books were created in 1830s. Alongside these, some attestations (giving the same information as the regimental books) from the 7th Light Dragoons have been utilised.¹⁶

Finally there are the printed and manuscript biographies of soldiers and the regimental histories that need to be considered. Although these were written for an audience, and so may have embellishments to make the works less factual, their omissions are even more significant. Soldiers rarely describe their background, or what

¹⁵ HO50/405, Henry Kinkman to AG Scotland, 4 April 1807.

¹⁶ Scots Guards: WO67/1; 20th Light Dragoons: WO25/285 & /287; 3/1st: WO25/314; 4/1st: WO25/316; 2/6th: WO25/329; 8th: WO67/7; 2/32nd: WO25/368; 2/34th: WO67/14; 7th Light Dragoons: NAM, 6806-43-32. The sample comprises 1176 men.

led them to enlist, and instead quickly pass over their initial experiences in the army, and launch into battle descriptions.¹⁷ A few were written for religious instruction – after all, what better tale of a sinner saved is there than a soldier who returns to Christianity – which colours the details of particular soldiers.¹⁸ The regimental histories are similar in this respect, briefly alluding to the mundane aspects of where the regiment recruited, and what type of men were enlisted, whilst giving precedence to the glories of successful campaigns and battles.

Nationalities and Regional Distribution

The national composition of the army has been thought not to mirror the composition of the UK. Contemporary opinion asserted that the army had an overlarge proportion of Scots and Irish during the Napoleonic Wars, and one of distinctions of the post-Waterloo army was the size of the Celtic component, particularly the number of Scots in the army compared with Scotland's inhabitants. This was a change from the pre-1793 army, which was principally Anglo-Scottish, and reflected the massive recruitment in Ireland and Scotland, especially during the Revolutionary Wars.¹⁹

Unfortunately, the printed inspection returns do not make a separate entry for Wales - it is treated as England – and so only a comparison between England, Scotland and Ireland can be made. There was always a small proportion of foreigners in the army as a whole, from the total sample of 160,524 men, only 4,631 were foreigners (3%). The 2/60th has been sampled in 1810, 1812 and 1814, and subtracting these men, only 1,459 soldiers were foreigners in the other line regiments. From the units sampled in the period from 1807 to 1815, the outcome differs from the traditional perception of the

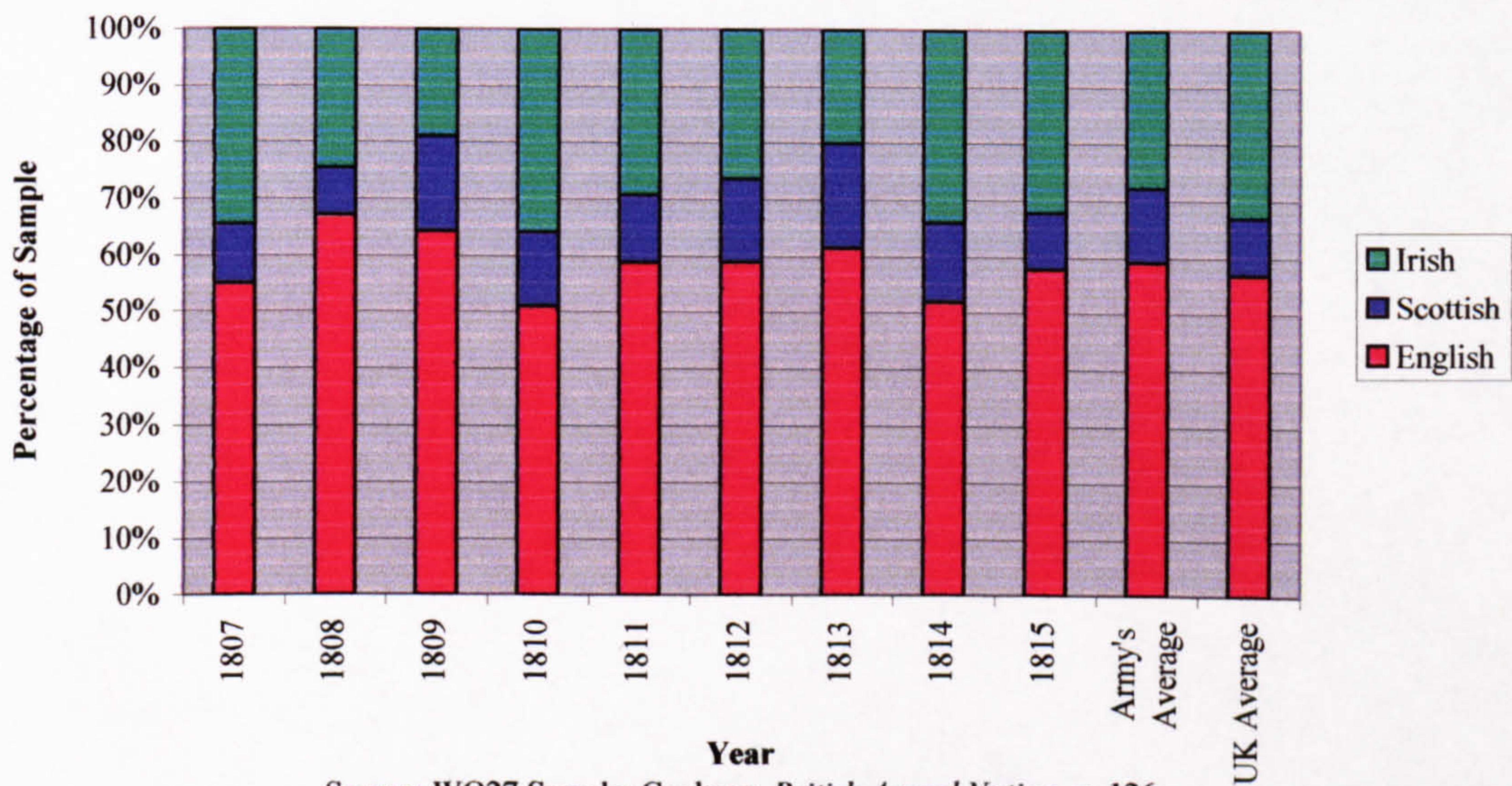
¹⁷ For example *Vicissitudes in the Life of a Scottish Soldier, written by himself*, (London, 1828), *Narrative of a Private Soldier in one of His Majesty's Regiments of Foot, written by himself*, (Glasgow, 1819), and D. Robertson, *Journal of Sergeant D. Robertson, late 92nd Highlanders, during the campaigns between 1797 and 1818*, (Perth, 1842).

¹⁸ For instance, *The Veteran Soldier: An Interesting Narrative of the Life and Religious Experience of the Late Sergeant Greenleigh*, (London, 1822) & *Memoirs of a Sergeant late in the Forty-Third Light Infantry Regiment, Previously to and During the Peninsular War, including an Account of his conversion from Popery to the Protestant Religion*, (London, 1835).

¹⁹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 126-128, & 153-155.

national composition of the army.²⁰ The striking point is the similarity between the UK population and the national composition of the army; Scotland is slightly over represented, on average it made up 13% of the army, but 10% of the UK, whilst the Irish contingent is less than its proportion of the population (25% of the army compared with 33% of the UK). It is difficult to explain this contradiction of contemporary opinion, but one consideration is that the inspections made in Ireland, and sent to the Irish Adjutant General, no longer exist. However, Ireland's garrison was not exclusively composed of Irish troops; in fact, it was government policy to reduce the proportion of Irish soldiers in Ireland.²¹

Graph XI: Nationalities in the British Army



Source: WO27 Sample; Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 126 (for the UK's national composition).

Another explanation is provided by the regiments sampled. The four specific Irish regiments, the 18th, 27th, 87th and 88th, spent most of their time outside the home garrison, and so they were not inspected often. For instance, the 27th had two battalions in Sicily, where inspections were almost non-existent, and its third battalion was in Ireland. Only when the 3/27th moved to Canada in 1815 does an inspection return exist

²⁰ See Graph XI.

²¹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, pp. 153-155.

for the regiment, and similarly, the 18th and 88th have only been sampled twice. But just because a regiment had an Irish title did not necessarily imply that it was Irish.

It may be possible that the nationalities in the army came to mirror the UK through government policy. The militia transfers took a large number of men from English and Scottish Militia regiments, and in the years when there were no transfers from the British Militia (1810, 1814 and 1815), there was a higher proportion of Irish troops in the army. In these years the army's strength was maintained by ordinary recruiting, which traditionally focused on Ireland, and moreover, in 1810, Irish militiamen were allowed to volunteer under the terms of the 1806 Act. Significantly, the militia transfers were not as successful from the Irish and Scottish Militias, and so the drafts they provided to the line were not equal to their populations. In 1809, 69% of the militiamen who volunteered were English, whilst only 8% were Scottish and 23% were Irish. Although the Scottish Militia rallied in 1811 and provided 15% of the volunteers, Ireland still under performed, providing only 24% of the intake that year. In effect, the militia transfers were counterbalancing the army's traditionally heavy recruitment in Ireland and Scotland. The balancing effect of the militia volunteers may also explain the nationality patterns in the post-Waterloo period. A large number of militia volunteers, especially Englishmen, chose limited service, and when these men were discharged first in 1814 and 1815, the army was left with ordinary recruits and militiamen who had chosen unlimited service, and in both categories the Irish and Scottish predominated.

Turning to individual units in the army, nationalities were not evenly distributed. It is generally assumed that under the pressure to fill the ranks, regiments would send out recruiting parties to wherever they thought they could get men, so rendering their regimental titles as virtually meaningless. In some cases this is valid;²² the 4/1st, hungry for men to fill the ranks of its three sister battalions overseas, went from overwhelmingly Scottish in 1807, to predominately Irish in 1812, although the battalion

²² See Appendix H.

was always a mixture of all three nationalities.²³ The only possible justifications for the its title change to the Royal Scots in 1812 were that its third and fourth battalions were raised in 1804 from limited service men raised in Scotland, and the stationing of the fourth battalion in Scotland during 1807, 1808, and 1811 to 1813.²⁴ The 2/31st almost replicates the populations of the UK, in 1807, 60% of its men were from England, 7% from Scotland and 32% from Ireland. However, from the regiments sampled only the 1/25th in 1808 has a similar composition.

These regiments do seem to be untypical, and most regiments were more stable in their national composition, generally composed of two nationalities. Anglo-Irish regiments included the 13th Light Dragoons, the 8th Foot, the 2/47th and the 1/61st.²⁵ There were other combinations, the 1/26th in 1811 and 1814 was Scotch-Irish, whilst the 2/81st was Anglo-Scottish.²⁶ It is clear that there were also national regiments especially in the cavalry corps. Out of the fifteen regiments of heavy cavalry (including the household cavalry), only two - the 6th and 7th Dragoon Guards - have a mixture of men in their ranks, with no single nationality above 70% of their men. The 4th and 5th Dragoon Guards were Irish, and although the 2nd Dragoons have not been sampled, it is safe to assume that their troopers reflected its unofficial title of the Scots Greys. The rest of the heavy cavalry were overwhelmingly English.

The light cavalry regiments also show delineated nationalism. As mentioned above the 13th Light Dragoons was Anglo-Irish, and the 8th Light Dragoons can be categorised as Irish-English, but overall there is the same pattern as the heavy cavalry, with English regiments dominating, if anything, even more. Such exclusiveness may have bordered on discrimination. Mr. Bennett questioned Colonel Palmer in the

²³ In 1807 the percentages by nationality in the battalion were 17% English, 72% Scottish, 7% Irish and 4% Foreign; in 1809 22% were English, 41% Scottish, 36% Irish and 2% Foreign; in 1810 34% English, 27% Scottish, 38% Irish; by 1812 the figures were 34% English, 19% Scottish, 45% Irish and 1% Foreign.

²⁴ WO380/1.

²⁵ See Appendix H.

²⁶ 1/26th was 56% Scottish and 36% Irish in 1811, and had only changed to 60% and 32% respectively by 1814; the 2/81st had 62% English in 1811, and 37% Scottish.

Commons as to why Irishmen were not allowed to enlist in the 10th Hussars, whilst foreigners were, to which Colonel Palmer replied simply 'because Irishmen desert'.²⁷ From the data on the cavalry regiments, the cavalry could maintain its ranks without having to send recruiting parties throughout the UK.

Examining the infantry, if a threshold of seventy per cent is used (i.e. any regiment with over seventy per cent of one nationality), the foot guards are English, including the Scots Guards in 1807 as are some line regiments, namely the 6th (which in 1807 was British), the 20th, the 23rd, 2/34th and 36th, which was in keeping with their titles. More importantly some Scottish- and Irish-titled regiments were composed of these nationalities, namely the 42nd, 78th, 79th, 91st, and 92nd for Scotland, 18th, 27th, 87th, 88th and 101st for Ireland. As with the light cavalry, such exclusiveness could be discriminatory: it was with some satisfaction that Lieutenant Colonel Burrard of the 1st Foot Guards informed the Duke of York that out of 480 recruits for the regiment, only seventeen were Irish.²⁸

In some cases the national identity of regiments was actually promoted, usually by the militia transfers. The 2/4th ranks' had a slight preponderance of Irishmen in 1807 and 1808 (50% in 1807 and 42% in 1808), but afterwards was predominately filled with Englishmen, a result of the 1807 militia transfer, when the 4th was initially allocated volunteers from four English and Welsh Militia regiments (the Derbyshire, Monmouth and Brecon, and 1st and 2nd West Riding regiments). During the 1809 transfer it received 734 men from the British Militia.²⁹ Furthermore, the 97th was transformed from a foreign regiment into a British unit by the militia transfers.³⁰

It appears unusual for the militia to promote the nationality of a regiment in this way. Initially the 1807 Act had set up national connections, with all Scottish militiamen

²⁷ *Hansard*, 1812-1813, XXI, 1812, 1249.

²⁸ WO1/651, Lt. Col. Burrard to York, 1 June 1812.

²⁹ WO1/904, Return of Militia Volunteers, 20 May 1809

³⁰ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 1811, 188.

going to Scottish regiments (which were the 1st, 21st, 42nd, 71st to 75th, 78th, 79th, and 90th to 94th).³¹ Of the Irish line regiments, the 18th was to receive militiamen from the South Mayo and Waterford Militias, the 27th from Fermanagh, Kildare and Longford Militias, the 87th Galway's and Tipperary's men, and the 88th Galway, Leitrim, both Mayo regiments, Roscommon, Sligo and Waterford Militias. A detailed return of the destination of Irish Militia recruits during the 1807 act shows that the army had to balance preserving, or creating national regiments, against the needs of regiments about to embark on foreign service. The four Irish line regiments received 1,009 men, but by November 1807, when restrictions were still in force on the choice of regiments for militia volunteers, the 13th was allocated six Irish militia regiments, and received 396 men from these units, the most given to any regiment by the Irish Militia. The 13th embarked for the West Indies in 1808, and it is clear that the Horse Guards wanted as many men as possible in its ranks before it departed. Overall, this return shows that even in 1807, most militiamen were not preserving national regiments, 83% of the Irish volunteers obtained by the winter of 1807 went to non-Irish line regiments, 5% even went to highland corps.³²

Allowing militia volunteers complete freedom of choice as to which line regiment they would volunteer for, made preserving national identities harder, and less under the control of the Horse Guards. Eighty-seven regiments received volunteers from the British Militia in 1809 with an average draft of 161 men. The Irish volunteers were more concentrated, although fifty-eight line regiments received volunteers from Ireland and the average draft was only thirty-three men, 80% of Irish militia volunteers went to eighteen regiments. Although predictably the 88th received a draft of 240 Irish militiamen, vastly outnumbering the seventeen volunteers from British Militia regiments, the 59th obtained 202 British militiamen and 159 Irishmen, the second

³¹ HO51/25, Militia volunteering orders, 17 August 1807.

³² WO1/612, Return of Irish Militia Volunteers, 17 November 1807.

highest draft from the Irish militia, and the 74th only got seven men from the British Militia (so they might not even have been Scottish, let alone highlanders) but seventy-three Irish volunteers.³³ A return from the first volunteering period in 1811 shows similar, if not worse results: 2,813 British volunteers chose eighty-two different regiments, and ignoring the large draft to the three Foot Guards regiments (357 men),³⁴ each of the seventy-nine line regiments received on average thirty-one British militiamen. The Irish Militia regiments were spread even thinner across thirty-nine regiments, with an average of only eight men per regiment.³⁵

Detailed analysis of where soldiers came from is more difficult. Simply labelling a soldier English, Scottish or Irish does not do justice to the diversity within the three Kingdoms, nor provide any real indication of where a soldier came from. In some cases regiments were able to have a territorial basis. The Duke of Richmond managed to fill his regiment (the 35th) with men from Sussex, and change its title accordingly in 1805.³⁶ Some militia regiments had a relationship with their county line regiments: the Perth Militia sent seventy-two out of its 171 volunteers to the 90th,³⁷ and Earl Temple used his influence as Colonel of the Royal Buckingham Militia to ensure that the 14th received volunteers from his regiment, after Calvert had solicited his interference,³⁸ and in 1811 sixty-five men out of eighty-five chose the 14th.³⁹

Such territorial connections were rare; and made less likely by the militia transfers. In an inspection return of 1/23rd in 1808 only 200 out of 1,077 men were Welsh, and the most prominent nationality is English (634 men).⁴⁰ When the 77th returned from India in 1807 it was given the title East Middlesex, but it was not until

³³ WO1/904, Return of Militia Volunteers, 20 May 1809

³⁴ 225 to the 1st Foot Guards, 76 to the 2nd, and 56 to the 3rd.

³⁵ WO1/946, Volunteers from Militia Regiments. The return only covers British and Irish Militia regiments in Britain.

³⁶ G. D. Martineau, *A History of the Royal Sussex Regiment*, (Chichester, 1955). The Duke became Colonel of the 35th in 1803.

³⁷ WO27/96, 16 May 1809.

³⁸ Claydon House Archives, Calvert Papers, 9/101/1, Calvert to Maj. Wood, 28 July 1807.

³⁹ WO27/105, Inspection return of Buckinghamshire Militia, 2 May 1811.

⁴⁰ WO27/94, Inspection return of the 1/23rd, 11 August 1808.

1809 that it actually received some militia volunteers from the Middlesex militia regiments, and even then they were few in number.⁴¹ In the example of the Perth Militia, apart from the volunteers for the 90th, the remaining ninety-nine volunteers went to fifteen different regiments, and there were undoubtedly many similar cases to the solitary militiaman in the 2nd West Yorkshire who chose the 77th.⁴²

Studying the regimental books provide further details of where the soldiers came from. For convenience the recruiting districts have been used to divide the United Kingdom into more manageable areas than counties. In the cases where a county was divided and included in more than one recruiting district, the recruiting district with the largest area in the county has been used.⁴³

⁴¹ C. L. Kingsford, *The Story of the Duke of Cambridge's Own (Middlesex Regiment)*, (London, 1916), pp. 62-63.

⁴² WO27/95, Inspection Return of 2nd West Yorkshire Militia, 15 May 1809.

⁴³ See Table 10.

Table 10: District of Birth of Soldiers

District	3 FG	7 LD	20 LD	3/ & 4/1st	2/6th	8th	2/32nd	2/34th
Durham	3%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%
Carlisle	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Leeds	6%	0%	11%	4%	3%	2%	2%	12%
Manchester	12%	0%	6%	5%	50%	4%	7%	4%
Nottingham	11%	5%	5%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%
Birmingham	12%	5%	5%	2%	5%	9%	13%	0%
Shrewsbury	2%	9%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	4%
Bury St. Edmunds	4%	5%	2%	1%	7%	0%	1%	32%
Bedford	4%	23%	7%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Gloucester	11%	0%	2%	4%	0%	0%	8%	0%
Hereford	0%	9%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	8%
Maidstone	2%	0%	6%	9%	0%	2%	1%	0%
London	2%	9%	9%	2%	1%	2%	1%	4%
Southampton	7%	5%	7%	6%	0%	4%	9%	0%
Wells	4%	5%	5%	12%	0%	0%	24%	4%
Edinburgh	8%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Glasgow	4%	5%	1%	6%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Aberdeen	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Inverness	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Belfast	0%	5%	0%	4%	1%	2%	3%	0%
Enniskillen	0%	0%	2%	8%	4%	6%	3%	4%
Newry	0%	5%	3%	10%	5%	28%	2%	0%
Dublin	1%	5%	2%	6%	1%	21%	6%	4%
Athlone	0%	5%	2%	2%	7%	4%	5%	0%
Waterford	1%	0%	4%	5%	3%	4%	2%	8%
Limerick	0%	0%	0%	3%	2%	0%	1%	0%
Cork	0%	5%	0%	2%	3%	2%	6%	8%
Overseas	1%	0%	16%	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%
Sample	161	22	123	308	209	47	232	25

Sources: WO25/285, /287, /314, /316, /329, /368; WO67/1, /7, /14, NAM, 6806-43-32.

The clearest conclusions that can be drawn from the English soldiers in these regiments are the predominant presence of men from the Manchester district (Lancashire and Cheshire) especially in the 2/6th, from Wells (Somerset, Devon and Cornwall), and Birmingham (Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Staffordshire). This made the 2/32nd title slightly relevant, but rendered the 2/6th rather meaningless. The high percentage of recruits from the 2/34th born in the Bury St. Edmunds district is not

significant, as it only equals eight men. By means of a comparison, the 5% of the 2/6th born in Warwickshire outnumber these eight men, as it equates to ten soldiers.

Similarly the Scotsmen tended to come from the more urban districts (Edinburgh and Glasgow), with the highland areas particularly underrepresented. This reflects the regiments sampled, as the 42nd and 91st were able to maintain their highland status, and the recruits that were coming from the highlands were going to these regiments. In the case of the 42nd the highlanders were 'much attached' to the Colonel, the Marquis of Huntley, and so the inspecting general expected the regiment to keep up its strength.⁴⁴ The Irish-born soldiers show more variation from across the country, ignoring the results from the 8th Foot, whose sample is small, but with a slightly higher concentration of recruits from Enniskillen, Newry and Dublin.

Just as revealing as where these soldiers were born, is where they were enlisted, as this provides a glimpse of the recruit's life before he enlisted. Comparing the details from regimental books with the information gathered by the Adjutant General in 1809 on the number of recruits raised per district, they provide a similar picture overall. Large proportions of the army were enlisted in London, Birmingham, and Manchester, but it is also clear that some regiments did have a regional recruitment base. The 32nd obtained many of its men in the Wells district, but none of the regiments sampled obtained any men from Carlisle, or the highlands, which suggests, particularly in the latter case, that specific regiments were recruiting in these areas.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ WO27/92, Inspection return of the 2/42nd, 27 May 1807.

⁴⁵ See Table 11.

Table 11: District of Enlistment of Soldiers compared to 1809 Recruiting Data

District	2/32 nd	2/6 th	3 FG	3/1 st	4/1 st	7 LD	8 th	Total		1809 Recruiting District data
Durham	3	0	9	0	0	0	0	12	2%	1%
Carlisle								0		1%
Leeds	0	1	4	0	1	0	1	7	1%	4%
Manchester	22	52	15	0	4	0	3	96	12%	14%
Nottingham	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	12	2%	3%
Birmingham	31	5	13	1	3	1	3	57	7%	5%
Shrewsbury	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0%	1%
Bury	1	10	5	0	0	1	0	17	2%	3%
Bedford	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	0%	2%
Gloucester	11	2	12	0	13	2	2	42	5%	3%
Maidstone	0	60	3	1	2	0	1	67	8%	1%
London	2	2	33	0	10	4	3	54	7%	8%
Southampton	5	0	13	0	5	3	4	30	4%	2%
Wells	69	17	15	0	67	3	0	171	22%	3%
Edinburgh	0	2	10	0	0	0	0	12	2%	3%
Glasgow	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	1%	2%
Aberdeen	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0%	2%
Inverness								0		3%
Ireland	69	41	8	8	48	4	27	205	26%	39%
Total	213	195	159	10	153	18	44	792		

Sources: WO25/3224, Return of Recruits, 19 October 1809; WO25/285, /287, /314, /316, /329, /368; WO67/1, /7, /14, NAM, 6806-43-32.

More can be gleaned from comparing the district of birth of a soldier with his place of enlistment. Unfortunately this data was not collected in a consistent manner in the original returns. Not all of the 1,176 soldiers in the database even have a place of enlistment, and twenty-three entries give obscure places of enlistment. For instance Patrick Brads from Mayo, enlisted into the 3/1st at Westport in 1813, but there are three Westports, one in Argyll, one in Mayo – the most likely – and one in Somerset. There are six soldiers with no place of birth given but are listed at the place where they were recruited. In such cases these soldiers cannot form part of any comparison between birthplace and enlistment. Moreover, any soldier that was a militiaman or a volunteer from the Army of Reserve has been specifically removed from the data, as he would

have had no choice over where he enlisted, simply joining from the depot where the militia regiment was stationed. It is possible that militiamen were not always recorded as such in regimental books. Nowhere in the sample from the 2/32nd is any man listed as a militia volunteer, yet the enlistments of Robert Bray, Samuel Bread, John Bonney and Phillip Beswick, all from Cornwall in 1813 at Castlebar, Mayo, by the 2/32nd look suspiciously like transfers from the militia.⁴⁶ However, to be consistent, the regimental books have been taken literally, and only entries that mention the soldier being a volunteer from the militia have been removed. This deducts eighty men from the list, and leaves 721 soldiers with places of birth and enlistment.

There are significant variations between the soldier's district of birth and the district where they enlisted.⁴⁷ The low percentage of soldiers born in London contrasts with the high number of London enlistments and this can be explained by examining the birth district of the men enlisted in London. Of the thirty-six soldiers enlisted in London, only six (or 17%) were born in London, and the rest were born in sixteen different districts. This demonstrates that recruits obtained in London were migrants from other regions, and the same can be said of the Maidstone district, where only 2% of the sixty-five men recruited in the district were born there. Some of these soldiers were born in adjacent districts, such as the thirteen soldiers enlisted in London from the Bedford, Maidstone, Southampton, and Gloucester districts. Even including these, the army was recruiting from the substantial number of migrants to London. It is difficult to imagine the journey that took Charles Archibald from Roxburgh, and Alexander Adam from Lanarkshire to enlist in the 3rd Foot Guards in London, or Thomas Savage, born in Kerry, to join the 4/1st in London, potentially the longest journey possible in the UK. An anonymous soldier who went on to record his army career moved from 'never-mind-where' in Shropshire to London before enlisting.⁴⁸ The 2/6th's recruiting party stationed

⁴⁶ WO25/368.

⁴⁷ See Appendix I.

⁴⁸ *Jottings from my Sabretache*, p.5.

at Great Baddow, just outside Chelmsford took full advantage of the migrant population in London, and the regiment obtained sixty men in the Maidstone district, the largest total obtained by its recruiting parties in any district.

Recruiting from migrants was limited to certain districts. In the rural Bury St. Edmunds district, eleven out of the twelve recruits were born in Norfolk, Suffolk or Cambridge. Similarly, in the Nottingham district, only one of its eleven recruits was not from the district, and he was a framework knitter from nearby Leicestershire. When the number of men enlisted in a particular district is small, it is difficult to make firm conclusions, and so the results from Bury might be an anomaly. However, the Manchester district had ninety-one enlistments, of which 74% were born in Lancashire or Cheshire. From the twenty-four from outside the Manchester district, thirteen were born in adjacent recruiting districts, indicating some migration to the industrial towns in Lancashire from which the army obtained its men, but overall a relatively stable population. The Gloucester district provides similar data to that of Manchester, 95% of recruits were born in the district or adjacent districts. The results from Newry and Dublin show a similar pattern, but counting adjacent districts engulfs vast areas of Ireland, for example, only the Cork, Newry and Belfast districts were not adjacent to Athlone.

The largest number of recruits obtained in this sample was in the Wells district. The results from there show the limitations of the data provided by the regimental books, as superficially the area's enlistments indicate a situation closer to London than the results obtained from the rest of England. Only 39% of the recruits were born in the West Country, and the remainder came from eighteen different districts. As noted above, the 2/32nd's regimental book does not indicate if a soldier was a militia volunteer, and some of the sixty-nine men recruited by that regiment in the south-west may have been militiamen. The south-west had a number of important naval ports that

were often garrisoned by militiamen making such a possibility more likely: out of the 171 men who gave a place of enlistment in the Wells district, twelve were recruited at Pendennis, probably meaning the castle, another twelve in Falmouth, fourteen at Berryhead barracks, and forty-eight at Plymouth. Potentially half the recruits enlisted in this sample from the Wells district were militiamen. The degree of migration of men before they joined the army was probably less extensive than the enlistment data superficially indicates. In Wells' case 73% of men born in the district joined the army in their district of birth, and only twenty-two out of the eighty-two future soldiers born in the south-west moved before they joined the army, some of whom were probably militiamen.

This small level of migration meant that the 2/32nd was able to have a West Country presence in the ranks, but even a low level of regional migration made maintaining any kind of territorial link difficult. The army's recruiting instructions did suggest sending parties to their counties, but it was likely that the men recruited would not necessarily be from that county: on average, just over half the men recruited in a district would be from elsewhere. The regional composition of a regiment also depended on its history. The 6th, despite being the 1st Warwickshire, had its second battalion formed from limited-service men raised in Lancashire, and although not in keeping with its title, it preserved this identity throughout the period. A quarter of its recruits enlisted in the Manchester district, and of the sixty men the party at Chelmsford recruited, thirty-eight were born in Lancashire.

Most regiments in the British army had no real territorial origins, and were given titles later,⁴⁹ but the notable exceptions to this rule were the highland corps. Clan chiefs raised these regiments from their tenants, creating true territorial units.⁵⁰ This source of manpower had proved very productive, and massive use was made of highland

⁴⁹ G. H. Cleare, 'County names for regiments in 1782', *JSAHR*, 1962 (38), pp.34-38.

⁵⁰ Stanley Dean MacDonalld Carpenter, 'Patterns of Recruitment of the Highland Regiments of the British Army, 1756-1815', M.Litt., (University of St. Andrews, 1977), pp. 77-78

recruiting in the early years of the Revolutionary Wars. Between 1793 and 1800, 30,000 men were raised for regulars and Fencible units,⁵¹ but this put an enormous strain on the remaining highland population. The last highland unit to be raised, the 93rd, had great difficulty finding men, despite the Countess of Sutherland's promises of land leases.⁵² It was clear that the manpower reserves of the highlands were exhausted, caused as much by the army's heavy recruitment as the introduction of sheep farming which was far more profitable than tenant farmers. In a few years, commercialism destroyed the clan system that underpinned the highland regiments.⁵³

This caused problems for the existing highland corps, particularly those that did not have a second battalion in Scotland. The 1/72nd was stationed at the Cape of Good Hope, and although Scotsmen outnumbered Englishmen and Irishmen, it cannot be considered a highland regiment.⁵⁴ In 1809 this regiment and five others (the 73rd, 74th, 75th, 91st and 94th) were removed from the highland establishment, and henceforth did not wear kilts.⁵⁵ This order left only five highland regiments, the 42nd, 78th, 79th, 92nd and 93rd, and was a frank admission that under the pressures of war, even the territorial highland corps could lose their regional identity.

The 71st had a more chequered history, it was originally raised in 1777 by Lord MacLeod from his land on the Isle of Lewis and the north west of Scotland, but its second battalion was formed from Dumbarton's Army of Reserve men, and in 1808 it was designated the Glasgow Highland regiment. By 1810 it had lost its Glaswegian title, and become the Highland Light Infantry. Even the remaining highland regiments

⁵¹ Carpenter, 'Recruitment of the Highland Regiments', M.Litt., p. 73.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-123.

⁵⁴ In 1807 60% were Scottish, 24% Irish and 15% English, in 1808 the figures are 63%, 21% and 15%, in 1809 64%, 19% and 16%.

⁵⁵ Carpenter, 'Recruitment of the Highland Regiments', M.Litt., p. 108. There is some discrepancy over what regiments were de-kilted. All agree that the 71st to 74th were removed from the highland establishment, the 94th is listed in some copies of the general order, but it is not clear if it was a highland corps in the first place. Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 130 gives 71st, 72nd, 74th, 75th 91st & 94th; Lt. Col. Angus Fairrie, *"Cuidich 'n Righ": A History of the Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth and Camerons)*, (Inverness, 1983), p. 7, the 71st to 75th, & 91st; Wood, *The Scottish Soldier*, p. 49, the 72nd to 75th, & 91st; R. P. Dunn-Pattison, *The History of the 91st Argyllshire Highlanders*, (Edinburgh, 1910), p. 41, states the 72nd to 75th, 91st and 94th were de-kilted.

had difficulty preserving their highland credentials. Although the majority of the 42nd came from the highlands, there was a large infusion of lowlanders into its ranks.⁵⁶ The 92nd was fortunate enough to have its second battalion raised from limited-service men from the highland counties of Nairn, Inverness, Moray, Banff and Aberdeen, which went on to supply recruits consistently to its sister battalion overseas with men principally from north of Inverness.⁵⁷

The de-kilting order was unpopular, and some of the de-kilted regiments sought to preserve their highland heritage, usually unofficially. In 1813, the 73rd still had a piper who defiantly wore the Black Watch kilt (the regiment was originally raised as a second battalion of the 42nd), which proved of great use in motivating the corps during its forced march across Germany.⁵⁸ The 1/72nd continued to use Scottish drumbeats, preserved many of its Scottish traditions, and like the 73rd retained a piper. The 72nd became a highland regiment again in 1823, and, along with the 73rd, 75th and 91st, regained the kilt in 1881.⁵⁹ Throughout this period, these regiments preserved their Scottish status, and this reflected the growing national identity of Scotland, which was increasingly centred on the image of the highlander.

The example of the highland regiment demonstrates that territorial identity in the regulars was impossible to maintain during the period whilst the army still relied on voluntary enlistment. With a mobile population, recruiting in a particular district was no guarantee of obtaining locally born men. The 2/32nd recruited heavily in the Wells district (31% of its men enlisted there), but only 24% of its men were born there.⁶⁰ Even when men were raised by compulsion in 1803, the army had to balance the ideal of territorial regiments against the manpower demands of individual regiments, hence the

⁵⁶ Eric and Andro Linklater, *The Black Watch: The History of the Royal Highland Regiment*, (London, 1977), p. 54.

⁵⁷ Lt. Col. C. Greenhill Gardyne, *The Life of a Regiment: The History of the Gordon Highlanders from its Formation in 1794 to 1816*, vol. 1, (London, 1901), pp. 113, 345.

⁵⁸ Linklater, *The Black Watch*, p. 79.

⁵⁹ Fairrie, *A History of the Queen's Own Highlanders*, p.7.

⁶⁰ WO25/368.

6th receiving limited-service men from Lancashire. Having received this draft from Lancashire, it continued to draw on its connections to Lancashire in order to preserve its strength. In the end the army was largely able to preserve national regiments, but could not maintain any more specific identities. Regimental titles were something that the army would aspire to, but could never fully achieve. Moreover, in particular cases regimental commanders did not want a strong territorial basis to their units: the commanding officer of the 2/28th requested some Scottish militia volunteers as they had many Irish recruits and he felt 'a mixture of Scotch would be advantageous to us.'⁶¹

Age and Service

The age of soldiers remained remarkably constant throughout the period in question.⁶² The average age of privates between 1807 and 1815 was twenty-eight, that of NCOs just over thirty-one; and the range for NCOs is only ten months (i.e. the difference between the highest and lowest amount halved), whilst that of the privates shows more variation with a range of twenty months. The figures for musicians have not been given as they varied considerably and were a small proportion of the army. Often they were boy recruits, and the unit had a small fixed establishment of them, so there would be an influx of boys into this category, who would then get older, until they were replaced with a new intake of boys.⁶³

⁶¹ HO50/407, Calvert to Beckett, incl. Belson to Adjutant General, 10 November 1807.

⁶² See Table 12.

⁶³ For instance, between 1807 29% of musicians were under 18, in 1808 26% were under 18, in 1809 20%, yet in 1810 only 9% were under 18.

Table 12: Average age of NCOs and Soldiers

Year	Average Age for NCOs	Average Age for Privates	Difference
1807	30.9	27.4	3.5
1808	30.9	27.1	3.9
1809	31.2	27.4	3.8
1810	30.9	28.2	2.7
1811	31.1	28.5	2.7
1812	31.6	28.2	3.4
1813	31.6	28.6	3.0
1814	31.5	28.3	3.2
1815	32.5	29.6	2.9
Average	31.3	28.0	3.3

Source: WO27 Sample.

A comparison of the age groups of the privates and NCOs in Table 13 shows the remarkable demographic stability of the army between 1807 and 1815. Just over half of the army's privates were between twenty and twenty-nine years old, whilst over 60% of the NCOs were concentrated in the age band of twenty-five to thirty-four years old. There are small changes in the percentage of private soldiers in various age groups, the large number of eighteen and nineteen year olds in 1807 reflects the influence of Windham's drive to complete the second battalions in that year. However, the high peak of eighteen and nineteen year olds in 1814 is probably due to the sample, which has many second battalions and so is unrepresentative of the army in that year. The only detectable trend is the slight shift in the balance between eighteen to twenty-four year olds and the twenty-five to thirty-four age group. In 1807, 42% of the army was aged eighteen to twenty-four, but by 1815 this proportion had shrunk to 26%, with the biggest shift occurring between 1809 and 1810 (38% to 33% respectively). Conversely, 37% of the army was between twenty-five and thirty-four in 1807, which had risen to 50% by 1815, the most dramatic change (excluding 1814 and 1815) occurred between 1807 and 1808 when the proportion of soldiers aged twenty-five to thirty-four leapt to 44%.

Table 13: The Percentage Privates of the Sample in each Age Group by Year

Age Group	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	Average
Under 18	5.9%	5.2%	5.7%	4.6%	3.6%	4.4%	1.9%	5.4%	1.7%	4.3%
18-19	9.6%	9.6%	7.9%	7.6%	7.9%	8.7%	6.5%	10.6%	4.0%	8.0%
20-24	28.3%	28.8%	29.0%	25.1%	25.7%	23.9%	26.3%	23.1%	22.4%	25.8%
25-29	25.5%	28.5%	26.4%	26.7%	26.0%	26.2%	28.7%	23.0%	31.9%	27.0%
30-34	15.0%	15.0%	15.5%	18.6%	18.7%	19.6%	18.9%	18.0%	18.3%	17.5%
35-39	8.4%	7.7%	9.4%	10.9%	10.1%	10.9%	11.3%	11.7%	12.6%	10.3%
40-44	4.4%	3.1%	3.8%	4.0%	4.8%	4.1%	4.4%	5.5%	5.9%	4.4%
45-49	2.0%	1.7%	1.7%	1.9%	2.3%	1.7%	1.6%	2.0%	2.5%	1.9%
50-54	0.7%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.7%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%
55+	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%

Source: WO27 Sample.

This shows that the recruiting standards were being upheld, and more importantly the balance between the army growing old (as it did in peacetime), or declining rapidly in age (when it recruited heavily) was being maintained, despite the demands made on the army recruitment. From the regimental books, the average age at enlistment was twenty-four, excluding boy recruits under sixteen.⁶⁴

The demographic stability of the army was achieved by a number of factors. Soldiers spent a few years in second battalions before being sent overseas, and so the average age of a first battalion was twenty-nine years and two months, whilst the age in second battalions averaged twenty-six and seven months, a difference of approximately two and a half years. Obviously, with an active army in the Peninsula, many of the twenty to twenty-nine year old soldiers (the age group considered best for active campaigning) would be killed or injured, but it also demonstrates that soldiers were going elsewhere. Some would have received discharges, most for ill health, especially during the disaster year of 1809, and some privates would of course become NCOs, but that might only extend their time in the army by a few more years. Others deserted, which is dealt with in Chapter 7, and some would have transferred back to second battalions when they became unfit, and eventually to the Royal Veteran and Garrison

⁶⁴ The standard deviation is six years.

battalions, which provided a few more years in the army before a soldier had to risk the vagaries of an army pension board.

Given this turnover in manpower, the consistency in the demography of the army is more remarkable, and points to the importance of the militia volunteers. The average age of a small sample of militia regiments was twenty-eight in 1807 and 1809, dropping to twenty-seven in 1810.⁶⁵ These older men maintained the army in an almost perfect state with regards to age, and the volunteers from the militia account for the shifts in the percentage of the army's age groups between 1807 to 1808, and 1809 to 1810, both periods of large militia transfers.

The length of service of a soldier had a bearing upon the likely efficiency of the army. The longer soldiers served, the more likely the army would be able to perform the tasks set for it, and the more likely it would be that the soldier would break all ties with civilian society, and embrace his new home – the regiment. As with ages, the service of soldiers between 1807 and 1815 remained remarkably constant,⁶⁶ with privates averaging six years and four months service, and the average NCOs spending nine and a half years in the army. It does appear that the average service of a soldier was lengthening in the period, and although this is likely during a period when the army grew, it is difficult to reconcile with the casualty rates that the army was sustaining. This may simply reflect vagaries in the sample: although the data from the second half of the period includes some of the regiments in the Peninsula, the 1815 sample excludes the Waterloo regiments whilst including many of the old Peninsula corps still in north America.

⁶⁵ WO27 Sample, Militia Regiments.

⁶⁶ See Table 14.

Table 14: Average Years Service of NCOs and Privates

Year	Average Length of Service of NCOs	Average Length of Service of Privates	Difference
1807	9.4	5.6	3.8
1808	8.4	4.8	3.6
1809	9.1	5.8	3.3
1810	8.9	6.0	2.9
1811	9.5	6.8	2.6
1812	9.2	6.5	2.7
1813	10.3	7.3	3.0
1814	9.9	7.0	2.9
1815	11.4	8.6	2.8
Average	9.6	6.5	3.1

Source: WO27 Sample.

As with the ages, the information provided by the inspection returns is hampered because it is already grouped, making the average less accurate. An examination of the length of service for privates (as with ages, musicians have been ignored, and the NCOs followed a similar pattern, but with a few years more service) predictably shows a high concentration of privates, on average half, with up to four years service.⁶⁷ The growing proportion of soldiers with five to nine year service during the latter half of the period is probably due to the militia volunteers. As they enrolled at specific times, and did so in large numbers of men, they affected the figures. Many of the militiamen the army received in 1807 and 1809 were still in the army by 1813 (i.e. they had served five years), and this also explains the relatively high proportion of soldiers who had served five to nine years in 1807, as these men were probably militia volunteers from 1799 and 1800.

The militia volunteers also affected the army without it being recorded. The militiamen's service before they volunteered was not counted in the inspection returns, which raises the possibility that these men had spent a longer time in the military than these figures suggest. Given the numbers of militiamen that volunteered into the line,

⁶⁷ See Table 15.

Table 15: Privates' Service by Year.

Year	Up to 4 years	5 to 9	10 to 19	20 to 29	30+
1807	55.7%	28.1%	14.5%	1.4%	0.3%
1808	66.8%	20.9%	11.6%	0.7%	0.1%
1809	58.1%	20.9%	20.0%	0.9%	0.1%
1810	53.5%	24.2%	21.0%	1.2%	0.1%
1811	50.3%	23.4%	24.6%	1.5%	0.1%
1812	49.5%	29.7%	19.8%	0.9%	0.0%
1813	39.6%	36.6%	21.9%	1.9%	0.1%
1814	42.5%	32.9%	22.4%	2.0%	0.3%
1815	27.1%	43.5%	25.2%	3.9%	0.3%
Average	49.2%	28.9%	20.1%	1.6%	0.1%

Source: WO27 Sample.

their influence on an overall estimate of the service of soldiers cannot be discounted. In 1807, it is very unlikely that any militiaman had served less than four years, as after the militia was raised in 1803, there were no ballots until after the volunteering period. During the annual militia transfers, evidence suggests that militiamen usually had some service before they volunteered for the line. From the Sussex Militia recruits between 1811 and 1814, only 6% had served less than a year in 1811, whilst 81% of those who volunteered had served over a year. By 1813 this trend had been reversed, with 51% of the volunteers having served less than a year (36% of all volunteers had served less than six months), whilst only 10% of those who transferred had served for at least two years. Between 1811 and 1813 the volunteers from the recruits had on average one year and two months service in the Sussex Militia, whilst those listed a parish men (presumably balloted) had three and a half years service.⁶⁸ These figures may be untypical, but they suggest that many militiamen who transferred from 1811 had some military training. This would mean that the privates' service in military forces would be higher than the six years and four months given above, maybe as much as another two years.

The question of service is linked to the soldiers' ages. Subtracting the soldiers' service from the average age produces a rough guide to the age at enlistment. For both

⁶⁸ East Sussex County Record Office, LCM/3/EW1, Casualty Returns, 1811-1814.

NCOs and privates the enlistment age is twenty-one. This does not correlate well with the average age of twenty-three from the regimental book examined (including boys, as the inspection returns do), but, as mentioned above, it is difficult to tell if the ages in these books refer to the age when enlisted, or the age when the book started. Men recruited in their early twenties were young enough to complete several years of active service, but not so young as to detract from the fighting capabilities of the army. This contrasts with France, where by 1814 the army was increasingly composed of teenage conscripts, the notorious 'Marie-Louises'.⁶⁹ This must have had an influence on the fighting capability of the army, because men of twenty or more with six years' service were undoubtedly better soldiers than boys of fifteen or sixteen who had only had a few months drill, especially given the physical demands of campaigning. Young soldiers were not physically equipped to withstand the strains of warfare, and if they became ill, would require replacement, so increasing the manpower demands. The age and service of the rank and file shows that the army was very finely balanced: any higher casualties, or the absence of the militia volunteers, may have resulted in catastrophic results for the British army. In the event the British army managed to maintain high standards in its recruitment, and this, alongside other factors, undoubtedly contributed to the spectacular performance of these men in the Peninsula.

Occupations and Motives

The occupations that the soldiers claimed or were reported as having before they joined the army are perhaps the most interesting, yet daunting, question in any study of the composition of any army. This is particularly so for the British army: its soldiers have often be labelled as criminals, or drawn from the lowest classes of society, but this judgement may not withstand detailed scrutiny. There were undoubtedly desperate characters in the army, such as a soldier of the 58th who was

⁶⁹ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, p. 36.

A notorious rebel and a man of so much influence that several of the soldiers of the battalion to which he belongs are understood to have been seduced from their allegiance by the effect of his persuasion or by his example.⁷⁰

More revealing was a letter sent to a deserter of the 22nd from his father, relating the latest exploits of 'Ned Ludd' in his home county of Nottinghamshire.⁷¹

In order to compare regiments, and make general observations on the class of men that joined the army, occupations have been classified. Unfortunately, there was no official contemporary classification of occupations, and the status of the occupations has only been crudely divided. The first breakdown of occupations is into wage earners (hereafter referred to as labourers), artisans, and retailers. This reflects the basic division between those who were employed and paid directly by others, those who had some degree of economic independence, and those who owned their own businesses. However, during this period the status of artisans was becoming more diverse. Some, such as weavers were becoming part of a putting out system that was threatening their independence, yet those who were in other trades less threatened by technological or structural innovation, upheld their status. To reflect this diversity the artisan grouping has been further divided in three categories of status, simply known as low, medium and high. These categories are not intended to reflect their wealth, but their position in society and in their respective trade, and in most cases their skill.⁷² A cabinetmaker would not consider himself an equal of a sawyer. By using a classification based on status, it makes comparisons easier than listing every occupation that has been found, and reduces the influence of economic geography, and local differences in titles. For instance, in the West Country woollen industry, the men who finished the cloth were known as shearmen, whilst in the West Riding of Yorkshire they were called croppers.⁷³

The rank and file of the army shows a high proportion of labourers, but equally

⁷⁰ WO35/24, Irish Adjutant General to Calvert, 5 August 1810.

⁷¹ HO50/460, Taylor to Torrens, incl. Letter to Thomas Fox, 11 February 1812.

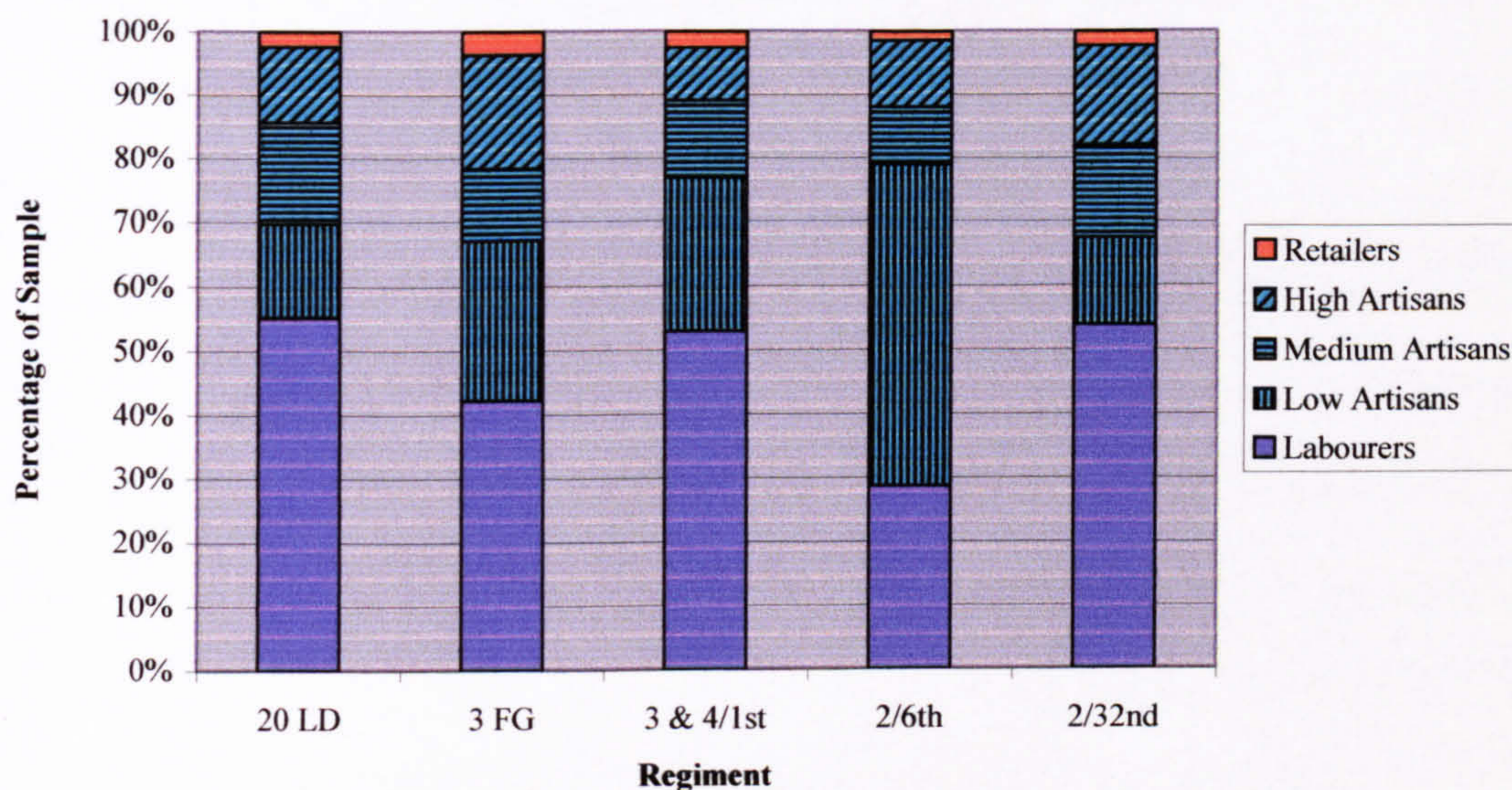
⁷² Wages were largely graded by skill anyway; Eric J. Evans, *The Forging of the Modern State: Early Industrial Britain, 1783-1870*, (London, 1996), p.132.

⁷³ See Appendix J for full list of occupations.

large is the presence of artisans,⁷⁴ and in some cases they predominate. Such artisans cannot be called the 'scum of the earth'; they were men who once had some degree of economic independence, but had enlisted into the army due to particular circumstances. This is evident in the cases of the 3rd Foot Guards and 2/6th, and reflects the areas from which the army recruited. The 3rd Foot Guards recruited in the Nottingham district, and so their ranks were filled with men who were in the stocking weaving trade, including framework knitters (thus accounting for the large numbers of artisans in the regimental breakdown). Their status is well known, and it was changes in their working practice that led to the Luddite disturbances. The 2/6th, as seen earlier, received most of its recruits from the Manchester district, and so most of these men were weavers. During 1807 and 1808 there was a strike in Lancashire by the weavers, and large numbers of weavers joined the army as the strike continued without any result: thirty-three weavers enlisted into the 2/6th between 1 January 1807 and the end of 1808, out of a total of sixty-four recruits. The 1st and 2/32nd recruited extensively in the West Country, explaining the large numbers of labourers in these units. The area's predominantly agricultural economy was stagnating, leaving large numbers of agricultural labourers without employment. For these men the army, and navy no doubt, were obvious choices to escape poverty.

⁷⁴ See Graph XII.

Graph XII: Classification of Soldiers' Occupations



Sources: WO25/285, /287, /314, /316, /329, /368; WO67/1, /7, /14.

The economic motive is often ascribed as the sole reason why a man enlisted, and although the evidence about motive is rarely found anywhere, it can be inferred from other facts. The bounty was an attraction to the labourers and poor artisans who made up the army, but they neither automatically choose the closest recruiting party, nor the highest bounty. Very few soldiers' biographies mention the bounty. *A Dorset Soldier* was offered a bounty of sixteen guineas, which he thought a great deal of money, and took it believing that he 'would not want for money for a long time'⁷⁵, and Edward Costello asked how much bounty he would get, but he was more attracted to the uniform initially,⁷⁶ and most soldiers had other reasons for joining the army.

The 50,000 men who chose to enlist in the militia were making an informed choice between an easy (but unexciting) service but low bounty, and a larger bounty and a more extensive (if glamorous) service. It is possible that these men were using the system of militia volunteering to gain two bounties, but the bounty was not the main concern of militiamen transferring to the line. They show more awareness of the

⁷⁵ Eileen Hathaway (ed.), *A Dorset Soldier: The Autobiography of Sergeant William Lawrence, 40th Regiment*, (Staplehurst, 1995), p. 18.

⁷⁶ Brett-James (ed.), *Military Memoirs of Edward Costello*, p. 2.

military system, and were more likely to enlist for limited terms of service than ordinary recruits, and the British regiments' volunteers were more likely to be on limited service than the Irish regiments, but Irish militiamen were less likely to choose limited service than even ordinary recruits for the line.⁷⁷ It may be that some married men were transferring from the militia, and so were unwilling to sign up for life, or perhaps, having spent more time in the armed forces, recognised the benefits of limited service. The mechanism for militia volunteering may have given potential recruits time for reflection, without the pressure of a recruiting sergeant, and the allure of a larger bounty. Thomas Morris enlisted for limited service, despite pressure from the recruiting sergeant to enlist for life, because he thought seven years 'quite long enough for a trial'⁷⁸, a sentiment echoed by George Calladine when he volunteered into the 19th from the Derbyshire Militia.⁷⁹

Table 16: Comparison of Percentage of Militiamen and Line Recruits who Chose Limited Service

Year	1807	1809	1811
British Militia	86%	78%	65%
Irish Militia	70%	8%	4%
Line Recruits	100%	27%	17%

Sources: WO1/904, Volunteers from the Militia, 1 July 1808; WO1/904, Return of Volunteers from the Militia, 5 August 1809; WO1/946, Abstract of Militia Volunteers, 21 September 1811; WO25/3224, Recruiting return 1807 to 1810, 5 April 1811; WO25/3225, Recruiting return for 1810 to 1812, 31 December 1812.

Recent research has suggested that a soldier's life was more attractive than civilian employment. The length of the Napoleonic Wars increased inflation and raised prices, but pay generally failed to match these increases. In such circumstances, the life of a soldier, with accommodation, food, regular pay (at least when stationed at home), basic medical care, chances of promotion, and possibly a pension, were incentives to enlist.⁸⁰ Besides these benefits, there was 'a glitter in the life of a soldier unknown to

⁷⁷ See Table 16.

⁷⁸ John Selby (ed.), *Thomas Morris: The Napoleonic Wars*, (London, 1967), p. 7.

⁷⁹ Maj. M. L. Ferrar (ed.), *The Diary of Colour-Sergeant George Calladine, 19th Foot, 1793-1837*, (London, 1922), p. 11.

⁸⁰ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, pp. 131-138. One estimate cited by Bartlett gives a 65% increase in the cost of living.

every other profession',⁸¹ and 'the roll of the spirit-stirring drum, the glittering file of bayonets, with the pomp and circumstance of military parade' inspired men, particularly young men, to enlist. Many envied the 'apparent freedom, the frankness and gaiety of an open-hearted soldier's holiday life.'⁸²

Personal circumstances often influenced soldiers to enlist. A manuscript biography of a soldier of the 38th details his journey to taking the bounty. After being apprenticed, and a pious youth (he could read by the age of six), his world fell apart when the Independent Chapel he attended split after the minister died. He was in an 'agitated state' until sixteen when he moved to Leicester and, after a year there, he enlisted.⁸³ One soldier obtained a position in a theatre when his father became ill, horrifying his parents. To compound his humiliation he froze on his first night and the next day joined a recruiting party at Leith on its way to the Isle of Wight.⁸⁴ Stephen Morley transferred from the Army of Reserve after his pay-sergeant's wife made him do chores for her.⁸⁵

More often it was a desire for a more exciting life. Edward Costello lived with an old soldier who had fought in Egypt in 1801, and 'became red hot for a soldier's life, and although rejected as to [sic] young for the Regulars I "listed", ... , in the Dublin Militia.' He later volunteered into the 95th.⁸⁶ James Anton always wanted to be a soldier, but was rejected for the line, and eventually got into the 42nd via the militia.⁸⁷ The Chelsea Pensioner who joined the cavalry was perhaps more typical, after taking the 'profession of the quill', and then a watchmaker in London,

It was in the month of January 1806, that happening to be on a stroll through Westminster, I forget with what object in view, I was attracted by a huge placard on which was emblazoned the figure of a light dragoon, mounted on a dashing steed and brandishing a

⁸¹ *The Veteran Soldier: An Interesting Narrative of the Life and Religious Experience of the Late Sergeant Greenleigh*, p. 26.

⁸² *Memoirs of a Sergeant Late in the Forty-Third Light Infantry Regiment*, p. 12.

⁸³ NAM, 7912-21, *Memoirs of an Unknown Soldier of the 38th*.

⁸⁴ Constable (ed.), *Memorials of the Late Wars*, (Edinburgh, 1828), p. 23-25.

⁸⁵ Stephen Morley, *Memoirs of a Sergeant of the 5th Regiment of Foot*, (Cambridge, 1999), p. 6.

⁸⁶ Brett-James (ed.), *Military Memoirs of Edward Costello*, p. 1.

⁸⁷ James Anton, *Retrospective of a Military life, during the most Eventful period of the late War*, (Edinburgh 1841), pp. 3, 39.

sabre. I felt a tap on the shoulder and looking round I was accosted, with a wink meant to be particularly knowing, by a swaggering blade of a light horseman in full fig of the very costume which I had been admiring.

After the recruiter found out that he could write, he was soon ‘under his fascination’ and was enlisted.⁸⁸

Wanderlust appears particularly conspicuous in the accounts of some soldier’s biographies, coupled with a desire to escape parental control, which eventually led them into the army. George Calladine was apprenticed as a framework knitter, and had a happy life, but he ‘had an inclination for roving, so it came to my mind to enlist for a soldier.’⁸⁹ Joseph Donaldson often played truant at school and even tried to run away to Surinam when he was only thirteen. After the shock of a short time at sea, he returned to Glasgow, but one night walking home from school he met a soldier and asked to join the army.⁹⁰ Charles O’Neil was apprenticed to a carpenter, ‘but the quiet habits, constant labour, - destitute of an exciting or romantic incident – of a mechanics life, ill suited the tastes I had already formed.’⁹¹

Boredom was not limited to civilian life, and militiamen could find the excitement, and potential promotions, of the line alluring. James Hale volunteered from the North Gloucester Militia as

There was no hopes of peace, I was rather inclined to extend my service, so that I might have opportunity of seeing some other country, for I was then quite tired of rambling about England, although the militia service is nothing but a mere pleasure.⁹²

Similar feeling could influence members of part-time forces. Thomas Morris decided to leave the Loyal Volunteer of St. George’s Middlesex after reading of ‘the heart-stirring accounts of sieges and battles; and the glorious achievements of the British troops in Spain, following each other in rapid succession’ which left him feeling ashamed of

⁸⁸ *Jottings from my Sabretache*, p. 7.

⁸⁹ Ferrar, *The Diary of Colour-Sergeant George Calladine*, p. 3.

⁹⁰ Joseph Donaldson, *Recollections of the Eventful Life of a Soldier, including the War in the Peninsula and Scenes and Sketches from Ireland*, (Staplehurst, 2000), p. 3-34.

⁹¹ Charles O’Neil, *The Military Adventures of Charles O’Neil*, (Worcester, 1851), p. 12.

⁹² James Hale, *Journal of James Hale, late sergeant 9th Foot*, (Cirencester, 1826), p. 5.

being only a part-time soldier.⁹³

Militiamen had to make a further choice once they had decided to volunteer for the line of which regiment they wanted to join. Personal reasons were undoubtedly influential: some volunteers from the Derbyshire Militia volunteered for the 19th because its depot was at Hull, and they 'wished to have a long march through the country.'⁹⁴ The militia volunteers preferred the light regiments, probably indicating that their martial reputation, or their progressive attitudes towards soldiers, was more important than joining particular county regiments. In 1809, the 2nd West Yorkshire witnessed sixty-one men volunteer to the 43rd, thirty-nine to the 52nd, fifty-eight to the 68th, five to the 85th and thirty-four to the 95th; a total of 197 out of 313 who volunteered. Only two other regiments, the 2nd and 50th, received militiamen in large numbers from the 2nd West Yorkshire. The Royal Carnarvon Militia was trained as light infantry and consequently twenty-nine of its forty-six volunteers chose the 52nd, and 128 men from the South Lincoln Militia joined the 95th, probably because they were stationed at Hythe barracks with them. The 95th was particularly popular in 1809 and by May, had attracted 1,286 volunteers.⁹⁵

Army recruits and militia volunteers took the decision to join the line for numerous reasons, of which their economic situation was only one. The Lancashire men recruited by the 2/6th in the Maidstone district ignored the numerous recruiting parties and regimental depots in London and the surrounding area, and were attracted by a recruiting party that championed their Lancashire roots. A Scottish soldier of the 71st specifically chose that corps because of its name, and because it already included so many of his fellow townsmen.⁹⁶ In some respects, Windham's idea of making a bargain with a potential recruit materialised, but not in the way he envisaged. To some men,

⁹³ John Selby (ed.), *Thomas Morris: The Napoleonic Wars*, pp. 2 & 5.

⁹⁴ Ferrar, *The Diary of Colour-Sergeant George Calladine*, p. 10.

⁹⁵ WO1/904, Return of Militia Volunteers, 20 May 1809

⁹⁶ *Vicissitudes in the Life of a Scottish Soldier, written by Himself*, p. 2.

status was as important as money, a factor that the short-service scheme failed to address.

Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to describe the average soldier of the period 1807-1815, and despite the shortcomings of the samples, some conclusions can be drawn. The soldiers who fought under Wellington were in their mid-twenties, and already had six years' service behind them. The NCOs who were immediately in charge of them would be a few years older. Before a soldier joined the army he would possibly have been an urban artisan, or a rural labourer, and, in both cases, it was likely that he had moved from his home parish before enlisting. The regiment in which he served was probably a mixture of men from other parts of the United Kingdom but it usually had one nationality dominant although, on account of the recruiting party system, men could come from different areas. In essence, the army would fairly accurately represent the lower end of the British society, with a mix of young men from different locations and trades.

The men that took the King's shilling often had several reasons for doing so, and were not always forced to join the army out of economic misfortune. A soldier's life was attractive to young men, particularly as the Peninsular War began to supply a stock of victories that glorified the humble rank and file (and the casualties from which opened up chances for promotion). During the Napoleonic Wars a cult of heroic endeavour developed which was not limited to patricians, nor even part-time volunteers;⁹⁷ Charles O'Neil, amongst other reasons for enlisting, felt soldiering was the only choice for a young man because 'the fair young damsels of our dear island – were scarcely willing to regard any young man as honourable or brave, who did not enlist'.⁹⁸

It is unquestionable that there were desperate characters in the army, but it is incorrect

⁹⁷ Colley, *Britons*, pp. 320-321

⁹⁸ Charles O'Neil, *The Military Adventures of Charles O'Neil*, p. 9.

to describe the entire army as such during the latter half of the Napoleonic Wars. In this context it is harsh to judge soldiers as those who did not fit easily into society.⁹⁹ Migration was prevalent in the UK and not just a symptom of those who rejected society's strictures, and it is clear that the army (or militia) was a viable alternative to civilian life. As with many judgements on the British Army, the character of the post-Waterloo army has been projected back onto the Napoleonic army, which has prejudiced observations on the rank and file during this period.

⁹⁹ Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 100.

Chapter 7: Deserters

Introduction

Desertion was a problem throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and was almost an accepted facet of European military life.¹ Britain was no exception, and every year between 1807 and 1815 the Horse Guards witnessed 2.9% of the rank and file abscond from their units. But the problem was more serious than just the loss of soldiers from the ranks. For the military, it could cripple units at particular moments, drastically affecting the morale of a regiment, and generally damaged the reputation of the army. It also had wider implications on society, forcing deserters into crime, and implicating civilians in their illegal behaviour. Some civilians did this reluctantly, others were keen to help a 'runaway hero', whilst there were those who saw the opportunity for profit. As desertion was a phenomenon of eighteenth-century armies, the problem in the UK had many similarities to desertion on the continent, but there were also peculiarities unique to Britain, which resulted in a very different approach from the policies of continental governments. This chapter will review the scale of the problem, the official policy on desertion and its implementation, the motivation of deserters, and the fates that befell them.

The Scale of the Problem

Between 1807 and 1815 Britain lost an average of 5,574 soldiers a year from the regulars through desertion, added to which were desertions from the militia, totalling 5,650 for 1811 and 1812,² spiralling to 3,934 for 1813.³ To put the scale of desertion in context, 50,166 men deserted between 1807 and 1815, 19.3% of all casualties; if the figures for 1807 to 1813 are examined (thus excluding the large number of discharges in

¹ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, p. 7; Andre Corvisier, *Armies and Society in Europe, 1494-1789*, (Bloomington, 1976), p. 179; Best, *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe*, p. 33; J. C. R. Childs, *Armies and Warfare in Europe, 1648-1789*, (Manchester, 1982), pp.71-73.

² *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 312-331, Return of death, discharges and desertions, Calvert, 26 July 1814.

³ WO162/326, Return of Casualties from 25 December 1812, 17 February 1814.

1814 and 1815 that were counted as casualties), 33,906 men deserted, 21.3% of all casualties in the regulars. Out of every five British soldiers who were casualties in the Napoleonic Wars, one was a deserter.

Desertion was a primarily a problem of the home army. In 1807 the army at home lost 5.1% of its strength through desertion, an amount that increased to 5.5% in 1808 and dropped to 4.0% in 1809,⁴ whilst the averages for the entire army were 1.9%, 2.2% and 1.6% respectively. The home army suffered more desertions than the army lost through deaths in 1807 and 1808, and only in 1809, with the combination of the Corunna retreat and Walcheren fever, did deaths outstrip the rate of desertion from troops at home.⁵

These figures were nothing unusual. Of the total desertions from British troops in 1810, 73.6% occurred in the United Kingdom, figures that are repeated in 1811.⁶ Although the percentage of desertions that occurred at home decreased in 1812 and 1813 (to 61.4% and 55.5% respectively), the actual proportion of the home army that deserted increased. In 1810 one in twenty of the soldiers stationed in the UK deserted, roughly equal to the average for 1807 to 1813, but, by 1812, this had risen to 7.2%, and despite being reduced in 1813 to 6.3%, it was still above the average for the period.⁷ Worse was to follow: in 1814 total desertions increased by over half to 8,857 men, and a similarly high rate was sustained in 1815.⁸ Unfortunately no detailed returns exist of where these desertions occurred, but the UK must have suffered endemic desertion from troops stationed at home in these years.

⁴ *CJ*, 1807, IV, 315, Return of deserters, AG, 10 August 1807; 1808, VII, 121, Return of Desertions and Effective Strength, 15 February 1808; 1810, XIII, 435, Return of deserters, Calvert, 16 February 1810.

⁵ The figures are 4.0% army died in 1807, 4.1% in 1808, and 7.0% in 1809.

⁶ WO25/3224, Casualty return for 1810, 15 November 1811; 3,459 desertions occurred in Britain, Ireland and the Channel Islands out of a total of 4,698; WO25/3225, Casualty Return for 1811 to 1813, 24 September 1813, WO162/326, Return of Casualties from 25 December 1812, AG's Office, 17 February 1814; WO162/326, Number of Desertions from the Regular Army, 5 April 1814. 3,631 desertions occurred in the U.K. from 5,026 in 1811 (72.2%), 3,632 from 5,918 (61.4%) in 1812, and 3,233 from 5,822 (55.5%) in 1813.

⁷ *CJ*, 1807, IV, 315, Return of Desertions, AG, 10 August 1807; 1808, VII, 121, Return of Desertions and Effective Strength, AG, 15 February 1808; 1810, XIII, 435, Return of Desertions, AG, 16 February 1810; 1813-14, XI, 261, Return of Casualties 1803 to 1812, 13 November 1812; WO25/3224, Casualty Return for 1807 to 1810, 5 April 1811; Casualty Return for 1810, AG, 15 November 1811; WO25/3225, Casualty Return, for 1811 to 1813, 24 September 1813.

⁸ WO162/326, Return of Casualties, 14 March 1815 & 6 March 1816.

Within the UK there were variations. Ireland, both troops stationed there, and troops from there, had an unenviable reputation for desertion.⁹ Detailed figures giving desertions in Britain and Ireland only exist for 1807, during which 6.2% of troops in Ireland deserted, compared to 4.6% in Britain. The Horse Guards believed there was a problem in Ireland, and so recruits for regiments with a battalion in Britain and Ireland were automatically sent to the battalion in Britain to reduce desertion.¹⁰ Evidence justified this view. Some units suffered terrible rates of desertion in Ireland. Out of the worst ten corps in 1811, seven were stationed in Ireland (1/37th, 2/90th, 2/84th, 2/59th, 2/21st, 2/32nd, and 2/40th). The 1/37th lost 173 men that year, in 1812, by contrast, when it was sent to England and later Gibraltar, it lost only 36 men. The pattern was not consistent, however. In same year that the 1/37th lost 173 men, there were 908 desertions from units stationed in Ireland for the entire year, from a total of 3,139 desertions from units with a presence in the UK given in the return, equating to 28.9%. The 1/5th had only twenty-six desertions during its stay in Ireland in 1811, slightly less than in 1813 when the unit travelled to England and then Spain.¹¹

An example of the variation in desertion is provided by the 6th Foot, one of the Horse Guards' 'ideal' regiments as its first battalion served as part of the disposable force, whilst the second battalion remained at home recruiting and sending drafts to its sister battalion. When the first battalion was at home, it averaged losses of 3.2% of its strength per year due to desertion (with a range of 2.9%); while abroad, the battalion only lost 0.8% a year on average through desertion. The second battalion averaged a loss of 4% of its strength a year by desertions.¹² This only abated when the battalion was sent to Jersey, which, though still part of the United Kingdom, was a military environment and difficult to escape from.

⁹ One sixth of the Irish establishment deserted in 1780, Best, *War and Society in Revolutionary Europe*, p. 33.

¹⁰ WO3/195, Calvert to Adjutant General of Ireland, 31 May 1808.

¹¹ *CJ*, 1813-14, XI, 312-331, Return of Deaths and Desertions, 26 July 1814.

¹² WO17/104, 259 and 274, Monthly Returns of 6th Foot.

The second major basis of desertion in the army was the foreign and colonial troops, particularly the former. The foreign corps' desertion rates were the reverse of those of the British units: foreign units stationed in the UK only lost 3.1% on average every year between 1810 and 1812, much lower than the rates of British units in the UK. Whilst overseas foreign corps lost 2.5% per year, four times the average loss from British troops overseas. A detailed examination makes the contrast even more apparent. Between 1810 and 1813, 61.2% of all desertions overseas were from foreign and colonial corps. In addition, desertions from all foreign and colonial units increased from 1.9% of their strength in 1809 to 3.3% in 1813.¹³ Every year desertions from these units increased by a third, comparing with an average yearly increase of 6.6% from British troops.

Desertion from these units was unsurprising. As the war proved more protracted prisoners of war and deserters were increasingly used to fill their ranks, rather than the natives of particular areas as they had done when first formed. This policy was even encouraged by government, as it sought to increase the size of the army,¹⁴ particularly in the Iberian Peninsula. But to the men who joined Wellington's army in this way, Spain was their 'home', from a point of view of desertion, they could easily leave units, and had the language and knowledge to be able to depart quickly from the area.¹⁵ With army stragglers, brigandage, and an endemic lack of civil authority in some areas, a Spanish, French, German or Polish deserter in Spain could easily never be heard of again. It is indicative of the problem that Wellington refused to put foreign regiments on outpost duty, and even suggested that some of them be sent to the security of Gibraltar. Elsewhere in the Mediterranean the situation was even worse: from the Sicily command of the 401

¹³ *CJ*, 1807, IV, 315, Return of Desertions, AG, 10 August 1807; 1808, VII, 121, Return of Desertions and Effective Strength, AG, 15 February 1808; 1810, XII, 435, Return of Desertions, AG, 16 February 1810; 1813-14, XI, 261, Return of Casualties 1803 to 1812, 13 November 1812; WO25/3224, Casualty return for 1807 to 1810, 5 April 1811; Casualty Return for 1810, AG, 15 November 1811; WO25/3225, Casualty Return, for 1811 to 1813, 24 September 1813.

¹⁴ See Chapter 4.

¹⁵ One British soldier, who spoke Spanish, was able to desert from Wellington's army. See Andrew Pearson, *The Autobiography of Anthony Pearson: A Peninsular Veteran*, (Edinburgh, 1865), pp. 88-92.

men who deserted in 1813, only four were British.¹⁶

Desertion in North America during 1814 and 1815 was the final major component of the levels of desertion from the British army. Desertion in 1814 and 1815 increased massively both from foreign and British troops, a phenomenon which may have been connected to the campaign in North America. The 1/6th lost thirty-three men by desertion in 1815, a very high level of desertion by its standards (unfortunately no comparison can be made with its strength). Whilst campaigning in Spain during 1812, only three men had deserted. The number of general courts martial held for desertion provides another index of the scale of the problem. During 1815, twenty-one were held in North America, three times the number in 1814, and prior to that from 1807 to 1813 only fifty-one courts martial were held for desertion in Canada, an average of just over eleven a year. In 1815, only in Europe (i.e. France) were more courts martial held for desertion.¹⁷

A deserter was not always a permanent loss to the army. There was a chance that he would be recaptured, although no official statistics on this survive. But, the regimental monthly returns do give an entry for deserters returned. In the 15th Light Dragoons, between 1807 and 1815 102 men deserted, whilst during the same period thirty-three men were returned to the regiment from desertion. In the 1/36th thirty-seven out of eight-eight were recaptured, and the regiment's second battalion saw 105 out of 236 deserters brought back to their unit.¹⁸ Although these units' statistics might not be representative, they suggest that between a third and a half of all deserters were recaptured or gave themselves up, and returned to their corps. The last caveat is important, because not all recaptured deserters were returned to their regiments, some were to face the full force of military law, and others were sent to the army's specific penal corps. Moreover, some deserters may have re-enlisted and were never caught. Considering these factors, perhaps

¹⁶ WO162/326, Number of deserters from the Regular Army at home and abroad during 1813, 5 April 1814.

¹⁷ WO92/1.

¹⁸ 15th LD: WO17/41, 257, 272, 288; 36th: WO17/146, 262, 277, 292.

as many as half all deserters escaped the army permanently.

Official Policy on Desertion, and its Implementation.

The obvious starting point to tackle desertion was to try to stop soldiers leaving units. To this end, the Horse Guards used the UK's small islands to hold troops, particularly the Isle of Wight, and to a lesser extent the Channel Islands. Any deserter, unless he was extremely resourceful (and sometimes they were), would be automatically confined to a small area, and so the chances of recapture were much higher. Even the psychological effect of being surrounded by water could resign a soldier to accept his lot. But the Horse Guards made no attempts at understanding the problem, and so because of the potential drain on Britain's army and the damaging effects on morale, the official attitude to desertion was harsh. Any deserter faced the prospect of a general court martial that could impose the death penalty, and had a whole range of options from transportation to a penal colony to service abroad, whilst a soldier who deserted twice faced the prospect of being marked forever by a 'D' two inches below his left armpit.¹⁹ Nor were these punishments theoretical. A deserter from the 37th was sentenced to 500 lashes and to be marked with the letter 'D', and although the Prince Regent commuted the flogging, he was still branded.²⁰ General courts martial used the array of sentences at their disposal. Out of the 395 general courts martial held in this period, most culprits were sentenced to general-service (132, or 33.4%), which usually meant unlimited service in one of the penal corps. But the second highest category of sentence was transportation for life (117 men) to New South Wales. If the other sentences of transportation are included (for a limited period, usually seven years, after which they would be attached to the corps at that place), then the total rises to 178 men, roughly half of all sentences. Other sentences included corporal punishment, prison, and ten deserters were sentenced to death. None of these death sentences, however, were carried out in the period; the monarch commuted

¹⁹ 47 Geo. III, c32, sec. vi; Mutiny Act, 23 March 1807.

²⁰ WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 29 May 1813.

these sentences to lesser punishments.²¹

This draconian level of justice was matched by increasing levels of supervision by the army. With monthly returns and the bi-annual inspections, regiments with high levels of desertion could expect a demand for an explanation from the Horse Guards. In March 1807, after careful scrutiny of the monthly returns by the Adjutant-General's department, the 18th Light Dragoons, 1/3rd, 1/8th, 2/21st, 2/28th, 2/40th and 2/47th were all singled out because of their high rates of desertion in February. All the units were predictably in Ireland, and the 18th Light Dragoons and 2/28th received more demands for explanations for their March returns. The Adjutant General also had the ignominy of asking the commander of the first battalion of his own regiment (the 14th) to explain the desertion rates in that corps.²² The Horse Guards continued this practice throughout the period.²³ By 1812 a return of every deserter had to be sent into the Horse Guards giving full details of the deserter, which was then compiled into detailed books, enabling the Horse Guards to keep a closer eye on desertion in particular corps.²⁴

The organisation of the UK into military districts gave the Horse Guards a permanent military presence that could be used to form parties to recapture deserters. James Berry, a deserter from the 25th probably thought he was safe whilst he was at sea, but when his ship berthed at Liverpool, a party was despatched to claim him.²⁵ James Guttridge, a deserter from the Royal Wagon Train, also received a visit on board the *Zealand*, after orders were sent to the local general officer.²⁶ But it is easy to overestimate the state's power and the army did not use all the powers it had, nor did it have the manpower available to tackle desertion systematically.

Military justice was never fully applied to most deserters. As noted above, there

²¹ WO92/1.

²² WO3/193, Calvert to Adjutant-General in Ireland, 13 March 1807; Wynyard to Adjutant General in Ireland, 17 March 1807.

²³ WO3/45, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Cartwright, 31 March 1808 (on desertions from 3rd and 4th Dragoons).

²⁴ 52 Geo. III, c 22, Mutiny Act, 20 March 1812.

²⁵ WO3/42, Calvert to Fisher, 23 March 1807.

²⁶ WO3.43, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Lord Forbes, 27 August 1807.

were just under 400 general courts martial between 1807 and 1815, including trials of militiamen, a tiny fraction of total desertions in the period. General courts martial took time to assemble, and could not process the sheer numbers of deserters. It is clear that military justice was being used selectively, for exemplary purposes. In 1807 James Thompson was considered ‘a fit subject to be made an example of’ after he deserted from the 55th, and confessed to desertion from the Ayrshire Militia.²⁷ John McAnalty was also chosen as an example after he deserted ‘from three services in a very short space of time.’ Remarkably, the trial eventually benefited him: he was sentenced to transportation as a felon, but pardoned by the King, because of his defence that he fell in with bad company who encouraged him to desert, and informed his officers that he was onboard a ship and wanted to be claimed.²⁸ Samuel Hulston was singled out for a trial as he had deserted from the Ayrshire Militia, twice from the line, and after commuting his sentence to service abroad, he then deserted from the Royal West Indian Rangers. Rather shrewdly, he gave himself up to the Ayrshire Militia, hoping his career in desertion would not be discovered.²⁹

Underneath general courts martial there were further layers of military courts that could try desertion. Garrison courts martial were instituted, but most deserters were probably dealt with at a regimental level. The Articles of War permitted regiments particular latitude in this respect, as the final section allowed regimental courts martial to try ‘all disorders and neglects, which officers and soldiers may be guilty of, to the prejudice of good order and military discipline.’³⁰ This also gave the regiment alternative charges for deserters – usually absent without leave, thus, perhaps, hiding the true level of desertion in the army. There were limits to regimental authority, and when the

²⁷ WO3/44, Wynyard to Lt. Col. Sir James Blair (OC Ayrshire Militia), 30 November 1807.

²⁸ WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Pigot, 7 April 1808. His trial was on the 24 April 1808 (WO92/1), and the proceedings are in WO71/213.

²⁹ WO3/46, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Somerset, 28 October 1808. The sentence of his general court martial was 500 lashes, WO92/1.

³⁰ G. A. Stepler, ‘British Military Law, Discipline and the conduct of Regimental Courts Martial in the later Eighteenth Century’, *EHR*, 102 (1987), p. 863.

commanding officer of the Westmeath Militia offered terms to a deserter, the Horse Guards informed the local general that the soldier was also a deserter from the West Indian Rangers. Calvert informed all involved that the sole power for offering terms resided with the King.³¹

Even at regimental level trials were probably infrequent for similar reasons that general courts martial were not held. In 1812 the Horse Guards suggested that deserters should either go to a battalion of their corps if it was at home, or to the army depot; regimental depots were neither secure nor offered much chance of sufficient officers being available to form a court-martial.³² Consequently, many commanding officers gave captured deserters the chance to either accept service overseas, or take the chance of a trial that would probably inflict a higher penalty. James Flint was sent overseas, despite the Horse Guards' wish to try him, because of the inconvenience of assembling the necessary officers.³³ Such proceedings still needed the sanction of the Horse Guards, but they never refused an offer.³⁴ This option was regulated, and only permitted if the man was fit, had certified his willingness to commute, and was backed by the authority of a general officer,³⁵ thus ensuring that regimental officers did not abuse the system. The option was usually only offered if there were 'no circumstances of aggravation' that attended the desertion.³⁶

Within these confines, the army used the threat of a trial, but often offered pardons to ensure that soldiers continued serving. The Horse Guards began recommending the practice to commanding officers. Lieutenant General Ludlow at Canterbury was informed that the deserter Henry Gaunt of the 2/9th would be pardoned if he transferred to a

³¹ WO3/196, Calvert to Bgd. Gen. Taylor, 4 January 1809.

³² WO3/158, Calvert to Merry, 24 April 1812.

³³ WO3/42, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Pigot, 30 January 1807.

³⁴ For instance WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Mackenzie, 27 May 1808, informing him that HRH Duke of York approved of Edward Doran (2nd Dragoon Guards) serving abroad rather than having a trial; WO3/195, Calvert to OC Army Depot, 26 August 1808.

³⁵ WO3/47, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Tarleton, 17 November 1808. If he was a deserter from the militia, it also required the consent of his Lord Lieutenant.

³⁶ WO3/49, 28 September 1809.

regiment overseas.³⁷ When in 1809 George Parry of the 7th Light Dragoons was informed that he could either serve abroad with the infantry, or take the chance of a court martial for the crime of repeated desertion, it was clear that the court martial's sentence would be much harsher.³⁸ From 1812 it became official policy to try to persuade deserters 'to volunteer for Service Abroad, instead of taking their trial, and that, when their consent can be obtained, they are generally sent out of the country',³⁹ and from then on a system developed for the treatment of deserters. Initially all deserters were sent to the army depot,⁴⁰ but later their fitness was tested at the nearest military station, so it could be quickly decided if they were to go to their regiments, or sent to the army depot for service abroad or be discharged.⁴¹ By 1812, any deserter travelling across the country had to have papers which explained whether his punishment was commuted to general-service, if he confessed, or if he was sentenced to service abroad, so that on arrival at the army depot the commandant there could dispose of him accordingly and quickly.⁴²

Reducing the use of trials, and sending most deserters on foreign service suited the Horse Guards. The army had no wish to lose men through punishments that would certainly discourage deserters from returning, and probably exacerbate the problem. During the trial of William Jones witnesses repeatedly reported that Jones said that if he was punished he would desert again.⁴³ Calvert was reluctant to sanction the branding of soldiers, despite the fact that it was permitted by the Mutiny Act.⁴⁴ Furthermore, the government was reluctant to punish men who had deserted for a long time, particularly if they were old or of no use to the army. A deserter from the 3rd was caught in Lincoln in 1807, after fourteen years, but was 'very ruptured' and so was discharged.⁴⁵ In the same

³⁷ WO3/46, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Ludlow, 10 August 1808; see also WO3/46, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Whetham, 19 September 1808.

³⁸ WO3/49, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Burrard, 27 September 1809.

³⁹ WO3/158, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 13 April 1812.

⁴⁰ WO3/158, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 12 September 1812.

⁴¹ WO3/158, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 10 December 1812; WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 4 February 1814.

⁴² WO3/158, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 10 September 1812.

⁴³ WO71/216, Trial of William Jones, 15th Foot, 9 January 1809.

⁴⁴ WO3/48, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Cockburn, 22 July 1809.

⁴⁵ WO3/155, Deputy Adjutant General to Moore, 24 August 1807.

year another man who deserted in 1793 was caught, and also given a discharge, and, in 1814, a deserter from the Army of Reserve who was 47, and had rheumatic pain in his head and breast, was also discharged.⁴⁶ Hugh Martin, a deserter from the 47th, was only considered fit for garrison duty, and so was discharged.⁴⁷ In 1810, during a deserter amnesty, all unfit deserters were given a discharge because it was 'unnecessary and inexpedient to burden the Garrison Battalions with men of that description.' So Patrick and Hugh Graham, both of the 94th, escaped any kind of justice because of the ulcers that both of them had.⁴⁸

As with much of military justice, each judgement took account of the circumstances and the character of the deserter, which resulted in an apparent lack of consistency. Whereas the army wanted a deserter from the Army of Reserve who was caught in 1811 to serve, if it was legal,⁴⁹ it required that a man who was feigning rheumatism in Colchester jail should be sent to the army depot and thereafter embarked for the first battalion of his regiment overseas.⁵⁰ It decided that a deserter from the Coldstream Guards should be ordered on overseas service if he was fit enough,⁵¹ and required that Anthony Pearson, a deserter from the 2/24th, who was only fit for garrison duty, should also be embarked for overseas service in the 3rd Garrison Battalion at Malta.⁵²

The army's manpower demands meant that the Horse Guards were keen to keep men in uniform. If the deserter's case was simple, or he surrendered himself, he was often returned to the regiment. A deserter from the 68th was sent back to his regiment and ordered to be treated with leniency as he had 'no circumstances aggravating his case', and

⁴⁶ WO3/155, Wynyard to Moore, 29 October 1807; WO3/159, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 12 August 1814.

⁴⁷ WO3/158, Calvert to Merry, 21 September 1812.

⁴⁸ WO3/198, Calvert to Bgd. Gen. Taylor, 30 January 1810; WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Vyse, 6 January 1810.

⁴⁹ WO3/157, Wynyard to Merry, 1 May 1811.

⁵⁰ WO3/157, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 25 March 1811.

⁵¹ WO3/158, Wynyard to Deputy Secretary at War, 28 November 1812.

⁵² WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 22 May 1813.

a deserter from the 11th Light Dragoons received similar treatment.⁵³ Most deserters were allowed to commute their punishment to service abroad. A deserter from the 84th was sentenced to join the regiment's battalion overseas,⁵⁴ as was Jason Mills, a deserter from the 4th Dragoon Guards,⁵⁵ and a recruit deserter was embarked for the 2/1st in India.⁵⁶ This created some interesting dilemmas for the army. Deserters from the 1st Foot were initially sent to the first battalion in the West Indies as punishment,⁵⁷ but the Horse Guards soon changed this policy. A suggestion to send culprits from the Foot Guards to the 1/1st was refused,⁵⁸ and after some consideration it was decided that 'it never ought to be considered a mark of disgrace to be removed to another battalion of the regiment.'⁵⁹ When six deserters were attached to a detachment of the 2/89th going to the first battalion in India, this almost certainly affected the morale of those who had chosen to serve in the first battalion.⁶⁰ When a deserter from the 1/4th agreed to serve abroad, as the battalion was under orders, Calvert suggested either a different punishment, or offered to send him to another regiment.⁶¹ To avoid these situations, it became increasingly prevalent to send culprits to colonial corps, specific penal units, and the East India Company's army.⁶²

The numbers of deserters and other criminals led to the creation of specific penal corps of selected (i.e. young) men from the prison ships (the Royal African Corps, Royal West Indian Rangers, the York Light Infantry Volunteers, and later the York Chasseurs).⁶³ They provided a useful addition to an over-stretched army. After an order to turn over all 'disposable deserters' in the prison ships at the army depot in 1807,⁶⁴ 551 men were taken

⁵³ WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 30 April 1810; WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 21 May 1811.

⁵⁴ WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 7 January 1811.

⁵⁵ WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 4 January 1811.

⁵⁶ WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 24 July 1813.

⁵⁷ WO3/43, Calvert to Kent, 5 May 1807; WO3/197, Calvert to Lt. Col. Barlow (Army Depot), 5 May 1807.

⁵⁸ WO3/193, Calvert to Lt. Col. Barlow, 2 May 1807.

⁵⁹ WO3/44, Wynyard to Kent, 20 October 1807.

⁶⁰ WO3/45, Wynyard to Maj. Gen. Whetham, 13 April 1808.

⁶¹ WO3/45, Calvert to Bgd. Gen. Clinton, 2 May 1808.

⁶² WO3/195, Wynyard to Taylor, 26 November 1808; WO3/198, Wynyard to OC Army Depot, 19 April 1810.

⁶³ WO1/774, Williams to Sir George Shee, 17 February 1807; WO1/638, Gordon to Stewart, 28 June 1808; WO3/158, Calvert to Merry, 13 February 1812 (for 103rd).

⁶⁴ WO3/193, Calvert to OC Army Depot, 9 July 1807.

from the hulks to join the Royal West Indian Rangers.⁶⁵ Later, in 1808, 138 prisoners were selected from Woolwich and Portsmouth for the Royal York Rangers.⁶⁶ In 1809 more deserters were chosen for the newly formed Royal African Corps; until its establishment of 800 rank and file was complete, all deserters arriving at the army depot were attached to the corps.⁶⁷ They were then usually sent to the most inhospitable garrisons, where there was little chance of escape again. Before they even got to their new stations, they were treated with suspicion; they were sent to the army depot (and still classed as deserters until they reached there),⁶⁸ and then to the Channel Islands or the Scilly Islands, all bases that were difficult to escape from.⁶⁹

However, disposing of large numbers of deserters in this way caused its own problems. The prison hulks in the Medina on the Isle of Wight were constantly overflowing, and new ships were bought to increase the capacity there.⁷⁰ Some of the 140 recruits from the prison hulks that joined regiments in the West Indies and Africa had been in prison for three or four years.⁷¹ In 1812 deserters could no longer be sent to the Isle of Wight as the hulks could not accommodate them, whilst repeated applications were made for them to be shipped overseas by the Transport Board.⁷² In 1813 it was suggested that a new corps for the Cape of Good Hope be formed from commuted deserters, as there were 4-500 at the army depot.⁷³ By 1815 there were 746 convicts and deserters which the Horse Guards desperately wanted to send to the Mediterranean and the West Indies, 'The prison ships in the Isle of Wight being in such a crowded state as to render it most desirable to be relieved from these men.'⁷⁴ By May 1815, 1,024 deserters and culprits

⁶⁵ WO1/635, Gordon to Cooke, 25 July 1807; WO6/133, Stewart to Gordon, 20 January 1808; Gordon to Stewart, 9 April 1808.

⁶⁶ WO3/45, Wynyard to Bgd. Gen. Fraser, 18 March 1808.

⁶⁷ WO3/197, Calvert to OC Army Depot, 2 August 1809; Wynyard to Taylor, 26 August 1809.

⁶⁸ WO3/155, Wynyard to Moore, 17 March & 5 April 1808.

⁶⁹ WO1/634, Gordon to Cockburn, 2 March 1807, suggesting depot on the Sicily Isles.

⁷⁰ WO1/639, James Taylor to Gordon, 18 July 1808, asking for the Buffalo, an ex-transport, Gordon to Stewart; WO1/638, 28 June 1808, the Dido was over capacity.

⁷¹ WO6/133, Stewart to Gordon, 20 January 1808.

⁷² WO3/158, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 23 October 1812, & 27 October 1812.

⁷³ WO1/657, York to Bathurst, 18 October 1813.

⁷⁴ WO1/660, Torrens to Bunbury, 20 May 1815.

were sent to regiments overseas,⁷⁵ and, by December, they were joined by 500 more sent to the East Indies.⁷⁶

There was one final factor that contributed to the army's apparent lack of firmness towards desertion: the difficulty in capturing, identifying and prosecuting deserters. One obvious method was to send a NCO who knew the deserter to find him, but even this could prove difficult. The author of *Jottings from my Sabretache* was sent on such a mission. Attired in civilian clothes made by the regimental tailor, his only clue 'was two dashing London female acquaintances'. He waited at their house until the deserters visited, and then stowed away in their carriage. When they alighted at Whitechapel, he attempted to follow them, but soon had no sight of them.⁷⁷

Guildford, a military town on the main route from London to Portsmouth, provides a snapshot of the desertion problem. John White claimed he had been discharged from the 7th Royal Veteran Battalion, and had left his discharge papers with a friend, but, after being confronted by a private of his old corps (the 9th Light Dragoons), he confessed.⁷⁸ John MacGuire, a deserter from the 1/19th, had the misfortune to come across the soldier who enlisted him two years before, albeit when he used the alias of John Collins.⁷⁹ Inevitably many cases in the town were not this simple, and one deserter had the nerve to let the authorities prove his guilt, which meant a series of voluminous correspondence between the local magistrate, the War Office, the regiment's agent, and the prisoner's commanding officer. John Edmunds of the 21st Light Dragoons told the local magistrates, under oath, that he had a furlough from his commanding officer to attend to some business. He could not complete his affairs before the furlough expired, but applied to his Colonel to prolong it, and went to see some friends at Stratford. On his way back he had lost the furlough somewhere between Petersfield and Guildford. The

⁷⁵ WO3/160, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 26 May 1815.

⁷⁶ WO3/161, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 15 December 1815.

⁷⁷ *Jottings from my Sabretache*, pp. 114-115.

⁷⁸ SHC, BR/QS/5/25, Oaths of John White and George Nethercott, 5 February 1808.

⁷⁹ SHC, BR/QS/5/25, Information of Nathaniel Lening, 21 December 1808.

man who arrested him believed him to be a deserter, and so the War Office had to check with the commanding officer to corroborate his story.⁸⁰ James Walker, who was in the Royal Military Artificers for nineteen years, had returned to the UK from Gibraltar with three other men who were to be discharged because they were unfit. Whilst in a public house the other three men left him, taking the furlough for all of them. He was later arrested as a deserter in Guildford because he had no furlough.⁸¹ Thomas Crabtree of the 2nd West Yorkshire Militia was apprehended in the town by a corporal of the 3rd Foot Guards, but after reference to the lieutenant colonel, Torre, it transpired that he was provisionally enlisted and on his way to his regiment.⁸²

This pattern was repeated throughout the UK. Thomas Fitzgibbon, a deserter from the 1/62nd, was sent to the army depot, where, if he was recognised by anyone there, he was to be tried, otherwise he would go out to the battalion in the Mediterranean.⁸³ Patrick Skinner was confined at Winchester gaol as a deserter, but as well as ordering an investigation into the prisoner, Calvert also wanted inquiries to be made into the person whose evidence had led to his arrest.⁸⁴ At the court martial of James Higgins, alias Clarke, it was decided that he had never enlisted, and the Commander in Chief felt duty bound to remunerate the accused for his fourteen-month stay in prison.⁸⁵

These problems stemmed from the lack of comprehensive details about individual soldiers. James, alias William, MacDonald was released, although he was suspected of being a deserter, as all the Horse Guards could ascertain was that he had enlisted while unfit in the 75th, not in itself a crime.⁸⁶ Three men in 1815 had not joined their regiments at home, but Calvert could not be sure that they were deserters as they could have joined other battalions of their regiments.⁸⁷ False accusations and mistakes were inevitable with

⁸⁰ SHC, BR/QS/5/24, Oaths of John Edmunds and Jonathan Benson, 28 November 1807.

⁸¹ SHC, BR/QS/5/26, Confession of James Walker, and oath of John Tucker, 21 June 1809.

⁸² SHC, BR/QS/5/29-31, Oath of Cpl. John Garron; Merry to Town Clerk Guildford, 9 September 1813.

⁸³ WO3/157, Wynyard to Moore, 14 September 1809.

⁸⁴ WO3/43, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Sir James Craig, 2 July 1807.

⁸⁵ WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 2 August 1813.

⁸⁶ WO3/158, Darling to Merry, 28 September 1812.

⁸⁷ WO3/160, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 7 March 1815.

a decentralised army bureaucracy. Two men who were thought to be deserters had to be sent back to their homes, as they were falsely apprehended,⁸⁸ and, after five months in prison, Patrick Roch was sent back to Ireland with five guineas, as there was no evidence of him being a deserter from the 2nd.⁸⁹ In such circumstances, it is unsurprising that the army relied heavily on confessions. Out of the nineteen deserters arrested in Guildford, twelve confessed, thus drastically reducing the workload of the local authorities and the War Office.⁹⁰

The desire to deal with deserters quickly led to the army encouraging deserters to surrender. Although Calvert explicitly stated that ‘no terms can possibly be entered into with a deserter,’ he afterwards added to the local general who had received a message from a deserter that if he surrendered himself, ‘HRH will be disposed to take his case into favourable consideration’.⁹¹ Morgan Morgan also received a similar assurance that he would get a discharge, under terms not specified, if he surrendered.⁹² Sir David Dundas during his tenure as commander in chief did not alter this policy, but at the same time assured one deserter that if he surrendered he would be treated leniently.⁹³ Typically, the troublesome Royal Dukes who were colonels exceeded their authority. Wynyard had to reprimand the Duke of York’s brother Cumberland after he had tried to discharge a deserter before he had even given himself up.⁹⁴

The government was also unwilling to use authoritarian methods to capture deserters. The commander of the depot of the 19th suggested that the mail of a deserter’s parents should be intercepted to locate him, as it was thought that he was making his way to the USA. However, the Home Office replied that it was ‘by no means a case in which it would be proper to have recourse to the measure suggested.’⁹⁵ There was also the problem

⁸⁸ WO3/157, Wynyard to Merry, 16 July 1810.

⁸⁹ WO3/158, Calvert to Merry, 28 November 1811.

⁹⁰ SHC, BR/QS/5/24-31, papers on deserters, 1808 to 1815.

⁹¹ WO3/44, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Pigot, 5 September 1807.

⁹² WO3/45, Wynyard to Gen. Norton, 1 February 1808.

⁹³ WO3/49, Calvert to Lord Somerset, 25 August 1809.

⁹⁴ WO3/45, Wynyard to Cumberland, 7 March 1808.

⁹⁵ HO50/422, Lawrence (OC 19th’s Depot) to Secretary at War, 31 October 1811; HO51/172, Beckett to Merry, 11 November 1811.

of escorting deserters across the country, and inevitably some men escaped again.⁹⁶

To alleviate the problem of deserters periodically general pardons were issued, allowing them to rejoin their regiments without reprisals, demonstrating the government's overriding need for men above its desire to uphold the law, and the difficulty of an eighteenth-century state in catching deserters. During the crisis of 1815, all men who returned to their regiments before the 20 July were pardoned, and sent to their regiments at the earliest opportunity.⁹⁷ In autumn 1807 it was suggested that a pardon be offered 'to a number of deserters who have concealed themselves ... in the western part of Ireland'⁹⁸ and, in 1813, a pardon was again offered to deserters in Ireland because it was 'almost impossible to apprehend them in the usual mode.'⁹⁹ But the 1808 proclamation warned that after the expiration of the pardon 'the most vigorous measures will be adopted to apprehend and punish those who do not accept HM's pardon'; in future the Hue and Cry was to be sent to parish officials, and descriptions of deserters were stuck up in conspicuous places in parishes, thus preventing 'deserters from returning to their homes and imposing on their friends and family.'¹⁰⁰ These pardons were not fully understood, and some men of the Royal York Rangers tried to claim them.¹⁰¹ It is symptomatic of the failure of the army to address the problem that pardons were offered in 1809 and 1815. However, given the restraints on Britain's manpower, the army judged it better to encourage deserters to surrender, than to hunt them down with any degree of vigour.

The Deserters

The reasons why desertions were not treated in a uniform manner across the army derived from the differing motives and the variable opportunities of the potential deserter. A soldier obviously needed strong reasons to leave the army and risk the punishment if

⁹⁶ WO3/155, Wynyard to Moore, 18 December 1807.

⁹⁷ HO50/431, Palmerstone to Sidmouth, 22 May 1815; WO3/160, Memo, Assistant Adjutant General, 29 July 1815.

⁹⁸ HO51/171, Beckett to Gordon, 25 September 1807.

⁹⁹ HO51/172, HO to Torrens, 15 February 1813; Beckett to Torrens, 2 April 1813.

¹⁰⁰ HO50/409, Calvert to Beckett, 17 June 1808.

¹⁰¹ WO3/46, Wynyard to Bgd. Gen. Whetham, 27 June 1808.

caught, but these motivations had to contend with the differing circumstances of each individual.

Contemporaries believed that desertion was principally caused by the bounty. Windham's reforms were meant to address this problem and reduce desertion because the bounty was smaller; desertion, he believed, 'did not proceed so much from the desire to get free from the restraints of a soldier's life, as from the temptation of a fresh bounty in another corps.'¹⁰² But the desire to leave the army did exist and three categories of desertion can be discerned: those who enlisted as recruits and then deserted - a response to the initial shock of a regimented life style; those who absconded after some service, disgruntled with officers, conditions of service, or for a host of personal reasons; and those who were tempted into desertion by the offer of bounties elsewhere. All three could lead to repeated desertion.

Recruit deserters were the major problem for the army. It was estimated that one in ten recruits deserted;¹⁰³ if this were true, approximately 1,250 deserters per year were recruits, accounting for one fifth of desertions. Of the deserter returns sampled from 1812 onwards, 14% of deserters left within a month, and within a year 54% of desertions occurred.¹⁰⁴ Desertion from recruiting parties was considerable, but as they did not get the full bounty money until they arrived at the regimental headquarters, the financial impact was lessened. It was for this reason that recruiting at headquarters was criticised, as the recruit got all his levy money, and could then leave.¹⁰⁵ This was the problem with recruits, they had just received what to them was a large sum of money, yet often had a considerable journey before they reached their regiment.

The desertion of recruits is easy to understand. Many innocent men, who took the King's shilling, had their expectations raised by the recruiting sergeant, yet found the

¹⁰² WO1/637, York to Castlereagh, 22 January 1808.

¹⁰³ WO1/637, York to Castlereagh, 22 January 1808.

¹⁰⁴ WO27/2906-2907. The regiments sampled are 1st & 2nd Dragoon Guards, 7th-10th Light Dragoons, 1/1st Foot Guards, 2nd, 6th, 2/36th, 42nd, 2/88th.

¹⁰⁵ WO1/1115, E. B. Littlehales to Sir George Shee, 14 March 1807.

reality of life in the army vastly different from their hopes. In the remarkable story of Charles O'Neil (who deserted twice and enlisted in three different regiments yet was never caught), he recounts his burning desire for the life of a soldier, fuelled by stories of adventure, but after he joined the 8th at Belfast, the 'rigid life of discipline baulked,' especially as he had enlisted to escape the constraints of home. It was now the excitement of desertions that enthralled him: 'The very romance connected with the undertaking, and the thrilling interest that existed in listening to these adventures, strengthened in my mind my desire to share in their experience.' However, it was a punishment for a breach of discipline, when he felt he was innocent, which determined him to leave.¹⁰⁶

More common was homesickness, exacerbated in some cases by disobeying their parent's wishes. Sergeant Greenleigh recollected 'the dagger that pierced me to my heart' because he had rebelled against his parents wishes and enlisted.¹⁰⁷ A sergeant of the 43rd described his first night in barracks shortly after he enlisted:

[my] memory began to be busy. I could not help thinking of the peaceful fire-side I had left; and in despite of my most vigorous effort to shake off the intrusion, conscience would not be denied, and the image of my mother, deserted at her utmost need, and pinched perhaps by want, was a source of great uneasiness. But having passed the Rubicon, retreat I knew was out of the question.¹⁰⁸

Thomas Morris also had a similar experience in his first few nights, and like the sergeant of the 43rd, felt he could not go back.¹⁰⁹ For many, the temptation was too much, and like Charles O'Neil, they returned home.

To tackle the problem of recruits deserting, the army reduced the opportunities they had to abscond. Recruits were closely supervised, and the time they spent travelling overland was reduced. The overall aim was to remove a recruit from familiar surroundings as quickly as possible. For instance, recruits for the 20th, 32nd, 38th, 61st, 72nd, 76th, and 90th from the north west of England were sent to their regiments in Ireland

¹⁰⁶ Charles O'Neil, *The Military Adventures of Charles O'Neil*, pp. 19-20.

¹⁰⁷ *The Veteran Soldier: An Interesting Narrative of the Life and Religious Experience of the Late Sergeant Greenleigh*, p.28.

¹⁰⁸ *Memoirs of a Sergeant Late in the Forty-Third Light Infantry Regiment*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁹ John Selby (ed.), *Thomas Morris: The Napoleonic Wars*, pp. 7-8.

via Liverpool, not the army depot.¹¹⁰ There were also specific problem areas that needed separate treatment, particularly Ireland and London. Irish militia volunteers for the line were not allowed to join corps in Ireland because they could easily desert from them,¹¹¹ and so the single battalion regiments in Ireland were shipped over to Britain allowing Irish militiamen to join them there,¹¹² and recruits for other regiments were sent to the army depot and shipped to their battalions overseas at the earliest opportunity.¹¹³ It was suggested that the recruiting districts in Ireland had to be changed as the Limerick district, though the smallest, had the highest desertion rates. Limerick was in a disturbed state after the rebellion, and a recruit from there had to march up to sixty miles to the nearest port, giving him ample opportunity to reconsider his situation and leave the army.¹¹⁴ The answer for London, and later the whole south east,¹¹⁵ was to establish a depot at Tilbury fort, from which recruits were shipped to the army depot. The fort was used in this way temporarily in 1807, and proved so effective in reducing desertion that it was given a permanent staff.¹¹⁶ The need to address desertion in London was heightened by the re-introduction of unlimited service, and higher bounties, which would increase desertion.¹¹⁷ Shipping recruits became standard practice; in Ireland a depot was established at Cork, and in Scotland at Leith for the transport of recruits by sea.¹¹⁸ As ships could move men over large distances with little chance of desertion, many of the soldiers were sent on to the army depot on the Isle of Wight, another difficult place to escape from.

Deserters who absconded after some service left few records, and most disgruntled long serving soldiers were more likely to express their emotions through

¹¹⁰ WO3/585, Darling to receiving officer at Manchester, 6 May 1812.

¹¹¹ HO51/172, Beckett to Torrens, 5 July 1811.

¹¹² WO3/585, Darling to York, 11 April 1811. The regiments were the 20th, 37th, and 76th.

¹¹³ WO3/585, Circular, by Calvert, 18 November 1811; Darling to Taylor, 13 April 1812.

¹¹⁴ WO1/643, Calvert to Bunbury, 26 March 1810, incl. Clinton to Adjutant General.

¹¹⁵ WO3/584, Wynyard to IFOs of London, Maidstone, Ipswich and Bedford districts, 5 December 1808; Calvert to Taylor, 20 August 1808.

¹¹⁶ WO3/154, 30 April 1807, Calvert to Moore; WO3/584, Calvert to Carew, 16 May 1808; Calvert to Midgely, 1 July 1808.

¹¹⁷ WO3/584, Calvert to Capt. Midgely (new commandant of Tilbury fort); Calvert to Carew, 16 May 1808.

¹¹⁸ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 27 August & 26 September 1808.

drunkenness or unruly behaviour.¹¹⁹ Institutionalised soldiers were more likely to accept their lot, and looked forward to their pension. Some soldiers, however, were desperate to leave the army. James Anderson, a deserter from the 71st, cut his Achilles tendon so he could get a discharge,¹²⁰ and Paget Bailey, despite recovering from a shot wound inflicted while he was trying to escape his escorting party, escaped again from his hospital bed at Haslemere.¹²¹ Two men deserted from Guernsey, and arrived in a boat at Winchelsea, where they pretended to have been prisoners of war escaped from France. Whilst the War Office was investigating, they promptly deserted again.¹²² The trial of Thomas Housley of the 36th is a little more difficult to interpret. He claimed that whilst drunk and visiting his wife shortly after enlisting, his wife cut two fingers from his right hand, an act for which she freely claimed responsibility. She announced to the sergeant who arrested Housley that ‘she would cut his throat before he should serve as a soldier’, and Housley appeared ‘well contented’ to him. But in his defence Housley hoped the court would allow him to serve, indicating that his wife was not saving him from the accusation of maiming himself. The court decided to give Housley his wish, probably intending to be rid of the gruesome case as quickly as possible.¹²³

Dissatisfaction with the service inevitably led to some men to desert. George Callaghan of 2/67th deserted from hospital, and persuaded a comrade to join him because where they were stationed at a ‘dear place’ and there was ‘a great difference from the regiment we had both left together’. As Callaghan knew how to handle a boat, he proposed that they go to France where they could live well. The only reason the pair gave for deserting was cheap living.¹²⁴ At the court martial of a deserter from the 2/60th in his defence he stated that ‘not understanding English he found no pleasure in the English Service, and wished to return to his own country.’ But for his comrade in the attempt, his

¹¹⁹ Peter Boroughs, ‘Crime and Punishment in the British Army, 1815-1870’, *EHR*, 100 (1985), p.551.

¹²⁰ WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 21 April 1814.

¹²¹ WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 14 April & 11 May 1814.

¹²² WO3/159, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 15 January 1814.

¹²³ WO71/233, Trial of Thomas Housley, 20 August 1813.

¹²⁴ WO71/213, Trial of John Carrol and George Callaghan, 1 June 1808.

desertion was a protest. He had enlisted into the Hanoverian Legion (presumably the KGL), but was transferred to the 2/60th, and he still had not received his bounty.¹²⁵ The protest motive explains why some deserters made no attempt to disguise their crime, simply taking to the roads still in their uniforms, and not making any attempt to hide themselves. Hugh Machiver was confronted by a corporal of the 2nd Surrey Militia in the King's Head public house in Guildford, at which Machiver immediately confessed to deserting from the 5th Dragoon Guards the day before.¹²⁶ John Dunning hardly had any criminal intent when he deserted. After four days he was detected in a public house, and the sergeant who recaptured him testified that 'I put my hand on his shoulders and said you are the man I want, and the prisoner said "I am glad you are come". He had his regimental jacket and breeches on and was in no ways disguised.'¹²⁷ The protest element of desertion was revealed in the trial of John Smith and William Langford. They deserted because of low pay and their treatment by two NCOs, but whilst on the run, they wrote a letter to their unit (one of many), asking if the Colonel would forgive them and send a pass so they could return safely to their regiment.¹²⁸

The Horse Guards recognised such grievances, and took measures to improve pay and conditions, thus insulating soldiers from wartime inflation.¹²⁹ In some cases deserters were given discharges, and although no reasons were given, it is probable that this was a recognition that some soldiers had legitimate reasons for their actions, an admission that it was sometimes better to allow a soldier to leave, than force him to stay.¹³⁰ The York Chasseurs were specifically raised in 1813 from the 'better class of deserters',¹³¹ after a suggestion that young lads 'whose only crime is perhaps that of inadvertently having left the recruiting party' should be removed from hardened criminals stationed in the hulks at

¹²⁵ WO71/211, Court Martial of Washill Wadeof and John Walker, 8 & 9 December 1807.

¹²⁶ SHC, BR/QS/5/29-31, Oath of William Derrick, Cpl. 2nd Surrey Militia, 6 July 1813.

¹²⁷ WO71/220, Trial of John Dunning, 14 March 1810.

¹²⁸ WO71/226, Trial of William Langford, 17 April 1812.

¹²⁹ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD (Durham), pp. 136-139.

¹³⁰ WO3/198, Calvert to Taylor, 2 January 1810. A man had surrendered as a deserter, but it was deemed expedient to give him a discharge for one substitute.

¹³¹ WO380/5, entry for York Chasseurs.

the Isle of Wight.¹³²

The end of the war in Europe did see an increase in desertions from soldiers with some service. In June 1814 it was feared that some desertions in the York Chassuers would be speedily emulated, because the war had finished.¹³³ This particular sense of grievance may have been exaggerated by the war with the USA, thus accounting for the high rates of desertion in 1814 and 1815. An anonymous soldier recorded his feelings when his discharge was refused in 1814 (which he was entitled to as a limited service man): 'I was almost tempted to desert. I lamented my becoming a soldier, ... to be so near home, and almost free, and yet to be sent across the Atlantic was very galling.'¹³⁴ John Spencer Cooper also expected his discharge in 1814 as he only had three weeks service left, but he needed to get the Colonel's signature and before he could get it, the regiment was sent to America. He did not get the chance to desert in Britain, and sailed to the USA 'In the very worst humour'.¹³⁵ Many men in France took the chance and deserted on the continent. The 71st lost twenty men the night before they sailed for America, 'chiefly, it was supposed from the attractions or enticements of French women.'¹³⁶ Certainly, with the prospect of yet another campaign, and one even further from home, such enticements could be powerfully seductive.

In amongst all the motives for deserting, some deserters would be aware of their prospects once they had deserted. In many cases this explains why soldiers deserted with their equipment, as they could sell the latter. Desertion was also more likely to occur in the summer months in the UK,¹³⁷ reflecting the fact that there were opportunities for work during the harvest for a man who wished to earn a little, but maintain his anonymity.

¹³² CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/1, Calvert to Taylor.

¹³³ WO1/659, Torrens to Bunbury, 15 June 1814.

¹³⁴ Constable (ed.), *Memorials of the Late War*, 'Journal of a Soldier', p. 129.

¹³⁵ John Spencer Cooper, *Rough Notes of Seven Campaigns in Portugal, Spain, France and America during the years 1809 to 1815*, (Staplehurst, 1996), p. 121.

¹³⁶ *Vicissitudes in the Life of a Scottish Soldier, written by Himself*, p.340.

¹³⁷ *CJ*, 1807, 315, Return of Desertions, AG, 10 August 1807; 1808, VII, 121, Return of Desertions and Effective Strength, AG, 15 February 1808; 1810, XIII, 435, Return of Desertions, AG, 16 February 1810. The average loss per month for December, January and February of the effective force in the UK between 1807 to 1809 is 0.33%, for July, August and September for the same years it is 0.5% (equivalent to a 52.8% increase).

Ultimately, deserters depended upon the sympathy of those outside the army if they were to avoid recapture, and there is evidence that it existed. Charles O'Neil was fortunate and found someone to help when he decided to desert for the first time:

Into this shop I saw an old clothes man enter, and immediately followed him. Having ordered a pint of porter for him, I asked him if he would be willing to exchange his old and ragged clothes for my new suit. He said he would, and informed me that I might meet him under a bridge near, where we might exchange. Observing that no one was near, I went under the bridge, and soon reappeared, dressed in his old clothes, and bearing his pack. Thus disguised, I walked bravely onwards, even passing some of my old comrades, who did not recognise me.¹³⁸

Later during his journey, after some trepidation, he confessed to a farmer who asked him directly if he had been a soldier. The farmer then provided him with another set of clothes, and took O'Neil in his market wagon to the door of O'Neil's parental home.¹³⁹ The high desertion rates sustained in Ireland may be linked to its predominate agricultural subsistence economy, as soldiers could return to their communities knowing that they would find work, and more importantly be protected by the community.¹⁴⁰

More disturbing for the authorities were the alarming incidents ranging from ignorance to collusion with deserters by those whom the government expected to uphold the law. The constables at Barnet and Finchley quartered some deserters and their escort in such a bad manner that the deserters escaped, and the constable of Newton Bushel also lost deserters when he failed to billet the whole of the escort with the deserters.¹⁴¹ A garrison court martial tried the men who formed the escort party that allowed James Wright to escape.¹⁴² The duplicity of gaolers was more serious: four deserters escaped from Woburn gaol, which meant they must have had help from the gaolers themselves, and the same occurred in Tiverton (where it was 'very frequent'), and in Warrington and Colchester. In all four cases investigations were ordered.¹⁴³ The case of the Usk

¹³⁸ Charles O'Neil, *The Military Adventures of Charles O'Neil*, p. 20.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹⁴⁰ This was particularly the case in rural areas of France, Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, pp. 116-117.

¹⁴¹ WO3/155, Wynyard to Moore, 12 December 1807; WO3/158, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 13 August 1812.

¹⁴² WO3/42, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Milner, 6 January 1807.

¹⁴³ WO3/155, Calvert to Moore, 28 March 8 September 1808; WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 5 May 1810; WO3/160, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 30 January 1815.

volunteer who helped a deserter demonstrates that placing a man in a uniform did not divorce him from his civilian mentality.¹⁴⁴

The final category of deserters were those who simply left to gain another bounty, taking advantage of the army's need for men. The bounty system, in one officer's opinion, had 'reduced the practice of desertion to a system',¹⁴⁵ and the desertions of this type seem extensive. In some circumstances this is unsurprising. A man who enlisted purely for financial reasons, may have had no reason to remain in the army, particularly if he could again alleviate his distress by enlisting elsewhere. Soldiers could also find themselves in debt, and one option to solve this problem was to desert. Debt could often turn first-time offenders into repeat deserters, if they sold their equipment whilst on the run. When they were returned to their regiment, they had to buy new equipment, and so received no pay for considerable lengths of time. In such circumstances, a soldier's mind would inevitably turn to a new start in another regiment. Francis Morpeth of the 31st was a typical case: he deserted three times in one year, each time returning without any part of his regimental clothes or necessaries, by which means he was over £5 in debt.¹⁴⁶

There were those who used bounty jumping as a system. A Chelsea pensioner, Mr. Smith, was 'in the habit of engaging himself as a recruit with different parties, and afterwards obtaining his discharge on the pretence of lameness.'¹⁴⁷ John Cullen, a pensioner of the 87th, also tried the same, enlisting under the name Tiffen in the Royal African Corps.¹⁴⁸ In 1814 some militiamen deserted, joining line parties and then giving themselves up as militia deserters, and so had to be sent back to their militia regiments.¹⁴⁹ There were also men known to the army as repeated offenders: the Horse Guards were so exasperated with John Wilson and Thomas Bouler, that they wanted to know if there was

¹⁴⁴ WO3/46, Calvert to General Norton, 24 September 1808.

¹⁴⁵ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37889, ff. 128-131, proposal of Capt. Drinkwater.

¹⁴⁶ WO71/217, Trial of Francis Morpeth, 5 March 1808.

¹⁴⁷ WO3/584, Calvert to Chelsea Hospital Commissioners, 8 August 1808.

¹⁴⁸ WO3/584, Calvert to Chelsea Hospital Commissioners, 24 September 1807.

¹⁴⁹ HO50/429, Merry to Addington, 5 March 1814.

any means of stopping them from deserting again.¹⁵⁰ In 1813, the Duke of York warned recruiting parties about these ‘trampers’, who ‘gave no satisfactory account of themselves but proceed through the country, from one district to another, enlisting with whatever Party will receive them, with the sole view of getting the bounty on intermediate approval, and afterwards deserting.’ He ordered that recruiting parties should question all recruits about their past.¹⁵¹

The most insidious aspect of this type of desertion was that organisations developed to take advantage of the fact that desertion was poorly monitored. Soldiers were always accused of mixing with the fringes of the criminal world, and the Horse Guards believed there was an organisation behind ‘bounty jumping’. Wynyard informed Beckett at the Home Office that journeymen shoemakers (‘the worst description of subjects in all countries’) were holding meetings across the county ‘for the purpose of aiding and assisting Deserters, and facilitating the frauds practised by those fellows on the government.’¹⁵² As the men who brought in recruits were also paid, a soldier could desert with the active knowledge of an accomplice who would bring him to another party and vouch for him. The Horse Guards contain revealing details of these men and their accomplices. James Smith persuaded John Ross of the 78th to desert,¹⁵³ and there were more partnerships like these, including the involvement of ex-soldiers or army personnel. Lieutenant Sharpe induced a man of the 7th Light Dragoons to desert, and so the Secretary at War stopped his half pay hoping to get him to come to the Horse Guards so he could be arrested.¹⁵⁴ There were also large numbers of Chelsea pensioners who were involved in such affairs, a striking fact as they were supposed to be good soldiers.¹⁵⁵ Even worse was the involvement of Mess. Tudor, Cannon and Sons, army agents, in getting William Lee

¹⁵⁰ WO3/160, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 7 October 1814; WO3/160, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 4 February 1815. Thomas Boulter had been discharged in 1813.

¹⁵¹ WO3/585, Circular, 15 January 1813.

¹⁵² CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/1, Wynyard to Beckett, 7 March 1810.

¹⁵³ WO3/157, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 4 July 1810.

¹⁵⁴ WO3/154, Calvert to Moore, 6 April & 23 April 1807.

¹⁵⁵ HO50/417, Merry to Beckett, 2 October 1810; HO51/171, Goulburn to Merry, 5 October 1810; WO3/157, Wynyard to Merry, 16 November 1811; WO3/158, Calvert to Merry, 16 March 1812.

of the 10th Light Dragoons to desert.¹⁵⁶

Inevitably opportunities to exploit the bounty attracted organised criminals, probably crimps who already had knowledge of the workings of the army, yet had seen their 'services' bypassed by better organisation in army recruitment. Most of their activity centred around ports where they could tempt a man to desert and join the navy, in which case there was less chance of him being discovered. A deserter in the navy could be shipped off immediately and not be back in Britain for many years, and so there was little chance of the army authorities ever finding him, while ship's officers were unlikely to receive up to date details on army deserters. Liverpool had a particularly active group of criminals. John McAnalty revealed the systematic way they had encouraged him to desert:

When I was quartered at Liverpool I promiscuously fell into bad company and after some drinking with them for some time they advised me to desert and quit the regiment entirely, at the same time recommending and praising the Sea Service, being young and ignorant of what I was doing, I quitted the regiment, and willing to try my fortune at Sea in the Service of the King I entered on board of the Princess vessel lying at Liverpool for the purpose of receiving Seamen for His Majesty's Service.¹⁵⁷

More evidence of desertion to the navy came to light after a private of the 89th deserted in Liverpool, again after being encouraged to leave so he could join the navy, turned King's evidence to get a pardon,¹⁵⁸ and a private of the 74th discovered a deserter concealed in a safe house near his quarters.¹⁵⁹ The crimps involved at Liverpool felt sufficiently threatened that they attempted to murder him, firing on him one night. Although he was not killed, he had to have his leg amputated. Consequently, a reward of one hundred pounds was offered for information that led to the discovery of the offenders.¹⁶⁰ The crimps also made an attempt on the life of another private in Liverpool who gave evidence against them.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁶ WO3/157, Calvert to Merry, 2 January & 16 January 1810.

¹⁵⁷ WO71/213, Trial of John McAnalty, 2 May 1808.

¹⁵⁸ WO3/157, Calvert to Palmerstone, 13 September 1810.

¹⁵⁹ HO50/417, Merry to Beckett, 25 September 1810.

¹⁶⁰ HO50/417, Merry to Beckett, 25 September 1810; HO51/171, Goulburn to Merry, 29 September 1810.

¹⁶¹ HO50/417, Merry to Beckett, 2 October 1810.

In investigating these crimes, it was found that many of the culprits were Chelsea pensioners, supposedly good soldiers, and, needless to say, they were struck off the pension lists.¹⁶² Similar cases emerged at Hull involving a publican,¹⁶³ and in Brighton, where some inhabitants encouraged men to desert.¹⁶⁴ One of the problems when the extent of this emerged was that it was difficult to secure successful prosecutions.¹⁶⁵ Consequently aggravated desertion was introduced as a crime in the 1813 Mutiny Act, making it a finable offence even to advertise a service that could provide men for the navy, army or East India Company.¹⁶⁶

It is difficult to assess the extent of desertion to other regiments through these means, but it seems a problem, particularly in respect of those who deserted from the army to the navy. Of the details of men who surrendered under pardons for desertion, 90% of those in other units were either in the navy or Royal Marines,¹⁶⁷ suggesting that desertion encouraged for the naval forces was very prevalent, and contributed to the high rates of desertion in the United Kingdom. The men who did desert to the navy were generally lost to the army, as 'Men claimed from the Navy seldom become useful and steady soldiers'¹⁶⁸ and from the Horse Guards' perspective, the men claimed were likely to desert again. It was suggested that all deserters be sent to the navy, an idea that predictably never went any further.¹⁶⁹ Nevertheless, the reclamation of soldiers was useful in exposing those who had helped them to desert to the navy, and the few sailors who made the reverse journey to the army were often sent back to the navy, because they made bad soldiers.¹⁷⁰

The whole problem of desertion was exacerbated by the provision of substitutes. Much has been made of this practice in the militia, and in the Sussex and Surrey Militia

¹⁶² HO51/171, Goulburn to Merry, 5 October 1810.

¹⁶³ WO3/158, Calvert to Deputy Secretary at War, 28 August 1812.

¹⁶⁴ HO51/172, Goulburn to Torrens, 16 October 1811.

¹⁶⁵ WO3/157, Calvert to Palmerstone, 23 March 1810.

¹⁶⁶ 53 Geo III, c.17, sect. XCI, 23 March 1813.

¹⁶⁷ WO3/155, /157 & /158. The sample has 106 names in it.

¹⁶⁸ WO3/155, Calvert to Moore, 17 November 1808.

¹⁶⁹ BL, Windham papers, Add. Mss. 37889, ff.128-131, Proposals of Capt. Drinkwater.

¹⁷⁰ WO3/158, AG to Secretary at War, 31 December 1812.

regiments a direct link was made between substitutes and desertion. It was felt that the use of crimps, who provided 'the worst description of substitutes' for the regiment, and the 'Inattention on the part of the Deputy Lieutenants to the description of persons they enrol' caused the high level of desertions in those regiments.¹⁷¹ What is less commonly known is that substitution was also allowed in the army, although officially on a limited scale. The commander in chief invariably 'declined to authorise the discharge of soldiers, unless under circumstances of a very peculiar nature,'¹⁷² and all required his authorisation. Occasionally, the Horse Guards were presented with a discharge for substitutes that they had not authorised, which they allowed.¹⁷³ 130 such discharges for substitutes have been found,¹⁷⁴ with a different number of substitutes required depending on the service of the men who wanted to get their discharge, and the terms the substitutes enlisted under. Normally three substitutes were needed for a soldier enlisted for life, and two for a limited service man.¹⁷⁵ The army also tried to limit it in other ways. When James Walker applied to have his furlough extended, as he had not found any substitutes, he was informed he must rejoin his regiment when his furlough expired.¹⁷⁶

As the soldier, or his family, had to find the substitutes, it increased the chance that crimps would be used. One crimp was caught attempting to encourage a recruit of the 17th Light Dragoons to desert so that he could enlist as a substitute in the 83rd, predictably in London.¹⁷⁷ After this any substitute enlisted in London had to be inspected by an IFO, so he could be checked against details of known deserters. William Macaulay enlisted as a substitute for Duncan McGregor whilst he was a deserter from the 21st, and, for his part in the affair, McGregor was prosecuted as 'it appearing of importance that an imposition of this nature should not pass with impunity, and that for

¹⁷¹ HO50/417, Wynyard to Goulburn, 25 October 1810.

¹⁷² WO3/158, Calvert to R. Lakin, Esq., 28 August 1812.

¹⁷³ WO3/49, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Wenrys, 11 December 1809.

¹⁷⁴ They are scattered throughout WO3, particularly WO3/42-49.

¹⁷⁵ WO3/193, Wynyard to Col. Hay (Maidstone), 15 June 1807.

¹⁷⁶ WO3/49, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Marquis Huntley, 5 October & 1 November 1809.

¹⁷⁷ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 5 September 1808.

the sake of example the delinquent should be proceeded against'.¹⁷⁸ One messenger at the adjutant general's office was even involved in trying to recruit a substitute for a desperate relative.¹⁷⁹

The practice of substitution in the army could have been more widespread than was officially known, especially as it benefited the army if the party gained two recruits instead of one. There was a NCO at the army depot that was offering substitutes to the new recruits there.¹⁸⁰ In the 2/24th the Quarter-Master offered discharges for money, whilst in the 2/84th it was the Paymaster who offered a similar service. In both cases money was deposited with them, and they would then use these sums to purchase substitutes and get discharges for the soldiers.¹⁸¹

Once a soldier had deserted, for whatever reason, life could be very difficult and lead to other incidents of crime. If he returned to the army, he was likely to desert again. It was the fear of being recognised as a deserter in his home in Dundalk that led Charles O'Neil to leave home and try his luck in the army once more. He found life in the 64th worse; the commanding officer was even stricter, and, as he put it, 'I had deserted once, without discovery. Why should I not do so again?' As before, it took another factor to convince him: the imminent arrival of his old regiment, the 8th.¹⁸² Having made this decision, he soon found himself in the same predicament; 'my condition was now irksome in the extreme. There was so much danger of being recognised that I could not feel myself safe anywhere.' He decided to enlist in another part of Ireland, thus hoping to avoid detection. He later enlisted in the Louth Militia, and then volunteered for the 28th, about to embark for foreign service. In the end his crimes went undetected.¹⁸³

Not all deserters were this fortunate, or sought sanctuary in rejoining the army. At

¹⁷⁸ WO3/159, Darling to Deputy Secretary at War, 6 August 1813.

¹⁷⁹ CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/1, Calvert to Capt. Irby (OC depot 24th), 20 December 1811.

¹⁸⁰ WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 18 August 1807.

¹⁸¹ WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 11 May 1808; WO3/46, Calvert to Lt. Gen. Doyle, 21 June 1808.

¹⁸² Charles O'Neil, *Military Adventures of Charles O'Neil*, pp. 23-24.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-27.

the trial of John Smith and William Langford, a letter was produced which was sent by Smith to his mother. They had marched to Newcastle from Newark in the hope of finding a place on a ship, (in the first day marching for fifty-six miles) but the town was full of soldiers and they did not dare step outside. They returned to Smith's mother at Newark, where the sergeant sent after them was waiting.¹⁸⁴ In the case of Thomas Purton, a deserter from the 62nd, desertion could lead to desperate actions. He volunteered into the 62nd in 1807,

From where he deserted about six weeks after, and went to Dorchester in Oxfordshire, where he was employed as a labourer in the service of Mr. Parsons, and in whose employ he met a young woman named Betty Powell, who knew him to be a deserter; and having threatened to inform a sergeant of the Guards then recruiting at Dorchester that he was so, he determined to murder her, for which purpose he waylaid her one evening between the hours of 7 and 8 o'clock at night and killed her by stabbing her with a knife, and then buried her in a ditch by the roadside between Dorchester and Whiteham.

He then fled to Norwood near Croydon, where after working on a cut in the neighbourhood, he was recognised as a deserter by a bailiff, who made the mistake of threatening to inform a local Dragoon officer. Purton duly murdered him. Fleeing to London, he worked in a stable yard, and stole a horse which he sold at Newbury, and then stole another from Launceston (in Somerset) which he sold at Devizies. With his money all spent, he enlisted in the 77th and was sent back to the 62nd as a deserter. He volunteered for the first battalion in Sicily, but was found wandering in the local fields 'much troubled in mind' after which he resolved to make a confession.¹⁸⁵

Conclusion

Desertion remained a problem throughout the course of the war, and probably indicated some of the tensions from the growing presence of the army in British society. As the large numbers of troops in Britain became permanent, so the sight of soldiers became commonplace, making capture harder. Equally, parts of civilian society were sympathetic to deserters, and becoming more knowledgeable of the army system, and

¹⁸⁴ WO71/226, Trial of William Langford, 17 April 1812.

¹⁸⁵ HO50/459, Wynyard to Beckett, 10 October 1810, incl. Confession of Thomas Purton.

used this for personal gain. The reasons for desertion were varied, and so in some instances were difficult to address, but generally the causes of the problem were similar to France's experience. Desertion was frequently remarkably casual, and often due to homesickness or a protest against poor conditions of service,¹⁸⁶ and its low incidence in areas of active service confirms the view of sociologists that desertion was rarely the product of fearing battle.¹⁸⁷ One of the significant differences for Britain was the influence of the navy's enormous demand for manpower, which introduced the practice of desertion specifically to enlist elsewhere.

Perhaps most revealing of all, was the Horse Guards' incredibly liberal attitude towards desertion, both compared with France,¹⁸⁸ and even with the army under Wellington, where executions for desertion were carried out. In France during one year 349 men were executed for desertion,¹⁸⁹ and discipline in the army under Wellington was fierce. Because national statistics on desertion do not exist for the pre-war period, it is difficult to compare levels of desertion with peacetime, but evidence for a study of two regiments suggests that desertion decreased in the period.¹⁹⁰ This was not the result of a deliberate attempt to tackle desertion. The army chose to deal with the problem rather than solve it, and so only severe cases were punished. There was no discussion by the government or Horse Guards on desertion, nor any investigation into its causes, but this was only following the army's previous attitude towards desertion.¹⁹¹ The army also refused to involve civilians in the problem, and a suggestion that a reward for capturing deserters was quietly ignored for fear that it would only lead to collusion between civilians and soldiers.¹⁹² The decline in desertion was probably due to the increased

¹⁸⁶ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, pp.64-65, & 94-96.

¹⁸⁷ Arthur N. Gilbert, 'A Tale of Two Regiments: Manpower and Effectiveness in British Military Units during the Napoleonic Wars', *Armed Forces and Society*, 9 (1982-83), p. 290.

¹⁸⁸ Forrest, *Conscripts and Deserters*, p. 229.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹⁹⁰ Gilbert, 'A Tale of Two Regiments', *Armed Forces and Society*, 9 (1982-83), p. 290.

¹⁹¹ Pimlott, 'The Administration of the British Army', 1783-1793', PhD (Leicester), pp. 223-236.

¹⁹² WO1/1117, 'An Old Soldier' to York, Jan 1808. Recruiting parties were not rewarded for capturing deserters for fear of collusion between the parties and recruits, WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 13 October 1807.

supervision of soldiers, regiments becoming more stable institutions, and improvements in the soldiers' conditions of service. Unfortunately, the regimental deserter returns do not distinguish the terms of service that a soldier enlisted under, and so no judgement can be made on the effectiveness of short-service in reducing desertion.

The acceptance of desertion also indicates something about the character of the army. Desertion was not considered the result of recruiting from the scum of the earth, nor was it considered that army life engendered delinquency.¹⁹³ The Horse Guards appeared to maintain a more pragmatic approach to desertion, indicating that assumptions about the rank and file of the army could not be drawn. The formation of the York Chassuers testified to this spirit, as it was Calvert's foremost aim to ensure that first-time deserters went on to be good soldiers. Although such views may have stemmed from the pressing concerns of keeping men in uniform, in whatever units, it was perhaps a fairer treatment of the problem of desertion.

¹⁹³ Peter Boroughs, 'Crime and Punishment in the British Army, 1815-1870', *EHR*, 100 (1985), pp. 545-571.

Conclusion: Recruiting the British Army and the
Nature of the British State

What emerges from the study of the recruitment of the army between 1807 and 1815 is the liberal nature of the British army in that period, particularly the part of it that was under the direct control of the Duke of York and Adjutant General Calvert. This was particularly shown in their treatment of deserters but is also evident elsewhere: the army advocated the introduction of a family allowance for soldiers; and it improved the soldiers' conditions of service. Although outside the remit of this thesis, other work has shown that the army developed a career structure for soldiers, culminating in the positions of sergeant major, colour sergeant, etc. posts that carried prestige and benefits, and positive rewards for good soldiers.¹ Alongside these, the Horse Guards was not afraid to push its humanitarian ideals, even if it meant interfering in regimental matters. The commanding officer of the 2/47th was officially admonished for allowing a punishment of 800 lashes on a boy,² and the local general at Exeter was requested to make a private representation to an officer, who punished a man for marrying without the commanding officer's consent.³

Moreover, the religious issue in the army highlighted the Horse Guards' forward thinking attitude. Catholic recruitment had been open from 1793, but there was no provision for their religious needs. Under Calvert, an evangelical, religion was re-introduced into the army,⁴ but not on sectarian lines. Catholic worship was permitted,⁵ and the future of Christian soldiering was being laid. The Horse Guards also made active efforts to suppress sectarianism. When it emerged that there was an Orange Order

¹ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD (Durham), p. 137.

² WO3/45, Wynyard to Lt. Gen. Lord Fitzroy (Ipswich), 15 March 1808.

³ WO3/49, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Theter, 18 December 1809.

⁴ Calvert had an ally in Perceval, CHA, Calvert Papers, 9/101/2, Calvert to Perceval, 25 February 1808. See WO3/49, Calvert to Maj. Gen. Whetham, 30 December 1809, for holding divine service at all military stations; WO3/49, Calvert to Duke of Cambridge, 15 January 1810, for arrangements for the Guards in London.

⁵ Charles O'Neil claimed to be responsible for this, after he complained to the Duke of York for being confined and receiving 300 lashes for refusing to attend a Church of England service. Charles O'Neil, *The Military Adventures of Charles O'Neil*, pp. 44-48.

Lodge in the 1st West Yorkshire Militia, after membership papers were discovered on a travelling razor grinder, the army ordered its activities to cease.⁶ Such lodges were declared illegal on the grounds that they administered oaths, but banning them, despite their protestations of loyalty, shows that the army was particularly sensitive to the effect sectarianism could have on a regiment.

The other aspect of the army's liberal behaviour was its ability to suggest and implement reforms. The small improvements made in recruitment, particularly the creation of recruiting districts and the nationalising of recruiting, appear superficially to be rather insignificant. In the context of the political climate in the 1790 and 1800s, any reform was treated as revolutionary, especially if it changed any part of the constitutional balance. Removing recruiting from the regiment and placing it under army control represented a massive increase in the power of the Horse Guards, and questions were raised in the Commons about the expense of the staff establishment that this caused, and the division of the UK into military districts.⁷ Any such regional control was comparable to the Major-Generals of the Commonwealth.

Elsewhere, the army and the government departments relevant to it, have been shown to have developed significantly in these years, introducing modern bureaucratic methods, salaried officials, and improved working arrangements.⁸ All of these actions had their roots in the reforms of the 1780s, but whereas other aspects of this reforming drive stopped on the onset of war (particularly political reform),⁹ reform in the military gathered pace. The abolition of the Inspector General of Recruiting in 1807 is an important point in the development of the army. Firstly, it removed one of the many sinecures existing in the army establishment, but it also had important repercussions for the administration of the army, and development of policy. The work of the Inspector

⁶ HO50/413, Gordon to Jenkinson, 9 September 1809, incl. Deardon (Lt. Col. 1st West Yorkshire Militia) to Gordon, 6 September 1809; Gordon to Jenkinson, 19 September 1809; Torrens to Beckett, 5 October 1809, HO51/171, Jenkinson to Gordon, 18 September 1809.

⁷ *Hansard*, 1810, XV, 657-672.

⁸ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD, pp. 259-260.

⁹ Sir Norman Chester, *The English Administrative System 1780-1870*, (Oxford, 1981), pp. 123-141.

General was transferred to the Horse Guards, and under Calvert detailed statistics were collected on recruitment, statistics that were not easily available beforehand, which has enabled a deeper understanding of the productivity of recruiting during the last years of the Napoleonic Wars. Such information was not intended for posterity, and the clear message behind the assiduous collection of data by the department of the adjutant general was that 'ordinary recruitment' was insufficient to meet the demands of the army. In this respect, the Horse Guards presaged the development of the professional civil service and a modern bureaucracy, which provided information for relevant ministers to determine suitable policies.¹⁰ Nowhere is this clearer than in the annual reports sent from the Commander in Chief to the Secretary for War; without such intelligence, it is difficult to see how the government could have successfully maintained the commitment in the Peninsula.

Perhaps the single most important issue for reform in the army was how to fill its ranks. The army, more specifically the adjutant general's department, consistently pushed for some form of compulsion to supply the army, usually under restricted terms of service, but at the same time allowing men to volunteer for overseas service. Although never stated in the various memoranda and letters sent on the issue, the implementation of these proposals this would have entailed a massive increase in state bureaucracy, and necessarily a considerable enhancement in the state's power. Of course, compulsion was a soldier's answer to a military problem, but constitutional ideology, exemplified by Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, pervaded every gentleman in this period, regardless of his position in the government. To even suggest conscription was a decisive turning point in the development of the British army – some officers in the Horse Guards had accepted the 'French principle' and so unwittingly admitted that the British constitution would have to be changed to

¹⁰ See D. Eastwood, "Amplifying the Province of the Legislature": the Flow of Information and the English State in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Historical Research*, 62 (1989), pp. 276-294.

meet the demands of the modern world. This implied that the 1688 constitution was not perfect, and echoes the development of new politics outside the framework of the Whig 1688 settlement. In common with the radicals of the post-Waterloo period,¹¹ the army was suggesting rational and modern solutions to its problems.

It is easy to overstate the army's progressive tendencies, and they had their limits. The Duke of York was consistently hostile to Windham's short-service scheme, and the Duke was the champion of the regimental system, showing that his reforming attitude only extended within the framework of a long-serving army based on *esprit de corps*, rather than nationalism. Any form of compulsion would be territorial, so preserving the regimental structure of the army; a British army with regiments that were only administrative units was never conceived. In all the memoranda on balloting, Ireland was not specifically mentioned, but it was understood from the experience of the militia and the Army of Reserve that such a system was unworkable in Ireland given its state of parochial and county government.

Moreover, it was easy for soldiers to suggest such improvements in the army when they did not have to consider the political situation in Parliament, nor face the reality of implementing them. Even if the governments from 1807 to 1815 had been more stable, it seems unlikely that the army would have got all that it wanted as, after the Talents, all the governments were Tory. They were particularly sensitive to any changes in the constitution, and the implications of substantial reforms in the way the army was recruited would have undermined their stance on political reform. Only under extreme circumstances, such as 1803-4 when the very existence of the UK was under threat, could the raising of the army by compulsion be countenanced. The weakness of the UK's governments in this period also played its part: after the failures of 1809, the Perceval government felt that the 'public might take alarm at any further operations. I

¹¹ W. D. Rubenstein, 'The End of "Old Corruption" in Britain', *Past and Present*, 101 (November 1983), p. 81. Rubenstein also argues that "Old Corruption" ended because the aristocracy reformed British government itself, i.e. like the army, reform leadership emanated from the top.

am afraid there is not power and authority enough in the existing government to counteract such a dangerous apathy.'¹² Rather than entering into a debate on army recruitment, from 1807, the Tory governments preferred to de-politicise military policy, indicating that they even had reservations over the changes that they were making in the role of the militia. They were successful in this, so much so that after 1809 there was only token opposition to their military policy. The Perceval government even used the army's liberal attitude to religion to deflect criticism of its own intransigence on the issue. Liverpool declared that there was no need for a general measure for religious toleration, because the army permitted Catholics in England to attend Catholic worship.¹³ Ryder as Home Secretary actually gave way on Catholic rights during the debates on the Militia Interchange Bill in 1811, but the clause allowing Catholic militiamen the same rights as they had in Ireland was predictably rejected by the Lords.¹⁴

Financial considerations also featured in the government's choice of military policy. Although the 1801 census, and the calculations afterwards, demonstrated that the UK's economy was buoyant and expanding, and therefore capable of sustaining high levels of taxation, there were still limits on the British government's capability to wage war.¹⁵ The consequences of defeat were so dire that expansion of the military forces had to be circumspect in case it upset the economy too much, thus undermining Britain's ability to wage war. Liverpool and Wellington both understood that for Britain at least, logistics played their part in the determining the size of the force in Iberia, and both were aware that even slight increases in the number of troops deployed there caused a disproportionate increase in the expenditure, and resources required.¹⁶ In essence, it was possible for Britain to lose the war by over exertion, and the situation was not severe

¹² BL, Liverpool papers, Add. Mss. 38360, ff.283-286.

¹³ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XIX, 350-355 (for Commons debates), & pp.368-371 for the Lords.

¹⁴ *Hansard*, 1810-1811, XX, 332, & 643-645.

¹⁵ J. E. Cookson, 'Political Arithmetic and War in Britain, 1793-1815', *War and Society*, 1 (1983), p. 42.

¹⁶ A. D. Harvey, *Collision of Empires: Britain in Three World Wars, 1793-1945*, (London, 1992), pp. 160-162.

enough to justify radical acts.

The strategic situation also mitigated government policy. Once the war in the Peninsula became permanent, no major reforms in army recruitment were likely, as they would jeopardise the commitment to fight in Iberia in the short-term. The recruiting results in 1810 were sufficient to scare the government and army into returning to militia transfers, and the demands for compulsion to fill the ranks of the army in 1811 were based on the assumption that an invasion was increasingly likely. After this report, the Duke of York produced a paper showing monthly recruiting from 1803, indicating when ballots were in operation, the clear message being that both could not co-exist.¹⁷ It was therefore only necessary to cover the gap between casualties and recruiting, and to do this with the least possible disruption.

It is not surprising that Britain's brief flirtation with balloting for the army occurred in 1803, when it needed to raise an army quickly, and had no serious overseas commitments. However, the period 1807 to 1815 is interesting as it shows the intricate relations between government and the localities in the British state. The militia transfers were an ideal solution for a number of reasons, but their particular attraction was that the government had a ready made body of opinion to listen to, and a group with whom it could make an agreement in order to obtain what it wanted – men. This was a particularly subtle way of improving Britain's military stature, but meant that the government had to accommodate viewpoints that did not always coincide with its own. Operating in such a manner is one of the hallmarks of an *ancien regime* state, and although it is clear that in other areas of the military the government was prepared to increase state power, over solving the manpower shortage, it resorted to tried and tested methods of functioning – using the counties to implement policy, and allowing them particular latitude in doing so. The importance of Parliament should also be stressed in allowing the government to proceed as it did, since it permitted militia stalwarts to

¹⁷ WO1/946, Return of Recruits raised from 1803, 21 March 1811.

express their views, but in the end amplified the consensus that developed over using the militia to supply the army. On account of these factors, there was no provincial revolt against the state caused by recruitment, and the only opposition to the government's military policy came from the militiamen who ignored the bounty being offered to them and remained in their regiments.

The numbers raised by the army and the militia suggest that the militia was a valuable extra recruiting service for the army. The case of Wales is a good example. The yield from the Hereford and Shrewsbury districts which covered Wales and the border with England was the worst in the UK,¹⁸ but the militia regiments from these districts provided 775 men per year between 1809 and 1813, just under three times more than the army obtained.¹⁹ Inevitably, there were problems when the militia in Britain was allowed to recruit openly, but overall militia recruitment, the use of ballots, and recruiting for the line proved sufficient. Just under 30,000 men a year between 1807 and 1813 joined Britain's military forces through these means, with the militia providing approximately half of them. In view of this achievement, it would necessitate a severe crisis to permit the introduction of compulsion for the line, as even the Army of Reserve had only envisaged raising 30,000 men.

Such successes were showing their limits by late 1813. Although the militia was successfully recruiting, that did not necessarily mean that these men were available to the army. The government's solution was to allow militiamen to serve overseas. Clearly, this was sanctioned on the understanding that it would speed the end of the war, but it also reveals that the government had been more skilful in changing Britain's military system than is often realised. In his 1807 memorandum on the militia transfer, Castlereagh also outlined a plan for a local militia, which after considerable revision, was enacted in 1808. Mentioning the two within the same paper to the militia colonels

¹⁸ See Appendix E.

¹⁹ See Appendix F.

shows that Castlereagh was attempting to mould Britain's different forces into a more coherent structure. Following the collapse of the Portland ministry, this process continued, with the Militia Interchange Act. In this context, militia transfers were the natural corollary of further integration of Britain's military, and, in 1814, the full extent of this quiet evolution was shown. During the diplomatic wrangling of 1813 and especially 1814, Castlereagh was able to highlight Britain's military power to the astonishment of most of its continental allies: from the paltry few thousand men it had offered the first coalition in 1793, Britain was now a major military power.

The major concern over the militia transfers was the effect that they had on the status of the militia. The removal of the ballot, and full-time embodiment made the militia similar to the regulars, and so it was feared that the militia was liable to compete with the line, effectively raising the bounty for men. This was particularly true from 1809 when the militia began recruiting by voluntary enlistment. Despite the army's attempts to get men who had served in the militia for some time, or were about to be discharged from the militia,²⁰ the need for men overrode such niceties. When the balloted men were assembled in 1807, replacing those who had already joined, arrangements were made for them to volunteer at their assembly points, even before they reached their militia regiments.²¹

The use of the militia, and local forces, in a co-ordinated military policy was an important point in the development of Britain's military force, which was hidden by the government's de-politicising of military policy and the lack of any radical changes. Although the question of the relationship between the army, militia, and local part-time forces was largely shelved until the Crimean War, when the latter war occurred the government quickly resorted to the expedients used in the Napoleonic Wars. By the end

²⁰ HO51/25, Circular, by Hawkesbury to deficient regiments, 16 October 1807.

²¹ HO50/407, Calvert to Beckett, 27 October 1807; Wynyard to Beckett, 2 November 1807, incl. O'Coote (Maj. Cmd. 73rd) to AG, 29 October 1807; Calvert to Beckett, 3 December 1807, incl. Farley (Lt. Col 68th) to AG, 27 November 1807.

of the Crimean conflict, 33,000 militiamen had volunteered for the line, and ten militia battalions were sent to the Mediterranean. Just as significant was the fact that the government allowed the militia to be raised by voluntary enlistment, holding the ballot in reserve for counties that did not raise their quotas.²² The apparently ad hoc nature of Britain's Napoleonic system, and its reform into truly linked territorial units as part of the Cardwell reforms, hides the progress that was made between 1807 and 1815 which allowed these future developments. Without the militia transfers of 1807, 1809 and 1811, the Militia Interchange Act of 1811, and the New Military System of 1813, the governments of the post-Crimea would have had a much tougher parliamentary battle over re-casting the army. After all, in the preamble to the 1811 Militia Transfer Act it stated that militia volunteering was to be a permanent means of supplying the army.

The question, therefore, arises about what happened to the forward thinking army, and the emergence of Britain as a major military force? Britain's army and its administration traditionally existed in two forms - one peacetime and one wartime, and this was particularly so after 1815. Although the Duke of York and Calvert were able to preserve the army from the kind of savage pruning it had received in 1783, most of Britain's military machine was dismantled. Despite the initial efforts of the Horse Guards, their military estimates of the force Britain required were ignored, and within ten years of its peak strength in 1813, the army was reduced by 147,080 men.²³ This was largely down to fiscal restraints imposed by the government, which the army was powerless to stop as civilian control of the army, under the omnipotent Treasury,²⁴ was firmly established during the wars.²⁵ As Torrens informed the Duke of York 'while you continue that paternal support of the great interests of the Army, you should anticipate at the same time the financial difficulties and objections which will come from

²² Hew Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army, 1830-54*, (Manchester, 1984), p. 220.

²³ Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, p. 181.

²⁴ Chester, *The English Administrative System*, pp. 197-208.

²⁵ Bartlett, 'The Development of the British Army', PhD (Durham), pp.255-258.

Government.’²⁶ Initial estimates for the numbers needed in early 1815 were as high as 230,000,²⁷ but the army estimates of 1815 provided for a force of 150,000 (this was still three times that of 1784-1792).

Post-Waterloo British military policy was affected, above all, by the fact that another European war looked unlikely: Britain had effectively satisfied its strategic aims, and so the army again reverted to the role of an imperial force. Every year between 1815 and the Crimean War, casualties were matched by ordinary recruiting, and there seemed no reason for any kind of reserve to meet emergencies, as none were envisaged.²⁸ The primacy of the imperial mission was emphasised further as the growth of police forces in the UK removed many, if not all, of the army’s duties at home. This meant that there was neither impetus for codifying the military system that had developed during the wars, nor for undertaking any reforms in the recruitment of the army.

What was left of the army was soon dominated by the influence of Wellington. His ultraconservative attitude, both politically and towards the army, was to dominate the history of the army. Any major reform was actively discouraged, and minor reforms (such as the institution of regimental libraries and savings accounts)²⁹ had to be quietly engineered by regimental officers; the kind of policies that were seen during the Napoleonic Wars were not repeated. Only after the burden of Wellington was lifted by his death in 1852 did a progressive army begin, slowly, to emerge, but it was soon cut short by the Crimean War, and *The Times* burgeoning campaign for root and branch changes in the administration of the army. Although the army was released from Wellington’s shadow, as this work has shown, there is much to understand about the workings of the British army during the Napoleonic Wars.

²⁶ WO3/610. Torrens to York, 30 December 1815.

²⁷ WO6/135, Bunbury to Torrens, 7 February 1815. WO25/3225, York to Bathurst, 3 November 1815.

²⁸ Strachan, *Wellington’s Legacy*, p. 56.

²⁹ Linklater, *The Black Watch*, pp. 89-90.

The long peace and the success of the Peninsular Army has often inhibited further investigation of Britain's military system. By examining the UK's military recruitment policy, it is clear that in many respects the roles of the army and government were reversed, with the army advocating more radical changes, and the government refusing such suggestions. In implementing the government's chosen policy of militia transfers, it is clear that Britain was operating as an *ancien regime* state, although with its own peculiarities. The agencies of the state were limited, and as those calling for an expansion of state apparatus were ignored, the government chose to use its traditional means of executing policy. It was successful, but it was operating under increasing strain, and so it could be generously said that the government had chosen the optimum policy, obtaining what it needed for the least disruption. The administration of the army was stretched to its limits, and further changes would have also involved a more comprehensive reform of the system of government. Britain's 'fiscal-military juggernaut' was operating at maximum output, and to do this some alternations were necessary. The government's quest for manpower meant that the eighteenth century methods of mobilisation had to be supplemented. The Army of Reserve showed that balloting for the army was just possible; whether such a policy could ever have been sustained for the seven years of Wellington's campaign in Iberia is a different matter. Militia transfers were not a new idea,³⁰ but this was the first time that they were used. In this respect the era was a turning point, and future European wars were going to be larger, and more demanding, and so the ideas emanating from the Horse Guards in 1809 would prove harder to ignore when warfare entered the industrial age.

³⁰ It had been suggested during the American War of Independence, see *Considerations upon the Different Modes of Finding Recruits for the Army* (London, 1775), p. 19.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ministers and Chief Military PostHolder, 1807 to 1815Horse Guards**Commander in Chief**

Duke of York	until 1809
Sir David Dundas	1809 to 1811
Duke of York	1811 onwards

Military Secretary

Lieutenant Colonel Sir James Willoughby Gordon	2 October 1809
Lieutenant Colonel Henry Torrens	onwards

Adjutant General

Major General Harry Calvert

Deputy Adjutant Generals

Brigadier General William Wynyard	
Lieutenant Colonel Henry Torrens	1 October 1809
Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Darling	onwards

Assistant Deputy Adjutant General

Lieutenant Colonel Theophilus Pritzler

Government Minister and Secretaries**Prime Minister**

Lord Grenville	21 March 1807
Duke of Portland	4 October 1809
Spencer Perceval	18 June 1812
Earl of Liverpool	10 April 1827

Secretary of State for War and the Colonies

William Windham	25 March 1807
Viscount Castlereagh	31 October 1809
Earl of Liverpool	11 June 1812
Earl Bathurst	onwards

Permanent Under Secretary for War

Sir George Shee	25 March 1807
Edward Cooke	31 October 1809
Hon. C. C. C. Jenkinson	1810
Robert Peel	1812
Henry Goulburn	onwards

Under Secretary for War and Colonies (War)

Sir J. Cockburn	1807
Hon. C. W. Stewart	1 May 1809
Hon. E. F. Robinson	2 November 1809
H. E. Bunbury	onwards

Secretary of State for the Home Department

Earl Spencer

25 March 1807

Lord Hawkesbury

1 November 1809

Richard Ryder

11 June 1812

Viscount Sidmouth

onwards

Permanent Under Secretary for the Home Department

J. Beckett

Non Permanent Under Secretary

C. W. Williams Wynn

1807

Hon. C. C. C. Jenkinson

1810

H. Goulburn

1812

J. H. Addington

onwards

Secretary at War

Richard Fitzpatrick

30 March 1807

J. M. Pulteney

27 June 1809

Lord Gower

27 October 1809

Viscount Palmerston

onwards

Deputy Secretary at War

Francis Moore

January 1810

William Merry

onwards

Appendix B: Regimental TitlesDragoon Guards

1 st (King's)	5 th (Princess Charlotte of Wales')
2 nd (Queen's)	6 th (Carabiniers)
3 rd (Prince of Wales')	7 th (Princess Royal's)
4 th (Royal Irish)	

Dragoons

1 st (Royal)	4 th (Queen's)
2 nd (Royal North British) (Royal Scots Grey)	6 th (Inniskilling)
3 rd (King's Own)	

Light Dragoons

7 th (Queen's Own Hussars)	17 th
8 th (Royal Irish)	18 th (King's Hussars)
9 th	19 th
10 th (Prince of Wales' Own Hussars)	20 th
11 th	21 st (or Yorkshire)
12 th (Prince of Wales')	22 nd
13 th	23 rd
14 th (Duchess of York's Own)	24 th
15 th (King's Hussars)	25 th
16 th (Queen's)	

Foot Guards

1 st (1815 Grenadier Guards)	2 nd (Coldstream)
3 rd (Scots)	

Line Regiments

1 st (Royal; 1812 Royal Scots)	53 rd (Shropshire)
2 nd (Queen's Royal)	54 th (West Norfolk)
3 rd (East Kent) (Bufs)	55 th (Westmoreland)
4 th (King's Own Lancaster)	56 th (West Essex)
5 th (Northumberland)	57 th (West Middlesex)
6 th (1 st Warwickshire)	58 th (Rutlandshire)
7 th (Royal Fusiliers)	59 th (2 nd Nottinghamshire)
8 th (King's)	60 th (Royal American)
9 th (East Norfolk)	61 st (South Gloucestershire)
10 th (North Lincoln)	62 nd (Wiltshire)
11 th (North Devon)	63 rd (West Suffolk)
12 th (East Suffolk)	64 th (2 nd Staffordshire)
13 th (1 st Somersetshire)	65 th (2 nd Yorkshire North Riding)

- 14th (Bedfordshire; 1809 Buckinghamshire)
 15th (Yorkshire East Riding)
 16th (Buckinghamshire; 1809 Bedfordshire)
 17th (Leicestershire)
 18th (Royal Irish)
 19th (1st Yorkshire North Riding)
 20th (East Devonshire)
 21st (Royal North British Fusiliers)
 22nd (Cheshire)
 23rd (Royal Welsh Fusiliers)
 24th (2nd Warwickshire)
 25th (King's Own Borderers)
 26th (Cameronians)
 27th (Enniskillen)
 28th (North Gloucester)
 29th (Worcestershire)
 30th (Cambridgeshire)
 31st (Huntingdonshire)
 32nd (Cornwall)
 33rd (1st Yorkshire West Riding)
 34th (Cumberland)
 35th (Sussex)
 36th (Herefordshire)
 37th (North Hampshire)
 38th (1st Staffordshire)
 39th (Dorsetshire)
 40th (2nd Somersetshire)
 41st
 42nd (Royal Highland) (Black Watch)
 43rd (Monmouthshire Light Infantry)
 44th (East Essex)
 45th (Nottinghamshire)
 46th (South Devonshire)
 47th (Lancashire)
 48th (Northamptonshire)
 49th (Hertfordshire)
 50th (West Kent)
 51st (2nd Yorkshire West Riding; 1809 2nd Yorkshire West Riding Light Infantry)
 52nd (Oxfordshire Light Infantry)
 66th (Berkshire)
 67th (South Hampshire)
 68th (Durham; 1808 Durham Light Infantry)
 69th (South Lincolnshire)
 70th (Surrey; 1812 Glasgow Lowland)
 71st (Highland; 1808 Glasgow Highland; 1809 Glasgow Highland Light Infantry; 1810 Highland Light Infantry)
 72nd (Highland pre 1809) (Seaforth Highlanders)
 73rd (Highland pre 1809) (Perthshire Highlanders)
 74th (Highland pre 1809)
 75th (Highland pre 1809) (Stirlingshire Highlanders)
 76th (Hindoostan, 1807-12)
 77th (East Middlesex)
 78th (Highland) (Ross-shire Buffs)
 79th (Cameron Highlanders)
 80th (Staffordshire Volunteers)
 81st
 82nd (Prince of Wales' Volunteers)
 83rd
 84th (1809, York and Lancaster)
 85th (Buckinghamshire Volunteers; 1808, Buckinghamshire Volunteer Light Infantry)
 86th (1809, Leinster; 1812 Royal County Down)
 87th (Prince of Wales' Irish; 1811, Prince of Wales' Own Irish)
 88th (Connaught Rangers)
 89th
 90th (Perthshire Volunteers)
 91st (Argyllshire Highlanders pre 1809)
 92nd (Highland) (Gordon Highlanders)
 93rd (Highland) (Sutherland Highlanders)
 94th (Scotch Brigade)
 95th (Rifles)
 96th
 97th (Queen's Own Germans; 1808 Queen's Own)
 98th
 99th (1811, Prince of Wales' Tipperary)
 100th (1812, Prince Regent's County of Dublin)
 101st (Duke of York's Irish)
 102nd
 103rd
 104th

Appendix C: Details of the establishment of
additional battalions to Line regiments.

Unit	Date	Details
3/1 st	1804	Scottish Additional Force Men
4/1 st	1804	Scottish Additional Force Men
2/3 rd	1803-04	Middlesex Army of Reserve and Additional Force (hereafter limited service men)
2/4 th	25/12/1804	Letter of service to Earl Chatham
2/5 th	1803-04	Sussex limited service men
2/6 th	1803-04	Lancashire limited service men
2/7 th	1803-04	West Riding limited service men
2/8 th	1803-04	West Riding limited service men
2/9 th	1803-04	Dorset and Somerset limited service men
2/10 th	1803-04	Essex limited service men
2/11 th	3/10/1808	From Irish militia volunteers, by 1807 Act
2/12 th	25/12/1811	Established from recruiting company of 1/12 th (in East Indies)
2/14 th	1803-04	Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire limited service men
3/14 th	25/12/1813	From militia volunteers by 1811 Act
2/15 th	1803-04	East Riding limited service men
2/18 th	1803-04	Irish limited service men
2/21 st	1803-04	Ayr and Renfrew limited service men
2/22 nd	10/2/1814	From militia volunteers by 1811 Act
2/23 rd	1803-04	Welsh limited service men
2/24 th	1803-04	Warwickshire limited service men
2/25 th	1803-04	Cumberland and Westmoreland limited service men
2/26 th	1803-04	'Certain Scottish counties' limited service men
2/27 th	1803-04	Irish limited service men
3/27 th	1803-04	Irish limited service men
2/28 th	1803-04	Irish limited service men
2/30 th	1803-04	'Certain English counties' limited service men
2/31 st	1803-04	Cheshire limited service men
2/32 nd	1803-04	Cornish limited service men
2/34 th	25/4/1805	From militia volunteers by 1805 Act
2/35 th	25/4/1805	From militia volunteers by 1805 Act
2/36 th	1803-04	Durham limited service men
2/37 th	25/5/1813	From militia volunteers by 1811 Act.
2/38 th	1803-04	Stafford limited service men
2/39 th	1803-04	Cheshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire limited service men
2/40 th	25/12/1804	Dorset and Somerset limited service men
2/42 nd	9/7/1803	Scottish limited service men
2/43 rd	25/12/1804	Worcester limited service men
2/44 th	9/7/1803	Irish limited service men

Unit	Date	Details
2/45 th	25/12/1804	Nottinghamshire and Rutland limited service men
2/47 th	9/7/1803	Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk limited service men
2/48 th	9/7/1803	Cumberland, Westmoreland and Lancashire limited service men
2/50 th	1803-04	Gloucestershire limited service men
2/52 nd	1803-04	Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, and Berkshire limited service men
2/53 rd	1803-04	Yorkshire limited service men
2/56 th	1803-04	Surrey limited service men
2/57 th	1803-04	Kent, Surrey, and Sussex Army of Reserve, Kent and Cinque Ports Additional Force
2/58 th	1803-04	Irish Army of reserve, Cork and Kerry Additional Force
2/59 th	1803-04	Derbyshire limited service men
2/61 st	1803-04	Durham, Northumberland Army of Reserve; Northumberland Additional Force
2/62 nd	1803-04	Wiltshire Army of Reserve
2/63 rd	1803	Suffolk Army of Reserve
2/66 th	1803-04	'Certain English counties' Army of Reserve; Hampshire Additional Force
2/67 th	1803-04	Irish limited service men
2/69 th	1803-04	'Certain English counties' Army of Reserve; Lincolnshire Additional Force
2/71 st	1803	Scottish Army of Reserve
2/72 nd	1804	Aberdeen Additional Force
2/73 rd	24/12/1808	Established from recruiting company of 1/73 rd (in East Indies)
2/78 th	6/12/1804	Letter of Service to Maj. Gen. Fraser to raise a battalion in Scotland.
2/79 th	23/3/1805	Letter of Service to Col. Cameron to raise a battalion in Scotland.
2/81 st	1803-04	Welsh limited service men
2/82 nd	1804	Tower Hamlets Additional Force
2/83 rd	1804	Middlesex Additional Force
2/84 th	25/4/1808	Established from recruiting company of 1/84 th (in East Indies)
2/87 th	1804	Irish Additional Force
2/88 th	1804	Irish Additional Force
2/89 th	1804	Irish Additional Force
2/90 th	1804	Monmouth, Brecon and Glamorgan Additional Force
2/91 st	1804	Argyll, Bute, and Perth Additional Force
2/92 nd	1803-04	Scottish limited service men
3/95 th	1/4/1809	Militia volunteers under 1809 Act
2/96 th	1804	Cardigan, Carmarthen and Pembroke Additional Force

Sources: WO380/1-4

Appendix D: Recruiting Districts in the UK, 1809



Notes

District headquarters are underlined.

Until May 1808 there was a recruiting district centred on Marlborough, comprising of Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire, which was later adjusted to the Gloucester recruiting district as depicted above. (WO3/584, Calvert to Taylor, 18 May 1808).

In 1812 the Carlisle and Durham districts were consolidated (WO3/585, Circular by Darling, 3 January 1812).

District	Recruits	ERO recruits	Total Recruits	Male Population	Recruits per 1000 males
Manchester	1,806	150	1,956	504,945	3.87
Inverness	371	12	383	139,525	2.75
Birmingham	740	42	782	330,978	2.36
Ireland	4,871	780	5,651	2,745,656	2.06
Aberdeen	224		224	120,890	1.85
London	1,197	5	1,202	662,922	1.81
Edinburgh	491	5	496	314,929	1.57
Bury	450	3	453	306,833	1.48
Carlisle	112	15	127	87,271	1.46
Nottingham	380	4	384	295,504	1.30
Glasgow	311	4	315	253,367	1.24
Leeds	545	7	552	477,728	1.16
Wells	461	24	485	434,257	1.12
Gloucester	376	4	380	359,011	1.06
Bedford	221	1	222	224,886	0.99
Durham	87	13	100	114,056	0.88
Southampton	230	42	272	323,051	0.84
Maidstone	99	56	155	240,058	0.65
Hereford	134	15	149	233,679	0.64
Shrewsbury	117		117	230,187	0.51

Notes:

3,576 recruits were enlisted at regimental headquarters.

The population of Ireland was 5,937,856 in 1811, and the percentage of males to total population in the rest of the UK was 46.2398618%, so, assuming Ireland had the same ratio gives a male population of 2,745,656; K. H. Connel, *The Population of Ireland, 1750-1845*, (Oxford, 1950), p. 5.

The London district includes the population of the following areas: Blackheath, Bromney and Beckenham, Little and Lessness, and Ruxley hundreds, the boroughs of Greenwich, Deptford and Woolwich in Kent; in Essex, the hundreds of Becontree, Havering Liberty, Chafford, Waltham and Ongar; Watford in Hertfordshire.

The Wells district includes Bradford hundred in Wiltshire.

The Gloucester district includes Malmesbury, Highworth Cricklead and Staple, Kingsbridge, Ramsbury, Selkley, Calne, Chippenham hundreds, the borough of Marlborough, and the parishes of Wroughton and Little Hinton in Elstub and Everly hundred, all from Wiltshire.

Sources: 1811 Census; WO25/3224, Return of Average number of Regimental Parties from 25 June 1808 to 24 June 1809, AG, 19 October 1809; Thomas Dix, *A Complete Atlas of English Counties*, (London, 1822).

Appendix F: Percentage of Militia Volunteer Quotas

Completed, 1807 to 1813

Regiment	Attitude to 1807 Plan	Percentage of Volunteer Quotas Completed					Total Recruits 1809 to 1813	Total Balloted	Percentage of recruiting quota raised	Percentage under 5' 5"	Percentage too old or too young
		1807	1809	1811	1812	1813					
Anglesey	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	49	25	62.3%	7.5%	33.0%
Bedford	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	201	132	113.1%	18.4%	26.8%
Berkshire	For, a warm supporter	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	350	171	100.0%	35.8%	27.2%
Buckinghamshire	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	238	179	75.0%	20.7%	25.9%
Cambridgeshire	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	396	101	111.3%	31.1%	38.0%
Cardigan		95.5%	40.2%	78.1%	35.7%	35.7%	36	167	93.5%	10.1%	28.5%
Carmarthen	Against	56.7%	35.3%	78.6%	20.2%	36.7%	97	138	62.5%	3.5%	19.1%
Carnarvon		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	53	34	73.2%	18.6%	27.1%
Cheshire		100.0%	98.9%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	291	352	78.2%	12.9%	26.5%
Cornwall		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	181	235	69.2%	13.3%	22.8%
Cornish Miners		100.0%	100.0%							7.0%	33.8%
Cumberland		71.8%	35.3%	31.8%	5.7%	25.4%	151	156	53.8%	8.2%	27.0%
Denbigh		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	237	104	106.8%	12.1%	24.2%
Derby		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	551	196	83.2%	11.6%	19.1%
East Devon		36.7%	33.0%	56.3%	21.1%	33.0%	295	37	70.9%	22.1%	25.3%
North Devon		100.0%	67.9%	80.7%	27.6%	35.7%	196	231	91.2%	17.9%	17.2%
South Devon		100.0%	65.1%	100.0%	98.6%	98.6%	419	51	100.4%	19.6%	24.3%
Dorset		100.0%	82.1%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	368	56	111.1%	18.8%	26.1%
Durham	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	70.0%	100.0%	179	165	75.3%	16.7%	28.0%
East Essex		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	264	186	77.9%	27.9%	37.4%
West Essex		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	409	169	100.1%	24.0%	24.2%
Flint		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	90.6%	65	110	93.8%	15.2%	30.5%
Glamorgan		100.0%	98.2%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	273	161	116.0%	23.6%	23.1%
North Gloucester		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	455	116	127.5%	14.5%	26.1%
South Gloucester	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	458	108	89.5%	18.1%	31.9%
North Hampshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	355	45	101.6%	25.4%	41.6%
South Hampshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	282	91	110.1%	13.6%	31.0%
Hampshire Isle of Wight		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	108	11	210.1%	6.0%	16.0%
Hertfordshire	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	76.4%	426	0	95.6%	33.5%	28.8%
Herefordshire	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	322	174	102.7%	27.9%	33.3%
Huntingdonshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	153	29	123.3%	39.2%	22.9%
East Kent		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	427	20	97.1%	18.4%	25.6%

Regiment	Attitude to 1807 Plan	Percentage of Volunteer Quotas Completed					Total Recruits 1809 to 1813	Total Balloted	Percentage of recruiting quota raised	Percentage under 5' 5"	Percentage too old or too young
		1807	1809	1811	1812	1813					
West Kent	Generally for	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.9%	1121	0	150.9%	31.9%	30.1%
1 st Lancashire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	336	297	83.8%	12.5%	12.5%
2 nd Lancashire	Against	100.0%	75.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	363	307	88.8%	25.1%	25.0%
3 rd Lancashire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	236	342	76.6%	17.2%	27.7%
Leicestershire	For	100.0%	100.0%		100.0%	100.0%	297	227	87.8%	22.8%	23.5%
North Lincolnshire	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	96.9%	255	166	66.3%	22.2%	30.8%
South Lincolnshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.0%	453	114	89.3%	33.7%	30.6%
East London										3.4%	29.6%
West London										13.0%	34.4%
Merioneth		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	29	53	73.0%	13.5%	30.6%
East Middlesex	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	1402	17	150.9%	26.2%	33.7%
West Middlesex		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	550	271	87.3%	36.3%	45.6%
Middlesex Westminster	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	261	367	66.8%	34.3%	52.0%
Monmouth & Brecon		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	382	124	109.7%	28.4%	27.1%
Montgomery		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	159	79	91.9%	36.8%	40.0%
East Norfolk		100.0%	31.2%	44.1%	28.7%	30.0%	203	150	62.9%	24.8%	33.0%
West Norfolk	Against	100.0%	63.0%	91.7%	94.2%	100.0%	623	74	124.1%	18.4%	27.7%
Northamptonshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.1%	100.0%	454	8	68.7%	23.6%	31.0%
Northumberland		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.9%	143	260	66.9%	17.3%	33.0%
Nottinghamshire	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	296	218	98.1%	14.2%	23.5%
Oxford		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	290	275	100.9%	29.5%	27.3%
Pembroke	For	75.8%	52.4%	11.6%	22.2%	22.8%	19	115	98.1%	20.5%	19.2%
Radnor		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	43	45	67.7%	23.9%	27.4%
Rutland		100.0%	40.0%	100.0%	38.2%	48.0%	71	0	92.1%	15.5%	52.4%
Salop		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	260	262	56.7%	27.3%	30.9%
1 st Somerset		100.0%	98.2%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	336	402	98.1%	22.1%	31.9%
2 nd Somerset		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	629	137	110.6%	26.4%	28.8%
Staffordshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	674	378	100.0%	15.7%	31.1%
East Suffolk	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	514	0	106.2%	29.7%	35.3%
West Suffolk	For, a warm supporter	84.4%	84.5%	100.0%	100.0%	75.0%	251	197	92.6%	14.3%	33.6%
1 st Surrey	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	388	177	91.1%	44.4%	35.4%
2 nd Surrey	For	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	414	175	95.0%	27.4%	38.0%
Sussex		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	481	222	94.3%	17.7%	35.0%

Regiment	Attitude to 1807 Plan	Percentage of Volunteer Quotas Completed					Total Recruits 1809 to 1813	Total Balloted	Percentage of recruiting quota raised	Percentage under 5' 5"	Percentage too old or too young
		1807	1809	1811	1812	1813					
1 st Tower Hamlets		100.0%	43.0%	33.2%	33.5%	29.8%	431	139	109.6%	28.9%	34.8%
2 nd Tower Hamlets		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	589	79	128.5%	16.4%	40.6%
Warwick	For	100.0%	55.9%	91.8%	100.0%	100.0%	520	319	105.9%	14.6%	31.1%
Westmoreland	For	90.7%	36.3%	54.0%	49.4%	57.4%	163	75	105.5%	17.0%	30.6%
Wiltshire		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	337	291	73.8%	23.6%	32.0%
Worcester		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	169	290	80.2%	19.8%	34.5%
Yorkshire East Riding		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	206	182	74.1%	22.9%	48.7%
1 st Yorkshire West Riding	Against	42.9%	27.6%	56.9%	24.6%	35.3%	325	164	65.0%	1.7%	18.7%
2 nd Yorkshire West Riding		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	463	285	99.5%	14.1%	23.3%
3 rd Yorkshire West Riding	Against	100.0%	64.4%	93.6%	82.4%	62.5%	282	233	68.5%	13.7%	26.2%
Yorkshire North Riding	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	728	132	101.7%	10.6%	30.7%
Antrim		100.0%					411	257	110.1%	10.3%	30.5%
Armagh		64.5%					495	24	85.6%	6.9%	21.5%
Carlow		100.0%					333	63	100.8%	11.9%	28.0%
Cavan		95.4%					416	0	91.3%	14.1%	45.8%
Clare		100.0%					481	0	105.5%	20.8%	25.3%
Cork City		100.0%					507	0	100.0%	14.4%	35.1%
North Cork		100.0%					567	0	111.8%	31.9%	45.0%
South Cork		100.0%					683	14	114.9%	12.3%	38.1%
Donegal		100.0%					672	0	106.2%	12.7%	31.2%
North Down		100.0%					245	245	107.9%	4.3%	27.2%
South Down		100.0%					246	78	71.4%	13.9%	33.2%
Dublin City		100.0%					412	6	68.9%	18.1%	38.8%
Dublin County		100.0%					596	0	130.8%	10.1%	39.4%
Fermanagh		67.1%					459	0	120.4%	15.7%	36.3%
Galway		100.0%					776	56	109.9%	22.5%	31.3%
Kerry		35.0%					445	57	90.6%	9.3%	48.1%
Kildare		100.0%					349	6	111.6%	11.2%	30.1%
Kilkenny		99.0%					543	0	89.5%	25.6%	34.0%
King's		100.0%					631	0	104.0%	28.3%	26.4%
Leitrim		57.9%					385	4	94.8%	18.7%	28.1%
Limerick City		100.0%					456	13	102.9%	25.1%	31.9%
Limerick County		99.4%					601	19	102.2%	19.1%	29.1%
Londonderry		100.0%					727	51	102.7%	11.5%	32.3%

Regiment	Attitude to 1807 Plan	Percentage of Volunteer Quotas Completed					Total Recruits 1809 to 1813	Total Balloted	Percentage of recruiting quota raised	Percentage under 5' 5"	Percentage too old or too young
		1807	1809	1811	1812	1813					
Longford		26.7%					364	15	99.4%	19.1%	27.9%
Louth		73.4%					472	216	100.4%	8.1%	19.7%
North Mayo		87.9%					396	0	79.4%	11.7%	26.7%
South Mayo		100.0%					600	3	113.5%	20.7%	29.2%
Meath		100.0%					534	0	88.0%	5.6%	19.6%
Monaghan		100.0%					365	0	63.1%	15.2%	37.9%
Queen's		100.0%					374	26	87.8%	18.0%	28.3%
Roscommon		100.0%					747	0	123.2%	28.9%	33.0%
Sligo		67.5%					297	20	74.1%	25.4%	30.5%
Tipperary		100.0%					842	9	112.4%	7.3%	25.0%
Tyrone		100.0%					569	0	80.8%	10.6%	39.0%
Waterford		100.0%					435	0	85.8%	15.3%	31.9%
Westmeath		100.0%					447	94	118.7%	14.7%	32.7%
Wexford		100.0%					246	309	73.3%	11.3%	23.4%
Wicklow		100.0%					516	0	113.2%	13.6%	33.3%
Aberdeen		80.0%	19.6%	32.9%	11.3%	20.4%	111	211	54.2%	18.0%	37.2%
Argyll & Bute		100.0%	65.1%	47.2%	50.0%	35.7%	88	155	62.4%	20.3%	31.7%
Ayr	Against	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	232	170	99.3%	14.6%	24.3%
Berwick, Haddington, Linlithgow & Peebles		100.0%	61.7%	89.7%	96.5%	79.0%	291	118	98.3%	18.4%	27.2%
Dumfries, Roxburgh & Selkirk		57.8%	37.7%	58.5%	53.3%	42.1%	313	76	86.0%	12.1%	39.9%
Edinburgh		84.2%	31.9%	59.1%	49.3%	41.3%	285	137	95.5%	15.5%	29.1%
Fife		100.0%	80.3%	100.0%	72.5%	67.0%	148	221	82.1%	19.7%	20.5%
Forfar & Kincardine		63.3%	13.3%	37.5%	5.9%	20.3%	110	234	46.5%	10.0%	24.2%
Inverness, Banff, Elgin & Nairn		79.4%	9.3%	35.7%	30.1%	24.5%	131	256	56.0%	10.5%	38.6%
Kirkcudbright & Wigton		100.0%	65.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	176	102	110.9%	18.4%	28.6%
Lanark	Against	79.6%	16.1%	40.6%	26.3%	24.5%	187	229	59.7%	8.0%	18.8%
Perth	Against	100.0%	72.0%	100.0%	89.2%	57.1%	167	324	81.0%	14.6%	26.6%
Renfrew		100.0%	79.4%	78.4%	22.8%	34.7%	177	56	62.1%	11.7%	16.4%
Ross, Caithness, Sutherland & Cromarty		85.5%	54.9%	32.1%	30.1%	29.9%	187	156	69.2%	27.0%	24.3%
Stirling, Dumbarton, Clackmannon & Kinross		88.0%	41.2%	100.0%	75.8%	78.6%	240	139	88.5%	18.5%	28.3%

Corps	1807 (WO27/ 91)	1808 (WO27/ 92)	1809 (WO27/ 94, 96- 97)	1810 (WO27/ 98-101)	1811 (WO27/ 102- 105)	1812 (WO27/ 106- 113)	1813 (WO27/ 116- 123)	1814 (WO27/ 126- 128)	1815 (WO27/ 134)
9 th Light Dragoons									
Depot, 9 th Light Dragoons									
10 th Light Dragoons			26/5/09		4/7/11	15/5/12			
Depot, 10 th Light Dragoons									
11 th Light Dragoons								10/5/14	
Depot, 11 th Light Dragoons									
12 th Light Dragoons									
Depot, 12 th Light Dragoons									
13 th Light Dragoons	28/4/07	11/7/08	30/5/09						
Depot, 13 th Light Dragoons									
14 th Light Dragoons									
Depot, 14 th Light Dragoons									
15 th Light Dragoons				21/5/10					
Depot, 15 th Light Dragoons									
16 th Light Dragoons									
Depot, 16 th Light Dragoons									
17 th Light Dragoons									
18 th Light Dragoons				12/5/10					
Depot, 18 th Light Dragoons									
19 th Light Dragoons		1/4/08							18/6/15
Depot, 19 th Light Dragoons									
20 th Light Dragoons		4/5/08							
21 st Light Dragoons	1/3/07	6/5/08		8/5/10		21/5/12		23/5/14	
22 nd Light Dragoons							25/3/13		
23 rd Light Dragoons					14/5/11	11/5/12			

Corps	1807 (WO27/ 91)	1808 (WO27/ 92)	1809 (WO27/ 94, 96- 97)	1810 (WO27/ 98-101)	1811 (WO27/ 102- 105)	1812 (WO27/ 106- 113)	1813 (WO27/ 116- 123)	1814 (WO27/ 126- 128)	1815 (WO27/ 134)
24 th Light Dragoons			15/12/09		4/11/11		16/10/13		
25 th Light Dragoons									
1/1 st Foot Guards					19/5/11				
2/1 st Foot Guards				1/6/10					21/8/15
3/1 st Foot Guards									
1/2 nd Foot Guards								6/5/14	
2/2 nd Foot Guards									
1/3 rd Foot Guards							15/8/13		
2/3 rd Foot Guards			1/5/09			27/4/12			
1/1 st Foot		14/5/08							
2/1 st Foot									
3/1 st Foot			1/5/09						
4/1 st Foot	19/5/07		17/5/09	14/6/10		15/6/12			
2 nd Foot		1/5/08				11/5/12			22/4/15
1/3 rd Foot						13/5/12			
2/3 rd Foot		19/4/08	1/5/09					21/5/14	
1/4 th Foot				17/5/10					
2/4 th Foot	11/3/07	1/5/08	27/5/09		14/5/11		5/7/13		
1/5 th Foot							1/5/13		
2/5 th Foot									
1/6 th Foot	1/4/07		14/5/09						24/4/15
2/6 th Foot	1/4/07	23/5/08	1/5/09					2/5/14	
1/7 th Foot			30/6/9	7/6/10			12/4/13		
2/7 th Foot									
1/8 th Foot		27/6/08		4/7/10					
2/8 th Foot				1/5/10	16/6/11				
1/9 th Foot									
2/9 th Foot						11/5/12			
1/10 th Foot	28/3/07								
2/10 th Foot				10/7/10					
1/11 th Foot	14/4/07								
2/11 th Foot								11/5/14	
12 th Foot					14/10/11				
13 th Foot	18/4/07					25/5/12			25/5/15

Corps	1807 (WO27/ 91)	1808 (WO27/ 92)	1809 (WO27/ 94, 96- 97)	1810 (WO27/ 98-101)	1811 (WO27/ 102- 105)	1812 (WO27/ 106- 113)	1813 (WO27/ 116- 123)	1814 (WO27/ 126- 128)	1815 (WO27/ 134)
1/14 th Foot			7/4/09						
2/14 th Foot									
3/14 th Foot									
1/15 th Foot		1/5/08		5/5/10					
2/15 th Foot									
16 th Foot		24/5/08							
17 th Foot					30/11/11				
1/18 th Foot	28/5/07								
2/18 th Foot					6/5/11				
19 th Foot									
20 th Foot			25/5/09	19/5/10			12/4/13		
1/21 st Foot									10/3/15
2/21 st Foot						2/7/12			
22 nd Foot			6/5/09						
1/23 rd Foot		11/8/08				25/5/12	12/4/13		
2/23 rd Foot									
1/24 th Foot	29/4/07								
2/24 th Foot	1/4/07						8/10/13		
1/25 th Foot		16/5/08		12/5/10			19/5/13		
2/25 th Foot	10/5/07		1/5/09					27/4/14	
1/26 th Foot				19/5/10	3/5/11	18/8/12		28/4/14	
2/26 th Foot									
1/27 th Foot									
2/27 th Foot									
3/27 th Foot									18/5/15
1/28 th Foot				21/6/10	21/5/11				
2/28 th Foot									
29 th Foot					15/12/11				
1/30 th Foot									30/6/15
2/30 th Foot									
1/31 st Foot									
2/31 st Foot	5/4/07								
1/32 nd Foot			11/5/09			11/5/12			
2/32 nd Foot		5/5/08							
33 rd Foot		15/6/08							
1/34 th Foot									
2/34 th Foot		3/5/08	1/5/09			12/5/12			
1/35 th Foot									
2/35 th Foot		23/5/08							
1/36 th Foot			24/5/09			11/5/12			

Corps	1807 (WO27/ 91)	1808 (WO27/ 92)	1809 (WO27/ 94, 96- 97)	1810 (WO27/ 98-101)	1811 (WO27/ 102- 105)	1812 (WO27/ 106- 113)	1813 (WO27/ 116- 123)	1814 (WO27/ 126- 128)	1815 (WO27/ 134)
1/59 th Foot									
2/59 th Foot									
1/60 th Foot									
2/60 th Foot				12/5/10		22/5/12		2/5/14	
3/60 th Foot									
4/60 th Foot									
5/60 th Foot	5/5/07								
6/60 th Foot									
7/60 th Foot									
1/61 st Foot			10/5/09			19/5/12			
2/61 st Foot		6/5/08							
1/62 nd Foot									12/6/15
2/62 nd Foot		21/4/08							
1/63 rd Foot					22/10/11				
2/63 rd Foot									
64 th Foot							22/9/13		
65 th Foot				14/3/10					
1/66 th Foot									
2/66 th Foot							10/5/13		
1/67 th Foot								9/5/14	
2/67 th Foot									
68 th Foot					31/5/11				
1/69 th Foot									4/8/15
2/69 th Foot									
70 th Foot					23/11/11				
1/71 st Foot							22/4/13		
2/71 st Foot									
1/72 nd Foot	1/3/07	13/5/08	19/5/09		16/7/11	10/5/12		2/5/14	
2/72 nd Foot									
1/73 rd Foot					28/9/11				1/6/15
2/73 rd Foot									
74 th Foot		12/7/08							
75 th Foot									
76 th Foot		1/5/08							
77 th Foot									
1/78 th Foot			10/5/09						
2/78 th Foot									
1/79 th Foot				12/6/10					
2/79 th Foot									
80 th Foot				17/5/10					

Militia Regiments Sampled

Regiment	1807 (WO27/91)	1809 (WO27/95)	1810 (WO27/101)	1811 (WO27/103)
Anglesey				
Bedford				
Berkshire	15/4/07			
Buckinghamshire	30/5/07	15/5/09	25/9/10	2/5/11
Cambridgeshire	3/3/07			
Cardigan				
Carmarthen		15/5/09	4/10/10	17/5/11
Carnarvon	31/3/07	22/5/09	7/10/10	29/4/11
Cheshire		14/5/09		
Cornwall		18/5/09		
Cornish Miners				
Cumberland	29/4/07			
Denbigh				
Derby				
East Devon	12/3/07	27/4/09	14/10/10	14/5/11
North Devon	15/4/07	4/5/09	8/10/10	20/4/11
South Devon	16/4/07	24/5/09	29/10/10	24/6/11
Dorset		2/5/09		
Durham	2/6/07			
East Essex				
West Essex		28/3/09		
Flint				
Glamorgan				
North Gloucester				
South Gloucester				
North Hampshire		6/4/09		
South Hampshire				
Hampshire Isle of Wight				
Hertfordshire				
Herefordshire				
Huntingdonshire				
East Kent				
West Kent	1/6/07			
1 st Lancashire	4/4/07	3/5/09		
2 nd Lancashire	21/5/07			
3 rd Lancashire	2/4/07			
Leicestershire	18/4/07			
North Lincolnshire	2/3/07			
South Lincolnshire		13/5/09		

Regiment	1807 (WO27/91)	1809 (WO27/95)	1810 (WO27/101)	1811 (WO27/103)
East London				
West London				
Merioneth				
East Middlesex	7/4/07			
West Middlesex	6/4/07	28/3/09		
Middlesex Westminster	20/4/07			
Monmouth & Brecon				
Montgomery				
East Norfolk	7/4/07			
West Norfolk	24/4/07			
Northampton-shire				
Northumberland				
Nottinghamshire				
Oxford				
Pembroke	4/3/07			
Radnor				
Rutland		11/5/09		
Salop				
1 st Somerset				
2 nd Somerset				
Staffordshire				
East Suffolk	9/5/07			
West Suffolk	8/4/07	23/5/09		
1 st Surrey		12/3/09		
2 nd Surrey				
Sussex		26/5/09		
1 st Tower Hamlets		15/3/09		
2 nd Tower Hamlets		23/3/09		
Warwick		19/5/09		
Westmoreland		27/5/09		
Wiltshire				
Worcester				
Yorkshire East Riding				
1 st Yorkshire West Riding		1/5/09	5/10/10	
2 nd Yorkshire West Riding	8/5/07	15/5/09	1/10/10	
3 rd Yorkshire West Riding	30/4/07	10/5/09	20/10/10	
Yorkshire North Riding				
Aberdeen	26/5/07			
Argyll & Bute				

Regiment	1807 (WO27/91)	1809 (WO27/95)	1810 (WO27/101)	1811 (WO27/103)
Ayr	12/3/07	29/5/09	23/10/10	
Berwick, Haddington, Linlithgow & Peebles				
Dumfries, Roxburgh & Selkirk	1/5/07			
Edinburgh	19/5/07			
Fife				
Forfar & Kincardine	20/5/07	31/5/09	17/10/10	14/5/11
Inverness, Banff, Elgin & Nairn	30/5/07	8/6/09	11/10/10	28/3/11
Kirkcudbright & Wigton				
Lanark	3/6/07	22/6/09		
Perth	24/4/07	16/5/09		
Renfrew				
Ross, Caithness, Sutherland & Cromarty				
Stirling, Dumbarton, Clackmannon & Kinross	13/5/07			

Appendix H: Nationality of Regiments

Corps	1807			1808			1809			1810			1811			1812			1813			1814			1815			
	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	
1 st Life Guards																												
2 nd Life Guards																												
Royal Horse Guards	96	2	0				98	0	0																			
Depot, Royal Horse Guards																			97	1	0							
1 st Dragoon Guards	97	1	2				97	1	2																			
2 nd Dragoon Guards							86	0	13										90	1	9				91	2	7	
3 rd Dragoon Guards				89	2	8																				93	2	6
4 th Dragoon Guards										12	3	86																
5 th Dragoon Guards										12	1	87																
6 th Dragoon Guards																51	15	34										
7 th Dragoon Guards													35	2	62													
1 st Dragoons																												
2 nd Dragoons																												
3 rd Dragoons	75	6	16	79	8	13	77	8	15				82	7	10													
4 th Dragoons	96	1	1	95	3	1																						
6 th Dragoons																						18	3	79				
7 th Light Dragoons	96	1	1	97	1	1													96	1	2							
8 th Light Dragoons																										39	3	58
9 th Light Dragoons																												
10 th Light Dragoons							92	2	2				92	1	1	93	2	1										
11 th Light Dragoons																						98	1	1				
12 th Light Dragoons																												
13 th Light Dragoons	57	4	38	57	5	37	58	5	37																			
14 th Light Dragoons																												
15 th Light Dragoons										94	3	1																
16 th Light Dragoons																												
17 th Light Dragoons																												
18 th Light Dragoons										38	4	57																
19 th Light Dragoons				71	6	21																				60	3	37
20 th Light Dragoons				75	3	10																						
21 st Light Dragoons	73	3	22	74	3	21				77	2	19				77	3	19				74	3	23				
22 nd Light Dragoons																			81	10	7							
23 rd Light Dragoons													86	2	11	83	2	14										
24 th Light Dragoons							72	7	19				81	4	13				78	10	11							
25 th Light Dragoons																												
1/1 st Foot Guards													95	4	1													
2/1 st Foot Guards										91	5	4														29	26	44
3/1 st Foot Guards																												
1/2 nd Foot Guards																						91	4	5				

Corps	1807			1808			1809			1810			1811			1812			1813			1814			1815		
	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish	English	Scottish	Irish			
2/71 st Foot																											
1/72 nd Foot	15	60	24	15	63	21	16	64	19				15	62	22	15	63	21				11	68	20			
2/72 nd Foot																											
1/73 rd Foot													43	30	24									46	25	27	
2/73 rd Foot																											
74 th Foot				10	72	16																					
75 th Foot																											
76 th Foot				95	1	4																					
77 th Foot																											
1/78 th Foot							11	83	5																		
2/78 th Foot																											
1/79 th Foot										11	83	6															
2/79 th Foot																											
80 th Foot										49	13	29															
1/81 st Foot																								67	2	30	
2/81 st Foot													62	37	2							65	0	34			
1/82 nd Foot													81	1	17	79	3	18									
2/82 nd Foot																											
1/83 rd Foot	70	3	25										61	3	34							59	3	35			
2/83 rd Foot																											
1/84 th Foot																								83	1	14	
2/84 th Foot																											
85 th Foot	26	3	68				53	4	43										49	3	48						
86 th Foot							71	3	19				69	3	22												
1/87 th Foot																											
2/87 th Foot	22	1	76																								
1/88 th Foot																											
2/88 th Foot										3	2	95				5	7	87									
1/89 th Foot																											
2/89 th Foot																								27	2	70	
1/90 th Foot				47	28	16																					
2/90 th Foot	82	7	10																								
1/91 st Foot							4	79	16				4	80	16	6	80	13	6	80	13						
2/91 st Foot																								12	70	16	
1/92 nd Foot																			4	89	7						
2/92 nd Foot																											
93 rd Foot																											
94 th Foot																											
1/95 th Foot																						78	12	10			
2/95 th Foot				46	19	35										63	12	26			76	6	18				
3/95 th Foot																											
1/96 th Foot													72	3	23												
2/96 th Foot																											
97 th Foot				6	0	50																					
98 th Foot	2	1	96																								
99 th Foot																											
100 th Foot																											
101 st Foot													4	0	95												
102 nd Foot																											
103 rd Foot																											
104 th Foot																											
Royal West Indian Rangers																								46	4	31	

Source: WO27 Sample.

All figures are the percentage of strength. Regiments with those with over 50% have the relevant figures coloured; those with over 70% of one nationality have the figure in bold.

Appendix J: Classification of Occupations given inSoldiers' enlistment details

Labourers	Low Artisans	Medium artisans	High artisans	Retailers
Boatman	Apprentice	Anchor smith	Breeches maker	Baker
Bottler	Blanket maker	Basket maker	Brewer	Book binder
Carrier	Bricklayer	Blacksmith	Brogue maker	Butcher
Carter	Brick maker	Block maker	Cabinet maker	Clerk
Coachman	Button Burnisher	Brassfounder	Carver	Gin stocker
Coal Miner	Button Maker	Brazier	Clockmaker	Grocer
Coger	Carder	Knife maker	Cloth dresser	Musician
Collier	Card maker	Bridle cutter	Clothier	Plan maker
Cook	Comb maker	Calico printer	Cloth maker	Scribe
Firer	Cordwainer	Carpenter	Coach painter	Upholder
Forgeman	Cotton spinner	Cassimere printer	Cutler	
Furnaceman	Felter	Cloth glosser	Dresser	
Gardener	File smith	Cloth maker	Engraver	
Groom	Firingman	Coating glosser	Farmer	
Husbandman	Joiner	Cooper	Flaxdresser	
Jobber	Leather Cutter	Draper	Framework knitter	
Labourer	Leather grinder	Dyer	Fustian cutter	
Miner	Nail maker	Farrier	Gilder	
Nailer	Potter	Founder	Glass grinder	
Oilman	Rope maker	Plasterer	Hatter	
Puddler	Sawyer	Glazier	Hoiser	
Sailor	Skinner	Iron founder	Husbandman	
Servant	Slater	Ironmonger	Ivory turner	
Slate Getter	Spinner	Linen manufacturer	Keysmith	
Tinner	Stay maker	Mason	Lambskin dresser	
	Stone cutter	Miller	Locksmith	
	Tanner	Moulder	Lace maker	
	Turner	Painter	Machine maker	
	Weaver	Painter & plumber	Manufacturer	
	Wire drawer	Pipe maker	Millwright	
	Wool skinner	Painter & glazier	Papermaker	
	Wool spinner	Plasterer	Patent snuff maker	
		Plumber	Pocketbook maker	
		Plumber & glazier	Reed maker	
		Printer	Shearman	
		Saddler	Silk weaver	
		Shoemaker	Steel toy maker	
		Smith	Stocking weaver	

Labourers	Low Artisans	Medium artisans	High artisans	Retailers
		Stirrup maker	Lock maker	
		Stone mason	Tailor	
		Stuff maker	Watchmaker	
		Tinplate worker	Whitesmith	
		Wheelwright	Wool comber	
		Wright	Wool sorter	
			Wool stapler	
			Yeoman	

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