The Reformed British Militia, c.1852-1908

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Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

2014

Abstract

This thesis aims to provide a comprehensive investigation of the reformed British militia between its reconstitution in 1852 and its abolition (and replacement by the Special Reserve) in 1908, addressing one of the major remaining gaps in our understanding of the auxiliary forces of this period. The post-1852 militia has generally been overshadowed by its eighteenth and early nineteenth century predecessor, and of the few major works that do examine the force after its reform, most do so as part of broader studies examining it from the point of view of the regular army, or as an epilogue to a much broader study of the militia of the earlier period, or the wider amateur military tradition as a whole. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to provide the first dedicated study of the reformed British militia in recent years. It will move beyond the limited 'top-down' approach characteristic of many works examining the wider Victorian army and instead tap into a more recent methodological trend which utilises a range of national and local archival material to examine the nuances of what remained a locally organised force. It will examine not just the role of the militia and the way in which it was organised, but also study the nature and composition of its officer corps, its rank and file, and will investigate areas which have been hitherto largely ignored such as the way discipline was maintained in what remained an amateur force. It will conclude with an examination of the militia's unprecedented service during the South African War before going onto examine the process by which the militia was ultimately abolished and replaced by the Special Reserve (and ask whether or not this represented a moment of continuity, or an outright break with the past.)

This study rejects the idea that during this period the militia largely became 'an anachronistic auxiliary' to the regular army. There can be no doubt that it became increasingly centralised under the control of the War Office and that it also provided a vital role as a source of both officers and men for the regular army. Yet by looking at a mix of both national and local archival material, a more nuanced picture emerges. Several units managed to retain a degree of organisational independence and a social distinctiveness from the wider army. Furthermore, many of the reforms which altered the organisation of the force had important benefits. Compared to the 1850s and 1860s, during which the newly reconstituted force was forced to yield to the exigencies of the

regular army, the militia of the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s was arguably better trained, better equipped and quantitatively stronger than during the preceding decades.

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List of Common Abbreviations

BL	British Library
HC	House of Commons
HL	House of Lords
KHLC	Kent History and Library Centre
LMA	London Metropolitan Archive
MCRM	Monmouth Castle and Regimental Museum
NAM	National Army Museum
NRS	National Records of Scotland
PP	Parliamentary Papers
RO	Record Office
SR	Special Reserve
TNA	The National Archives
WO	War Office
WSHC	Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre

Acknowledgements

There are many to whom I owe a great deal of gratitude over the last four years, Firstly, I would like to thank Dr. Timothy Bowman, my primary supervisor, without whom I would never have been first introduced to the topic that is now this study's focus. Without his thoughts, patience and support I would have been lost. Also I would like to thank Professor Ian Beckett who has given me much advice over the period, and without whose pioneering work examining the amateur military tradition this study would not have been possible. Additionally I would like to thank the staff in the School of History at the University of Kent for giving me the opportunity to undertake this research in the first place. Without their support, both moral and financial, this study would not have been possible.

Elsewhere I would like to thank the countless archivists I have encountered upon my travels for their tireless work facilitating my endless questions about the militia. I would like to particularly thank the staff of the Monmouthshire Castle and Regimental Museum for there willingness to let me trawl through boxes of archival material with total freedom, much of which has proven immeasurably useful.

On a personal note I would to thank my friends, my mother and my late father for all their kindness, patience and encouragement. Finally, I would like to give a special thanks to Charlotte Hoban for her love and support over what has been, for several personal reasons, an extremely turbulent period. Without her support (and that of her family), this study would definitely not have been possible.

Introduction

This study aims to provide a comprehensive investigation of the reformed British militia of the Victorian and Edwardian period, a key part of the United Kingdom's land forces and, what Ian Beckett termed, an 'amateur military tradition' of auxiliary forces. However, whereas there is a large degree of historiographical awareness of many of the other auxiliary forces (the Rifle Volunteers, Yeomanry and, after 1908, the Territorial Army), our understanding of the militia remains incomplete. The two principal existing studies, Beckett's *Amateur Military Tradition* and Duncan Anderson's thesis, have gone some way to rectifying this, but both are far from comprehensive studies. The broad focus of the former, placing the militia within a wider amateur military tradition from the sixteenth century until the present day, means it is unable to examine the reformed militia after 1852 in sufficient detail. Conversely, Anderson's account has been more focused, bridging the gap between earlier works on the militia of the Georgian period and its reconstitution in 1852; yet it fails to examine the force after the implementation of Edward Cardwell's army reforms during the early 1870s (suggesting that henceforth it was little more than a part of the regular army).[1] Some recent scholarship examining the Edwardian Army has gone some way to redressing the lack of any modern analysis of the militia during this period (and its eventual replacement, the Special Reserve).[2] By comparison the other auxiliary forces have all been the focus of more recent scholarship which aims to better understand their place within contemporary society and Britain's defensive arrangements.[3]

Therefore, this study will fill one of the major remaining gaps in our understanding of the auxiliary forces of the Victorian and Edwardian period, providing a comprehensive examination of what remained the most militarily important of Britain's auxiliary forces. It will not only test the conclusions of the existing historiography, but

[1] I. F. W. Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers: The amateur military tradition 1558-1945*, (Barnsley: Pen & Sword, 2011); D. Anderson, 'The English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century: A study of its military, social and political significance', unpublished D. Phil., University of Oxford, (1982).

[2] T. Bowman and M. Connelly, *The Edwardian Army: Recruiting, Training, and Deploying the British Army, 1902-1914*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

[3] For the two principal studies of the Victorian Rifle Volunteers, see H. Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908*, (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1975), and I. F. W. Beckett, *Riflemen Form: A Study of the Rifle Volunteer Movement 1859-1908*, (Aldershot: The Ogilby Trusts, 1982). For the yeomanry cavalry, see G. Hay, 'The British Yeomanry Cavalry, 1794-1920', unpublished PhD, University of Kent, (2011).

also tread new ground by acknowledging the variations in what remained until the end a force predominantly organised and recruited upon a local county basis. This means it is essential to survey local archival material in addition to that located in central archives in order to build up a more representative picture and to avoid a simple analysis from the 'top down', something much of the existing historiography has failed to do. Such an approach will help to broaden our understanding of a variety of issues. This includes the debate over the militia's changing function and its place within the wider defensive arrangements of the UK, highlighting some of the continuity in official attitudes to such. Although organised primarily for defence against invasion and periodically as an aid to the civil power, the militia also played a more proactive role in supporting the regular army throughout the period. In wartime they allowed the regular army to concentrate abroad by relieving them from domestic garrison duties within the UK. However, such a role also saw militia units serve abroad, a role which culminated in their unprecedented service *en masse* during the South African War. It is also important to acknowledge that by the end of the century the militia arguably provided the single most important source of manpower for the line, a function which was increasingly pressed upon the force in the wake of the reforms of the late 1860s and 1870s and an issue which dominated much of the debate over its function until its reformation in 1908. Yet aside from charting the militia's changing role and organisation, the study will explore the changing size and nature of both the officer corps and the rank and file. This is an area where the localised nature of the force is particularly prevalent as variation existed which had only been hitherto alluded at. Similarly this will be aided by closer examination of the way discipline was enforced in what remained an amateur force and the sometimes turbulent relationship between the militiamen and the local population, both issues which have been largely ignored by much of the contemporary and more recent historiography. This analysis will also examine the experience of the officers and men during their embodied service during the Crimean War, Indian Mutiny and later the South African War. Finally, it will bring these threads together by charting the debate over the future of the militia as part of the wider reform of the army and its subsequent reform and conversion into the Special Reserve in 1908, although the study will continue until 1914 so it can explore the degree of continuity between the two.

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Before further exploring these lines of enquiry, one must establish where they sit in relation to the wider historiography. Most contemporary accounts of the Victorian and Edwardian Militia suffer from the same problem: they examine the force from an insular perspective without putting it into a wider context. This was particularly true of the myriad of regimental histories which were largely written by serving or retired militia officers. The first were published in the late 1860s and 1870s in the wake of the first period of significant militia reform since 1852, although the bulk dated from the first decades of the twentieth century. Far from uniform in the quality of their scholarship, they varied greatly in both length and depth despite following a similar narrative and descriptive format with at best only a cursory attempt to place the regiment's experience within that of the wider militia.[4] For example, in 1876 a serving Captain of the 3rd West York Light Infantry published a year-by-year narrative of its service and the service of its officers. Later in 1907 the acting chaplain to the 3rd King's Own Scottish Borderers published a similar account immediately prior to the establishment of the Special Reserve. Militia regimental histories were not limited to infantry battalions; in 1913 a late Captain of the Cornwall and Devon Royal Garrison Artillery published a history of the unit up to its disbandment in 1908.[5] Some regular regimental histories also paid account to their associated militia units after they were unified into territorial regiments in 1881. For instance, in his history of the Royal Sussex Regiment's service in the South African War the author also covers, albeit in far less detail, the service of the regiment's militia battalion.[6]

There were also several contemporary accounts by serving and retired militia officers which aimed to examine the militia more widely. Some simply offered their authors the chance to voice their own opinions on the direction of militia reform, particularly in relation to recruitment and the fact that the militia was increasingly a

[4] For a comprehensive bibliographical list see A. S. White, *A Bibliography of Regimental Histories of the British Army*, (The Society for Army Historical Research, 1965), pp. 149-61, 300.

[5] Additional regimental histories cited throughout the text can be found in the appropriate section of the bibliography. G. A. Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia, or Third West York Light Infantry*, (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1876); R.W. Weir, *History of the 3rd Batt. King's Own Scottish Borderers, 1798-1907*, (Dumfries: Courier and Herald Offices, 1907); G. Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *"The Royal Miners." A History of the Stannaries Regiment of Miners, late Cornwall and Devon Miners Royal Garrison Artillery Militia, commonly called "The Royal Miners"*, (London: Harrison and Sons, 1908).

[6] Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek, Being Some Account Of The Royal Sussex Regiment In South Africa*, H. F. Bidder ed., (London: Murray and Co., 1907).

source of manpower for the line.[7] A rather different perspective was provided by an anonymous account satirising the experience of a single regiment from its reconstitution in 1852 to its embodied service at home and in the Ionian Islands.[8] One trend which spanned across the period was an attempt to frame the contemporary militia as a 'constitutional force' which could trace a direct line back to the militia tradition of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval period. In 1857 an officer of the East Norfolk Regiment published a lecture in which he had attempted to trace the contemporary militia's roots back to the Anglo-Saxon period.[9] Even in 1908 militia officers were still attempting to frame the militia in such a light. The only contemporary study of the militia as a whole, by Colonel George Hay, made the same direct link. Hay's chronological outline of the militia's wider history was largely a reaction to what he perceived as the decline of public familiarity with such a tradition and on the whole somewhat of a manifesto for the efficacy of the militia. As he saw it – Hay was himself a militia colonel for nearly twenty-five years, commander of the 3rd The Prince of Wales Own West Yorkshire Regiment – the force's utility had been demonstrated by its 'active and material' service during the South African War, while at home militiamen had gone 'beyond their obligation of service' by volunteering for overseas despite the fact that theoretically it was still an emergency force for home defence. He made no attempt to deny the increasing importance of the militia as a recruitment mechanism for the line, although he maintained such was far from a blemish upon the reputation of the force; in fact it 'enabled the Constitutional Force to continue its connection with the Military History of England'.[10] To his credit, Hay did attempt to go beyond other contemporary accounts by also examining the force's composition, pay, discipline, equipment and the legislative base upon which it was regulated, while also providing details upon the lineage of each unit and their service during the South African War.[11] Despite this his work is preoccupied

[7] For examples see E. Finch Hatton, *The Militia and the Recruiting Service. With Suggestions for their Reorganization*¸ (London: Bosworth & Harrison, 1859); E.C. Strode, *The Line and the Militia*, (London: William Ridgeway, 1869); and G.A. Raikes, *Militia Reform. With special reference to the Militia Reserve and new Organisation Scheme*, (London: W. Mitchell & Co., 1873).

[8] Emeritus, *The Militiaman at Home and Abroad; Being the History of a Militia Regiment, from its First Training to its Disembodiment; with Sketches of the Ionian Islands, Malta and Gibraltar.*, (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1857).

[9] W. Haggard, *The Militia: Its Importance as a Constitutional Force*, (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts, 1857).

[10] G. J. Hay, *An Epitomized History Of The Militia (The "Constitutional Force")*, (London: United Services Gazette, 1908), pp. 1-3, 166. 182-3.

[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 185-444.

with demonstrating the link between the contemporary force and its ancient roots and is therefore less concerned with providing any real analysis of the contemporary militia.

After the abolition of the force in 1908 very little was published regarding the militia aside from several regimental histories. There were however a few exceptions. Although the last volume of Sir John Fortescue's seminal history of the British Army paid only a cursory nod to the militia and the auxiliary forces, his previous examination of the county lieutenancies during the Napoleonic War helped to explore the role played by the militia in the wider mobilisation of manpower during the period.[12] Exploring both the machinery of the militia ballot and the role of the lieutenancy to the militia's recruitment, he came to the conclusion (later challenged by Duncan Anderson's thesis) that the militia's role was principally as an auxiliary to the line. A further exception was Colonel John Dunlop's influential study of the British Army between 1899 and 1914, which although primarily concerned with the regular army also contained a chapter examining the auxiliary forces.[13] Concerned primarily with explaining the relationship between the auxiliaries and the various attempts at army reform, he concluded that by 1899 there was far from a coherent system of amateur forces within the UK. He argued that the militia 'was a collection of units' and incapable of taking the field as a unified force. A key problem was that the localised basis upon which the force was organised meant there was a comparative lack of units based and recruited in growing urban, compared to rural, areas. This meant that hitherto the militia had consisted of a large proportion of agricultural labourers while the officers were drawn from among the local landed gentry. Like Hay he also rightly acknowledged the supportive role the militia played in relation to the regulars by offering young officers a 'backdoor' to a regular commission (due to the fact that a fixed number of commissions were offered to militia officers each year, meaning potential candidates could circumvent the need to attend either Sandhurst or Woolwich) and the opportunity for many recruits to make the required standard for entry into the line – he also attributed the high rates of crime, which he terms as 'unusual in a Volunteer force', to the high percentage of men transferring to the regulars; although he does not explain this point, it most likely relates to the issue of fraudulent enlistment. Crucially, he acknowledged that the standard of training within

[12] J. W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, vol. XIII, (London: Macmillan, 1930) and *The County Lieutenancies and the Army, 1803-1814*, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1909).
[13] J. K. Dunlop, *The Development of the British Army 1899-1914: From the Eve of the South African War to the Eve of the Great War, with Special Reference to the Territorial Force*, (London: Methuen, 1938), pp. 42-52.

each militia unit varied considerably, showing that they cannot be treated simply as a homogenous force and that variation between units existed.[14] On the whole Dunlop's account of the militia and the other auxiliaries does little more than set out their organisational structure at the moment prior to the South African War, although some interesting points were raised which later historians have further developed.

It has only been since the 1960s that some attempt has been made to redress the lack of scholarship examining the Victorian and Edwardian Militia and to try and place it within a wider understanding of British society. Duncan Anderson's thesis on the English Militia of the mid-nineteenth century attempts to do just this by largely examining the force as a social institution. Rejecting the assertion laid down by Fortescue, later reaffirmed by Richard Glover and by J.R. Western, that by the early nineteenth century the militia's role had largely degenerated to an auxiliary to the line, he contends that there was in fact a strong 'militia party', principally from among its officer corps, who maintained a prolonged resistance to such views. Instead they argued that the militia's role was as a home defence force alongside, not submissive to, the regular army. In fact he argues that it was their resistance which ensured the survival of the force in the years after the Napoleonic Wars in a political environment which was becoming increasingly hostile. Thus when it was reconstituted in 1852 the militia remained a force organised for home defence and 'as a mechanism for social reform.' Its eventual subsumption to the line 'was imposed on it by the exceptional contingencies of the 1850's – it was not the logical termination of the militia's history.' It was only from the mid-1860s onwards that political resistance to greater integration faltered and not until after the reforms of Edward Cardwell that the militia became in effect 'an anachronistic auxiliary' to the line.[15] In explaining his wider thesis Anderson also examines the composition of the officer corps which within each regiment resembled 'clubs' where family connections and landed wealth were paramount. He also charts attitudes towards the militia, specifically the grievances and resistance of three groups: those advocating greater enfranchisement for whom the militia ballot represented enforced military service upon a population still largely without the vote; the concerns of anti-militarist and nonconformist groups who feared militia service would damage the nation's morality; and those in the

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 42-3, 46-50.

[15] J. R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century. The Story Of A Political Issue 1660-1802*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965); R. Glover, *Peninsular preparation: the reform of the British Army, 1795-1809*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963); Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 2-6.

Horse Guards and the War Office who were sceptical of the force's efficacy for home defence, yet who were also aware that it could act as a conduit through which military virtues were disseminated to the population.[16] However, by concentrating on explaining the 1852 reconstitution as an 'event', Anderson's thesis has some major drawbacks. By ending his study in the 1870s he is guilty of the same short-sighted understanding for which he criticises Fortescue, Glover and Western. He is without doubt correct that the Cardwell reforms marked a defining moment when the militia became more closely associated with the regulars, yet, as will be argued, his cut-off date implies that afterwards the militia had little or no independence from the line whatsoever. Examination of the force on a localised regimental basis, something lacking in his study, shows that this is a gross oversimplification. For instance, during the South African War most militiamen served abroad in their own units and under the command of their own officers, while in a broader sense its role garrisoning the UK and various Mediterranean stations was essentially the same role as experienced during the 1850s. However, the greatest drawback is that his thesis contains little consideration of the recruitment and social composition of the rank and file, or an examination of the way in which the force was organised and trained.

Ian Beckett has also partially examined the Victorian and Edwardian militia as part of a wider study examining the British amateur military tradition. Building upon Anderson's work, Beckett identifies four stages of debate over potential militia reform, all resulting from mounting concerns over French naval ambitions and in 1851 a *coup d'état* by Napoleon III. Largely such debate was split between two sides with competing ideas over the direction of such reform: one side suggested that there should be a return to a 'local militia' organised for the defence of each county and on the other, a belief that the militia should be regulated as a national force in order to resist invasion anywhere within the UK.[17] He also argues that the bulk of recruits in the regiments he surveyed were agricultural labourers, while the composition of the officer corps remained stable as 60 per cent of officers held their commissions from before the reform. Like Anderson he argues that it was their embodied service during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny which saw the militia's role transform into a recruitment mechanism for the line, a role that a high proportion of militia colonels resented and as a result meant its social

[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 5-79, 80-199, 200-87, 288-367.
[17] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 145-9.

composition quickly began to decline as lower elements of society were used to fill the gaps.[18] He also concurs with Anderson that a militia lobby within Parliament prevented the greater integration of the militia until the Cardwell reforms, the result of which was that from 1882 to 1904 over a third of regular recruits had previously served in the militia, a trend also evident among the officers through the use of the militia as a 'backdoor' to a regular commission. In terms of the reasons for enlisting, Beckett argues that aside from allowing men the chance to achieve the necessary fitness for joining the line, the militia also acted as a form of temporary refuge for the unemployed in times of economic hardship. He also concludes that, by the South African War, the militia and the auxiliary forces were a significant contributing factor to the military conditioning of British society. Finally, he argues that, despite the unprecedented nature of the militia's service during the South African War, the militia's strength rapidly declined prompting both the Unionist government and Liberal opposition to recognise it required urgent reform alongside the army and auxiliary forces as a whole. However, the attempts to reform the force by the successive Secretaries of State for War, St John Brodrick and Hugh Arnold-Forster, were unsuccessful, due mainly to the intransigence of the force's supporters in Parliament. It was their continued intransigence which, in 1908, forced the new Liberal successor, Richard Haldane, to abolish the force entirely and replace it with the Special Reserve.[19] Therefore, Beckett's study is alone in that it examines militia across the entire period. However, by focussing upon the amateur military tradition more generally it is unable to provide sufficient details with regards to the nuances of what remained a highly localised force. By comparison to his investigation of the volunteers, his analysis of the militia is narrowly sourced while it is clear much of the initial assessment relies heavily on Anderson's thesis (which itself has its own issues regarding the breath of its source material). Illustrating this is that aside from a discussion of the impact of the Cardwell reforms, there is very little on the militia between 1859 and 1899. In fact, the chapter examining the period is concerned almost entirely with the volunteers due to Beckett's belief that the revived volunteer movement was 'the most significant of the auxiliary forces…in terms of its effect upon social, political and military affairs.'[20]

David French has also considered the auxiliary forces as part of his study of the British regimental system. Aside from coming to a similar conclusion to Beckett over the

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 150-4.
[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 198-200, 207-17.
[20] *Ibid.*, p. 164.

importance of the militia as a source of manpower for the regulars, French notes that increased integration with the line caused tensions between the militia and the regular army.[21] French disagrees with Anderson's assertion that resistance to further integration had effectively died after Cardwell's reforms; in fact there remained a high degree of suspicion between militia officers and their regular counterparts, as well as suspicion over the growing importance of the volunteers, who it was feared attracted the kind of respectable working class candidates the militia wished to attract (a point Beckett also makes).[22] French believes that the key reason behind these strained relations were the often subtle social distinctions between the regulars and militia, although to a degree this began to narrow as the proportion of militia officers from among the local landed gentry fell due to the effect of the agricultural depression upon land rents and as a result the shortfall was increasingly met by those who, with little concern for the regiment itself, saw a militia commission as a 'backdoor' to the regular army. He also agrees with Beckett that many militiamen joined because they saw the force as a temporary relief from unemployment, or as a means of achieving the necessary fitness to join the line, though he does acknowledge many from urban areas also joined simply out of boredom.[23] Finally, he also briefly examines their training and discipline, arguing that efficiency varied dramatically between units and that the best had managed to create a tangible sense of regimental community. However, many other battalions were characterised by varying standards as they were limited by short periods of training, a lack of formation-level training and insufficient firing ranges and ammunition for effective musketry practice.[24] Although going some way to expanding upon the social distinctions within the militia and the social aspect of the force's relationship with the regular army, as with many other pieces it is again a rather piecemeal examination and again reliant upon a small sample of local sources.

Recent scholarship has also extended to the important role played by the militia and the auxiliary forces more generally during the South African War.[25] In the same way a recent study of the regular army examines the war from the 'bottom up',[26] Stephen

[21] D. French, *Military Identities*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 203-4, 214,
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 204.
[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 206-10.
[24] *Ibid.*, p. pp. 217-22.
[25] For such a study examining the service of the volunteers abroad, see W. Bennett, *Absent Minded Beggars: The Volunteer Movement in the Boer War*, (London: Leo Cooper, 1999).
[26] E. Spiers, *The Victorian Soldier in Africa*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).

Miller has charted the experience of the various auxiliary forces in South Africa by utilising a range of personal testimonies.[27] He argues that for the vast majority the experience of the war was often monotonous, consisting primarily of duties behind the lines in support of the regulars due to the British government's reluctance to risk using them in action *en-masse*. Though Miller should be credited for his extensive use of personal accounts, his study largely ignores the role of the militia and tends thus to focus upon the experience of the volunteers and yeomanry. He also failed to explore the wartime service of the majority of auxiliary soldiers who served either in overseas garrisons, Ireland, or mainland Britain itself. Therefore, Miller cannot lay claim to a full understanding of the auxiliary forces during the South African War. In attempting to explain the wider reasons why so many young working class men volunteered for foreign service, Miller rejects the conclusions of revisionist historians such as Henry Pelling, Eric Hobsbawm and Richard Price who maintained that patriotism only drove the middle classes to volunteer, the majority only doing so due to economic hardship and unemployment. Instead Miller argues that patriotism penetrated all areas of society and that unemployment did not force men to volunteer for service abroad,[28] a point supported by others such as Andrew Thompson and Ed Spiers, the latter arguing local factors could explain anomalies in the recruitment pattern.[29] However, Miller's belief in the importance of patriotism as a motive can be challenged. By citing occasions such as 'Mafeking Night' as evidence for working class support for the war he fails to appreciate that the working class were happy to shake off middle-class sensibilities; thus such spontaneous yet short lived outpourings of celebration cannot be used as concrete evidence of an entrenched mass patriotism.

Wider examinations of army reform have also begun to acknowledge the importance of the militia. Building on previous work by Brian Bond and Edward Spiers,[30] a recent study by David French examines the creation and development of the regimental system resulting from the reforms of Cardwell and his successor Hugh

[27] S. M. Miller, 'In Support of the "Imperial Mission?" Volunteering for the South African War, 1899-1902', *The Journal of Military History*, vol. 69, no. 3, (July, 2005), pp. 691-711; *Ibid.*, *Volunteers on the Veld: Britain's Citizen-Soldiers and the South African War, 1899-1902*, (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007).

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 61, 63-5.

[29] E. Spiers, *The Scottish Soldier and Empire, 1854-1902*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 183.

[30] B. Bond, 'The Effect of the Cardwell Reforms in Army Organization, 1874–1904', *RUSI Journal*, vol. 105, issue 620, (1960), pp. 515-524; E.M. Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army, 1866-1902*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 2-28.

Childers. He argues that both Cardwell and Childers hoped that by creating a system in which regular soldiers and militiamen were trained together at a single depot, it would both increase the latter's efficiency and encourage militiamen to transfer directly to their associated line battalions. In addition, transferring the militia from the authority of the lords lieutenant to the War Office was also expected to increase the ease with which the regular and auxiliary forces could be directed and administered.[31] However, these studies pay little regard to whether or not the reforms had a positive or negative effect upon the militia and particularly whether or not closer association with the line contributed to an increase in their military efficiency.

Similarly, the historiography has also acknowledged the importance of the militia within the wider debate upon army reform in the wake of the South African War. Dunlop quickly recognised that militia reform was a central facet of each of the three schemes presented for the reform of the army by Brodrick, Arnold-Forster and Haldane, an issue which remained controversial for both the Unionist and Liberal governments.[32] More recent work has reaffirmed this by recognising how within the Unionist government a significant degree of the opposition towards the reforms of Brodrick and Arnold-Forster, both from within the cabinet and Parliament, centred on what future role the militia would, or would not, have as part of a secondary line in support of the army; indeed it was this issue more so than any other which prevented Arnold-Forster from even formally introducing his army reform scheme to Parliament.[33] Scholars have also acknowledged the importance of the militia in determining Haldane's decision to abolish the force and instead bind its most efficient units more firmly to the regular army through the creation of the Special Reserve.[34] However, most of these works tend to gravitate towards the successful reforms of Haldane – he is the only one of the three to receive a recent biography – at the expense of those of his less successful predecessors, those examining the latter tending to examine the militia in the broadest sense (of how they fit

[31] French, *Military Identities*, pp. 14-5, 20.

[32] Dunlop, *British Army*.

[33] See L. J. Satre, 'St. John Brodrick and Army Reform, 1901-1903', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 15, no. 2, (Spring, 1976), pp. 117-139; A. Tucker, 'The Issue of Army Reform in the Unionist Government 1903-05', *Historical Journal*, vol. 9, no. 1, (1966), pp. 90-100; Beckett, 'H.O. Arnold-Forster and the Volunteers' in Beckett and J. Gooch ed., *Politicians and Defence: Studies in the Formulation of British Defence Policy, 1845-1970*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), pp. 47-68; R. Williams, *Defending the Empire: The Conservative Party and British Defence Policy, 1899-1915*, (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1991), pp. 7-25, 41-55, 77-83.

[34] See E. Spiers, *Haldane: an army reformer*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1980); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 100-17.

into the wider reform of the army) and in limited detail.

In addition to the academic scholarship several amateur studies have also partially examined the Victorian and Edwardian militia, although they vary significantly in terms of the depth, breadth and quality of their research. Bryn Owen's study of the auxiliary units of Wales, published in six volumes, provides a narrative account of each militia regiment based upon a sampling of primary material from local archives and the regional press.[35] Although useful in consolidating the narrative of each unit's service, much like contemporary regimental histories Owen makes little attempt to place each unit into the militia's wider context, much of the account given over to simply describing each unit's lineage, uniform and badges. Similarly, T. L. Hewitson has briefly charted the history of the Northumberland Light Infantry as part of a wider study examining the auxiliary forces of Northumberland until the present day, although it suffers from similar drawbacks.[36] By contrast Graham Watson's study of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers, building upon three previous histories of the regiment, uses a wide variety of material from regimental and county archives, personal papers and the local press (although many of the references to such are rather vague) to provide a relatively in depth investigation which moves beyond a simple narrative account.[37]

Despite the fact that the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers have received a recent assessment, there has been a relatively little exploration of the militia's artillery and engineers. The only recent examination of the militia artillery by Norman Litchfield provides a useful but ultimately brief narrative account of the artillery's structure and organisation alongside a short summary of each unit's lineage. However, it is essentially a popular work which fails to explore the artillery in more than a superficial manner.[38] Other works examining the Royal Artillery more widely have barely touched upon the militia. For instance, there is only the briefest mention of the militia artillery as part of Colonel Maurice-Jones' account of the army's coastal artillery.[39] Therefore, one of the hopes of this thesis will be that it expands upon our understanding of the significant

[35] Each volume examines the auxiliary units of one or more Welsh counties. Details of each volume can be found in the bibliography, but for an example see B. Owen, *The History of the Welsh Militia and Volunteer Corps: Anglesey and Caernarfonshire*, (Caernarfon: Palace Books, 1989).
[36] T. L. Hewitson, *Weekend Warriors: From Tyne to Tweed*¸ (Stroud: Tempus, 2006).
[37] G. Watson, *Militiamen and Sappers: A History of The Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers*, (Monmouth: J. H. Hooper, E. D. Smeeden, R.J. Pope, 1996).
[38] N. Litchfield, *Militia Artillery, 1852-1909: Their Lineage, Uniforms and Badges*, (N.E.H. Litchfield, 1987).
[39] Col. K. W. Maurice-Jones, *The History of Coast Artillery in the British Army*, (Uckfield: The Naval & Military Press, n.d).

minority of units which were in many respects distinct from the majority of the infantry.

Clearly the existing historiography of the Victorian and Edwardian militia is fragmented. This is even clearer when it is considered that, by comparison, the militia of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has received a far greater depth of scholarship. In his study of the Elizabethan militia, Lindsay Boynton outlined the first steps towards the establishment of a national militia.[40] In an examination of the militia from the restoration until the beginning of the nineteenth century, J.R. Western has explored the force as a 'political issue'. From the late seventeenth century the militia were a crucial factor in a battle between the monarchy and local authorities who both saw control of the armed forces as a means of ensuring and executing their power, although by the 1750s it became less of a defining issue among those agitating for militia reform.[41] Therefore, when it was reconstituted in 1757 the militia was largely organised and controlled upon a local basis and led by prominent local landowners, a point which has also been subsequently argued by Stephen Conway and E.H. Gould in their own studies.[42] Aside from its wider organisation, Western also makes a number of conclusions about the nature of the post-1757 militia. Firstly, he argues that despite being recruited via the ballot, most militiamen were either substitutes or volunteers. Secondly, its more favourable terms of service meant that it brought 'under arms many men who would not have entered the army', particularly in rural areas, although on the whole its recruits largely came from a similar class base to that of the regulars.[43] Thirdly, he concludes that the militia were generally well trained but poorly led, the standard of its officers comparatively poor due to their amateur nature, although he argues that if trained by competent professional NCOs and junior officers the men could reach a reasonable level of technical proficiency.[44] Finally, he claims that by the late eighteenth century there was an increasing sense that the militia was becoming subsumed by the line as a recruitment and training mechanism; indeed he ends his study in 1802 due to his claim that during the Napoleonic War the militia were subsumed into an enlarged and complex military system

[40] L. Boynton, *The Elizabethan Militia, 1558-1638*, 2nd ed., (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971), pp. 9-10.
[41] Western, *English Militia*, p. xii-xv, 14, 16.
[42] *Ibid.*, pp. 436-8; S. Conway, *War, State, and Society in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 195-6; E.H. Gould, 'To Strengthen the King's Hands: Dynastic Legitimacy, Militia Reform and Ideas of National Unity in England 1745-1760' *The Historical Journal*, vol. 34, no.2, (June, 1991), pp 329-348 (pp. 346-348).
[43] Western, *English Militia*, p. 264, 271, 443.
[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 338-9, 435, 443.

which precludes them from being studied as an independent force.[45]

There have also been two accounts dedicated to the Irish militia of the Napoleonic period. In his investigation of the formation, expansion and embodied service of Irish militia regiments from 1793 to 1816, Sir Henry McAnally argues that, in Ireland, the militia had a variety of functions: principally they acted as the chief means of defence after the majority of regular regiments were posted overseas; as in Great Britain they also provided the authorities with a means of dealing with civil unrest.[46] In recent years Ivan Nelson has undertaken a further study, a reaction to what he regards as the wealth of primary material left previously untouched. He argues that the Irish militia were of great importance to the regulars as on average 53 per cent of Irish regiments from 1793 to 1802 were composed of militiamen.[47] However, the fact that his study ends in 1802 means it acts as only a partial reassessment of the force compared to McAnnally's. Nevertheless, a recently completed thesis examining the Irish amateur military tradition should go a long way to furthering our understanding of the Irish militia, and therefore this thesis will focus primarily upon English, Welsh and Scottish units.[48]

More recent investigations into the Georgian militia have broadened its study even further and attempted to offer new perspectives upon the force. Stephen Conway has suggested that the social composition of English and Welsh regiments 'included more of a cross section of society than has been imagined.' The officer corps contained, alongside landed gentlemen, many junior officers from rather obscure backgrounds, many of whom had only recently acquired land. The same social distinctions were evident in the rank and file as a significant minority of substitutes were from more stable and respectable working class backgrounds.[49] Furthermore, a recent article by Mathew McCormack has examined the Militia Act of 1757 in terms of gender issues which, he argues, were at the heart of contemporary British society. 'The association of military service with masculine valour; its juxtaposition with women in sentimental and dependant roles; the focus upon sexual virility; and the concerns…about national strength and moral decay…were key issues in 1750s Britain, while debates over the militia were 'fundamentally gendered';

[45] *Ibid.*, pp. xv, 227-35, 237-41. This is an assertion which Duncan Anderson has discounted in his thesis, contrasted and discussed above in greater detail. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 2-6.
[46] H. McAnally, *The Irish Militia 1793-1816*, (Dublin: Clonmore and Reynolds, 1949), p. iii.
[47] I. F. Nelson, *The Irish Militia, 1793-1802*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), p. 248.
[48] W. Butler, 'The Irish Amateur Military Tradition', unpublished D. Phil., University of Kent, (2014).
[49] Conway, *War, State, and Society*, pp. 78-80.

indeed, militia service was equated with citizenship and therefore became equated with masculinity.[50] More specifically, J.E. Cookson has examined the militia as part of what he refers to as the 'British armed nation' during the Napoleonic War, the mass participation of a significant proportion of the population in the auxiliary forces and the effect of such participation upon contemporary society.[51]

Compared to the militia the other auxiliary forces have received far more awareness from scholars. The Victorian Rifle Volunteer movement has been the subject of two studies: one by Hugh Cunningham and a more comprehensive analysis by Ian Beckett. Cunningham examined not just the origin of the Rifle Volunteer movement, but also explored it in a wide range of contexts including the volunteers' political involvement with the state, changing social composition and the degree the movement originated and was sustained by patriotism; indeed he uses the volunteers as a means to further discuss the nature of Victorian patriotism in Britain. The studies principle drawback, albeit self-confessed, is that its sparse sourcing means it is far from a comprehensive study.[52] Beckett's *Riflemen Form* has taken a far wider sample of official and local sources. He maintains the most significant role of the volunteers was in helping to condition British society towards military matters during the late nineteenth century. Although the force was originally a product of middle class patriotism, it soon became a channel for the respectable working class who were unwilling to commit to the regular army or militia. Compared to the regular army and the militia, the volunteers were more socially representative despite only ever having the direct support of a small percentage of the population. The movement 'embraced all classes and persuasions, and tended to be a cohesive factor in society', one which avoided involvement in politics until the 1880s, after which developed a narrow-minded volunteer interest resistant to change.[53] Furthermore, in addition to Cookson's above mentioned wider study of the 'British armed nation', there have been more specific studies examining the volunteers of the late eighteenth century and the Napoleonic War by J.R. Western and more recently by Austen Gee.[54] Furthermore, until recently the yeomanry cavalry had also been lacking a

[50] M. McCormack, 'The New Militia: Gender, Politics and War in 1750s Britain', *Gender and History*, vol. 19, no. 3 (November, 2007), pp. 483-500, (pp. 483-4, 497).
[51] J.E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation 1793-1815*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997).
[52] Cunningham, *Volunteer Force*, pp. 4, 153.
[53] Beckett, *Riflemen Form*, pp. 83-6, 107, 259.
[54] J.R. Western, 'The Volunteer Movement as an Anti-Revolutionary Force, 1793-1801', *The English Historical Review*, vol. 71, no. 281, (1956), pp. 603-614; A. Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement 1794-*

comprehensive analysis, although this has been recently rectified in a thesis by George Hay examining the yeomanry from 1794 to 1920 in which he has placed them into the wider amateur military tradition.[55]

The Territorial Army has also been the subject of dedicated studies. Peter Dennis traced it from its creation by Haldane until the Second World War, illustrating the problems of creating a national part-time reserve controlled by the war office yet organised on a local basis.[56] He concludes that Haldane's final reform scheme was a compromise. Originally he conceived the Territorial Force as a second line which could be used to support the regular army in the field, not as a force for home defence; yet pressure from the volunteers and yeomanry, from which the Territorial Army had been created, forced him to drop this obligation. However, this was a tactical move in order to gain their support for the bill as he believed an adequate number would sign the overseas Imperial Service Obligation allowing them to be sent overseas.[57] By contrast, John Gooch argued that the Territorial Army were designed to function 'as a pool for the provision of reserves' for the expeditionary force. The roles of both were entwined with a growing distrust of Germany in British diplomatic circles, effectively complementing each other in the run up to 1914.[58] There have also been a number of more recent studies of the Territorial Army, both academic and popular, as a result of the centenary of its establishment in 2008.[59]

In addition to studies examining the British and Irish amateur military tradition, there has also been scholarship examining the auxiliary forces and citizen soldiers raised throughout the British Empire.[60] Arguably a large part of this has been with regards to the Canadian Militia, a force which, much like its American counterpart, was founded upon the same principals of citizen soldiery as underpinning the British militia tradition. In addition to narrative accounts charting the history of the force published prior to the

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1814, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003).

[55] Hay, 'British Yeomanry Cavalry'.

[56] P. Dennis, *The Territorial Force 1906-1940*, (Woodbridge: Royal Historical Society and Boydell press, 1987), p. 1.

[57] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[58] J. Gooch, *The Prospect of War: Studies in British Defence Policy*¸ (Abingdon: Frank Crass and Company Ltd, 1981), pp. 92-3.

[59] K.W. Mitchinson, *Defending Albion: Britain's Home Army, 1908- 1919* (Basingstoke: Pal grave Macmillan, 2005) and K.W. Mitchinson, *England's Last Hope: The Territorial Force, 1908-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

[60] For the most recent example, see I.F.W. Beckett ed., *Citizen Soldiers and the British Empire, 1837-1902*¸ (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2012).

Second World War,[61] more recent post-war scholarship has examined the important role of the Canadian Militia within the wider tradition of citizen soldiery which has formed a key part of a much venerated 'militia tradition' arguably dating from the perceived success of the force during the American War of Independence and the War of 1812.[62] There have also been works examining auxiliary forces raised in Australia and New Zeeland which acknowledge the wider nature of an amateur military tradition within settler communities across the Empire.[63]

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An assessment of the existing historiography shows that the Victorian and Edwardian militia lacks a comprehensive analysis which focuses upon the militia as a military and social institution in its own right. This study aims to provide such an analysis. In conjunction with other studies, it will also help to provide a richer understanding of the amateur military tradition. In terms of its methodology it draws upon recent studies, such as those by Beckett and Spiers, which have examined the auxiliary forces and regular army in a multifaceted manner, utilising a wide range of official correspondence and local archival records. Primarily this study aims to test some of the existing conclusions identified above. Most notably it seeks to dispel the assertion that its increasing association with the regular army, particularly from the early 1870s onwards, means there is little value in a dedicated assessment of the militia as an institution in its own right and that instead it should, for all intents and purposes, be regarded as part of the regular army.[64] This view can be challenged by examining the force from 'the bottom up'. Such an approach recognises that, right across the period, the militia was far from one

[61] For instance, see E.J. Chambers, *The Canadian Militia: A History of the Origin and Development of the Force*, (Montreal, QC: L.M. Fresco, 1907).

[62] G. F. G. Stanley, *Canada's Soldiers, 1604-1954: The Military History of an Unmilitary People*, (Toronto, ON: Macmillan, 1960); J.A. Wood, *Militia Myths: Ideas of the Canadian Citizen Soldier, 1896-1921*, (Vancouver, BC: UBC Press, 2010), p. 1; J.A. Wood, 'Canada', Beckett ed., *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 79-99, (pp. 79-81).

[63] For amateur units in Australia generally, see C. Wilcox, *For Hearths and Homes: Citizen Soldiering in Australia, 1854-1945*, (St. Leonards, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1998), and 'Australia', Beckett ed., *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 57-78. For an in depth study of the volunteers and militia of Victoria, see R.J. Marmion, 'The Victorian Volunteer Force on the Central Victorian Goldfields 1858-1883', MA Thesis, Latrobe University, (2003). For New Zealand, see G.J. Clayton, 'Defence Not Defiance: The Shaping of New Zealand's Volunteer Force', unpublished PhD, University of Waikato, (1990), P. Cooke and J. Crawford, *The Territorial's: The History of the Territorial and Volunteer Forces of New Zealand*, (Auckland: Random House, 2011), and 'New Zealand, Beckett ed., *Citizen Soldiers*, pp. 121-38.

[64] Such was the case with Duncan Anderson's thesis, which stopped after the reforms of Edward Cardwell.

homogeneous force; instead, its localised basis meant there remained a significant degree of variation between units. That is not to say broader conclusions cannot be made: it is without doubt that, as a whole, the force became increasingly integral to providing both officers and men for the regular army. However, in order to provide a richer understanding it is vital one appreciate the nuances present in a force which even by 1908 continued to exercise a degree of organisational and social distinctiveness, albeit even if diminished, from the regular army.

In order to do this the aim is to split this study into six chapters. Chapter one will explore the organisational history of the militia from the lead up to its reconstitution in 1852 until the beginning of the South African War. Not only will it provide the context in which the militia was reconstituted in 1852 (outlining the governmental debates over the direction of its reform, illustrating exactly what its role was to be after decades of suspended animation and how this changed in relation to the embodiments of the 1850s), it will also examine the legislation which regulated the force, illustrate how it was organised and assess the extent to which the Cardwell reforms transformed the force into an adjunct to the regular army. It will be argued that although the Cardwell reforms have rightly been appreciated as a transitional moment in the militia's organisation, this has in fact been overstated as his predecessors had also attempted to bring the force under more central control with the aim to improve the efficiency of the force. On the whole this was a success – in the period after the reforms the militia was on the whole stronger and more professionally trained than before – although not all units were able to benefit as much as others, while many units continually lacked suitable barracks and facilities necessary to allow a higher standard of training. Finally, this chapter will examine the militia's artillery, engineers and submarine miners, illuminating their organisational distinctiveness and the more specialised nature of their training compared to the vast bulk of the infantry.

Chapter two will study the militia's officer corps. Firstly, it will ascertain the degree to which the militia lacked effective leadership, both in terms of the shortage of officers and the extent to which they were efficient. By using a sample of officers from several regiments it will establish the social distinctions between the officers of different units. Aside from a significant minority of former regular officers, initially many units were officered by members of the landed gentry and often commanded by a leading landowner from within the county. From the late 1870s onwards their stranglehold upon

the force began to diminish due in no small part to the onset of the 'Great Agricultural Depression'. As land rents fell many independent gentlemen were forced into business or to undertake a profession; thus they had little time to dedicate to a militia commission. This meant that junior commissions were increasingly held by those seeking to use the militia as a means to gain a regular commission, an avenue which was made permanent as part of Cardwell's reform package, with the result being that by the end of the century the militia was increasingly lacking in officers. However, it is also important to acknowledge that not all units fit this pattern; from the beginning units based in or near large cities and industrial areas usually contained a higher proportion of former regular officers, professionals and businessmen. In addition to this the chapter will examine the nature of promotion, which was usually by seniority, and then test the extent to which the militia became a 'backdoor' to a regular commission. As will be seen, the militia became a vital source of officers for the regular army to the extent that by the end of the South African War the militia were responsible for providing one-third of all officers for the regular army, while a small proportion also sought service in colonial forces such as those in Africa.

Chapter three will take a similar methodological approach to the preceding chapter by examining the nature of recruitment, the conditions of service and the social composition of the other ranks. It will assess the inherent difficulties of the decision to abandon recruitment by ballot in favour of voluntary enlistment, the latter meaning the militia was largely reliant on financial inducements to recruit, something which was simply insufficient to enable many units to reach their establishment – thus at no point after its reconstitution did the enrolled strength of the militia as a whole meet its establishment. It will also show that these problems were particularly damaging during the 1850s: some units were prohibited by the activities of nonconformist and peace advocates hostile to militia service, although it was the regular army's insatiable demand for manpower during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny (a period in which the enrolled strength of the force reached its lowest ebb) which caused the greatest difficulties in maintaining strength. By the 1860s this had largely recovered and in the subsequent decades the proportion wanting to complete remained relatively stable, in fact it was only in the wake of the South African War that the total enrolled strength fell to a level comparable with the 1850s. Combating wastage (caused by desertion, the ability to purchase one's discharge and the reopening of transfers to the line) was a constant

struggle, one made worse in many units by Cardwell's alteration to the payment of the enrolment bounty and the loss in many units (but not all) of the ability to recruit and train their own men after they were relocated to their joint brigade depots (although some managed to maintain their independence by retaining their own headquarters and staff). Furthermore, the success of recruitment was linked to the changing social background of those entering the force. It will be shown that there was a general decline in the proportion of agricultural workers and skilled artisans (seen by many officers as the most suitable classes from which to recruit) so that by the end of the century many units were increasingly reliant upon young unskilled labourers, just the sort who made up the bulk of recruits entering the regular army. Unsurprisingly it became easier for units recruiting in urban and industrial areas to maintain their strength meaning that, as a whole, the militia became increasingly an urban force with a broad reduction in the strength of regiments in rural areas by the late 1890s. However, one thing the existing historiography has largely failed to appreciate is that in many units the reliance upon urban workers was not a wholly new trend; many in fact recruited skilled or semi-skilled industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen right across the period, with little or no reliance upon agricultural areas. There was also a significant variation in the social composition of the militia's artillery, engineers and submarine miners which, largely, relied upon more skilled workers.

Chapter four will explore discipline within the militia and the impact it had upon the relationship of the force with society. Firstly, it will explore how discipline was maintained in what remained, unless embodied, a part-time force, arguing that most disciplinary matters were dealt with informally, either through summary trial before local magistrates or a system of minor punishments, as opposed to courts-martial. It will also explore the nature of and reasons behind the high rates of desertion identified in the previous chapter and how the rates of such varied on a regimental basis. Crucially, it will explore the particularly controversial issue of billeting which in many areas was the chief cause of conflict between the militia and the wider population on account of poor discipline in many units. Finally, the chapter will also examine discipline within the context of the South African War. Indiscipline among militiamen remained a major concern, although it was dealt with in much the same manner as the regular army as most military crimes (most common of which were those relating to drunkenness) were dealt with by courts-martial.

Chapter five will chart the embodied service of the militia during the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, and later during the South African War. It will demonstrate that the militia's service both abroad and at home during the South African War was far from an aberration; in fact it was the extreme culmination of a tradition of limited foreign service and a more established domestic role dating back to the Napoleonic War. The chapter will therefore initially chart the first two embodiments in which the militia was principally tasked with relieving regulars units from domestic garrison duties, although it also saw the utilisation of ten infantry battalions for service in the Mediterranean. However, the bulk of the chapter will explore the role and experience of the militia during the South African War, both abroad and domestically. It will show that the existing historiography is right to characterise their service as largely supportive in nature, dominated as it was by garrison duties upon the lines of communication. However, it will demonstrate that the militia played a more active role than hitherto acknowledged due to the increasingly open nature of a guerrilla conflict. It will also examine the day-to-day experiences of life on campaign for many who had never seen any form of previous military service. Yet the focus will not just be upon those serving in South Africa itself as most militiamen served at home or, once again, in the Mediterranean.

The final chapter will place the militia within the context of the drive for the reform of the army in the wake of the South African War and provide an overarching account of the process which led to the destruction of the force and its replacement by the Special Reserve in 1908. Not only will it explore in further detail the nature of the reform schemes proposed by Brodrick, Arnold-Forster and Haldane, but it will also demonstrate how important the militia was as an issue within the wider debate over the defensive arrangements of the UK. It will also chart the attempts to resist reform from within what remained an influential Parliamentary militia lobby, one which successfully halted the proposed reforms of Arnold-Forster, yet was effectively side-tracked by Haldane. Finally, the chapter will explore the transition between the militia's abolition as a result of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act and the creation of the Special Reserve, a force which finally formalised the role of supplying manpower to the regular army.

In order to achieve the above this study will make use of a wide range of primary and secondary material. One thing that unites many of the existing studies is their examination of the militia from a 'top down' perspective, one which relies heavily on

official archival material and that centralised at The National Archives (TNA). This is problematic as such an approach discounts the wealth of local archival material to be found in county archives and regimental collections throughout the UK, much of which helps to build a picture of a more nuanced force than hitherto appreciated. An over reliance upon centralised material at TNA has its own potential setbacks: a disproportionate amount of the material was collected by the War Office in 1908 and thus comes from units which were disbanded at time, thus those deemed the least efficient. That is not to say such material is not useful: simply it is important one does not use it to the exclusion of sources distributed elsewhere which will help to provide a more representative assessment of the militia across Great Britain as a whole. Therefore, the primary methodological aim of this study will be to utilise archival material held both in central archives in London and Edinburgh, while at the same time exploring a wide sample of material held in local collections across the country. It is in such collections that many of the papers pertaining to the lieutenancy are held, crucial due to their value in building an understanding of, for instance, the process and patronage networks through which potential officers gained their commissions. Similarly, such papers also illuminate how each unit was organised, the nature of the officer's mess and the nature of discipline within a unit. Many local and regimental collections also house personal correspondence relating to a wide variety of topics including, for instance, letters to and from the regimental adjutant and personal accounts of embodied service. Additionally, many of the enlistment records, vital to building up a picture of the social composition of each unit, are housed in local archives as are records detailing officer's service.

The acknowledgement of the importance of local records does not mean that this study will ignore more centralised material and official sources. A wide variety of material relating to the militia is located in the papers of the Home Office and War Office housed at TNA. These include similar regimental accounts to those housed in local archives, but importantly also include cabinet records, militia attestation papers (from the 1870s onwards), papers relating to the South African War and the correspondence of key individuals, most notably for this study, those of Cardwell and Brodrick. In addition, individual correspondence can be found within the British Library – it is also a useful source of contemporary regimental histories. Parliamentary command papers are also crucial if one is to build a wider picture of where individual regiments fit into the militia as a whole. Similarly important are the official records of Parliamentary debates which

provide details of the importance of the militia in a political context.

This study will also make use of contemporary published material. Although contemporary regimental histories vary in depth and quality, they nonetheless provide an interesting account of each regiment's service. However, one does need to caution against over use of such histories; it stands to reason that the least effective units would not be those that could afford to publish a regimental account. Furthermore, national and local newspapers provide an additional source of information. Many officers both from within and outside the militia used *The Times* and contemporary journals such as that of the Royal United Services Institute as a forum in which to air their views. Local papers are particularly useful in filling in the narrative gaps within the documentary evidence as many reported avidly upon their local militia units. They also act as a useful source of personal accounts of militiamen and officers serving whilst embodied, mostly during the South African War, and provide a record of the way disciplinary offences were dealt with through local magistrates.

By examining such a wide variety of primary source material, in addition to the existing secondary accounts examined above, this study will provide the reconstituted Victorian and Edwardian militia with the dedicated study it warrants. It will demonstrate that some of the broad conclusions about the British militia identified in the historiography are correct. The force without doubt became increasingly centralised under the control of the War Office, the reforms of Cardwell and Childers placing it into more a subservient, yet often uneasy, relationship with the regular army, particularly when it came to providing both officers and men for service in the line. Furthermore, there was a falling reliance, firstly, upon independent landed county gentlemen as officers and, secondly, upon agricultural workers as members of the rank and file, meaning other sources of manpower increasingly filled the void. By the eve of the South African War, militia officers were more likely to be those using the force as a means of obtaining a regular commission, while the rank and file became increasingly reliant upon unskilled urban labourers. However, any idea that its increasing centralisation under War Office control and the changes in its social composition meant the militia steadily declined across the period is unfounded; in fact, its strength peaked during the 1890s. It was not until after the South African War that many of the issued already identified began to severely damage the efficacy of the force, amplified by the unprecedented service of many units serving abroad during the war itself. Most importantly, it must be

remembered that right across the period the militia remained a force organised upon a local basis. Therefore, it is erroneous to think of it simply as a homogeneous force. Initially comprised entirely of infantry prior to 1852, several units post reconstitution were reorganised so as to provide the militia with a range of capabilities: this primarily involved the creation of garrison artillery, and later, engineers and submarine miners. Furthermore, not all units exhibited the same patterns of change identified above. Several managed to maintain a degree of local character and independence, principally those which were based apart from (after 1881) their territorial regimental depots. Similarly, several units (principally those based in urban areas) never relied upon the landed gentry as a source of officers, instead relying upon retired regular officers, professionals or those in business. Neither did they rely upon agricultural workers for the rank and file, instead drawing the bulk of their manpower from industrial workers, artisans and other urban workers.

1. The Reconstitution and Organisation of the Militia

Existing scholarship has failed to provide a comprehensive overview of the organisation of the militia across the Victorian and Edwardian period. Most works argue that the militia became increasingly integrated into the regular army, particularly as a result of the reforms of Edward Cardwell and his successors, in turn leading to a slow decline during which it was stripped of its most effective officers and men and transformed into what amounted to a recruitment mechanism for the line.[1] There has also been some debate over how the militia was able to initially resist calls for greater integration and how deeply held such views were. Historians such as Olive Anderson, Duncan Anderson and Ian Beckett have argued that greater integration was effectively resisted during the late 1850s and early 1860s, only occurring later as the militia's supporters within Parliament declined in number. Conversely, both Hew Strachan and Edward Spiers have stressed a degree of continuity between this period and that of Cardwell's later reforms which formally bound the militia and line together for the first time.[2]

The reality of the reconstitution and organisation of the reformed militia was more nuanced. While it is true that, by the end of the century, the militia was far less independent than in 1852, by examining the force upon a regimental basis one can see that this process was more piecemeal than hitherto recognised. In 1852 the militia was largely reconstituted upon legislation laid down in 1802. Prior to this, a period of prolonged military retrenchment following the Napoleonic Wars quickly gave way to renewed support for militia reform due to resurgent fears of invasion.[3] Four separate ministries in turn grappled with the issue, two opposing views emerging as to how best to reconstitute it. Previously, during the Napoleonic Wars, the 'regular' militia remained liable for national defence and was organised to serve anywhere within the UK whilst

[1] Bond, 'Prelude to the Cardwell Reforms', pp. 229-36 (pp. 235-6); O. Anderson, 'Early Experiences of Manpower Problems in an Industrial Society at War: Great Britain 1854-6', *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 82, no. 4 (1967), pp. 526-45, (pp. 529-33); H. F. A. Strachan, ''The Pre-Crimean Origins of Reform in the British Army', unpublished PhD, (1976), pp. 331-50; E. M. Spiers, *The Army and Society, 1815-1914* (London: Longman, 1980), pp. 162-3, 168-9; Spiers., *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 4, 15, 19-20, 126; D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 355-67; Beckett , *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 155, 185-8, 216-7; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 14, 203-31.

[2] O. Anderson, 'Early Experiences of Manpower Problems', pp. 526-45, (pp. 529-30); D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 355-6; Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, p. 155; Strachan, 'Pre-Crimean Origins of Reform', pp. 331-50; Spiers, *Army and Society*, pp. 162-3, 168-9.

[3] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 219-24; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 120-1, 126-9.

embodied, augmented in 1796 by a 'supplementary militia' with the same purpose. Yet from 1808 (until 1816) a 'local' militia was also established, organised principally for service within each county. These competing ideas continued to influence debate over what path reform would follow during the 1840s, leading to the decision, in 1852, that the 'regular' militia was to form the basis for that reconstituted in 1852.[4] This was soon challenged by the insatiable needs of the regular army for manpower during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny which included the direct transfer of both officers and men to the regular army. Although this was not unprecedented – they had performed a similar role at times during the Napoleonic Wars – this prompted some calls for greater integration between the two in peacetime, although these largely were negated by the disembodiment of the last units from 1860 to 1861 and the desire of the Secretary of State for War, Sidney Herbert's, desire to prohibit drafting from the militia in order to secure a revival in its strength. Despite measures to centralise control of the force under the War Office, it was Cardwell's reforms, principally localisation and the reinvestment of control of the militia with the War Office, which did more to formally link it to the line. Yet Cardwell was not just motivated by the needs of the regular army, but also a desire to improve the efficiency of the militia, although some units benefitted more than others. There remained opposition, albeit largely unsuccessful, from units whose traditions and local ties were threatened by wider organisational changes. Yet one cannot claim that the successful implementation of his reforms was only achieved due to the weakness of the Parliamentary militia lobby; in fact, their representation remained relatively strong, thus hinting that many militia officers within Parliament acquiesced or supported greater integration (possibly believing it to be on the whole beneficial for the force's efficiency). In addition, his and his successor's reforms were far from uniformly implemented in practice, there remaining some units which continued to operate largely autonomously.

The result of the numerous reforms demonstrates that closer association with the line was not automatically a bad thing for the militia. By the end of the century, it was, on the whole, better trained and equipped, and had at its disposal better facilities than compared to the 1850s and 1860s, a period in which training was comparatively limited. Indeed, from the 1870s onwards, in addition to the prior expansion of the number of artillery corps, dedicated units – two engineer regiments, submarine miners and Royal Army Medical Corps (established in 1898) – were established to provide at least some

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 3, 62-3, 77, 114,

militiamen with specialist training, enabling the militia to provide a more effective secondary line for the regular army as a whole during wartime. That is not to say there were not problems: brigading units for field training was undoubtedly more useful than square-bashing, but it also made service with some recruits very unpopular. Nevertheless, it is clear that qualitatively many units were in arguably better shape in the decade preceding the South African War than during the 1850s and 1860s.

* * *

The militia of 1852 to 1908 formed part of a far longer amateur military tradition. Many militia units liked to claim an unbroken lineage going back to the Anglo-Saxon period, but the truth was that the militia, revitalised by the Tudors and early Stuarts, went into sharp decline in the 1680s and was effectively a moribund force by the early eighteenth century. Considering the re-establishment of the militia in the 1850s, legislators used the 'new' militia, established in 1757 (30 Geo. II, c. 25) during the Seven Years War, as a practical template. The 1757 legislation established militia regiments across England and Wales, organised and recruited upon a county basis and the ultimate responsibility of the lords lieutenant in each county. Initially there was great difficulty in establishing regiments in several counties due to opposition from lords lieutenant and those opposed to the force more generally; therefore, in June 1758, further legislation was required to coerce (through fines) those still resistant to it. Similarly, the militia was not permanently established until April 1769 (9 Geo. III, c. 42) as the original act only provided for it upon a temporary basis, this having been extended for seven years in March 1762. In 1802 the legislation governing the militia was consolidated by a new Militia Act (42 Geo. III, c. 90) which later would form much of the foundation for that passed in 1852. Yet this legislation only applied to the militia in England and Wales. Although there were attempts to extend the scheme to Scotland in 1760, its opponents were able to prevent it being established there until 1797 (principally over fears arms would pass into Jacobite hands).[5]

Arguably the most notable feature of the 'new' militia was the fact that recruiting was carried out by ballot. Each county was required to draw up a census of all able bodied men aged between 18 and 50 years (reduced to 45 from 1762 onwards) from

[5] Western, *English Militia*, pp. 127-73;62-5, 78-9; Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, pp. 62-7.

which a quota would be apportioned so that each county, theoretically, would provide the same proportion of manpower. Those selected to serve were legally bound to do so, although each man was permitted to either purchase his release through payment of a £10 fine (although until 1782 anyone paying a fine would automatically be appointed for service the following year), or through the provision of a willing substitute to take his place. Therefore, the ballot represented, as Ian Beckett argues, a 'tax upon manpower' rather than any real form of conscription. However, this did not stop the implementation of the ballot from being one of the most divisive politically sensitive issues of the period due to misguided fears that it did, in fact, represent conscription, with the possibility that there could be some liability for foreign service (not helped by a lack of explanation from the government). Hostility was so great that it led to serious rioting in several counties at various points across the period. It was the legacy of such division that ensured the ballot would remain a controversial aspect of the debate over militia reform prior to 1852, remaining upon the statute book across the Victorian and Edwardian period, although it was suspended on an annual basis before finally being abolished in 1921 (11 and 12 Geo. V, c. 37).[6]

In the decades following the Napoleonic Wars, the government was preoccupied by the need to make substantial savings from the estimates. Savings were secured from both the regular army and Royal Navy, the former finding its strength reduced from a wartime establishment of 247,000 men to just 100,000 by 1823. Therefore, it is unsurprising that the militia also faced significant cuts: in 1815 direct enlistment was restricted, and although the following July a new ballot was ordered, the decision was taken to suspend the annual training until 1820.[7] Although the militia subsequently assembled for training in 1821, 1825 and 1830, with attempts to implement a new ballot in October 1828, efforts to revive the force on a more permanent footing faltered. In April 1829 the Duke of Wellington implemented legislation (10 Geo. 4, c. 10) which suspended the ballot on a rolling yearly basis and reduced the permanent staff by 37%, its strength falling from 3,384 men to just 2,118 through the reduction of 'ineffective corporals'. However, this decision was not aimed at pushing the force further towards abolition. Although never ardent militia advocates, both Wellington and Sir Henry

[6] Western, *English Militia*, pp. 128-9, 212-5, 245-54, 290-302; Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, pp. 62-7.
[7] H. F. A. Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy: The Reform of the British Army, 1830-1854*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 181; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 127-8.

Hardinge, Secretary at War, recognised that retaining the militia was the least objectionable solution to the organisation of the auxiliary forces; both were aware of their wider utility in supporting the regulars during the Napoleonic Wars. Duncan Anderson has also argued that the reduction of the permanent staff was partly a reaction to their use by those militia colonels opposed to Catholic Emancipation, many of whom had become associated with either the Brunswick Clubs or Orange Lodges which in some parts of Ireland resembled state sponsored, and state armed, 'Protestant gangs'. Despite these attacks, the militia managed to maintain its existence due to a strong parliamentary lobby, aided by the fact that a House of Commons select committee, instead of the Secretary at War, was responsible for drawing up the estimates, meaning the force's supporters could ensure it avoided the worst of the cuts.[8] Consequently between 1816 and 1832 the amount voted to the estimates remained substantial, ranging between £250,000 in 1816 to as much as £429,845 in 1820, and £422,836 in 1831.[9]

The militia's existence became less certain after the failed annual training of 1831, the last attempted before 1852. In December 1832 Wellington's relatively sympathetic government was toppled by a Whig party determined to make further savings from the estimates. Worryingly for the militia, the change of government saw the number of militia officers serving as MPs drop from 64 to just 23. It was not long before Edward Ellice, the new Secretary at War, proposed a further reduction of the permanent staff the following year. Yet these plans were thwarted due to the opposition of the King and those militia colonels seated within the Lords. Therefore, the following May, Ellice was forced to compromise: he presented his plans to the House of Commons committee tasked with examining the estimates which, although no longer dominated by militia supporters, only agreed for the inspection of each regiment's permanent staff by regular officers in order to determine their efficiency. Far from providing Ellice with the ammunition necessary to significantly reduce the staff across the board, their report found that the efficiency of the permanent staff varied considerably between regiments. For instance, in Hampshire, Lancashire, Norfolk and Tower Hamlets the inspecting officer found the majority of the staff to be efficient in their duties and knowledge of drill, with only a few exceptions generally deemed unfit. By contrast, Cornwall was one of only a few counties in which the permanent staff was almost universally deemed to be

[8] Anderson, 'The English Militia', pp. 219-27; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 128-130.

[9] Parliamentary Papers (PP), *Militia. Abstract of sums voted and amount expended for the militia of the United Kingdom, 1816-1833*., 231, (1834), pp. 2-3.

unsuitable for active service due to their age and lack of military experience.[10]

The fall of the Whig government in November 1834 meant Ellice's proposals were indefinitely postponed. It was not until their return to power in April 1835, with a new Secretary at War, Viscount Howick, that efforts were renewed to find savings. Arguing that from 1816 to 1834 the total cost of the militia to the public purse amounted to £6,084,406, Howick assuaged opposition from MPs towards further reductions by asserting that his proposals were aimed at simply removing ineffective sergeants from the permanent staff, much the same way Hardinge had previously removed what were deemed to be the least efficient corporals. However, once again the militia lobby within the House of Lords (including the Duke of Wellington and the Duke of Richmond) rallied and, once again supported by the King, refused to back the bill unless the government wedded itself to the promise of future legislation putting the militia on a more efficient footing. As a result, the amended bill limited the reduction of the staff to at least one-third of the established number of sergeants, although all drum-majors and drummers were to be reduced, the filling up of any new vacancies prohibited, and all arms and stores were to be handed back to the Ordnance Department. The bill also authorised the continued suspension of the ballot, although only until the end of the next Parliament (as opposed to indefinitely). The result was that although the legislation (5 and 6 Will. IV, c. 37) prevented the outright destruction of the force, it effectively placed the militia into a state of suspended animation, lacking equipment and manpower, and shorn of the ability to recruit.[11]

The issue of further militia reform fell off the political agenda for the next eight years. However, this changed once both Wellington and Lord Palmerston highlighted concerns over growing French naval ambitions in 1845 and 1846. On 30 July 1845 Palmerston pressed the Prime Minister, Robert Peel, to consider the reintroduction of the militia ballot on account of his fear that technological advancement rendered the Channel 'nothing more than a river passable by a steam bridge'. Although Peel initially refused, by December the government began to instruct militia colonels and the lords lieutenant that the permanent staff should be brought up to the established strength laid down by the

[10] PP, *Militia. Copies of the reports of the officers appointed on the recommendation of the committee on the militia estimates of the last session of Parliament, on the state of the staff of the disembodied militia of the United Kingdom*., 201, (1835); Hansard, House of Commons' Debate (HC Deb.), 7 February 1834, vol. 21, cc. 165-7 (cc. 166-7).

[11] PP, *Militia. Copies of the reports* 201, (1835), pp. 2-3; HC Deb., 7 August 1835, vol. 30m cc. 176-80 (c. 178); Hansard, House of Lords Debate (HL Deb.), 18 August 1835, vol. 30, cc. 628-9; 19 August 1835, vol. 30, cc. 670-2.

1835 legislation and that all officer vacancies should be filled as soon as possible.[12] This decision caused a surge of activity by peace activists who voiced their opposition through the press, at local meetings across the country and through directly petitioning Parliament – by contrast it prompted militia officers across the country, through the local press, to proclaim the need to reform the militia. It also prompted the re-establishment of 'militia clubs' for the purpose of insuring members against potential selection in the ballot.[13] By the following January the government was forced to reassure MPs that there were no immediate plans to call out the militia, and although Peel remained on the whole sceptical he announced the intention to press ahead with legislation aimed at reforming the force. Therefore, Peel tasked Sidney Herbert and Sir James Graham, Secretary at War and Home Secretary respectively, to devise a reform package, resulting in proposals for a force of 100,000 men drawn from those aged 18 to 40, enlisted for seven years and trained for up to three months each year. Nevertheless, the fall of Peel's ministry that June meant the plans were shelved.[14]

Peel's successor, Lord John Russell, was initially influenced by both Wellington and Palmerston to go forward with Herbert and Graham's previous scheme. However, Russell was also presented with an alternative by Herbert's successor, Fox Maule, in December 1847 – he was himself influenced by the noted army reformer Alexander Tulloch. This called for a smaller regular militia of 50,000 unmarried men under the age of 30, recruited by ballot, and trained for up to 60 says at a time. The key difference, however, was that in addition he proposed a revival of the local militia (suspended in 1816 and abolished outright in 1836) which would number 150,000 men raised by ballot, would be trained for 28 days in the first year, 14 in subsequent years, but each regiment would only be liable to serve within their own county. He faced clear opposition from Palmerston who instead desired the militia to resemble, what he termed, an 'army of reserve', liable to serve anywhere within the UK and large enough to concentrate and outnumber a plausible invasion force of 30,000 French troops. The following January Russell proposed a compromise, a 200,000 strong force of regular and local militia, raised annually by a ballot of 40,000 men aged between 18 and 25, serving three years in the regular militia with a further two in the local militia, and trained for 28 days in the

[12] HC Deb., 30 July 1845, vol. 82, cc. 1223-34; *The Times*, 13 and 25 December, 1845.
[13] For examples of opposition to a revived militia, see *Newcastle Courant*, 30 January 1846, and *Northern Star and Leeds General Advertiser*, 17 January 1846; HC Deb., 29 January 1846, vol. 83, cc. 367-70.
[14] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 145-6.

first two years, 21 days in the third and 14 days in the fourth and fifth. The draft bill was introduced to the Commons by February, although the news of revolution in Paris meant again the passage of the bill was suspended.[15]

Debate over militia reform remained dormant for the next four years until fears over the prospect of invasion were renewed upon the ascension of Napoleon III in December 1851. Initially Russell weighed up both previous schemes, although following Palmerston's dismissal from government Russell pressed ahead with his own plans for a revived local militia. This would comprise of 150,000 men, 72,000 raised in the first year through both voluntary enlistment and the balloting of those aged 20 to 23, with the total increasing to 100,000 and 150,000 in the second and third years respectively through balloting those aged 20 to 21. They were liable to serve for five years and were to be trained for 28 days in the first year and 14 thereafter. Crucially, and in opposition to Palmerston's plans, each regiment was only liable to serve outside its county in case of imminent invasion. Palmerston, however, was to have his revenge in what he termed his 'tit-for-tat' with Russell. The following February he successfully brought forward an amendment which struck the term 'local' from the bill and regulated the militia as a 'national force' based upon the 1802 legislation, and under a greater degree of centralised control. Although the government opposed the amendment, it passed with Conservative support by a majority of just 13 votes, after which Russell was forced to resign.[16]

Unlike their predecessors, the succeeding Conservative administration, headed by the Earl of Derby, was finally able to solve the issue of militia reform including the divisive issue of the ballot. Spencer Walpole, the new Home Secretary, managed this by, in essence, changing very little of the way in which the force was organised; much like Palmerston's previous amendment, he aimed to return to the legislation of 1802 to form the basis of a reconstituted force. However, the controversy over the ballot which had plagued the previous three schemes pushed Walpole to take the unprecedented step of adopting a system of voluntary enlistment. This was achieved by claiming the 1802 legislation already enabled parishes to raise volunteers through means of a bounty, something which had been permitted during the Napoleonic Wars in order to allow regiments to replace those who had transferred to the regular army. Furthermore, voluntary enlistment was, on the whole, cheaper and more time efficient to implement.

[15] National Records of Scotland (NRS), Fox Maule Papers, GD45/8/36/1/10, Letter from Palmerston to Maule, 22 December 1847; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 146-7.
[16] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 147.

Sections 56 and 59 of the Militia Act, 1802, required the ballot machinery to be brought into operation for any vacancy no matter how small, at great cost and time to the county involved. In fact, if even one vacancy remained after three months the county was liable to a fine of £10 annually until it was filled. Although Walpole had, in effect, manufactured (what Ian Beckett termed) a 'convenient fiction', it nevertheless made this idea of voluntary enlistment more palatable to its critics, particularly when combined with the fact that a recourse to the ballot would remain as a last resort if voluntary enlistment failed. Despite this, the draft bill remained deeply divisive, taking 200 hours to debate and involving 32 divisions in the Commons alone. Russell, who believed the bill to be 'expensive, inefficient & oppressive', attempted to throw it out during the second reading, although ultimately he failed to gain enough support from other Whig MPs, many perceiving his opposition as partisan and factious, resulting in the loss of the vote 165 to 315 after which the opposition to the bill collapsed.[17]

Therefore, when it finally received royal assent on 30 June 1852, the Militia Act (15 and 16 Vict., c. 50) reconstituted a force which, in many ways, had changed little to that of 1757. It remained in essence a national force designed for home defence, but organised and recruited upon a local county basis. As mentioned above, recourse to the ballot was retained, legislation introduced in 1853 (16 and 17 Vict. c. 133) setting the precedent for its annual suspension (although it remained on the statute book until abolished 1921 (11 and 12 Geo. V, c. 37). In total 80,000 volunteers were to be raised in England and Wales principally from those aged 18-35, 50,000 in 1852 and a further 30,000 in 1853. They were to be engaged for an initial period of five years and trained annually for 21 days, although new recruits would also face a period of preliminary drill. Further acts were passed reconstituting both Scottish (17 and 18 Vict., c. 106) and Irish regiments upon the same grounds (17 and 18 Vict., c. 107) in 1854, authorising 15,000 men and 30,000 respectively. The cost of the total £6 bounty offered to each volunteer was to be born not by each lieutenancy through the county rates, as was the ballot, but by the government through the consolidated fund.[18] Although organised on a local basis,

[17] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 147-8; Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre (WSHC), Herbert papers, 2057/F8/III/B/143, Memorandum on the new machinery to be used for raising recruits in the militia by voluntary enlistment, n.d.; Hickleton Papers, Reel 6, Letter from Russell to Wood, 8 April 1852, quoted in P. Scherer, *Lord John Russell: A Biography*, (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1999), p. 206.

[18] NRS, GD45/8/529, 'Official Minutes (Extracts) on the subjects (1) of the Re-organisation of the Militia, and (2) of our National Defences, 1845-1852'; HC Deb., 29 March 1852, vol. 120, cc. 267-339, (c. 275); *Ibid.*, 28 July 1854, vol. 135, cc. 896-907, (c. 897); Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, pp. 146-8, 246.

regiments were liable to be transferred out of their own county, riding or place by order in council for the purposes of training or exercise.

Although the organisation of the militia in each 'county, riding or place' remained the responsibility of the county lieutenancy, as it had since the restoration, the militia as a whole continued to be administered centrally from Whitehall. In 1852 this was the responsibility of the Home Office, with powers only transferring to the War Office when embodied. Yet as a result of this arrangement and the great degree of 'confusion and inconvenience' it caused when the force was embodied from 1854 to 1855, a War Office circular authorised that, henceforth, it was to be administered by the War Office exclusively.[19] On a county level, the lord lieutenant was expected to oversee the general provision of their militia (and all other auxiliary forces) raised within their lieutenancy area and to formally nominate potential candidates for commissions. Each was assisted in their duties by a vice-lieutenant and a number – depending on the population size – of personally appointed deputy lieutenants, most of whom tended to be members of the local landed gentry and persons of local significance who would encourage recruitment. The day-to-day administration of the lieutenancy was entrusted to a clerk whose primary duties included the preparation of commissions for deputy lieutenants and militia officers. Furthermore, the clerks of the general and subdivision meetings were also traditionally tasked with preparing for the implementation of the ballot, and who remained useful due to the fact that the ballot remained upon the statute book due to legislation passed in 1853. (16 and 17 Vict. c. 33.) Voluntary enlistment meant the chief role which continued to be performed by the clerks of the subdivision meetings was the issuance of precepts to the local chief constable requesting him to distribute notices to enlisted militiamen informing them of an impending training (for which they could receive from 5s to £1 depending on the number of names on each precept). This did not stop some from attempting to claim financial compensation for work which they were no longer supposed to undertake, something the government was quick to crack down upon. Furthermore, voluntary enlistment meant that overseers and parish officers were expected to collect the names of men in the several parishes of each lieutenancy area who were willing to be enrolled so that the commanding officer of each regiment could find the most suitable time and place for them to be attested by the adjutant and surgeon before being sworn

[19] HL Deb., 21 February 1856, vol. 140, cc. 1023-48, (c. 1024); Hay, *Constitutional Force*, p. 157.

before a magistrate or Deputy Lieutenant.[20]

In addition to reconfirming the continued role of the lieutenancy in the organisation of the militia, the new act recognised that some militia regiments were organised upon separate legislative grounds, although generally it attempted to bring them under more centralised control. Since 1797, separate legislation (37 Geo. 3, c. 27 and 42 Geo. 3, c. 90.) required the Constable of the Tower (who fulfilled the role of lord lieutenant of the Tower Hamlets) to raise, arm and train a regiment of militia. Similarly, legislation (36 Geo. 3, c. 92 and 39 Geo. 3, c. 82) in 1796 and 1799, later consolidated under one act in 1820 (1 Geo. 4, c. 100), authorised for a separate regiment of militia for the City of London, distinct from that raised in Middlesex. Outside of London, in 1798 legislation (38 Geo. 3, c. c. 74) permitted that a separate regiment of militia was to be raised from among the mining classes of Cornwall and Devon under the authority of the Lord Warden of the Stannaries, a position which traditionally reserved the right to provide for the defence of the area separately from either the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall or Devon. These legislatively distinct regiments continued to be recognised by the new act, although it extended its provisions to those raised in the Tower Hamlets and from among the Cornish and Devon Stannaries, for the first time counted their strength as part of the overall quota for English regiments. Nevertheless, the Royal London Regiment remained independently regulated by the previous act of 1820, the new legislation merely including its strength in the wider quota.[21]

Outside of the broader legislative framework governing the militia on the mainland, there were also four regiments of militia raised in the Channel Islands: the Royal Jersey Light Infantry, Royal Guernsey Light Infantry (both consisting of three battalions each, the former, in 1890, augmented by two field artillery companies and four garrison artillery companies), the Royal Alderney Light Infantry (converted to artillery from 1855) and, until 1875, the Royal Sark Light Infantry (both consisting of a single company). Each of the regiments were administered by the lieutenant governors of Jersey and Guernsey (both Alderney and Sark coming under the authority of the latter) and raised by laws enacted by the local legislatures, while service remained unpaid and compulsory from the age of 16 meaning that a disproportionate number of men could be

[20] Hampshire Archives and Local Studies (HantsALS), Q30/3/5/54, War Office Circular, 31 March 1853.
[21] 15 and 16 Vict., c. 50, ss. 35-6, 38.

maintained despite the island's small population.[22]

Prior to its reconstitution the militia was a force consisting entirely of infantry regiments. However, by 1856 a total of 22 new garrison artillery corps had been formed either from existing or newly raised units.[23] For instance, the Hampshire Artillery was primarily formed from three officers and 396 men of the South Hampshire Regiment. Similarly, an artillery corps was formed in Devon during the reorganisation of its existing three regiments, the East and South being converted into the 1st and 2nd Devon Regiment respectively, while the North Devon Regiment was disbanded entirely – this was in addition to the total conversion of the neighbouring Royal Cornwall and Devon Miners Regiment into an artillery corps at the same time.[24] In the north-east two new artillery corps' were raised in addition to the existing infantry regiments in Northumberland and County Durham, the latter in which a second infantry regiment was also raised. The newly established Northumberland Artillery was partially formed through the transfer of men from the Northumberland Light Infantry Regiment (instead of the Lord Lieutenant's own scheme, as explored in Chapter 3) with its headquarters at Tynemouth so as to enable it to be easily inspected by members of the Royal Artillery also stationed there.[25]

The severity of the manpower shortage experience by the regular army during both the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny demonstrated how limiting it was to frame the militia simply as a force for home defence. Therefore, in order to enable the regular army to concentrate its strength in the Crimea, the decision was taken to embody the militia in May 1854. Theoretically the existing legislation (42 Geo. 3. c. 90. s. 111, 42 Geo. 3. c. 91. s. 197 and 42 Geo. 3. c. 120. s. 55) only authorised the embodiment of the militia when the country was threatened with invasion, or in times of civil insurrection. Yet there could be no doubt, unlike during the Napoleonic Wars, that Russia presented no credible threat of invasion. Therefore, Herbert, once again Secretary at War, was forced to take a rather selective interpretation of the existing legislation (explored in detail in Chapter 5)

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[22] HC Deb., 2 August 1883, vol. 282, cc. 1328-9; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 441-3, Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 145.

[23] HC Deb., 10 July 1855, vol. 139, cc. 673-4; Maurice-Jones, *History of Coast Artillery*, p. 161.

[24] HantsALS, Q/30/3/5/78, Letter from Palmerston to Winchester, 19 August 1853; Col. H. Walrond, *Historical Records of the 1st Devon Militia (4th Battalion The Devonshire Regiment) with a notice of the 2nd and North Devon Militia Regiments*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1897), pp. 332-3; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 200, 203, 214.

[25] Northumberland Archives (NA), ZGI 1 / Parcel 1, letter from Grey to Palmerston, 30 April 1853, letter from Palmerston to Grey, 13 March 1853; WSHC, 2057/F8/III/A/7, letter, Grey to Herbert, 26 July, 1853.

in order to justify the embodiment – ultimately that the issue came down to the question of exactly what a 'threat of invasion' constituted. However, due to the ambiguity both he and Palmerston, Walpole's successor as Home Secretary, thought it necessary to clarify this issue, and consequently in May 1854 a new act (17 and 18 Vict. c. 13) authorised the militia's embodiment whenever a state of war existed, a move in keeping with Palmerston's belief that the militia was essentially a national 'army reserve'.[26]

Aside from its domestic role, the government also took the step of drafting a bill which would take the emergency measure of using militia regiments to replace regular units abroad. However, this was far from an unprecedented measure. In November 1813 the government passed legislation which for the first time permitted overseas service, aimed at combating the dwindling number of regular recruits available for Wellington's army. It permitted a total of 30,000 militiamen to volunteer for service in Europe until the end of the war (or for up to a maximum of 6 months), with regiments up to 900 in strength liable to serve as whole units under the command of their own officers, the remainder forming a depot at home, so long as no less than three-quarters of the men agreed. Regiments unable to find the requisite volunteers could form provisional battalions up to 600, so long as they were accompanied by two field officers, or 300 men with, one field officer; units unable to find more than 100 could still serve together as distinct companies attached to line regiments. As an incentive a bounty of 8 guineas was offered for each volunteer, while each man was assured that, if subsequently wounded, he would receive a pension which was also applicable to the widows and orphans of those killed. Although Wellington initially rejected the scheme, preferring instead to wait for a large draft of militiamen (which he felt were of greater use than whole units), the government pushed on regardless, although to appease him they proposed to try and persuade a further 40,000 militiamen to pass directly into the line.[27] However, the scheme failed to find the requisite support as several militia colonels reneged upon their promise to serve at the last minute. One key problem was that militiamen were on the whole reluctant to serve as part of a provisional battalion unless under the command of their own officers. For instance, the Denbighshire Regiment was eager to serve, but only under its commanding officer, Colonel Sir Watkin Wynn. Yet crucially, it also failed to gain the broad support of militia officers who felt service abroad would threaten an important

[26] NRS, GD45/8/36/1/10.
[27] 54 Geo III, c. 1; Fortescue, *History of The British Army*, vol. IX , pp. 416-7; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 112.

mechanism for their own advancement: the direct transfer of men to the line which, for every 50 men, they could gain a regular commission. As a result few regiments volunteered. By early 1814 a militia brigade numbering just 2,800 men had been sent to bolster Wellington's forces in Southern France, formed from three provisional battalions, the bulk provided by the Royal Buckinghamshire and Worcestershire Regiments, and commanded by the Marquis of Buckingham, Lieutenant-Colonel of the former.[28]

Despite the fact that plans for foreign service in 1854 had no intention of sending militiamen to serve in the theatre of war, the bill, introduced in December 1854, was not without it critics. Firstly, there were concerns over the threat foreign service would have upon a force designed for home defence, a point argued by both the Earl of Derby and Earl Grey. Secondly, there were fears that service abroad would negatively impact recruitment for the militia at a time the army was increasingly reliant upon it as a source of recruits. Finally, assurances were sought from militia officers that those who could not spare the time to serve abroad would not face any shame in declining to do so; such assurances were also desired for married militiamen and those whose civil employment could be threatened by prolonged foreign service. Nonetheless, such opposition was tempered as both Palmerston and the Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State for War, argued the proposals were in fact less far-reaching than those passed during the Napoleonic Wars; no units would serve in the theatre of war itself, limited simply to garrison duty within the Mediterranean – the possibility of such duty in Canada was also mooted, but never undertaken. They also assured that service abroad would be on a strictly voluntary basis for both officers and men. As a result the bill passed onto the statute book (18 and 19 Vict., c. 1) with relative ease and ultimately led to the despatch of ten militia regiments to Gibraltar, Malta and the Ionian Islands.[29]

The continued shortage of manpower in the regular army meant there was also increasing pressure to use the militia as a direct source of recruits. Measures had already been taken to encourage the limited transfer of militiamen to the line, as had been the case during the Napoleonic Wars. However, the scale of the manpower shortage pressed the War Office to take the unprecedented step of issuing a circular in November 1854 requiring each regiment to provide at least 25% of its strength directly to the line,

[28] Fortescue, *History of The British Army*, vol. IX , pp. 417-9; Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, p. 117; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, p. 181.
[29] HC Deb., 13 December 1854, vol. 136, cc. 241-51, (cc. 241-2); *Ibid.*, 14 December 1854, vol. 136, cc. 303-12 (303-7); *Ibid.*, 18 December 1854, vol. 136, cc. 464-86; HL Deb., 21 December 1854, vol. 136, cc.685-732, (cc. 688, 695, 712-3).

although it was stressed to commanding officers that the men were not to be coerced. Most militia officers accepted that while the country was at war such a move was a military necessity; indeed one militia officer, Major George Walker, who later went on to command the Dumfries, Roxburgh, Kirkcudbright and Selkirk Regiment (after 1860 renamed the Scottish Borderers Regiment, and after 1887 the 3rd King's Own Scottish Borderers) informed Parliament that it had been only right that the needs of the militia had been deferred for the good of the line.[30]

In just a few years since its reform the militia had seen its role shift from a force reconstituted primarily for home defence to, in effect, a reserve for the regular army. Far from immediately returning to the pre-war status-quo, in October 1856 the Secretary of State for War, Fox Maule (now Lord Panmure), began to consider maintaining the militia as 'the grand reserve of the army' in order to allow the rapid expansion of the regular army in the event of a similar crisis. To do this would require the militia to be 'more in connection with the army than it has hitherto been' and that its training would have to be extended to the maximum period of 56 days permitted, although he admitted the cost of such a move would mean the possibility of only calling out a portion of the force each year. He also suggested that half of this period would consist of the current course of regimental drill (detailed below), yet the second half would see regiments brigaded at major military stations for large scale manoeuvres which, it was hoped, would increase their efficiency and give the militia a 'more military character'. The memorandum also advocated that when embodied the militia should continue to allow men to volunteer to the line and that such a principal would enable the army to be kept up to strength in wartime, although to allow this it required the militia to maintain a far higher proportion of effectives than it had hitherto been able to – an almost impossible arrangement to reconcile. However, by the following March there was evidence of growing pressure from militia officers in Parliament resisting his plans. Panmure even feared that his desire to call out the militia for its annual training could lead to Parliamentary opposition towards the militia estimates.[31]

Although Panmure's plans for a more integrated militia were not formally implemented, the subsequent Indian Mutiny saw the militia used in much the same way

[30] HC Deb., 25 July 1867, vol. 189, cc. 87-103 (c. 99).

[31] NRS. GD45/8/388, Horse Guards memorandum on the peace establishment of the regular army and provision for the militia, October 1856, and GD45/8/422/1/1, 'Cabinet opinions in regard to calling out the militia for training', March 1857.

as it was during the Crimean War, albeit with militia regiments limited to service within the UK. Yet by the end of decade it was becoming increasingly clear that supporting the regular army was having a largely negative impact upon the militia's strength. By 1860 the force was 41,525 men below its establishment and it was estimated that fewer than 40,000 had attended the annual training the previous year. Therefore, in May 1858 a royal commission was established to ascertain how the militia could be reorganised to place it upon a more efficient footing. Yet before it had even begun the commission was dealt a serious blow when the new Secretary of State for War, Jonathan Peel, requested that any consideration of feeding recruits to the line was dropped due to the establishment of a separate commission examining recruitment within the army and auxiliaries more widely (and for which a militia officer had been formally attached). Nevertheless, it made several recommendations most notably those aimed at curbing high rates of desertion (explored in Chapter 3): it recommended that the enrolment bounty should be withheld until after the completion of a recruits training and that each regiment should arrange their training on corresponding days each year to prevent fraudulent enlistment. The report also recommended that small regiments under 500 men in strength should be amalgamated and that the period of annual training should be extended to at least 28 days, both as a means of increasing the force's efficiency.[32]

After the downfall of Derby's ministry in June 1859, it was left to Herbert to try and implement the commission's findings. Although the subsequent Militia Act of 1859 was far from a comprehensive overhaul of the force's organisation, it did take steps to ensure the Secretary of State for War played a more prominent role. Most notably, it stripped the lords lieutenant of the right to fix the date upon which their units would assemble for training, vesting that power with the Secretary of State. Hitherto he had only been able to request that lords lieutenant ensured their units trained at the same time. For instance, in July 1858 the War Office asked the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, the Marquess of Winchester, to fix the date of the trainings of both the Hampshire Regiment and Hampshire Artillery to mitigate the amount of fraudulent enlistment. Additionally, the act also enabled him to amalgamate units from different counties or areas and ensured all new recruits were liable to serve in any part of Great Britain and Ireland for an

[32] HC Deb., 14 June 1858, vol. 150, cc. 2002-14 (c. 2006); PP, *Report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the establishment, organization, government, and direction of the militia of the United Kingdom; together with the minutes of evidence and appendix*, 2553 (1859 Session 2), p. vii, x-xiii, xiv; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 155.

indefinite period.[33] Additional legislation (23 and 24 Vict., c. 94, and 23 and 24 Vict., c. 120.) passed the following year made further minor alterations to the provision of storehouses and the operation of the ballot machinery (in effect suspending the making of all ballot lists), yet the decision to disembody the remaining regiments in order to reduce the burden upon the estimates meant that much of the imperative for wider reformation was lost. In fact, far from being welcomed as a relief, the decision was one that was opposed by some embodied regiments. For instance, the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Lord Hatherton, requested the disembodiment of the 2nd Staffordshire Regiment be delayed due to the poor state of the local iron trade, while likewise the commanding officer of the Forfarshire Artillery professed similar fears over the likelihood of future employment for his men.[34] Yet Herbert was undeterred. Unlike Panmure and Peel, he was aware that prolonged embodiment and the transfer of so many militiamen to the line was the root cause of the militia's inefficiency. Therefore he argued that 'The best thing…for the Militia was…to follow the old constitutional system of never calling them out, except on great emergencies', and that halting the transfer of militiamen to the regular army would be of great benefit for its efficiency. After considerable consultation with militia colonels and other ministers, he formally suspended the practice in June 1860.[35]

Despite his desire to secure the militia's recovery, Herbert did not entirely defer to their concerns; indeed, when the need for greater efficiency came into conflict with their local sentiments he was more often than not willing to favour the former. Such a conflict occurred as a result of the recommendation of the 1859 Royal Commission to amalgamate small regiments (now permitted by section 7 of the Militia Act, 1859) a practice already successfully implemented in Scotland. In 1860 the Galloway Rifles, consisting of just four companies, was disbanded. Raised in Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtownshire, subsequently the two companies recruited in the latter county were incorporated within the Royal Ayrshire Regiment, while the two Kirkcudbrightshire companies were amalgamated with the Dumfriesshire Regiment which, as a result, changed its name to the Scottish Borderers Regiment in 1864.[36] It was hoped that the same principle could be extended to regiments elsewhere, particularly among some

[33] 22 and 23 Vict., c. 38, ss. 2, 7-8; HantsALS, Q30/3/8/10, letter from the WO to Winchester, 6 July 1858.
[34] WSHC, 2057/F8/V/B/269/l, letter from Lord Hatherton to Herbert, 29 March 1860, and 2057/F8/V/B/269/i , letter from Lt.-Col. Laird to Herbert, 28 February 1860.
[35] HC Deb., 1 June 1860, vol. 158, cc. 1916-47 (cc. 1934-5); Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 155.
[36] Weir, *The King's Own Scottish Borderers*, p. 63.

smaller Welsh units.[37] Therefore in June he set out his plans for further amalgamations, although unsurprisingly this caused a great deal of anger among those officers who felt such a move would jeopardise their position in command of independent regiments. For instance, the Rutlandshire Regiment was successfully merged into the neighbouring, and far larger, Northamptonshire Regiment in 1860, but not without the protestation of its officers. Similar complaints were voiced by the Colonel of the Royal Cumberland Regiment over its proposed amalgamation with the Royal Westmoreland Regiment, although subsequently both regiments remained independent. Opposition was also voiced by the commanding officer of the Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles over the decision to amalgamate his regiment with the neighbouring Royal Anglesey Light Infantry, although his protests could not stop both regiments being unified until March 1867 after which they again were separated.[38]

Despite Herbert's best efforts, he could not escape the fact that many regiments remained highly deficient. Two decades of suspended animation prior to 1852 meant many of the existing militia depots were no longer suitable for the secure storage of each unit's arms, clothing and equipment. For instance, the storehouse of the Cambridgeshire Regiment was described as being in such a dilapidated state that they were forced instead to purchase and convert another set of buildings into an entirely new depot.[39] Due to such difficulties, and as a temporary measure to allow the force to train in 1853, the War Office permitted that all arms, clothing and equipment were to be sent to a local ordnance stores upon the termination of training if a regiment did not have a suitable and secure storehouse of its own.[40] Despite this, some regiments were forced to make temporary arrangements for the first two trainings in 1852 and 1853. Such was the case in Monmouth whereby a temporary storeroom, orderly room, guards room and staff accommodation was established. Similarly, the 1st, 3rd and 5th Royal Lancashire

[37] Herbert planned to amalgamate the regiments of the following Welsh counties into single units: Flint and Denbigh; Carmarthen and Pembroke; Merioneth and Montgomery; and Anglesey and Carnarvon. HC Deb., 26 June 1860, vo. 159, cc. 1030-45 (cc. 1034-6).

[38] WSHC, 2057/F8/V/B/418, Memorandum on the amalgamation of small militia corps, 26 June 1860; 2057/F8/V/B/403, written statement setting forth reasons against the amalgamation of the Rutland Militia and that of an adjoining county, n.d; 2057/F8/V/B/269/w, letter, Col. Lowther to Herbert, 24 August 1860; 2057/F8/V/B/342, letter, Herbert to Lt.-Col. Williams, 7 November 1860; Owen, *Welsh Militia and Volunteer Corps*, vol. 1, pp. 55-6.

[39] HantsALS, Q30/3/18/52, letter from Ellis to Woodham, 4 August 1854.

[40] The War Office was forced to remind commanding officers that in such instances they were not to send their arms and equipment back to the Board of Ordnance. TNA, WO 68/381/3, North Hampshire Regiment and Hampshire Regiment letter book, 1846-1855, WO Circular, 4 February 1853.

Regiment also hired facilities before later constructing their own.[41]

Nevertheless, it was clear that a more permanent solution was required. According to the new Militia Act, each lord lieutenant was expected to find waste or common ground on which their regiments could train. If there was no suitable location available in their vicinity they were instead authorised to hire such, for which, with the approval of the Home Secretary, they would be financially compensated – for corps of 800 men or above in strength the rate of £8; for corps of 500 but less than 800 men in strength, £6; and for those under 500 men in strength, £4.[42] Furthermore, legislation (16 and 17 Vict., c. 116, ss. 37-41) passed in 1853 stated that every regiment was required to provide suitable stores for their arms, clothing and other equipment alongside an orderly room, guard room and sufficient space on which the men could be mustered for the issue and return of their arms, clothing and equipment. They were also expected to provide sufficient quarters for a proportion of the permanent staff deemed necessary for the defence of the stores, totalling not less than half or fewer than six of the staff, except in corps consisting of less than three companies, in which case the entire staff were to be quartered. On the whole this proved somewhat of a controversial issue as it was expected that the renovation, construction or hire of all buildings used were to be paid for by the lieutenancy out of, or mortgaged against, the county rates, and not by the government. When the government attempted to clarify the issue, numerous MPs complained about the costs faced by regiments in their constituencies. One such MP, William Egerton, complained that in Cheshire the estimated cost of providing for both regiments amounted to between £12,000 and £14,000. Another, Robert Christopher, MP for North Lincolnshire, protested how the current relatively modest cost of £50 per year, which provided storehouses for both regiments in his county, could rise to as much as £20,000, a sentiment echoed by the Kentish MP, William Deedes, who stated that the current cost of £80 per year could rise to £10,000 for both his county's infantry regiments alone.[43] As a result, an amendment was tabled and successfully passed making the lieutenancies liable for just half the total cost, the rest to be borne by the government. This in turn

[41] Monmouth Castle and Regimental Museum (MCRM), RMRE/13/1, Adjutant's Letter Book, 1852-1854, no. 54, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary at War, 28 May 1853; Lancashire Archives (LancA), LM3, Drafts of proceedings of lieutenancy general meetings, 1852-1854, entries for 29 October 1852, 3 January 1853 and May 1853.

[42] 15 and 16 Vict., C. 50, s. 38; PP, *Militia regulations. Militia regulations made by the Secretary at War, in pursuance of the act 15 & 16 Vict. c.50.*, 32, (1852-53), p. 9.

[43] HC Deb., 27 July 1854, vol. 135, cc. 821-7, (cc. 821-3); *The Leader*, 5 August 1854.

forced the government to rework the bill so that when it finally gained royal assent in August 1854, the decision to provide accommodation for the permanent staff was to be at the discretion of local magistrates, meaning that if they decided to forgo the additional accommodation they could be spared the worst of the financial burden.[44] The uncertainty over the issue led some local officials to delay any decision over whether or not to provide new facilities for their regiments. For instance, in Devon, Kent, Sussex, Warwickshire and Wiltshire no provision was made for new buildings until it was clear exactly what would be required and who would be liable to fund it.[45]

The provision of facilities for militia regiments represented a substantial expense upon the lieutenancies. In Middlesex, the rather more extensive set of facilities provided for the 2nd Middlesex Rifles on two acres of purchased land at Barnet – consisting of a parade ground, two storerooms, fumigation room, quartermaster's store and office, armoury, adjutant's quarters, officer's private room, guard room, orderly room, defaulters room, cells, wash-closet, bread room and coal house – enabled the regiment to store all of its 1,050 arms securely at a total cost of £7,516. A similar, albeit slightly smaller, set of facilities constructed as the headquarters of the 3rd Royal Westminster Regiment at Turnham Green came to a total cost of just £5,886 because of the lesser expense incurred in raising a boundary wall due to the parade ground being enclosed on three sides. Similarly, in April 1854 the Lancashire lieutenancy purchased '4,000 yards' of the former house of correction in Preston for £2,000 as the storehouse of the 3rd Lancashire Regiment. In 1855 the Bedfordshire lieutenancy were forced to borrow £5,000 in order to fund the construction of a depot for the county regiment.[46]

Some regiments managed to forgo the worst of such costs. Fortunately for the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, the Duke of Beaufort gifted the use of the Great Castle House as a depot on the provision that the castle ruins remained undamaged. Similarly, despite a lack of suitable waste ground near the depot of the Bedfordshire Regiment, in 1862 it was able to hire land for the duration of its training from the Duke

[44] 17 and 18 Vict., c. 105, ss. 2-8.

[45] HantsALS, Q30/3/18/45, letter from anon. to Woodham, 4 August 1854, Q30/3/18/49, letter from anon. to Woodham, 3 August 1854, Q30/3/18/51, letter from anon. to Woodham, 5 August 1854, Q30/3/18/54, letter from anon. to Woodham 4 August 1854, Q30/3/18/55, letter from Cooks to Woodham, 8 August 1854.

[46] London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), MJ/SP/1855/01/11, Statement on the condition of Militia buildings, 17 January 1855; Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service (BLARS), LC/Mil/1/4, Papers concerning the purchase, maintenance and eventual sale of the Depot, 1854-1878; LancA, LM3, entry for April 1854.

of Bedford for £6 each spring. In Scotland, the Forfar and Kincardine Regiment was fortunate that the lieutenancy was able to share some of the costs, for the provision of a new depot, with the government due to the fact that Panmure, the Secretary of State for War, was also the county's lord lieutenant, although he was sceptical as to the amount he could persuade them to fund.[47] Not all regiments were as fortunate, however. The depot of the Hampshire Regiment remained inadequate for over a decade: not only was the yard too small on which to assemble their full strength, but the depot lacked a magazine, a sufficient storehouse (which was poorly ventilated), accommodation for the permanent staff, or anywhere for the men to change except in the open yard.[48] Even in 1864 the War Office, summarising the finding of an inspecting officer, found that 'No county stores [were] so utterly inadequate for the requirements of a militia regiment as the premises in occupation of the Hants Militia!'[49] They were not alone. Similar concerns were also voiced over the poor state of the new storehouse of the King's Own Tower Hamlets Regiment, the adjutant complaining on several occasions at the state of the plumbing.[50]

It was not just suitable facilities which were initially lacking, but also a sufficient quantity of effective arms and equipment. In January 1836 a War Office circular directed that all arms, clothing and equipment were to be returned to the various ordnance depots, excepting those retained for one-half of the strength of the permanent staff. Two decades later it was unsurprising that what little militia regiments did possess was in poor condition, and a fraction of what was to be required by the new quota. For instance, the Royal West Middlesex Regiment possessed just 17 muskets and 20 bayonets, one of the former and eight of the latter described as in a 'bad' condition, alongside just 180 rounds of ammunition and a somewhat motley assortment of old uniforms which was barely enough for the existing staff. Similarly, the 1st Surrey Regiment possessed enough clothing and obsolete flintlock muskets for just eleven members of the staff, meaning that at the first annual training there were no arms with which to train the men.[51] To remedy

[47] BLARS, LC/Mil/4/3, Lieutenancy papers, 1858-1885, letter from Col. Gilpin to the Secretary of State for War, 29 April 1862, and *Ibid.*, 28 May 1862'; NRS, GD45/12/283, Miscellaneous papers concerning the Forfarshire and Kincardine militia, 1854-1857, letter from Maj. Mackay to Panmure, 17 November 1856; MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 77, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary at War, 23 July 1853.
[48] HantsALS, Q30/3/8/53, letter from Lt.-Col. Shelton to Winchester, 10 October 1859; Q30/3/11/1, letter from Capt. Nichol to Winchester, 26 April 1865; Q30/4/10, letter from Shelton to Winchester, 6 June 1860.
[49] HantsALS, Q30/4/10/31, letter from WO to Winchester, 22 November 1864.
[50] TNA, WO 68/429/6, King's Own Tower Hamlets Regiment letter book, May 1854 to Dec. 1862, letter from Capt. John Gray to anon., 26 December 1855, and letter from Gray to C. Wright, 26 September 1856.
[51] LMA, L/034(a), Routine correspondence concerning appointment in and property of the five regiments of militia, 1855-1857, Return of the stores of the Royal West Middlesex Militia; Surrey History Centre

this, a War Office circular of October 1852 stated that arms, clothing and accoutrements required would be supplied by the Board of Ordnance, with commanding officers only liable to purchase their own equipment if enough could not be provided.[52] However, much of what was initially provided was of such a poor quality that the War Office was forced to acknowledge the deficiencies and, in the case of what was sent to the regiments in Hampshire, despatch inspectors to examine the complaints. Officers of the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry also complained, firstly due to the fact that the regiment received the wrong pattern of shoulder straps and caps, and secondly because 75 pairs of boots required for new recruits did not arrive until after the commencement of the training of 1853, which in turn forced the adjutant to purchase replacements at his own expense. Furthermore, after regiments were embodied there continued to be difficulties in supplying sufficient arms in several units. For instance, the Edinburgh Light Infantry continued to experience delays over the issuance of additional rifles in May and June 1855. The King's Own Tower Hamlets Regiment also experienced difficulties the following November when there was a delay issuing 400 stand of arms, while a year later there were also delays in requisitioning additional uniforms on account of the their embodiment.[53]

It is also unsurprising that the arms provided to the militia were generally of an older pattern than those of the line. Due to the premium placed upon the latest arms by the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny, many militia regiments experienced delays in replacing their smooth bore percussion muskets with the new Enfield rifle, first developed in 1853. It was not until 1858 that the War Office began to distribute them to the militia, although they were limited to embodied regiments meaning many, including the Edinburgh Light Infantry, for instance, were forced to continue using the old pattern muskets. It was not until the following November that the decision was taken to supply the remainder. For instance, the 1st Surrey Regiment only received the new rifles the following year. When the Enfield was, in turn, replaced by the breech loading Snider rifle

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(SHC), ESR/4/1/3: Historical Record from 1856, entries for 1852 and 1853.

[52] TNA, WO 68/381/3, WO Circular, No. 1,132, 22 October 1852.

[53] HantsALS, Q/30/3/5/61, letter from Palmerston to Winchester, 8 April 1853; MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 18, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary of the Ordnance, 11 March 1853, and no. 57, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary at War, 6 June 1853; TNA, WO 68/429/6, letter from Gray to the Deputy Store Keeper, Tower of London, 8 November 1856, and letter from W. Grant to the Quarter-Master General, 3 November 1857; NRS, GD224/192/7, Edinburgh militia correspondence and related papers, 1854-1856, letter from the Ordnance office to the Duke of Buccleuch, 14 May 1855, and letter from Potley to Buccleuch, 21 June 1855.

in 1866, it was only towards the end of the following year that they were first issued to militia regiments, and even then only to the permanent staff. For instance, the permanent staff of the Bedfordshire Regiment only began to receive the new rifles early in 1868. It was not until later in the year that the 1st Surrey Regiment began to receive enough to equip their rank and file, while the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry had to wait a further year.[54]

Additionally, the training provided during the 1850s and early 1860s was rather basic. All recruits were liable to attend a period of preliminary training initially lasting 14 days (although this was liable to be extended or shortened) before they would join the remainder of their regiment. In principle it was meant to resemble the basic course of instruction provided for the regulars. However, the short period available – by contrast, their regular counterparts undertook a course of basic instruction lasting two and a half months[55] – meant that training was limited to a course of instruction covering just the basics of drill, the handling of their arms and manoeuvres at company level, although it was recognised that less emphasis would be placed upon their attitude and 'position' compared to regular recruits. A War Office memorandum established that recruits were to be drilled three times a day for periods lasting between one and a half hours to one and three-quarter hours in groups no larger than 20. After two or three days they would be armed and taken through basic manual and platoon exercises. The initial delays experienced in providing arms meant, if necessary, groups of recruits would rotate every quarter-hour between instruction in the basic handling of their arms and other aspects of their drill. This meant that, in theory, just 20 firearms would be sufficient to train up to 100 men. By the tenth day it was expected that recruits would be proficient in their basic platoon manoeuvres and after two weeks able to perform basic drills as a company.[56] Upon the recommendation of the 1859 militia commission, the preliminary training was extended to 21 days. However, by 1861 this had again been reduced to just 14 days, while in the following year it fell to just seven. It was not until 1867 that recruits were

[54] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 238; NRS, GD224/192/17, Memoranda, lists and returns relating to the militia, 1858-1861, letter from the Director of Stores to the Officer Commanding the Edinburgh Light Infantry, 2 January 1858, and WO Circular, 54 / 2 Derby / 7, 10 November 1859; SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entries for 1860 and 1868; BLARS, LC/Mil/4/3, WO Circular, 54/Militia, Gen. No. 452, 21 December 1867; MCRM, RMRE/13/2, no. 262, letter from Vaughan to the Inspector of Reserve Forces, 6 June 1869.
[55] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 260.
[56] Kent History and Library Centre (KHLC), WKR/B2/245: 'Memorandum on the Drill and Instruction of the Militia Recruits.', 15 October 1852.

once again drilled for 14 days.[57]

The short length of the preliminary training was partially mitigated by the fact that it was expected to immediately precede the annual training of the regiment. However, that too suffered from similar drawbacks. The majority of regiments trained their men for between 21 and 28 days each year despite the fact that the Militia Act of 1852 authorised a maximum period of 56 days per-annum (and a minimum of just three). Herbert explored the financial implications of setting the minimum period of annual training at 27 days for all regiments, as suggested by the 1859 militia commission, although it seems he swayed against the idea on account of the additional expense upon the estimates.[58] Therefore, it was not until 1865 that the Earl de Gray and Ripon, Herbert's successor, extended the period without the additional expense by capping the strength of large regiments to 700 privates. The experience of the 1st Surrey Regiment was typical of the majority of regiments in that between 1859 and 1864 it assembled for 21 days training during the Spring (excepting that for 1860 whereby it assembled for 27 days) and between 1865 and 1868 for 27 days.[59]

Although the annual training focussed largely upon drill exercises and parade upon the barrack square, there was an increasing emphasis upon a practical instruction in musketry. Immediately after the reform it was difficult for militiamen to actually fire their weapons unless they had access to suitable range facilities, or land which could substitute for such. Yet after the establishment of the School of Musketry at Hythe in 1853, this began to change. Regiments were invited to send officers to undertake a course of instruction which would enable them to oversee musketry practice in their own units. For instance, in November 1857 the King's Own Tower Hamlets Regiment sent a subaltern to undergo the course.[60] Nevertheless, some regiments continued to encounter difficulties in finding suitable facilities. For instance, in August 1854 the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry was unable to find a suitable location after a local landowner forbade the use of his land. By comparison, in 1861 the whole of the 1st Surrey Regiment was able to undergo a course of musketry on land in a local

[57] HC Deb., 5 July 1867, vol. 189, cc. 87-103 (c. 100).
[58] WSHC, 2057/F8/V/C/22, Memorandum comparing the expense of training militia for 21 or 27 days, 14 March 1861.
[59] SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entries for 1859 to 1868.
[60] TNA, WO 68/429/6, letter from Grant to the Assistant Adjutant-General, 10 November 1857.

landowner's deer park.[61] The 1859 militia commission was fully aware of the difficulties, although all they could suggest was that regiments with no access to a suitable range should periodically send detachments to the nearest facilities, and that the opportunity to undertake the school of musketry should be extended to the members of the permanent staff. Many NCOs took this opportunity, and far from being inferior to their regular counterparts, many were praised for their 'exemplary conduct'.[62]

There were other major limitations to peacetime training. Firstly, there was initially little provision for inter-unit training or large-scale manoeuvres. The Hertfordshire Regiment was a rare exception in that they took part in a day of field manoeuvres and a mock engagement alongside the West Essex Yeomanry and a Royal Artillery battery on 11 June 1853, during which the regiment demonstrated its musketry and the ability to form up by line, column and square. Similarly, those units which when embodied had served at a major military station, such as Aldershot, had some experience of brigade level manoeuvres.[63] However, it was not until 1867 that disembodied regiments were brigaded in peacetime for such purposes (explored below). A further concern was that many regiments lacked sufficient NCOs to enable the effective instruction of their men. As a result, particularly during the first two annual trainings, several had to appoint regular instructors upon a temporary basis. For instance, the Hampshire Regiment relied on the assistance of 25 NCOs from the 48th Regiment, which just happened to also be stationed in Winchester, the former's headquarters; this was again the case in 1861 when 12 regular NCOs were attached to assist in the training. Similarly, on account of their having only four NCOs appointed to the permanent staff during the trainings of 1852 and 1853, the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry Regiment attached 20 regular NCOs as instructors, while both the South Devon and Somerset Light Infantry Regiments also employed regular instructors, the former a total of 30, during their initial training periods.[64]

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[61] MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 351, letter from Vaughan to the Brigade Major, Carmarthen, 25 August 1854.

[62] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553. (1859 Session 2), p. xii; WSHC, 2057/F8/V/B/421, Statement on the disembodied militia at Hythe, n.d.

[63] Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HertsALS), D/EYo/1/50, 'Order of proceedings for Brigade Field Day of the Hertfordshire Militia and the West Essex Yeomanry Cavalry, and Artillery at Ware Park, Ware', 11 June 1853.

[64] TNA, WO 68/381/1, entry for 1861; *Ibid.*, WO 68/381/3, letter from Maj. Purves to Winchester, 31 January 1853; MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 5, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary at War, 15 November 1852, no. 41, letter from the Adjutant to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, 26 April 1853, and no. 50, letter from the Adjutant to the Brigade Major, Portsmouth, 18 May 1853; PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553 (1859 Session 2), qq. 1618-21.

On the plus side, militia artillery corps were provided with specialist training, even if, once again, insufficient time and facilities limited its complexity. Those corps created from the conversion of existing infantry regiments faced the added difficulty of adjusting their training techniques to their new role. For instance, it took the Royal Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery two years to replace the sergeants on the permanent staff, who hitherto had all been infantrymen, with discharged sergeants from the Royal Artillery. Prior to this the regiment had been able to do little other than hire the services of a retired major from the Royal Artillery to instruct the men in the basic use and exercise of their heavy ordnance.[65] As the Militia artillery were initially expected to provide service as garrison artillery units, it is unsurprising that their training focussed upon the use and manipulation of heavy ordnance, although they were also expected to cover the basics of the drill yard. For instance, at the annual training of the Hampshire Artillery in 1867 the inspecting officer assessed their basic platoon drill and musketry, in addition to their use of heavy ordnance.[66] By 1890 the standard daily timetable recommended for the annual training had changed little, consisting of an hour's foot drill each morning followed later in the afternoon by two hours of gun drill, including how to manipulate ammunition and the theory behind gunnery, and by two further hours of target practice and repository exercises.[67] However, despite the specialist nature of their training, three to four weeks was insufficient time for gunners to become proficient with anything more than the basic manoeuvring of their heavy guns. Such was the conclusion of the Deputy Adjutant-General of the Royal Artillery who, in giving evidence to the 1859 militia commission, bemoaned that a lack of suitable barrack accommodation meant some units had failed to train with any heavy ordnance whilst embodied. He also argued that even if the men were given the maximum regulated 56 days of annual training it would still be insufficient to enable them to become effective gunners; in his opinion at least a year of continuous embodiment was required before 56 days of annual training would suffice to maintain the necessary skills.[68] The 1859 militia commission therefore suggested that in future all artillery corps should give over as much time as possible towards practical gunnery drill, that each corps should be provided with adequate heavy

[65] Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *"The Royal Miners*, pp. 61-3.
[66] HantsALS, Q30/4/17/4, letter from Maj.-Gen. Burnaby to Winchester, 28 May 1867.
[67] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553. (1859 Session 2), qq. 4923-5, 4933; Litchfield, *Militia Artillery*, p. 3.
[68] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553. (1859 Session 2), qq. 4928-9, 4941-2, 4964-8.

guns and that their headquarters should be located as near as possible to coastal defences so as to enable them to train each company successively.[69]

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Without doubt the first decade since reconstitution represented a particularly tumultuous period for the militia. Even though Herbert had been motivated by a desire to halt the further integration of the militia and the line in order to increase the former's efficiency, his successors were far more open to the concept. In fact there was a far greater degree of continuity between their attempts to reorganise the militia and Cardwell's later more extensive reforms than has hitherto been appreciated.[70] Firstly, in May 1866 Peel issued a circular which reversed Herbert's decision to halt the transfer of militiamen to the regular army. Peel had remained a committed and fervent advocate of such a policy and hoped that by reopening direct enlistment it would help alleviate poor rates of regular recruitment. Subsequently he encouraged militia officers to persuade as many men to transfer as possible.[71]

Secondly, in 1868 Peel's successor Sir John Pakington sought to further reform the command structure of the auxiliary and reserve forces in reaction to concerns over the lack of control over the auxiliaries by the general officers commanding the various military districts. Building upon an idea that had been mooted by his predecessors, Pakington abolished the existing office of Inspector-General of Militia alongside those for the other auxiliary and reserve forces and created instead a new position, the newly titled Inspector-General of Reserve Forces (Major-General James Lindsay being the first to be appointed to the position). This individual was to be directly accountable to the Secretary of State for War and would thus enable the auxiliary forces to be directed more easily when embodied or assembled for training by acting as an intermediary between the War Office and the general officers commanding each district. Although the arrangement prefigured some of the more radical changes to come, Pakington was quick to reassure the lords lieutenant that it would not jeopardise their authority over the militia and that he would continue to personally correspond with them over the day-to-day running of the

[69] *Ibid.*, pp. xiii-xiv.
[70] This conclusion sits as part of a wider historiographical trend since the 1960s recognising the limitations of Cardwell's reforms and the continuity of such with his predecessors. Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 2.
[71] HC Deb., 14 June 1866, vol. 184, cc. 378-9.

force. Nevertheless, in 1872 as part of Cardwell's reforms the re-titled Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces was attached to the staff of the Commander in Chief in order to enable himself and the Secretary of State to successfully co-ordinate their direction.[72]

Thirdly, Pakington also fulfilled his predecessor's desire to form a militia reserve for service with the army, solving the question of how militiamen who opted to remain with their regiments could still be used as a means of augmenting the line. In the spring of 1867 Peel drafted plans for the temporary transfer of up to one-quarter of the entire militia to the line during wartime, a measure which was designed to provide for the rapid expansion of the line without permanently draining the militia. Although in March he resigned before he could introduce the scheme to Parliament, it was swiftly taken up by Pakington and introduced to the Commons in May, passing onto the statute book with little opposition in August. The Militia Reserve Act enabled militiamen to volunteer their services to join the army as regular soldiers temporarily when the country was at or threatened by war, although no more than one-quarter of the total quota of each regiment were permitted to enrol at any one time. Entry into the reserve was open to all militiamen aged 30 and under, at least 33 inches across the chest and 5ft 4in in height. All reservists were to enlist for a period of five years in receipt of a bounty of £1 in addition to that for their militia service, and during peacetime were liable to be trained with the regulars for up to 56 days per year either in addition to, or substituted for, the annual training of their militia regiment.[73] Critics, including the former Secretary of State for War, Ripon, recognised that by taking the most efficient men from the militia just when the force was liable to itself be embodied was hardly conductive to its own efficiency. However, according to its supporters, including the Duke of Cambridge, the scheme was, from the militia's point of view, preferable to the permanent loss of volunteers as experienced in previous embodiments and allowed for the augmentation of the army at little permanent cost to the militia.[74]

Clearly there had been a policy by predecessors to both simplify the command structure of the militia by placing it under more centralised control, and bring it into greater association with the regular army. Both Ian Beckett and Duncan Anderson have argued that a key reason such reforms were accepted, unlike in 1861, was due to a decline

[72] TNA, WO 32/6166, Papers regarding the Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces, 1868-1874; HC Deb., 23 March 1868, vol. 191, cc. 40-98 (cc. 50-1, 62).
[73] 30 and 31 Vict., c. 111; PP, *Militia reserve. Regulations for the discipline and payment of the militia reserve*., 321, (1867-68), pp. 2-3.
[74] HL Deb., 4 March 1867 vol. 185, cc. 1768-99, (cv. 1786, 1792).

in the militia's representation in Parliament and the death of a number of significant supporters of the force in the intervening years, including both Palmerston and Herbert.[75] What is clear, from an examination of the militia interest within Parliament, is that one cannot claim that representation of the force collapsed entirely towards the end of the 1860s. As illustrated by figures given in Appendix 1, the number of serving and retired militia officers sitting in the Commons actually increased, from 43 in 1852 under a coalition government to 59 in 1859 and 64 in 1870, both under Liberal governments. Conversely representation within the Lords fell to just 23 peers by 1870 from a high of 50 in 1852. Therefore, although such figures are not an exact indicator of the size of the effective militia lobby within Parliament, it does nonetheless illustrate a far more nuanced picture, illustrating that the militia continued to be represented among the benches of both the Conservatives and Liberals, although more heavily among the former.

Cardwell's motivation for reform was driven by the Liberal Party's wider desire to achieve savings from the estimates. Nevertheless, he was also influenced by the desire to make the militia itself a more united, professional and more effective force through closer association with the regulars. In presenting the army estimates to the Commons in March 1869, he announced that he desired the regular and auxiliary forces of the country to be consolidated so as to provide a united front against any potential invader, and that in an emergency he regarded 'the old constitutional force' as not only the best source of manpower to fill-up regular battalions, but also to act as a secondary line of defence in its own right. Yet initially Cardwell was reluctant to appear too radical: he made it clear the government had 'not the smallest intention of in any way depriving it [the militia] of its local character, and of its connection with the county', a view also shared by the Queen. In effect he was framing the militia as able to both fulfil a traditionally perceived role as a locally organised force for home defence, while at the same time acknowledging his desire for it to become a *de facto* auxiliary to the line upon a national basis.[76] Cardwell began to implement such a strategy, subsequently introducing legislation in May (32 and 33 Vict., c. 13) which placed the force under the direct command of the general officers commanding each military district when assembled for training (in addition to abolishing property qualifications for militia officers). The following year additional legislation (33

[75] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 187.

[76] HC Deb., 11 March 1869, vol. 194, cc. 1111-77 (cc. 1123-5); TNA, PRO 30/48/1, Cardwell papers, correspondence with the Queen, 1868 to 1869, letter from the Queen to Cardwell, 7 January 1869.

and 34 Vict., c. 68.) was passed permitting the embodiment of the militia 'in case of imminent national danger or of great emergency' as opposed to simply in cases where either a state of war existed or the country was threatened by invasion. Cardwell also stated his intention to retain the Militia Reserve, despite the concerns of many militia officers over the potential wartime loss of its most able manpower and which, in essence, meant two bounties were paid for each reservist, one for his enrolment as a militiaman and one for his entry into the reserve. Subsequently he planned to raise 20,000 men for the coming year (rising to 30,000 in 1871) despite hitherto only attracting 2,700 men.[77] Furthermore, in 1871 Cardwell introduced plans to increase the establishment of the militia by as much as 45,000 men so that it would be better able to weather the loss of the planned 30,000 reservists in the event of war. That April he announced his intention to raise the additional 45,000 at an additional cost of £237,216 to the estimates, with the first increase planned over the course of the following year. Cardwell faced opposition from those who feared there was not the accommodation for the extra recruits, and those who felt the money would be better spent on the regulars, and although he managed to secure the additional expense the increase to the establishment was not forthcoming.[78]

Cardwell also planned to further centralise the auxiliaries under the control of the War Office as part of his proposed Army Regulation Bill. Introduced to the Commons in February 1871, it firmly threatened the link between the lieutenancy and the militia, withdrawing the lords lieutenant' historic jurisdiction over the force and their right to award commissions, instead vesting control with the Secretary of State for War.[79] Despite relative quiet in the press, the bill faced a rough passage through Parliament owing chiefly to opposition over the proposed abolition of purchase. Nevertheless, aside from the concern of some militia colonels, and their supporters, over the loss of local control and the refusal of the government to bear all expenses paid out of the county rates, there was surprisingly little opposition considering the number of militia MPs; Appendix 1 shows that, in 1870, there were 64 retired or serving militia officers in the Commons. There was more concern from among the benches of the Lords. Two amendments were

[77] HC Deb., 11 March 1869, vol. 194, cc. 1111-77 (cc. 1128-9); *Ibid.*, 11 April 1871, vol. 205, cc. 1200-39 (c. 1214); R. Biddulph, *Lord Cardwell at the War Office* (London: John Murray, 1904), pp. 33-4.

[78] PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers of militia regiments, (Great Britain and Ireland), 22nd November, 1870; with answers*, C. 288, (1871); TNA, PRO 30/48/2, correspondence with the Queen, 1870, Memorandum on the army, 11 November 1870; HC Deb., 16 February 1871, vol. 204, cc. 327-59 (cc. 333-4); *Ibid.*, 11 April 1871, vol. 205, cc. 1200-39 (cc. 1210-1).

[79] Western, *English Militia*, p. 16; TNA, PRO 30/48/2, Memorandum on the army, 11 November 1870; *Ibid.*, letter from Cardwell to the Queen, 1 December 1870.

proposed which aimed to avoid the transfer of the power to appoint commissions to the Secretary of State, although both ultimately failed on the understanding that the right to nominate first appointments was to be retained by the lords lieutenant.[80] The Regulation of the Forces Act (34 and 35 Vict., c. 86), which passed onto the statue book in August 1871, authorised the Secretary of State to direct by an order in council that the lords lieutenant' jurisdiction over the militia would be withdrawn on 31 March 1872. Henceforth the War Office could formally direct when and where the militia were to assemble for training, while Parliament gained the power to directly increase or decrease the force's size. Yet some of the organisational changes were not as fundamental as they first appeared. In addition to retaining the right to nominate individuals for first appointments, they were also permitted to continue to appoint deputy lieutenants and in the event of a reversion to the ballot, to hold authority over its implementation.[81]

Cardwell went even further by proposing that regular and militia battalions should be formally linked as part of his wider scheme for localisation. One of the primary motives behind this was that it would encourage militia recruits to transfer to the regular army. However, he also hoped that it would benefit the militia by increasing their efficiency through training alongside the regulars. Introduced into the Commons in February 1872, the Localisation Bill proposed to formally divide the country into 66 sub-districts, each of which would house two line battalions alongside their associated militia infantry battalions and rifle volunteer corps, forming an administrative brigade under the command of a regular colonel, although under his command militia battalions would remain under the command of their own officers. The much maligned practice of billeting regiments while assembled for training was to be avoided by encamping militia units at their depot. All of the militia's arms, accoutrements and clothing were to be centralised at the new depot as were the permanent staff, with the eventual aim that new staff appointments would be made from regular NCOs among their linked battalions. In order to make the scheme a reality Cardwell requested that an additional £3,500,000 be raised in order to pay for the construction of 26 new depots and the conversion of 40 already occupied, a substantial investment of public expenditure in a government dominated by the desire for savings from the estimates. Despite the unprecedented nature of the scheme

[80] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 16-8; HC Deb., 6 March 1871, vol. 204, cc. 1397-477 (c. 1447); *Ibid.*, 9 March 1871, vol. 204, cc. 1679-748 (c. 1734); *Ibid.*, 16 March 1871, vol. 205, cc. 57-151 (cc. 85-6, 102, 108); *Ibid.*, 17 March 1871, vol. 205, cc. 203-59 (cc. 218-9, 224-30); *Ibid.*, 21 April 1871, vol. 205, c. 1466; *Ibid.*, 20 June 1871 vol. 207, cc. 308-10; HL Deb., 1 August 1871, vol. 208, cc. 628-36 (cc. 630-5).
[81] Biddulph, *Lord Cardwell at the War Office*, pp. 110-2.

the measures passed through Parliament, reaching the statute book in July with far less hostility than Cardwell's previous bill despite familiar concerns from a minority of militia officers over a loss of control, recruitment, the further transfer of men to the line, the role of the permanent staff, and the added pressure of a possible influx of ex-regular officers upon promotion prospects.[82]

It soon became clear, however, that actually delivering localisation was easier said than done. One major concern was that it effectively challenged the right of the militia's commanding officers to oversee their own recruitment once relocated to the new depot, which instead became the responsibility of each brigade's commanding officer. Nevertheless, there were also difficulties owing to the sheer scale of the construction programme for the new depots. By 1876 only 40 of the 70 brigade depots had been formed, and of these just eight had a completed set of facilities, while a further 54 were in the process of constructing them.[83] This meant that for some units it could be many years before localisation became a reality. There were also concerns over the financial impact upon the county authorities. The Localisation Act itself had authorised that local officials were able to transfer to the War Office any lands or buildings they owned for the use of the militia. However, the act made no provision to compensate them for the significant expenditure of originally purchasing or constructing the facilities. As a result Cardwell was forced to pass additional legislation which ensured the county authorities could be compensated for any buildings or land transferred to the jurisdiction of the War Office, and that if such were not required local officials had the right to sell them in order to regain their investment.[84]

Before leaving the War Office after the Liberal defeat in August 1873, Cardwell further brought the militia into line with the regulars by passing legislation (36 and 37 Vict. c. 68) which extended the term of enlistment from five to six years, the same period most regulars would serve before joining the army reserve under the new scheme of short

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[82] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 19; TNA, PRO 30/48/3, Cardwell papers, correspondence with the Queen, 1871, letter from Cardwell to the Queen, December 1871; PP, *Memorandum by His Royal Highness the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief on the proposal of the Secretary of State for war for the organization of the various military land forces of the country; and report of a committee on the details involved therein*., C. 493, (1872), pp. 3-13; HC Deb., 22 February 1872, vol. 209, cc. 879-916 (cc. 893-906); *Ibid.*, 4 March 1872, vol. 209, cc. 1328-81 (cc. 1365-8, 1370-1, 1378-9),

[83] PP, *Report of the committee appointed by the Secretary of State for War to enquire into certain questions that have arisen with respect to the militia and the present brigade depot system; together with minutes of evidence, appendix, and index*., C. 1654, C. 1654-I, (1877), p. iii.

[84] See 35 and 36 Vict., c. 68, s. 10, 36 and 37 Vict. c. 68, s. 8, and, 36 and 37 Vict. c. 84, s. 2.

service enlistment.[85] Far from diverging from his strategy, Cardwell's Conservative successors Gathorne Hardy and Frederick Stanley continued to implement his reforms, hardly surprising considering the considerable public expenditure which had been earmarked for the scheme. Firstly, in June 1874 Hardy passed legislation (37 and 38 Vict. c. 29) permitting the militia to, in future, be organised and directed 'by royal warrants, orders and regulations to the same extent as the regular army, instead of through Parliament.[86] Secondly, the following August he consolidated much of the existing legislation into a single Act (38 and 39 Vict. c. 69), repealing in whole or in part 29 individual pieces of legislation dating back as far as 1803, and uniting the regulation of the militia across the entirety of the UK, although its most significant feature was that for the first time it permitted militia units to serve abroad – they were now not only able to volunteer for service in the Channel Islands (permitted since 1859), but henceforth also Malta and Gibraltar – without the need for temporary enabling legislation, although commanding officers were reminded that such offers were voluntary and, as clarified in 1882 (45 and 46 Vict. c. 49), required at least three-quarters of the men to consent.

Hardy's ongoing concerns over the implementation of localisation led to his establishment in 1876 of a royal commission which would investigate the impact of the scheme upon the militia, concluding that localisation should be taken to its logical conclusion through the unification of linked regular and militia battalions into single territorial regiments. The findings were later echoed by another committee aimed specifically at examining the feasibility of the recommendations, although it was acknowledged there could be difficulties amalgamating some regular and militia battalions into single regiments.[87] Yet despite the recommendation, it was left to Cardwell's Liberal successor Hugh Childers to take such a step despite some pressure to abandon the linking principal entirely.[88] In March 1881 he proposed to create 67 new territorial regiments within which the militia would for the most part form the third and fourth battalions. Controversially, they were to abandon their own uniform and assume

[85] French, *Military Identities*, p. 14.

[86] Until 1870 an annual Militia Pay Act (kept in force via the Expiring Laws Continuance Act, 1873) had been necessary to regulate the force's pay.

[87] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 1654, C. 1654-I, (1877), pp. iii-vi; PP, *Report of committee on the formation of territorial regiments as proposed by Colonel Stanley's Committee, February 1881*., C. 2793, (1881), pp. 4-10.

[88] PP, *Report of the Committee of General and other officers of the army on army reorganisation*., c. 2791, (1881), p. 33, and TNA, WO 33/35, Memo by the Adjutant-General. Re-organization of the infantry of the line, 13 November 1880, as cited in French, *Military Identities*, pp. 19-20.

the identity of their new regiment, distinguished simply through bearing the letter 'M' upon the shoulder straps. It was also reconfirmed that the responsibility for recruitment for both the regular and militia battalions was formally invested in each depot's regular staff under the superintendence of the regiment's commanding officer. Recruits, unless their headquarters were located away from the territorial depot, were to be trained immediately upon enlistment at the depot and under the supervision of the regular staff, and in 1882 a general order prohibited the system of recruit training at preliminary drill outright.[89]

Despite its successful implementation, there were some difficulties which arose from the reality of forcing regular and militia battalions with their own separate identities into single regiments. Firstly, not all regular and militia regiments were included in the territorialisation scheme. Both the 60th King's Royal Rifle Corps and the Rifle Brigade were exempt owing to their recruiting upon a national basis, the headquarters of which were located at Winchester. This created an anomaly whereby their associated militia battalions (the Huntingdonshire, Royal Flint, 2nd Royal Middlesex, North Cork, and Carlow Regiments and the King's Own and Queen's Own Tower Hamlets Regiments respectively) were, in effect, without an associated sub-district. Secondly, as with the more modest localisation scheme, there were also practical concerns that if regiments were forced to leave their traditional headquarters then it might adversely affect not just their *esprit de corps*, but also their ability to recruit. By 1880 there were still 23 English and Welsh regiments which had not relocated to their brigade depot despite the fact that all, with the exception of that in Newcastle, were ready to receive them. The residents of Hertford, unhappy at the proposed relocation of their regiment to Bedfordshire (on account of it becoming the 4th Bedfordshire Regiment), founded a private company aimed at raising funds for the construction of a permanent barracks in the town, successfully collecting £6,000 through the issue of 600 shares price at £10 each. They succeeded and subsequently rented the new depot back to the War Office as the battalion's depot. Furthermore, it was believed some units would benefit from remaining at their existing headquarters. For instance, the 4th Norfolk Regiment continued to train in Great Yarmouth as it had in the majority of years since 1852, only transferring its

[89] PP, *Revised memorandum showing the principal changes in army organization, &c., intended to take effect from 1st July 1881*., C. 2922, (1881), p. 3; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, p. 161.

headquarters to the regimental depot at Norwich in 1888.[90]

Territorialisation was not just limited to militia infantry battalions. In April 1882 a general order reorganised the Royal Artillery into two brigades of horse artillery, four brigades of field artillery and eleven territorial divisions of garrison artillery. The 37 militia garrison artillery corps were henceforth divided between ten of the eleven districts according to their location, the exception being London where no militia artillery units had been raised. Within each division the first brigade consisted of a regular unit, the militia forming the junior brigades. As a result of this each unit was forced to drop its county title including any 'royal' prefix, assuming instead the brigade number and divisional title. For instance, the Hampshire Artillery became the 2nd Brigade Southern Division, and the Edinburgh Artillery the 3rd Brigade Scottish Division. Nevertheless, due to the unpopularity of the move some corps, including the Royal Carmarthen Artillery and Royal Pembroke Artillery, unofficially rejected the new designations, preferring instead to continue using their county titles. The main problem with the new arrangement was that the distribution of militia artillery corps allotted to each division bore no relation to the coastal defences they were supposed to garrison, instead depending, firstly, upon how many brigades could be raised in each division and, secondly, whether or not there were already Royal Garrison Artillery Volunteer units raised in particular areas. This meant that of 37 militia artillery brigades only six were allotted to the four divisions responsible for defending a stretch of coast extending from King's Lynn to the Isle of Wight; by comparison 14 alone were raised in Ireland, six in Scotland and four in Wales. The militia artillery was again reorganised in 1889 after the eleven territorial divisions were abolished and the entirety of the force redistributed into three new large divisions, while each brigade was again permitted to once use their county titles, although none of the brigades which had previously been designated as 'royal' were allowed to retain the title. This meant that, for instance, both the Hampshire Artillery and Edinburgh Artillery were henceforth allotted to a greatly enlarged Southern Division.[91]

The closer association of the artillery shows there was a belief the militia as a whole could become an auxiliary for the whole of the army, not just the infantry. Yet one

[90] HertsALS, D/EYo/1/45, Notes and transcripts concerning the history of the Hertfordshire Militia and 4th Bedfordshire Regiment, 1663-1951, *Hertfordshire Mercury*, 7 September 1951; TNA, WO 33/37, *Report of the Militia Localization Committee*, 1881, pp. vi-vii; WO 68/123, entry for 1888.

[91] Litchfield, *Militia Artillery*, pp. 4-5; Maurice-Jones, *History of Coast Artillery*, pp. 161-2; Owen, *History of the Welsh Militia…(Part 1)*, pp. 47-9, 83-5.

area of growing importance which had no affiliated reserve in the militia was the Royal Engineers.[92] Owing to the increasingly technical nature of the army's service, it was clear the Royal Engineers required the same auxiliary support provided for the other parts of the army. Therefore, in 1876 both the Royal Anglesey and Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry were selected for conversion into engineers. Although remote from the Royal Engineers headquarters at Chatham, both units had access to surrounding countryside suitable for training purposes and a pool of recruits from more technical backgrounds in mining and heavy industry – it has also been suggested that the prior success of raising volunteer engineer corps in industrial parts of England and Scotland precluded a further reliance upon such areas. In the case of the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, Garnet Wolseley, the Assistant Adjutant-General, was familiar with the regiment after inspecting it in 1874, during which he praised its officers, internal economy, discipline and drill. This may have also influenced his decision to select the regiment for conversion. The fact that it went ahead was testament to the consent of the commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel John Francis Vaughan, and his belief that his officers and men were highly suitable for the role and could be instructed in their new duties with relative ease. However, not everyone connected to the regiment was happy about the change. Most notably the Duke of Beaufort, Lord Lieutenant of Monmouthshire, chastised Vaughan's acquiescence to the conversion and his lack of consultation with the other officers over the decision, lamenting that they would no longer be a 'smart light infantry Regiment'. There is also evidence to suggest that the officers were not particularly enthusiastic; one anonymously voiced his feelings through a poem published in *The Sapper* lamenting the almost leisurely nature of their existing training and bemoaning the more technical nature of the engineers.[93]

The following years also saw the establishment of militia submarine mining corps. Tasked with defending key waterways against naval attack, the first corps was established in November 1878 when the Hampshire (later Portsmouth Division) Submarine Miners was established from among local 'artizans and mechanics' who were to be trained in the use of torpedoes and submarine mines. It remained the only such unit

[92] There had been an assortment of volunteer engineer units raised since 1859, but these ranged in size and were limited strictly to service within the UK.

[93] Watson, *Militiamen and Sappers*, pp. 66-8; MCRM, RMRE/13/5/1, Miscellaneous correspondence, 1874-6, 'Confidential Inspection Report Royal Monmouth Militia', 1874; MCRM, DVau/2/18/37, letter from Wolseley to GOC Western District, 17 January 1876, letter from Vaughan to Wolseley, 21 January 1876; MCRM, RMRE/15/1, 'Bless thee, Bottom, thou art translated!', *The Sapper*, June 1877.

until two additional companies were raised in Devon and Kent in 1884, the new units based at Plymouth and Chatham respectively. That year the force was also reorganised upon a divisional structure similar to that of the artillery. Further units were subsequently established across the country: in 1888 three new divisions were formed at Harwich, Milford Haven and the River Severn, while in 1891 and 1892 two existing volunteer submarine mining corps were converted into militia units at Hull and Falmouth. By 1902 a total of ten divisions were stationed along a stretch of coast from Milford Haven to the Humber, although it was deemed unnecessary to raise additional units in the North of England or Scotland as volunteer corps had already been established there for the same purpose. By comparison to the engineer regiments in Wales, the submarine mining divisions were relatively small in size. For instance, in 1884 the Hampshire Submarine Miners had an establishment of just two companies consisting of five officers, seven permanent NCOs, twelve volunteer NCOs and 148 sappers. However, compared to others they were comparatively large as both the Kent and Devon Submarine Miners consisted of just a single company.[94]

Furthermore, in keeping with the growing importance of the support service to the operation of the regular army, in 1891 a company was established at Aldershot to provide the militia with a dedicated unit for the provision of medical support. By 1902 this had expanded to twelve companies organised across the country, their purpose to support the Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC), recently formed in 1898, and extending to them the same expansionary and supportive capability in times of war afforded to the rest of the army. This meant that in the event of the RAMC proceeding abroad to support the regular army in the field there would continue to be a reserve providing medical support for those forces remaining in the UK.[95]

One of the main themes of militia reforms from the mid-1860s onwards was that they strove towards the improvement of the militia's training. Initially further attempts to increase the length of the annual training faltered mainly due to concerns over the impact

[94] W. Baker-Brown, *History of submarine mining in the British Army*,(Chatham: Royal Engineers Institute, 1910), p. 160; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 227-31; *Portsmouth Evening News*, 26 November 1878, p. 2; HantsALS, Q30/4/19, Hampshire engineer militia, submarine miners, 1878-9, letter from WO to Winchester, 2 November 1878; *Ibid.*, Q30/4/20, Correspondence and papers relating to the Southern Submarine Mining militia, 1884-90, WO Circular, 6 August 1884.

[95] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*., vol. 2, Cd.2063, (1904), qq. 20306, 20310, 22924; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Appendices to the minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*., Cd.2064, (1904), p. 90.

upon employers' willingness to tolerate a militiaman's absence. In 1882 it was briefly extended to 56 days, but despite being observed by every battalion except those in Berkshire (on account of the proportion of agricultural labourers who were required for the harvest) the following year it was once again reduced to 27 days.[96] Crucially, however, the period of preliminary training was extended significantly. The Regulation of the Forces Act gave the militia's commanding officers the ability to increase the period of their preliminary drill up to a maximum of six months. In reality no unit extended its recruit training to the maximum permitted due to the impact such a move would undoubtedly have had upon discouraging potential recruits, again over fears for job security.[97] Nevertheless, during the 1870s the majority of units did increase their recruits training to 56 days which from 1883 became the standard length of recruit training whether or not they were trained on enlistment at the depot or by their own battalion away from the headquarters.[98]

Extra provision was also made for militia units to undergo brigade level training in peacetime. In 1867 the War Office experimented by inviting regiments near Aldershot to serve out their annual training at the camp. Five units duly accepted (the Royal Berkshire, 1st and 2nd Royal Surrey, Oxfordshire, and Hampshire Regiments) and as a result were able to take part in more advanced manoeuvres in conjunction with other militia regular units, most notably as part of a field day comprising the entire division stationed at the camp. The good conduct of the militia despite the poor weather prompted the Commander in Chief to recommend that the system be extended to other camps including those at Shorncliffe and the Curragh. As a result in the following year a War Office circular authorised the formation of brigades at the principal military stations, while any militia units whose headquarters coincided with a regular regiment could also train together for a few days during the last week of their annual training. Both the 1st and 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment and the Hampshire Regiment again proceeded to Aldershot, while in the following years other regiments, such as the Bedfordshire Regiment at Woburn Park in 1869, took the opportunity to partake in brigade field exercises for the first time.[99]

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[96] NRS, GD/40/9/464, Letters from the 5th Duke of Buccleuch to the Marquess of Lothian, March 1871 to November 1883, letter no. 58, 26 July 1882.

[97] 34 and 35 Vict., c. 86, s. 8.

[98] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890), p. 334.

[99] *London Standard*, 5 July 1867, p. 6; SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entries for 1867 and 1868; HantsALS, Q30/4/10, no. 11, letter from the War Office to Winchester, 11 January 1867; *Ibid.*, War Office circular (B Militia

Therefore, from 1868 onwards there was a clear drive towards a more collective and comprehensive training regime. From 1869 the annual trainings of the East Kent Regiment were not simply limited to the parade square, but encompassed outpost duty in the surrounding countryside as well as field exercises, mock skirmishes and 'sham fights' with other units garrisoned at either Dover or Canterbury, and later at the military camp at Shorncliffe. For instance, in 1880 they frequently marched into the surrounding countryside to practice outpost duty before joining a brigade field day at Canterbury, while in 1881 they partook in a simulated attack upon 'imaginary heights' alongside men of the regimental depot, the East Kent Rifle Volunteers, the cavalry depot and a battery of Royal Horse Artillery. Urban units including the 7th Rifle Brigade also frequently trained away from headquarters, principally at Aldershot and on some occasions Shorncliffe. Units such as the 3rd Bedfordshire Regiment were fortunate enough to have ample suitable ground on which to encamp and practice field exercises. For instance, after 1896 they frequently assembled for training at Ampthill Park, the estate of the later commanding officers of the battalion, Lord Ampthill. In Scotland the Edinburgh Light Infantry was brigaded at Glencorse. Although training largely continued to centre on traditional drill and parade, in 1878 it took part in a 'grand sham' battle in Queen's Park, Edinburgh. Nevertheless, the condition of the camp concerned the Lord Lieutenant and Colonel of the regiment, the Duke of Buccleuch, who commented that the station was too small to act as an effective brigade headquarters with insufficient room to draw out the entire regiment for drill in line at any one time, and that owing to poor weather it was a thoroughly unpleasant experience for the encamped men.[100] However, any chances that the localisation scheme would enable militiamen to train alongside their linked regular battalions, fostering greater links between the two, was tenuous at best. From 1873 to 1881 the East Kent Regiment did not once train with either, one of which was stationed in Bengal and the other at Limerick. Instead, when in May 1875 the regiment was at Dover for field exercises, it trained alongside men from 7th Royal Fusiliers, 90th Light

118), 8 May 1868; TNA, WO 68/381/1, entries for 1867 to 187; BLARS, LC/Mil/4/3, letter from Gilpin to Capt. Greene, 26 May 1869.

[100] National Army Museum (NAM), 2001-02-439, entries for 1869 to 1881; TNA, WO 68/429/9, Letter book, 7th Rifle Brigade, 1888-91, letter from Colonel Somerset to Major Tomlinson, 15 March 1890; *Ibid.*, letter from Tomlinson to Somerset, 18 March 1890; *Bedfordshire Times and Independent*, 13 June 1896; BLARS, X550/4/4, anon., *The Bedfordshire Militia. An Illustrated Description of Life and Work in Camp, May and June 1906*, (Bedford: The Beds Times Publishing Co., 1906); NRS, GD40/9/464, letter no. 20, 17 June 1878, letter no. 21 and 22 June 1879, and letter no. 30, 13 June 1879.

Infantry and 104th Bengal Fusiliers.[101]

The military authorities recognised that enabling the militia to train alongside other units was beneficial to both the efficiency of the officers and men. However, not all units were able to reap the benefits of such an arrangement. Initially such was limited to only a handful of suitable, and predominantly urban, locations (Winchester, Plymouth, Colchester, Salford, Sheffield, Dover, Edinburgh, Perth, Sterling, Preston and Chichester).[102] Although the establishment of brigade depots went some way to give others the opportunity to train alongside regular units, it became increasingly clear that the best opportunities to do so were afforded at one of the principal military camps at Aldershot, Shorncliffe, Colchester, Strensall and the Curragh. However, such opportunities were largely monopolised by just a handful of units. For instance, of the 11 annual training periods held from 1879 up to and including 1889, just 13 (out of a total of 139) units were brigaded with the regular army in more than five of the recorded years, while a further 49 did so at least once; even more concerning was that 77 were never able to do so. During this period the 3rd East Surrey Regiment was stationed at Aldershot for all but two of their annual training periods, while the 4th Oxfordshire Regiment did so in each year over the same period. Shorncliffe was frequently used by the 3rd East Kent Regiment and, from 1882, both the 3rd and 4th Royal West Kent Regiment. By comparison, only a handful of northern militia battalions managed to brigade at Strensall, the 3rd West Yorkshire Regiment doing so on three occasions and the 3rd Derbyshire Regiment twice during the 1880s, while others including the 4th and 5th Derbyshire and 3rd and 4th Manchester Regiments did so once. In 1890 it was recognised that, aside from the political objections some had to withdrawing militia battalions from their headquarters, the main thing that precluded over half of all battalions from having the opportunity to brigade was the cost of transporting the men over large distances. As a solution the royal commission examining the militia in 1890 suggested that a roster should be established so that each battalion could take turns in proceeding to the principal camps. As an alternative they suggested, if the situation permitted, that battalions form their own brigade camps alongside regular battalions garrisoned within their own district, a practice that some such as the 3rd Royal Scots Regiment (late Edinburgh Light

[101] NAM, 2001-02-439, entries for 1869 to 1881.
[102] HantsALS, War Office circular (B Militia 118), 8 May 1868.

Infantry) had already undertaken since the 1870s.[103] This appeared to have had some success. For instance, prior to 1890 the 4th Norfolk Regiment conducted recruit musketry drill and the battalion's annual training at the South Denes in Great Yarmouth, as it had most years since 1852. Afterwards the battalion was twice sent to Colchester in 1890 and 1896 while later, in 1899, it formed part of a militia brigade encamped at Great Yarmouth itself; they again proceeded to in 1903.[104]

There were also attempts to increase the amount of time devoted to musketry practice at both the recruit and annual trainings in an attempt to close the gap between militiamen and the line. In 1872 a general order introduced the practice of awarding good shooting badges as already issued in the line, while two years later the militia regulations were updated to allow prizes to also be issued for proficient musketry.[105] By 1890 it was recognised, according to the officer commanding at Hythe, that the standard of musketry in militia battalions had on the whole increased, although it still remained inferior to that of the line. The main drawback was that militiamen simply had fewer chances to practice firing their weapons: not only did they fired fewer rounds each year than a regular soldier, 40 compared to 100, but the limited training period meant any bad weather could reduce time spent at the ranges even further. Despite such improvements, there were some battalions which were inconvenienced by lacking access to adequate range facilities near their headquarters. There were no sufficient range facilities in Newcastle-upon-Tyne for the use of the 3rd Northumberland Fusiliers, although fortunately the battalion was able to access those situated 13 miles to the east at Tynemouth. In the South the 3rd and 4th Oxfordshire Light Infantry undertook their musketry training at Aldershot, 45 miles from their regimental depot. Nevertheless, the UK's extensive rail network meant units which hitherto would have lacked sufficient facilities at least had some access, even if it required them to travel.[106]

Greater provision was also given over to more specialised training to be offered to both the officers and men of the militia's artillery and newly formed engineer units with the effect that they were arguably better trained than their infantry counterparts. Both field artillerymen and engineers received longer periods of training than their counterparts within the infantry and garrison artillery due to the more specialised nature

[103] Figures from Appendix 11 in PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890); *Ibid.*, p. xxi.
[104] TNA, WO 68/123.
[105] Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 158-9.
[106] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890), pp. xvi-xvii, 321.

of their training. By the end of the century engineer recruits would be expected to assemble for 104 days training prior to their annual training which, depending on the year and unit, lasted between 41 and 56 days. Submarine miners were trained for even longer, recruits undertaking 132 days of training prior to joining their units after which they would be expected to undertake 55 days of annual training. Additionally the engineers, submarine miners and field artillerymen trained on average for eight hours each day meaning that in each year the number of hours devoted to training was far in excess of that for the infantry and garrison artillery, both of which trained for on average just five hours each day.[107]

The training programmes of both the artillery and engineers were also tailored to their specific roles. For instance, after their conversion the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers began to conduct exercises in the construction of field fortifications, such duties were to be undertaken in addition to the basic drill expected of an infantry battalion and an altered course of musketry. The conversion itself was far from seamless: despite the fact that a new adjutant was appointed from the Royal Engineers, in March 1877, to oversee the first annual training since the conversion, that year the regiment continued to train as light infantry due to a delay in receiving the necessary equipment. Both engineer regiments initially remained at their existing headquarters although they were later permitted to proceed to Chatham for more extensive training. For instance, due to the initially inadequate facilities at Monmouth the regiment trained away from their headquarters on five separate occasions (1885, 1887, 1889, 1893 and 1898), returning to Monmouth only once the training facilities had been improved. Furthermore, after the South African War the internal structure of both regiments was altered so that individual companies were tailored to specific roles. This meant that by April 1902 the two regiments consisted of two field companies, three railway companies, three bridging companies and two depot companies.[108]

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By the eve of the South African War the militia had without doubt changed significantly

[107] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, Cd.2064, (1904), p. 103.

[108] MCRM, RMRE/13/4, letter from Col. Payne to Commander Royal Engineers South Wales, 11 March 1878, and letter from Mackworth to Conway, 11 May 1878; Lt.-Col. H.E.M. Lindsay, 'Militia Engineers, their Origin, Development, and Future', *Journal of the Royal United Service Institution*, vol. 50, no. 2, (1 July 1906), pp. 1000-12 (pp, 1001-3); Watson, *Militiamen and Sappers*, pp. 70-1.

compared to the 1850s. The Militia Act of 1852 was the culmination of eight years of debate over what form a renewed militia would take, set against the backdrop of public and governmental paranoia over invasion resulting from French aggrandisement. In the end it was Palmerston's concept of a militia organised upon a national basis which won out against Peel's 'local militia'. This meant the militia continued to be organised as a national militia for home defence, yet organised and recruited upon a local basis. However, this was soon challenged by the insatiable demands of the regular army for manpower during both the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. Temporarily at least, the militia was forced to take on a role as a second line in support of the regular army, supplanting and expanding the manpower available to the regular army. Such was not without some precedent as the militia had been forced to undertake a somewhat similar role during the Napoleonic Wars. By the early 1860s Herbert attempted to return somewhat to the status-quo by prohibiting the enlistment of militiamen to the line and maintaining its organisational independence. However, this was not based upon a desire to defer to the concerns of the militia's supporters, illustrated by his apparent willingness to amalgamate small units. Instead, Herbert was more concerned with ensuring the quick recovery of the force's strength and improving its efficiency. Financial restrictions prevented him from making any major improvements to their training which was often substandard in quality and lacking sufficient facilities, arms and equipment.

By the 1870s this had all changed, although it would be wrong to suggest Cardwell's reforms were alone in successfully centralising the militia under War Office control and integrating it with the regular army. Indeed, he was preceded in many respects by the reforms implemented by Peel and Pakington, continuing a trend started by Peel in mid 1860s. However, there can be no doubt Cardwell's reforms, and those of his successor which built upon his scheme, were instrumental in eroding the militia's independence. That is not to say such integration was universal, as it is clear this varied upon a regimental level, with many maintaining a greater degree of autonomy. It is also clear many militia officers were apathetic to such changes as the proportion of militia officers represented in Parliament remained comparatively stable, even though most were Conservatives. Finally, it is important one acknowledges the fact that Cardwell was also motivated by the drive for the greater effectiveness of the militia, not just the line. For many units training improved so that it was not just on the whole longer, but also more comprehensive through the provision of greater opportunities for inter-unit manoeuvres

and more complicated training exercises, not just basic drill upon the barrack square. It also gave many units access to a far greater range of facilities than hitherto available. That is not to say these improvements were universal: far from it, as a significant proportion of the force continued to face obstacles to their improvement, a point which illustrates the high degree of variability between the efficacy of individual units. Yet there is no doubt that from the 1880s onwards the militia was far superior in the way it was trained, equipped and organised than prior, no longer simply comprising infantry and garrison artillery, but also field artillery, engineers, submarine miners and a small contingent of medical staff.

2. The Officer Corps.

Since the 1960s there has been an upsurge of scholarly interest in the British Army's officer corps during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, charting its rising professionalism, social composition and place as a social institution in contemporary Victorian and Edwardian society.[1] By comparison, our understanding of the militia's officer corps is severely lacking. In the 1930s J. K. Dunlop argued that the officer corps was largely dawn from among the local landed gentry. He acknowledged that, after 1872, the militia played an important role in supplying candidates for the regular army through what was contemporarily termed the 'militia backdoor' (which allowed potential candidates to circumvent the need to attend either Sandhurst or Woolwich).[2] This assessment was supported by later scholarship. A central theme of Duncan Anderson's thesis is the idea that the officer corps effectively formed a 'militia party' which maintained the survival of the force in the years before the 1852 reform. He later argues that the reconstituted militia's officer corps essentially resembled 'clubs' where family connections and landed wealth were paramount. It was 'commanded by a group who were socially and economically of a higher order than that demanded by the legal minimum qualifications', while its junior officers tended to be members of the 'lesser gentry' or 'greater yeomanry'. As a result, former regular officers and professionals were unable to make any significant inroads into gaining commissions. He also rejects the impression given by regimental histories that, in 1852, the whole officer corps had been reconstituted, arguing that there were in fact many officers retained their commission after the reform.[3] Later, Ian Beckett echoed many of Anderson's conclusions, similarly arguing that sixty per cent of militia officers had been commissioned before the reform and also that many middle-class professionals and former regulars missed out upon taking commissions.[4]

This chapter will show that some of the existing conclusions regarding the militia's officer corps are correct, although, as elsewhere in this study, the localised nature of the force meant there were many units which bucked national patterns. When reconstituted in 1852, the Militia Act did little to radically alter the source and means by

[1] For instance see Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp. 109-415; Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 90-117; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 145-79; Bowman and Connelly, *The Edwardian Army*, pp. 7-40.
[2] Dunlop, *Development of the British Army*, pp.42-3, 46-50.
[3] Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 2-6, 11, 56, 63-4, 79. 249-59.
[4] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 151-2.

which militia officers were obtained. Initially the authority to appoint commissions remained with the lords lieutenant, although it was largely left to commanding officers to nominate individuals. It was not until 1872 that this power was formally stripped (although they retained the right to nominate candidates to a first appointment). Patronage remained a crucial means by which potential candidates were able to secure commissions. Promotion within regiments was largely by seniority, although property qualifications meant vacancies for the rank of captain and above were, before 1869, technically out of reach of officers who did not qualify (unless they had previously served in the regular army). It will also be seen that the degree of continuity between the militia's officer corps before and after the reform has been largely exaggerated, although there did remain a useful nucleus of senior officers around which units could reconstitute. Furthermore, although as a whole there remained only a small proportion of former regular officers, amongst the senior ranks there was a far higher proportion than has been argued.

It will also be seen that the officer corps had serious problems in terms of maintaining its strength despite some concessions towards opening up commissions to a more diverse talent pool. At no point between 1862 and 1907 did the officer corps meet its establishment, a key reason being the weakening of the traditional social ties with the landed gentry (itself decreasing due to the impact of agricultural depression). The abolition of property qualifications in 1869 as a means of trying to encourage more candidates for commissions, combined with the opening of the 'militia backdoor' to those seeking a regular commission, led to a revival in the officer corps's strength. However, this came at the price of further severing its traditional ties with the landed gentry. Such independent gentlemen were increasingly supplanted by professionals, businessmen and those simply looking to join the regular army. Yet the social makeup of the officer corps was even more nuanced than has been acknowledged, as several units based in urban areas had never been reliant upon the landed gentry as a source of officers. Also it is important not to overplay the decline of landed gentlemen as some units bucked the wider decline owing to the circumstances of the local economy and the personal links of the commanding officers.

It will also be seen that the opening of line commissions to militia officers was itself not as wholly successful, or indeed as unique, as it may first appear (having been used as a temporary expedient during the 1850s and earlier during the Napoleonic Wars).

Although it accounted for the greatest single source of regular officers, highlighting the inability of the Royal Military Academy (RMA) and Royal Military College (RMC) to supply sufficient candidates, the *esprit de corps* and close links so desired by Cardwell and Childers failed to appear, as most officers simply did not opt to transfer to their linked battalions (some even deciding to seek commissions in colonial corps).

Finally, it will also be shown that pay and allowances were wholly inadequate to enable militia officers to survive without a considerable private income. The cost of equipping oneself and the high costs of messing, and maintaining one's social position within the regiment, continued to inhibit many of more humble means from opting for a militia commission (at least not without some considerable difficulty).

* * *

When reconstituted in 1852, in many respects, the way in which the militia's officer corps was organised and recruited remained the same as it had since the last century. Before Parliament the Home Secretary, Spencer Walpole, was clear 'no change whatever was contemplated by the present Bill.'[5] The power to appoint militia officers was to remain with the lords lieutenant subject to the approval of the crown (although if such was not received after 14 days, the decision of the former was to be final), just as it had since the 'new militia' was initially reformed in 1757. In order to maintain the connection between militia units and members of the local landed gentry, the bill reconfirmed that most officers would still have to meet property requirements for each step in rank which would continue to be based upon those established in 1802 (which themselves had largely remained unchanged since 1786). In most large English counties, possession of an estate valued at no less than £1,000 per annum was required for a colonelcy, £600 for a lieutenant-colonelcy, £400 for a majority, £200 for a captaincy, £50 for a lieutenancy, or £20 for an ensigncy. Heirs-apparent could also qualify although the amount required was double that compared to if they held it in person (for ensigns £50). Also, it was required that at least half of the property or land valued towards officers' qualifications should be located in the county of the unit for which they were applying. The only major changes introduced by the new bill were aimed at opening commissions to a more diverse pool of potential officers and, as Walpole argued, to get 'good officers to command the militia.'

[5] HC Deb., 6 May 1852, vol. 121, cc. 299-346, (cc. 302-3).

Therefore, all requirements for subalterns were abolished, while the existing qualifications would be dropped altogether for retired or half-pay regular officers, or those from the East India Company Service (EICS), who had served at least five years. It also reconfirmed a smaller set of qualifications for several English counties (Cumberland, Huntingdon, Monmouthshire, Westmoreland, Rutland and the Isle of Ely) and those in Wales: no less than £600 for a colonelcy, £400 for a lieutenant-colonelcy, £200 for a majority, or £150 for a captaincy (lowered to just £100 in Ely), with those for subalterns also abolished. A similar set of qualifications for cities and corporate towns regarded as legally separate from their surrounding counties was also upheld: no less than £300 for a colonelcy, lieutenant-colonelcy and majority, and £100 for a captaincy. Officers raised for units from the City of London were also given a lower set of qualifications.[6]

When the Scottish militia was reconstituted in 1854, the legislation continued to recognise its own separate set of qualifications. Applicants for a colonelcy (or their heirs apparent) required an estate valued at no less than £600 per annum, £400 for a lieutenant-colonelcy, or £300 for a majority or captaincy. Qualifications in the City of Edinburgh and its liberties were lower still, just £200 or more per-annum for a lieutenant-colonelcy, or £100 for a majority or captaincy. Members of the Royal College of Surgeons also retained their exemption from such qualifications altogether.[7]

Property qualifications would remain in force until finally abolished in 1869. However, that did not mean there were not changes made to those laid down by previous legislation. Panmure admitted that there was little merit for the continued discrepancies between the property qualifications in the various parts of the UK. Therefore, in 1855, he successfully introduced legislation which ensured qualifications were standardised across the UK, fixing them at the same rates as already applied in Scottish, Welsh and in several small English counties. This meant those applying for a colonelcy would now only require land or an estate valued at no less than £600 per annum, while just £400 was required for a lieutenant-colonelcy, £300 for a majority or £200 for a captaincy; the same qualifications were required of heirs-apparent. The only exceptions were to be those for the cities of London and Edinburgh, which were to remain separate. There was also the provision for younger sons to qualify for commissions to a captaincy and majority if they were the son of anyone meeting the requisite qualification (£200 and £300 respectively).

[6] 26 Geo. III, c. 107; 42 Geo. III, c. 90, ss. vi-ix; 15 and 16 Vict., c. 50, s. iii; HC Deb., 6 May 1852, vol. 121, cc. 299-346, (cc. 302-3); Western, *English Militia*, p. 340.
[7] 17 and 18 Vict., c. 106, ss. vi-vii.

The first step was also taken in officially breaking down the link between the militia's officer corps and local county society, as the landed estate which qualified an individual for a commission could now be located anywhere.[8]

One further change, which was laid down in a War Office circular of March 1853, was that all new appointments to the rank of colonel were to be henceforth honorary only and appointed at the discretion of the lords lieutenant. This meant that the day-to-day command of a regiment would be exercised by the lieutenant-colonel, although all colonels still serving were able to retain command until they retired. Honorary colonels, who were expected to be influential members of the local landed gentry, would retain a role in assisting the lords lieutenant in the superintendence of their units and to encourage the recruitment of local gentlemen, but not in any way to take active command of the regiment.[9] Unsurprisingly there was some resistance to the scheme due to the fears that it could lead to confusion over who would have ultimate authority over the regiment. This was echoed by the Lord Lieutenant for County Durham, the 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, who feared colonels would be 'put on the shelf' and that, without full pay and lacking in any real responsibilities towards the running of their regiments, they would have little interest in encouraging potential officers and men to join the regiment.[10]

The changes made to property qualifications beg the question as to the degree of continuity between the militia's officer corps prior to and immediately after reconstitution in 1852. Nonetheless, this is a key question which has been unsatisfactorily answered by existing works. The existing historiography largely argues that the majority of officers present after reconstitution were commissioned prior to the reform. Duncan Anderson rejects the impression given by regimental histories that, in 1852, the whole officer corps had been reconstituted, arguing that key sources, such as the army lists, had been misinterpreted by chroniclers lacking experience with such material. For instance, the author of a regimental history examining the West Kent Regiment gave the impression the regiment's officers were predominantly new appointments. In fact many officers had been promoted, a detail that was missed because the army lists showed the date on which an officer gained their current rank and not the date they joined the

[8] *Ibid*., c. 1943; 18 and 19 Vict., c. 100. ss. i-vi.
[9] War Office Circular, 10 March 1853, cited in Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia*, p. 157.
[10] Durham County Record Office (DCRO), D/LO/C778, letter, 3rd Marquess of Londonderry to 3rd Viscount Palmerston, 9 April 1853; letter, 3rd Marquess of Londonderry to S. H. Walpole, 12 April 1853; letter, S. H. Walpole to 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, 16 April 1853; and letter, 3rd Viscount Palmerston to 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, 19 April 1853.

regiment. As a result it gave the false impression that the regiment was almost entirely reconstituted. He argued that those able to use further source material saw, instead, a gradual, not sudden, change of the junior officer corps. Later, Ian Beckett also argued that sixty per cent of militia officers had been commissioned before the reform.[11]

More detailed analysis shows that any assertion of a gradual change is challengeable. Beckett's assertion may well have been accurate in 1852 and 1853, but by 1854 the vast majority of officers had, in fact, been only recently commissioned, although there was a great variation depending on rank. Table 2.1 illustrates that, in 1854, only 33 per cent of officers in England and Wales were commissioned prior to 1852. In Scotland, in 1856, the proportion was slightly less, at 29 per cent. What is clear, however, is that there were a far larger proportion of senior officers commissioned before 1852 when compared to the junior ranks, amounting to 66 and 68 per cent in England and Wales respectively, and 53 per cent in Scotland. By comparison only 28, 26 and 25 per cent of junior officers had been commissioned before the reform.

What both Anderson and Beckett's studies also failed to explore was the wide disparity between different units. The 1852 reform saw the creation of 17 new English and two new Scottish regiments which were officered by new appointments, although a small but significant minority had been commissioned prior to the reform with other units. Of those units predating the reform, some were almost entirely officered by those commissioned prior to the reform, while others had almost none. The Royal Denbighshire Regiment had the highest proportion of officers commissioned prior to 1852, both field officers and seven of the ten junior officers (amounting to 75 per cent of the regiment's officers). Similarly both the Leicester and Suffolk Artillery Regiments had very high proportions, all three field officers and six of the ten junior officers in the former, and two of the three field officers and seven of the ten junior officers in the latter (69 per cent of the regiment's officers in both cases). In comparison there were six regiments which possessed no officers commissioned prior to 1852, two in England (the Huntingdon Light Infantry and Rutland Light Infantry, of which the latter had an extremely small establishment of one Captain, a Lieutenant and an Ensign), and four in Wales (the Royal

[11] The author claimed that only three officers remained in 1852 who had served in the 1814-6 embodiment, while the remainder had accepted the retired allowance. This gave the impression the regiment lacked any officers commissioned before 1852. J. Bonhote, *Historical Records of the West Kent Militia: with some account of the earlier defensive levies in Kent*, (London: Hudson and Kearns, 1909), cited in Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 63-4, 249-59; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 151.

Table 2.1: Militia Officers Commissioned prior to the 1852 Reform in England, Wales and Scotland.[12]

		England	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*Total*
Field Officers	Total	190	25	49	264
	Commissioned prior 1852	125	17	26	168
	Percentage	66	68	53	64
Captains & Subalterns	Total	1,115	128	285	1,528
	Commissioned prior 1852	307	33	72	412
	Percentage	28	26	25	27
Total Officers	Total	1,305	153	334	1,792
	Commissioned prior 1852	432	50	98	580
	Percentage	33	33	29	32

Anglesey, Royal Carnarvon, Royal Merioneth and Royal Montgomery Regiments). Anderson was right to be wary of the regimental history of the West Kent Regiment, as in 1854 there were in fact nine officers commissioned prior to the reform, one senior and eight junior, even after three veterans of the Peninsular War had retired. This suggests that, although there were many officers still commissioned with their regiments in 1852, many had chosen to retire soon after the reform so that, by 1854, the majority of junior vacancies were filled by new appointments. It is difficult to establish why certain regiments had such a high proportions of officers commissioned prior to the reform, although certain minor patterns do emerge. Geographically East Anglian regiments and those from Yorkshire had on average a lower proportion of officer's commissioned pre-reform than other areas. For instance, in 1854 the Huntingdon Regiment had no officers commissioned prior to 1852 (although this was a regiment with a small peace-time establishment of two companies and a major-commandant pre-1852[13]), while both the Essex Rifles and West Essex Regiment had only 13 per cent, and the West Suffolk and Cambridgeshire Regiments 17 and 20 per cent respectively. By comparison the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Royal Middlesex Regiment were all well above average with 65, 60 and 57 per cent of their officer's commissioned pre-reform respectively.

[12] This table excludes battalions created in 1852. Names of officers sourced from *Hart's Annual Army List*, 1854, pp. 553-70; *Ibid*., 1855, pp. 648-51; and A. Sleigh, *The Royal Militia and Yeomanry Cavalry Army List*, (London: British Army Dispatch Press, 1850), pp. 45-167.
[13] Sleigh, *Royal Militia and Yeomanry List*, p. 46.

Of those officers that were commissioned before the reform, the vast majority had gained their commissions after 1830. Of the total 482 officers remaining in the force by 1854 in England and Wales, only 73 were commissioned prior to 1830. A small minority of senior officers had, in fact, served in their units for some time. For instance, Colonel John H. Manners, the 5th Duke of Rutland, had commanded the Leicester Regiment since 1798 and continued to do so until his death in 1857, a total of over 58 years service. Similarly Colonel Thomas Wood, of the Royal East Middlesex Regiment, had commanded his regiment since 1803 and by the time he retired, in 1860, had served for over 56 years.[14] Nevertheless the vast majority of officers commissioned before the reform had joined during the 1830s or 1840s. In December 1845 a circular was issued from Whitehall demanding that both the permanent staff and any vacancies were to be filled by the spring of the following year, owing to the possibility that the militia could be embodied. This led to a frantic attempt to fill regimental vacancies and a wave of new officers joining the force.[15] In Huntingdonshire the Lord Lieutenant, the 7th Earl of Sandwich, was informed that the local regiment was deficient one captain and, in the event of embodiment, a further lieutenant, while the commanding officer, Colonel T. W. Vaughan, commented that it was difficult to find adequate candidates because of the 'long peace' and a lack of landed county families.[16] It is thus wrong to suggest that immediately prior to 1852 new appointments and promotions had been entirely suspended. Although the militia had not trained since 1831 and been in a state of effective suspension, clearly the force was able to maintain a wider presence through its officer corps. This was identified by Duncan Anderson termed a 'Militia attitude', allowing the officers and their supporters to preserve the existence of the force in the face of public and government hostility.[17]

To ensure that regiments were as efficient as possible the government ensured that those deciding to remain or leave would be able to do so without hindrance. Although it was made clear officers would not be at a disadvantage if they were to decide to continue – the new provisions allowed them to continue in the force and confirmed that they would not be at any disadvantage in terms of rank to those commissioned under the new

[14] *Hart's Annual Army List*, 1854, pp. 553-70; *Ibid.*, 1855, pp. 648-51; Sleigh, *Royal Militia and Yeomanry List*, pp. 45-167.
[15] Huntingdonshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS), HINCH 9/36, Circular letter, 9 December 1845; Sleigh, *Royal Militia and Yeomanry List*, pp. 45-167.
[16] HALS, HINCH 9/152, letter, J. G. Green to 7th Earl Sandwich, 12 Dec. 1845; HINCH 9/154, letter, Col. T. W. Vaughan to 7th Earl Sandwich, 30 Dec. 1845.
[17] Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 5-6.

legislation – it was also made clear those officers choosing not to continue would not have any entitled allowances rescinded and that they would retain their ranks upon retirement.[18] Many officers who had initially remained availed themselves of the chance to retire citing that they were no longer fit for embodied service, or were either too old or unwilling to turn out for training. In the 1st Somerset Regiment it was remarked by the commanding officer, Colonel H.C. Henley, that the senior subaltern was an old man who was retained on the regiment's strength since it was last assembled in 1816. He further concluded that of those officers who turned out in 1852, but yet were commissioned prior, the vast majority 'from age or infirmity were quite unfit for military service.' In the West Kent Regiment two of the officers commissioned prior to 1852 had served during the 1814-1816 embodiments. Both would have been at least in their mid-fifties by 1852 and far older than the majority of the other subalterns; subsequently both left the regiment in 1853. Similarly, three of the five officers of the Royal East Middlesex Regiment, commissioned during the Napoleonic Wars, cited poor health, deteriorating sight and hearing, and their age as reasons for resigning their commissions. Even four years after the reform the adjutant of the Huntingdonshire Regiment decided he was no longer fit for the job.[19]

A further question is whether or not the government's desire to attract more retired and half-pay officers from the regular army and EICS succeeded or not. As Figure 1.2 illustrates, their efforts were a partial success: as desired over half of all field officers serving in 1854 had previously served in the regular army or EICS, although this accounted for just 21 per cent of officers when taken as a whole. It is also of note that the field ranks of the Scottish militia appear to have been particularly attractive to ex-regulars. The proportion of retired and half-pay officers also varied on a regimental basis. On the whole there was a loose correlation that suggests regiments with a higher proportion of senior officers with prior service in the Army or EICS were more likely to contain a higher overall proportion than those commanded by those without previous service (although this was far from always the case). For instance, all three senior officers of the 4th Royal South Middlesex Regiment had only recently retired from the regular

[18] 15 & 16 Vict., c.50, s. vii.
[19] W. J. W. Kerr, *Records of the 1st Somerset Militia (3rd Battalion Somerset Light Infantry)*, (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1930), p. 60; Bonhote, *Historical Records of the West Kent Militia*, pp. 249-50; LMA, L/029, Lieutenancy papers, 'Routine correspondence concerning appointment etc, in regiments 1,2 & 3', letter, anonymous to Col. Wood, Feb. 1853; letter, to Col. T. Wood, 9 Feb. 1853; letter, to Col. T. Wood, 17 Feb. 1853; HALS, *HINCH 9*/239, letter, Capt. J. G. Green to 7th Earl of Sandwich, 6 Aug. 1856.

army, while eleven junior officers had also previously served in the regulars; overall 56 per cent of the regiment's officers were former regulars. Similar was true in several other units including the 5th Royal Elthorne Middlesex Regiment, Shropshire Regiment, Cambridge Regiment, Devon Artillery, and Lancashire Artillery to name a few. One of the attractions to those who did seek to continue their military service in the militia was that they could supplement their retirement pay or half-pay. A peculiar anomaly meant that half-pay officers engaged in the militia were also entitled to draw their full pay if the regiment was embodied, meaning they were effectively being paid twice. An example given in *The Times* in 1854 deplored that a half-pay captain serving as a major in a militia regiment while indefinitely embodied would earn 7s more per day than an equivalent major serving in the Crimea.[20]

Property qualifications and previous service aside, personal connections and patronage remained a crucial means by which prospective officers (or, if young, their fathers), secured commissions in the militia. Usually applicants would directly approach either the commanding officer of the unit to which he wished to apply, or directly to the lord lieutenant himself (or by someone else on their behalf). After the reform Lieutenant-Colonel Edward Bagot, commanding the 4th Royal South Middlesex Regiment, informed the lord lieutenant, the 2nd Marquess of Salisbury, of his support for the application of Charles Tyndale to the vacant majority owing to his knowledge of the latter's service in the 51st Foot. He also recommended a particular applicant to become surgeon as he was the son of his own personal doctor.[21] The adjutant of the Huntingdonshire Regiment, Captain J.G. Green, informed the lord lieutenant for Huntingdonshire, the 7th Earl of Sandwich, that on the possibility of the regiment being called out for training he knew of a suitable candidate to fill the vacant lieutenancy. Such was also the case in the Royal Lanarkshire Regiment whereby an outgoing officer nominated his own nephew as a potential candidate.[22] Elsewhere, the lord lieutenant of County Durham, the 3rd Marquess of Londonderry, corresponded with the 2nd Earl of Durham (his successor as lord lieutenant in 1854) and Rowland Burden, a local landowner, offering them the senior and junior majorities in the county regiments before advertising them to other local

[20] *The Times*, 26 Dec. 1854.
[21] LMA. L/030a, letter Lt.-Col. E. Bagot to Salisbury, 31 March 1853.
[22] HALS, HINCH 9/189, letter, J. G. Green to 7th Earl Sandwich, 10 Feb. 1852; South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture Museum, 2011.46.34, letter, D. O. Stewart to 10th Duke of Hamilton, 26 Dec. 1845.

Table 2.2: Militia Officers Serving in 1854 Previously Commissioned in the Army or EICS.[23]

		England	*Wales*	*Scotland*	*Total*
Field Officers	Total	233	25	49	307
	Ex-Regulars & EICS	126	14	34	174
	Percentage	54	56	69	57
Captains & Subalterns	Total	1,327	128	285	1,740
	Ex-Regulars & EICS	194	20	42	256
	Percentage	15	16	15	15
Total Officers	Total	1,560	153	334	2,047
	Ex-Regulars & EICS	320	34	76	430
	Percentage	21	22	23	21

gentlemen. Later Londonderry's second son, Lieutenant-Colonel George H. Vane-Tempest (commanding the North Durham Regiment), took responsibility for nominating potential candidates to the lord lieutenant, usually upon the suggestion of his second in command, Major Edward Johnson, who appears to have taken over the practical responsibility of managing potential candidates.[24] Similar familial ties were evident in the neighbouring Northumberland Light Infantry, the Dukes of Northumberland being intimately connected with the regiment since Colonel George Percy (later the 5th duke) took command in 1804. His eldest son and heir, Earl Algernon George Percy (later the 6th duke), who was first commissioned in 1842, went on to also command the regiment from 1862 to 1874, as did his eldest son and heir Henry George Percy (later the 7th duke) between 1875 and 1895, and his second son Algernon Malcolm Arthur Percy thereafter; the latter's son also served as a subaltern from 1902 until 1908. Although no other family was as intimately connected to the regiment as the Percy's, other families demonstrated similar connections. Two younger sons of the 2nd Marquess of Salisbury, Arthur and

[23] *Hart's Annual Army List*, 1854, pp. 553-70; *Hart's Annual Army List*, 1855, pp. 648-51; Sleigh, *Royal Militia and Yeomanry List*, pp. 45-167.

[24] DCRO, D/Lo/C778/box4/'11': Durham Lieutenancy and Militia Papers, 1853, letter, 3rd Marquess of Londonderry to 2nd Earl of Durham, 17 March 1853; letter, 3rd Marquess of Londonderry to R. Burden, 17 March 1853; DCRO, D/Lo/C743/box1/'34': North Durham Militia Papers, 1852-1864, letters, E. Johnson to Lt.-Col. G. H. Vere, 1 Dec. 1863; 8 Dec. 1863; 12 Dec. 1863; 14 Dec. 1863.

Lionel Cecil, and a grandson, Reginald Edward Cecil, were also connected with the regiment. Similarly, two sons of Major Alexander Browne later served in the regiment as captains while two sons of Major Alfred Grey served as lieutenants.[25]

Once successful, applicants were required to pass details of their property qualifications to the clerk of the lieutenancy, the individual responsible for the physical process of drawing up the commission. For this they were expected to pay a fee which at first was determined separately by each lieutenancy, yet this led to an unfair system whereby the cost of obtaining a commission could significantly vary across the country. Further complicating this was that some lieutenancies also included the cost of the stamp duty and any additional costs, such as those for gazetting the commission, whereas others paid them out of the county rates. Some of the highest rates were found in Derbyshire where all commissioned officers were require to pay £10 6s regardless of the rank. Similarly in Huntingdonshire the fee ranged from 10 Guineas for field officers to 7 Guineas for a captaincy and 5 Guineas for subalterns. By comparison, in Shropshire the fee was fixed at 1 Guinea, while in Westmoreland it was just 5s regardless of rank. One officer in Middlesex was particularly incensed by the fact that in his county a lieutenancy cost £4 16s whereas in neighbouring Tower Hamlets it could be secured for only £3 3s. Due to the level of anger among militia officers, in May 1853 the government decided to fix the fees at a rate of two guineas for field officers and one guinea for captains and subalterns.[26]

* * *

Despite the fact that the mechanisms through which militia officers were recruited remained similar to that prior to the reform, there were clearly problems in its ability to find the requisite number of officers. Figure 1 shows that at no point between 1862 and 1907 did the militia's officer corps meet, or in most years get anywhere near, its establishment (reliable national figures prior to 1862 are unfortunately not available).

[25] R. Scott, *The Services of the 27th Northumberland Light Infantry Militia, now 3rd Battalion Northumberland Fusiliers*, (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Andrew Reid & Co. ltd., 1914), pp. 74-8, 145-52.
[26] War Office circular, 23 May 1853, cited in Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia*, p. 158; PP, *Deputy lieutenants, &c. Abstract of return of all fees charged on the commissions of deputy lieutenants and officers of militia, in each county in England and Wales.*, 998, (1852-53); HALS, Hinch 9/203, 'Petition to 7th Earl of Sandwich', 10 November 1852, and Hinch 9/222, Letter, Clerk of the Lieutenancy to 7th Earl of Sandwich, 7 June 1853; LMA, L/29, Lieutenancy correspondence, 1854-5, and L/34(a), Militia correspondence, 1855-7.

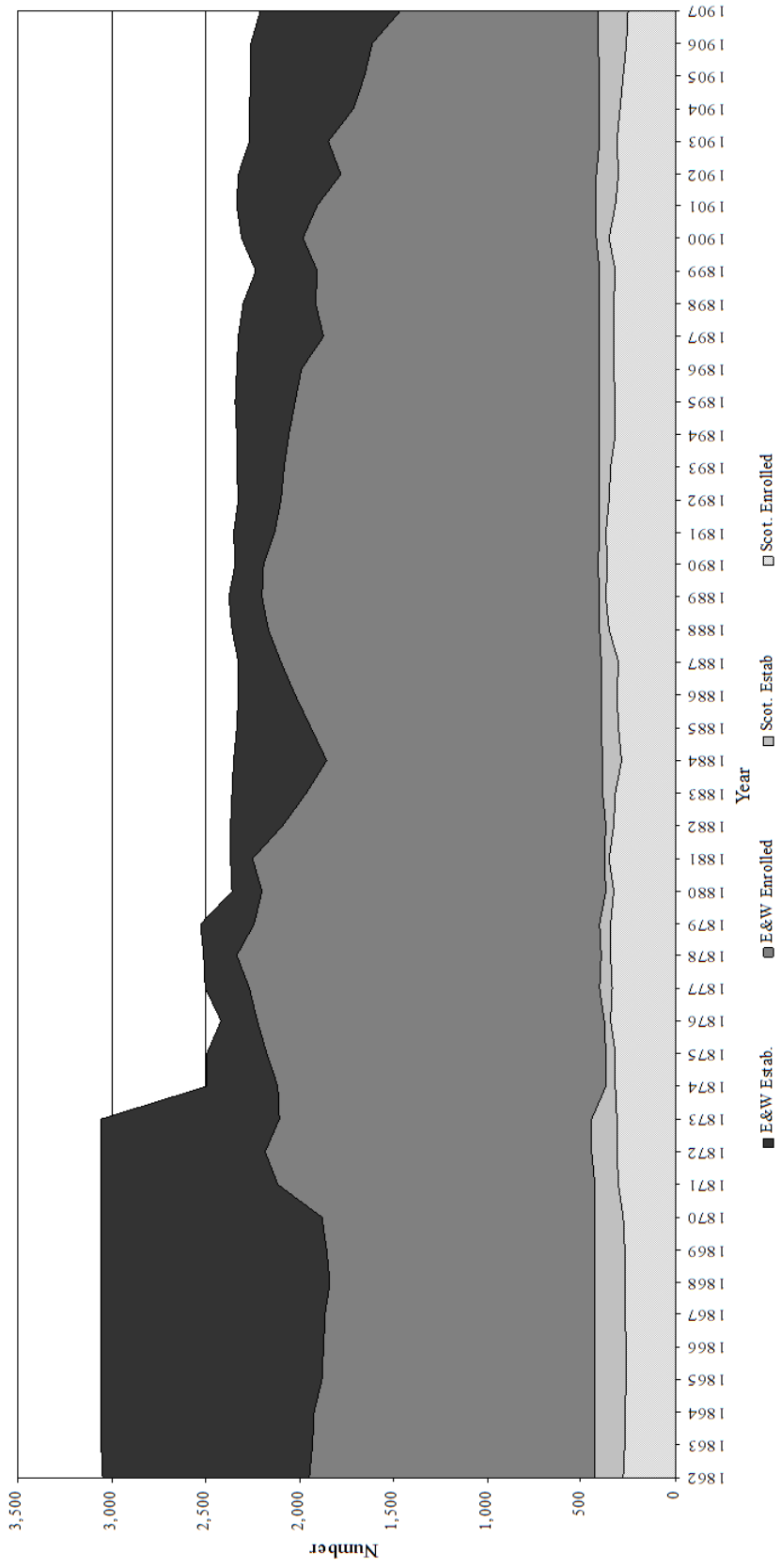
Superficially this appears to have been particularly bad up until 1874 when the establishment was reduced considerably. Yet until then the official figures failed to account for the fact, in 1860, the commissioning of ensigns (and second-lieutenants in militia artillery) was officially suspended, units instead being assigned two supernumerary lieutenants. Despite this, official figures continued to show the full establishment, including the previously abolished ensigncies, which gives the impression the deficiency was in fact far worse than in reality. However, it would be wrong to suggest the deficiency was wholly the result of an administrative quirk. Prior to 1869 the militia as a whole was finding it increasingly difficult to find enough officers, declining more sharply in the decades prior to and after the South African War.

A key reason for this was that the militia found it increasingly difficult to secure officers from what was regarded as the typical source: the local landed gentry. As seen above, the principal reason why property qualifications were reintroduced in 1852 was in order to preserve the link between militia units and their county through their officers. Yet before and after the reform of 1852, there is evidence to suggest some units were already struggling to make this link a firm reality. In 1845 Colonel Vaughan of the Huntingdonshire Regiment complained that he found difficulty in finding suitable men willing to serve as officers in the militia due to '…the long peace and because the county families are now a good deal dispersed.'[27] In 1853, the Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, the 3rd Earl Grey, complained to Sidney Herbert that he found great difficulty in finding suitable officers for the Northumberland Light Infantry.[28] Later, in 1868, the Inspector-General of Reserve Forces, Major-General James Lindsay, lamented the decline of 'the county connection', arguing that county gentlemen no longer found a militia commission an attractive proposition. The result of this was a growing deficiency in the number of subalterns and captains.[29]

Despite some initial signs that the link between the landed gentry and officer corps was weakening, property qualifications meant the highest ranks continued to be dominated by independent landed gentlemen. As explored later, the significant costs required to maintain oneself in a senior rank meant militia units 'tended to be

[27] HALS, HINCH 9/154, letter, Col. T. W. Vaughan to 7th Earl of Sandwich, 30 Dec. 1845.
[28] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/A/26, Papers of Sidney Herbert, 1st Baron Herbert of Lea, 1853-5, letter, 3rd Earl Grey to Sidney Herbert, 9 July 1853.
[29] These comments were made to the Royal United Services Institute at a lecture by Maj. A. Leahy, 'Our Infantry Forces and Infantry Reserves', p. 338, as quoted in French, *Military Identities*, p. 207.

Figure 1: The Strength of the Officer Corps in the English, Welsh, and Scottish Militia, 1862-1907.[28]



[28] See Appendix 2 for the figures upon which this is based. Note that from 1880 onwards all figures exclude adjutants.

commanded by a group who were socially and economically of a higher order than that demanded by the legal minimum qualifications.'[30] As Table 2.3 demonstrates, this effectively helped to keep the force one dominated by local landowners who could spare the wealth and time necessary for service. Every senior officer of the Northumberland Light Infantry appointed or promoted prior to 1869 possessed, or was directly related to, individuals with considerable landed estates. As Dukes of Northumberland (possessing extensive estates totalling over 186,000 acres), the Percy family provided four commanding officers during the period. Another commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel William Bigge, possessed a comparably minor estate of over 375 acres. The same was true in the Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery Regiment. Commanding for 30 years between 1853 and 1883, Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Colman Rashleigh possessed an estate of nearly 800 acres in Cornwall, while Major Sir Charles Brune Graves-Sawle succeeded to an estate of over 3,300 acres situated across Cornwall and Devon. Both individuals also appear to have additional income derived from mining on their estates. Even a regiment with a higher than average proportion of retired regular officers such as the Essex Rifles was initially dominated by landed families. Upon reform the regiment was commanded by Colonel Charles Maynard, the eldest son and heir of 3rd Viscount Maynard, who possessed an estate of over 8,600 acres in Essex. Under his command both Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Jocelyn, heir apparent of the 3rd Earl of Roden, and Major Thomas Spitty, were from landed families with considerable estates, the former heir apparent to over 14,500 acres (with over 1,100 acres located in Essex), and the latter heir to an estate of over 3,000 acres located in the county. The same was true in Scotland where the commander of the Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders, Colonel Alexander Fraser, the 17th Baron Saltoun, possessed over 10,000 acres in the county, and was succeeded in 1855 by Henry Erskine, a landowner with an estate of over 3,200 acres.

As a result of the continued dominance of the peerage and landed gentry many emerging middle-class professionals and those who were involved in business and industry were unable to reach above the rank of captain in any significant proportions.[31] Table 2.3 shoes that in the first two decades since reform there were no professionals recorded from among the sampled regiments, while only one was recorded as being involved in industry, Colonel William Thompson of the Royal London Regiment, whose

[30] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', p. 11.
[31] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 151; D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 8, 11.

Table 2.3: The Social Background of Field Officers in a Sample of English, Welsh and Scottish Units, 1852-1908.[32]

	1852-1869	*1870-1889*	*1890-1908*
Title holders and heirs	6	1	2
Younger Sons	1	…	2
(Total Peerage)	**7**	**1**	**4**
Greater Landowners	5	3	6
Lesser Landowners	9	13	7
(Total Landowners)	**14**	**16**	**12**
*Retired and Half-Pay Officers**	13	15	5
Clergy	…	…	…
Professionals	…	7	9
Business and Industry	1	6	9
Other Occupations	…	1	…
Unknown	3	4	6
Total	**39**	**50**	**46**

*Includes retired and half-pay officers from the regular army and EICS with minor estates or no other apparent source of income. Those who only briefly served and those with major landed estates are counted as landowners.

family had made their fortune through Iron smelting. In some units this was also due to outright hostility towards anyone whose income was not derived from the traditional source of independent landed wealth. For instance, in October 1852 one unsuccessful applicant for a commission was informed by the Marquess of Salisbury, the Lord Lieutenant for Middlesex, that his employment in the General Screw Steam Navigation Company was an 'insuperable obstacle' to a militia commission.[33] This was far from isolated to regiments based in predominantly rural areas. Even in the Royal London Regiment and Edinburgh Artillery the proportion of professionals, businessmen and industrialists was at first practically non-existent, with the vast majority of officers retired professionals from either the army or EICS.

As part of his wider reform package, in 1869 Cardwell abolished the remaining property qualifications in the hope of opening up the highest ranks to a wider pool of potential officers.[34] Table 2.3 shows that there was a notable increase in professionals, businessmen and industrials who, from 1890 to 1908, accounted for 40 per cent of the total proportion of senior officers compared to almost no representation in the first two

[32] See Appendix 3.
[33] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', p. 77; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 151.
[34] HC Deb., 11 March 1869, vol. 194, cc. 1111-77, (c. 1125); *Ibid.*, 15 April 1869, vol. 195, c. 941.

decades after reform. It tended to be units located in or near urban centres which often contained a higher proportion of retired regular officers, professionals and individuals connected to business and industry. Even though many of these also possessed landed estates, their primary income had been derived from sources other than land rents. The Essex Rifles contained a higher than average proportion of retired regulars, six of the nine officers reaching field rank prior to 1869 having previously served in the regulars. Some had landed estates that were supplemented by business connections in London. Both Majors Capel Coape and Evelyn P. Meadows came from traditional gentry families with landed estates which were supplemented with additional sources of income. The former possessed over 1,100 acres in Essex despite his directorship of the London & Liverpool Hotel Company. Meanwhile the latter had previously farmed 250 acres in Suffolk before moving to London where he derived an income from the interest and dividends received from various investments. In the Royal London Regiment three of the senior officers prior to 1869 were retired regulars. This trend continued so that only one of the senior officers, Colonel Lorenzo George Dundas, was from a family possessed of landed estate of over 2,000 acres (belonging to his father in Ireland). The same was true in the Edinburgh Artillery Regiment where both of the commanding officers appointed prior to 1869, Lieutenant-Colonels William Geddes and Henry Rolland, retired directly from the EICS at that rank. Lieutenant-Colonel Alexander Moncrieff, commanding the regiment from 1878 to 1883, was an engineer by trade (and also inventor of the Barbett Gun Carriage) and later the director of two banks, the proceeds from which he was able to purchase a substantial landed estate. Furthermore, in giving evidence to a Royal Commission examining the militia 1877, Captain William Hill, adjutant to the Worcestershire Regiment, commented that the regiment's senior officers were comprised of men that had previously served in the regulars, with county gentlemen limited to the subaltern ranks.[35]

However, the peerage and landed gentry remained the single greatest source of field officers, even by the end of the century. In many respects this is unsurprising as it tended to be the greater landowners and titled families possessed of large estates that were able to survive the worst impact of the agricultural depression. The Cornwall and Devon Miners RGA (Militia), despite the arguably more technical nature of an artillery regiment's training, remained largely commanded by minor landowners. The only

[35] PP, *Report of the committee*¸ C. 1654, C. 1654-I, (1877), qq. 6073-4.

exceptions were Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas M. A. Horsford who in addition to owning a small 145 acre estate in Cornwall also had links to the local coal industry, and Lieutenant-Colonel Francis J. Hext who, despite his 490 acre estate in the county, was a practicing barrister. In Scotland the 3rd Gordon Highlanders was commanded from 1891 until 1908 by Lieutenant-Colonel Algernon H. Thomas, heir of the 8th Earl of Kintore who possessed an estate of over 25,000 acres in Aberdeenshire. Serving under him was Major Alexander W. F. Fraser, the heir to the 17th Baron Saltoun, who possessed an estate of over 10,700 acres in the county and who had briefly commanded the battalion (as the Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders) from 1854 to 1855.

By comparison the social composition of the junior officer ranks was more complex than has been hitherto understood. As a whole there was a similar increase in the proportion from professional families and those connected to business and industry at the expense of the landed gentry, alongside an increase in the sons of regular officers hoping to achieve a regular commission through the force. However, Table 2.4 illustrates that from 1852 until 1869 most reaching the rank of captain continued to be drawn from largely landed families, much like the senior officers, on account of the necessary property qualifications. On the other hand, officers who spent their entire commissioned service with the militia as subalterns were more likely to come from either a professional background or have connections to business and industry, particularly in units in or near urban and industrial areas.

Despite the national trend, there was a wide degree of regimental variation in the composition of their junior officers. The availability and sources of potential candidates largely depended upon the nature of the local economy and the influence of a regiment's commanding officer. For instance, the 3rd (later 5th) Northumberland Fusiliers managed to maintain small proportion of officers from among the landed gentlemen largely due to the influence of the commanding officer Lord Algernon Percy, whose position as the second son of the 6th Duke of Northumberland gave him considerable influence to attract gentlemen from Northumberland and beyond. For instance, gentlemen such as Gerard F. T. Leather, who joined the regiment on the way to gaining a line commission (as did his younger brother), was heir to a major fortune and estate of over 7,900 acres built on his grandfather's proprietorship of local collieries. Yet despite Percy's insistence to the Norfolk Commission in 1904 that he 'always…[tried] as far as possible to get them

Table 2.4: The Social Background of Captains and Subalterns in a Sample of English, Welsh and Scottish Units, expressed as a Percentage, 1852-1908.[36]

	Captains			*Subalterns*			*Total*		
	1852-1869	*1870-1889*	*1890-1908*	*1852-1869*	*1870-1889*	*1890-1908*	*1852-1869*	*1870-1889*	*1890-1908*
Title holders and heirs	1.2	1.7	1.6	…	1.4	2.0	0.7	1.5	1.9
Younger sons	2.4	1.7	0.0	1.5	0.7	1.5	2.0	1.0	1.2
(Total Peerage)	**3.7**	**3.4**	**1.6**	**1.5**	**2.1**	**3.5**	**2.7**	**2.5**	**3.1**
Greater landowners	7.3	11.9	4.9	1.5	9.2	6.1	4.8	10.0	5.8
Lesser landowners	29.3	20.3	4.9	7.7	15.6	6.1	19.7	17.0	5.8
(Total landowners)	**36.6**	**32.2**	**9.8**	**9.2**	**24.8**	**12.1**	**24.5**	**27.0**	**11.6**
*Retired and half-pay Officers**	17.1	18.6	13.1	…	…	…	9.5	5.5	3.1
Sons of serving or retired officers	…	…	…	3.1	14.2	18.2	1.4	10.0	13.9
Clergy	1.2	1.7	3.3	4.6	5.7	6.6	2.7	4.5	5.8
Professionals	6.1	8.5	13.1	23.1	16.3	12.1	13.6	14.0	12.4
Business and industry	15.9	23.7	31.1	21.5	16.3	20.2	18.4	18.5	22.8
Other occupations	…	…	1.6	…	2.8	…	…	2.0	0.4
Unknown	19.5	11.9	26.2	36.9	17.7	27.3	27.2	16.0	27.0
Total Sampled	**82**	**59**	**61**	**65**	**141**	**198**	**147**	**200**	**259**

* Includes retired and half-pay officers from the regular army and EICS with minor estates or no other apparent source of income. Those who only briefly served and those with major landed estates are counted as landowners.

connected with the county', it was local industry that enabled him to attract a steady of junior officers. [37] Nevertheless, by the end of the period the majority of junior officers within the battalion came from families connected in some way to business and industry, principally in local collieries, ship building, and businesses operating out of the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Elsewhere, Colonel H. D. Fryer of the 4th Suffolk Regiment stated (in 1904) that there was no difficulty in getting officers and that of these they are 'mostly county men', while the senior officers were chiefly men of property. One unit which did appear to significantly buck the wider trend was the 3rd Hampshire Regiment. Its commanding officer, the Earl of Selborne, noted that 27 out of 30 of the officers present while the battalion was embodied at Aldershot (during the South African War) were what he deemed as 'county' men; in fact, unlike many other battalions, there was a waiting list for officers joining the battalion with only two vacancies after the South African War.[38] By comparison, the Edinburgh RGA (Militia), which had historically

[36] See Appendix 3.
[37] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904). q. 4841.
[38] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, (1904), qq. 15043, 15065, 17663-4, 17672, 17710.

relied largely upon urban professionals and businessmen, saw little change in the source of their officers.

There were other more fundamental reasons why landed gentlemen were refusing to take commissions as they once had. By far the greatest factor was the wider agricultural depression and its impact upon land rents, and thus the entire landed gentry itself. Owing to the influx of cheap imported grain primarily from the United States of America and Russia from the 1870s onwards, estates whose tenants could no longer afford their rents began to collapse. Small estates were particularly susceptible, with many families forced to sell their land, marry into money or diversify their assets by investing their money into business and finance. The South and East of England were particularly hard-hit due to a greater concentration of arable farming compared to the more pastoral Northern, Wales and Scotland, meaning these countries were more susceptible to impact of cheap to cheaper imports.[39] The effect of this was frequently cited by senior officers as the chief explanation for the decline in landed gentlemen. For instance, both Colonel W. A. Hill, commanding the 3rd Gloucester Regiment, and Lieutenant-Colonel R. M. Holden, of the 4th Rifles, argued that although in many counties there were still landed gentlemen willing to serve in the militia, they no longer had the time to devote to a commission because they had been forced to take some form of employment. This was echoed by Lord Raglan, commanding officer of the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), who went as far to suggest that county gentlemen had all but disappeared from many English counties, and that in Monmouthshire those who remained did not have the sons to come forward to service as they once had. Similarly, Lord Lovat argued that the problem was worse in agricultural districts, and that those gentlemen who remained had to spend more time working.[40] Many also argued that in combination with this the workload of the militia officer had increased so as to make it unattractive for gentlemen who had been forced into employment.[41] As will be examined later, it was also increasingly difficult for many gentlemen to bear the financial impact of service in the militia.

Further compounding the shortage of county gentlemen was competition from not

[39] G. E. Mingay *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class*, (London: Longman, 1976), pp. 165-78; P. J. Perry, 'Where was the "Great Agricultural Depression"? A Geography of Agricultural Bankruptcy in Late Victorian England and Wales', *Agricultural History Review*¸ 20, I, (1972), pp. 30-45; Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, p. 94.
[40] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, q. 15470, qq. 16789, 16940, q. 17175.
[41] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), q. 7631.

only the regular army and EICS, but also the other auxiliary forces. Traditionally both the militia and yeomanry competed with each other as they principally drew their officers from the landed classes. The wide scale revival of a volunteer movement in 1859 provided further competition as they were at first officered by the same class. [42] This was echoed by Major Garnham of the 6th West York Regiment who argued that potential candidates were now attracted to the volunteers instead of the militia.[43] Although towards the end of the century there were an increasing proportion of middle-class professionals and businessmen officering volunteer corps, in London and other large urban centres landed elites continued to officer certain prestigious units.[44]

The changing social composition of the militia was not the only reason why it struggled to maintain the strength of its officer corps. Linked to this was the fact that many young officers were now simply using the force as a 'backdoor' means of obtaining a regular commission without the need to attend either Sandhurst or Woolwich. As a concept the transfer of officer from the militia to the line was nothing new; in fact, militia officers had been temporarily able to gain a regular commission without purchase since the eighteenth century, although this was largely a wartime expedient. During the Napoleonic Wars the 1st Royal Lancashire Regiment provided 19 officers to a variety of regular regiments including the guards, line, cavalry and rifles. In this regiment the tradition was even recorded prior to the 1757 reform, two officers recorded as transferring in 1716 and 1718 respectively.[45] The practice was once again revived during the embodiments of the 1850s as a means of incentivising officers to encourage their men to themselves transfer to the line. In November 1854 the War Office permitted units to nominate one officer for a regular ensigncy without purchase for every 75 men provided by the regiment.[46] Militia regiments frequently provided enough men to meet these terms meaning a small yet significant proportion of officers transferred to the line. The 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment provided a total of eight officers to a variety of regiments through this means during the two embodiments, the 1st Somerset Regiment a total of six officers, the West Kent Regiment a total of three, and the 1st Royal Lancashire Regiment five.

[42] French, *Military Identities*, pp. 206-7; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 171.
[43] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654, C.1654-I, (1877) q. 7090; p. 172-4; PP, *Report of the committee*¸1890, (C.5922), p. viii.
[44] Beckett, *Riflemen Form*, pp. 44-69.
[45] J. Lawson Whalley, *Roll of Officers of the Old County Regiment of Lancashire Militia, late 1st Royal Lancashire (The Duke of Lancaster's Own), now 3rd and 4th Battalions The King's Own (Royal Lancaster) Regiment, 1642 to 1889*, (London: Simpkin, Marshall and Co., 1889), p. 103.
[46] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B/188 and 2057/F8/III/B/195, War Office circulars, 6 and 17 November 1854.

Scottish Militia regiments despite their ongoing reconstitution in 1854 also supplied officers during both embodiments. The Dumfries, Roxburgh and Selkirk Regiment had one subaltern nominated to a commission in the line and another appointed to the Cape Mounted Rifles during the embodiments, and a further three officers in the 1860s. Furthermore, the Edinburgh Light Infantry managed to nominate four subalterns between June 1855 and July 1856 and another two in 1866 and 1869 respectively.[47]

Despite the precedent, it was not until February 1872 that this became a permanent option for those hoping to avoid the traditional and highly competitive route to a regular commission. Henceforth commissions were open to any subaltern which had been nominated by his commanding officer, had attended at least two annual trainings and had passed a literary examination. By 1900 the regulations were further clarified: candidates were to be unmarried and had to have served at least two annual trainings in distinct years with the same regiment (although those over the age of 23 would be accepted so long as they had served three annual trainings). He would also have to have 'obtained the certificate, Army Form E 527, required of a subaltern officer before the end of the second training after his appointment', and provide a character reference from the commanding officer of his regiment. Those wishing to gain a commission in the Royal Artillery were limited to subalterns of the militia artillery, and needed to have passed the school of instruction at Woolwich alongside the *p.s.* certificate (Army Form E 502). Examinations for line commissions were held half yearly in March and September, and the fee for the examination required of the candidates cost £2 in London and £3 elsewhere. Furthermore, candidates were allowed three attempts at the examination before they were prohibited from attempting to gain a regular commission.[48]

The decision was largely motivated by the hope that it would increase the attractiveness of militia commissions and arrest the decline in the strength of its officer corps. Yet it was also a means of helping to address the concerns over the abolition of the purchase system which had 'disrupted the process by which officers secured their commissions, promotions and retirements.' The attempts of both Cardwell and, his later

[47] J. Davis, *Historical Records of the Second Royal Surrey: Or Eleventh Regiment of Militia*, (London: Marcus Ward & Co., 1877), pp. 250, 272, 345; Kerr, *Records of the 1st Somerset* Militia, pp. 1-110; Bonhote, *Historical records of the West Kent Militia*, pp. 257, 262; Whalley, *Roll of Officers of the Old County Regiment of Lancashire Militia*, p. 103; Weir, *History of the 3rd Batt. King's Own Scottish Borderers*, pp. 207-27; Major R. C. Dudgeon, *History of the Edinburgh, or Queen's Regiment Light Infantry Militia*, (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and sons, 1882), pp. 169-74.

[48] PP, *Army (Militia). Regulations for the competitive examination of Militia candidates for commissions in the army, in September next*, Cd. 300, (1900), pp. 3-4; Appendix LIII, PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Appendices*¸ Cd. 2064, (1904), p. 97.

successor, Childers, to maintain the flow of promotions in the regular officer corps helped to sustain the popularity of cadetships at Sandhurst and Woolwich.[49] However, there were only a finite number of places available each year. By 1903 it was recognised that both could provide no more than 410 of the approximate total of 800 vacancies per year, the remainder having to be provided by the militia (and after 1908 from the Officer Training Corps established at universities across the country).[50]

Cardwell's reforms had some effect on attracting more candidates to join as subalterns, increasing vastly the rates of turnover amongst the junior ranks and the difficulty of ensuring they served long enough to gain promotion. According to the regiments sampled in Table 2.4, the number of subalterns serving increased by over two-fold from 1870-1889 compared to the previous two decades, and over three-fold from 1890 to 1908. The majority of junior officers commissioned after 1872 therefore failed to go on to achieve promotion above the rank of lieutenant. This had the knock-on effect of decreasing the number of captains. It is no coincidence that during the first years in which line commissions were offered to militia officers the proportion of captains wanting to complete rose sharply, from 55 in 1871 to 136 by 1874.[51] In 1873 Cardwell established a scheme which aimed to mitigate the shortage by allowing a limited number of regular captains (with at least twelve years experience) to transfer to the militia while drawing half-pay for ten years. However, the scheme was never fully put into operation despite the fact that, by 1890, 48 officers were recorded as serving who had transferred under the scheme. [52]

However, opening the 'militia backdoor' only furthered the disconnection between militia units and the local communities as those genuinely interesting in serving their local county were swamped by 'birds of passage' whose only concern was to gain a regular commission in the army.[53] The benefit of such to the militia was that the overall proportion of landed gentlemen serving as junior officers between 1870 and 1889 rose

[49] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 90, 93.
[50] PP, *Committee on Military Education. Report of the committee appointed to consider the education and training of officers of the army; together with appendix*., Cd. 982, (1902), pp.11,13. The figure of 100 commissions annually was in fact the recommendation of the 1903 Committee on Military Education, therefore there was previously an even greater reliance on the militia.
[51] Calculated from figures given in Appendix No. 13, PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890), p. 332; Appendix XXII, PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Appendices*, Cd. 2064, p 42; PP, *Army. Interim report of the War Office Committee on the provision of officers (a) for service with the regular army in war, and (b) for the auxiliary forces*., Cd. 3294, (1907), p. 5.
[52] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890), p. viii.
[53] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 186-7; French, *Military identities*, p. 207.

slightly compared to the previous two decades. This was echoed by Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Robert A. Cunliffe, Colonel of the Royal Denbighshire Regiment, who noticed that since commissions in the line were offered to subalterns, young county gentlemen were in fact more inclined to join his regiment.[54] However, far from representing a sustained recommitment of the landed gentry to their local militia regiments, the connection was largely superficial. From 1890 until 1908 the total proportion of landed gentlemen collapsed while the proportion of businessmen, industrialists, and the sons of serving officers increased to take their place.

Cardwell's decision to allow militia subalterns to compete for regular commissions meant that an increasing proportion of regular officers began their military careers with the militia. Despite not taking the traditional route, there was nothing to stop former militia officers from rising to the very highest ranks within the regular army. These included (among others) two future field marshals, Sir John French and Sir Henry Wilson, three future generals, Sir Bruce Hamilton, Bryan Mahon and Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, two future major generals, Sir Oliver Stewart Wood Nugent and Sir Edward Spears, and the future Marshal of the Royal Air Force Lord Hugh Trenchard. Its importance as a source of line officers should therefore not be underestimated.[55]

Overall the proportion of Militia officers transferring to the regular army was considerable. By 1901 the militia provided nearly one half of all officers required for the regular army.[56] It was the conclusion of the Deputy Adjutant-General, Major-General A. J. Lyon Fremantle, when questioned in 1890, that the majority of subalterns were now simply joining the force in order to gain a regular commission.[57] In the first year that the scheme was operated (1873) there were a total of 3,225 applicants for commissions in England and Wales alone, with a further 222 in Scotland and 1,006 in Ireland, a total of 4,453. In the event only 64 commissions were actually given, but the popularity of the scheme was clear from the beginning.[58] The proportion only increased towards the end of the century. Of the 1,709 subalterns leaving the militia in the five years from 1880 to

[54] PP, *Report of the* committee, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), qq. 9797-8.
[55] R. Holmes, *The Little Field Marshal: A Life of Sir John French*, (London: Cassell Military Paperbacks, 2005), pp. 19-20; K. Jeffery, *Field Marshal Sir Henry Wilson: A Political Soldier*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 11-3; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time* Soldiers, p. 187; PP, *Committee on Military Education*, Cd. 982, (1902), pp. 11, 13.
[56] G. Harries-Jenkins, *The Army in Victorian Society*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p.153.
[57] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.5922, (1890), qq. 8049, 8067.
[58] Calculated from figures in PP, *Army (volunteers from militia, etc.). Return of the number of volunteers from each regiment of the militia to the line in the year 1878, stating in each case how many volunteered to the linked line regiment, and how many to other corps*,202, (1874),

1884 a total of 663 were transfers to the regular army, a total of 39 per cent, averaging out at 132 transfers per year and a considerable rise on the 1873 figure. This rose even further so that in 1890 a total of 172 subalterns transferred, rising to 260 by the end of the decade.[59] Yet it was during the South African War that the numbers taking line commissions hit unprecedented heights. During the Norfolk commission Major-General Alfred Turner, Inspector General of Auxiliary Forces, noted that during the war the number of commissions given to militia subalterns jumped to 1,982 in just over three years. In particular battalions the transfer of officers hit even higher proportions. For instance, of the 21 subalterns of the 3rd Welsh Regiment which went out to South Africa, 17 transferred to the line, while in total the battalion brought only six back to the UK.[60]

A more detailed examination on a regimental basis shows that in all of the sampled units, except for the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), over one half of the recorded number of subalterns transferred to the line. However, of those only a minority ever transferred to their linked line battalions. Both Cardwell and Childers had hoped localisation, and later territorialisation, would encourage militia officers to transfer into their local regular units helping to foster a greater sense of regimental *esprit de* corps; such was the recommendation of a Royal Commission examining the militia in1877, which suggested that 'whenever practicable' subalterns transferring should remain within the regiment by transferring to one of their linked line battalions.[61] Yet of those sampled, only the Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery (later RGA (Militia)) saw even half of their officers transferred to their linked regular units, in this case the Royal Artillery. Elsewhere, Colonel C. Healey, commanding the 3rd South Wales Borderers stated that only 'two out of ten' of his subalterns transferred to their regular battalions. To him the reason for this was that many had family connections to other regiments and so wished primarily to transfer to such regiments, while others had simply joined the regiment with the express aim of gaining a commission in another part of the service, for instance the cavalry. Therefore, it was mainly just the Welsh officers who desired to join their line battalion.[62] Unlike the infantry and artillery, officers from the engineers and

[59] Calculated from figures in PP, *Army (militia officers). Return showing, by ranks and by years, the number of persons, not including the permanent staff, who have been appointed to the militia of the United Kingdom during the last five years.* 118, (1884); Appendix LIII , PP, Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Appendices, Cd. 2064, (1904), p. 97.
[60] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, Cd. 2062, (1904), vol. I, q. 3750; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, q. 18551.
[61] PP, *Report of the* committee, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), p. xxi.
[62] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, q., 18495-6.

Table 2.5: The Transfer of Militia Subalterns to the Regular Army based upon a Sample of Nine Regiments, 1872 to 1908.[63]

Unit	*Total Subalterns*	*Number Transferred*	*To Linked Battalion**
Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles / 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers.	55	28	9
Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery / RGA (Militia)*	39	21	11
Royal Monmouthshire LI / RE (Militia)	112	34	…
1st Lancashire / 3rd & 4th Royal Lancaster	…	22	3
Northumberland LI / 3rd (5th) Northumberland Fusiliers	105	61	23
1st Somerset / 3rd Somersetshire LI	109	47	12
3rd North Staffordshire / 4th North Staffordshire	78	43	11
Dumfries, Roxburgh, Kirkcudbright and Selkirk (3rd Scottish Borderers)	61	32	7
Edinburgh Artillery / RGA (Militia)*	58	34	13
Total	617	322	77

*For militia artillery corps outside the system of territorial regiments after 1881, this figure denotes those joining the Royal Artillery.

submarine miners were not permitted to gain commissions in the Royal Engineers, which helps to explain why the total proportion of officers transferring to the line in the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) was comparatively low. Lord Raglan, the regiment's commanding officer, lamented this exclusion, noting that the Royal Engineers were hostile to the idea and believed militia officers were simply not up to the task despite that two commissions were offered annually to members of the Royal Indian Engineering College at Cooper's Hill, Surrey. It was his belief that allowing even just one commission from both engineer regiments, however difficult the examination, would encourage more 'young men with engineering knowledge' to enter the Royal Engineers via the militia.[64]

Not all militia officers who transferred from their regiments ended up in the regular army. A small but steady number sought service with various colonial corps, most notably those in Africa, either on secondment or with the intention of securing a permanent posting. Within the sampled units, in Table 2.5, there were at least 23 officers who served abroad, principally with the Sierra Leone Frontier Force, Northern Nigeria Regiment and Gold Coast Constabulary (later part of the West African Frontier Force

[63] See Appendix 3.
[64] *Ibid.*, qq. 16836, 16839.

(WAFF)), and the Bechuanaland Border Police. Indeed, four officers who had all been commissioned into the army from the Northumberland Light Infantry regiment all served together in Bechuanaland at the same time during the South African War suggesting that there was some personal link between the units. There were other notable expeditions which attracted militia officers such as the Burmese Expedition in 1886, Ruby Mines Expedition of 1887 and Hazara Expedition of 1888. In fact, while serving as a lieutenant the future commanding officer of the 3rd North Staffordshire Regiment, Francis Vere Wright, and Lieutenant John Gordon Davidson (of the Edinburgh Artillery) both temporarily transferred to the Italian Army's British legion in the 1860s to serve in the Second Italian War of Independence under Garibaldi (costing the latter his life in 1865).[65]

The varied and numerous opportunities for foreign service enabled by the South African War whetted the appetite of may officers who now desired foreign appointments in greater numbers. As a result there was an increase in the proportion of militia officers serving in colonial units, particularly the WAFF and King's African Rifles (KAR). The latter was opened to militia officers in 1902 to appease the growing demand. By 1905 there were ten militia officers serving, three more than was originally intended, so it was decided to cap the number where it stood so as to avoid the prospect of having too many in the regiment.[66] Some militia officers seconded or transferred to colonial corps were able to reach influential positions. In West Africa the *Aide de camp* to the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the West African colonies in 1899, Lieutenant J. F. N. Price, had been seconded from the 3rd Bedfordshire Regiment. However, some faced significant difficulties owing to their previous position within the militia. There were questions raised by the colonial governor, C. King Harman, over the quality and efficiency of militia officers serving in the WAFF including Major Blakeney, the commanding officer of the Sierra Leone Battalion until 1903. In fact the rising efficiency of the battalion as noted in December 1903 was attributed to Blakeney's replacement with a regular commanding officer. As a general rule officers in the WAFF were expected to serve for five years, after which they could be offered a further term of service if deemed efficient.[67] The prospects of promotion for militia officers were limited as they struggled

[65] J. Robson Scott, *My Life as a Soldier and Sportsman*, (London: Grant Richards, 1921), pp. 43-4.
[66] TNA, CO 534/1, Despatches: Africa, East, Prot. and Somaliland, 1905, letter, 12 July 1905.
[67] *Hart's New Annual Army List*, 1899, p. 106; TNA, CO 455/14, Despatches: Gambia, Gold Coast, Sierre [sic] Leone, Lagos: file, 31 Aug. 1903; Report on Lagos Battalion, n.d.; CO 455/14, Despatches: Northern and Southern Nigeria, 1903: letter, 21 Dec. 1903; letter, 10 Dec. 1904; CO 445/17, Despatches, 1904:

to compete with regular officers who were deemed more efficient. It was therefore expected that the majority of secondments would cease after five years due to the negative impact of being away from home regiments for a prolonged period of time. There was also confusion as to whether a militia officer could count his seconded service towards a Colonial Office pension, as it was later clarified that WAFF secondments were given one at a time and therefore were not regarded as cumulative service for the Colonial Office.[68]

* * *

Of all the aspects of a commission that attracted potential officers to the militia, pay was not one of them. Whilst training with their regiments militia officers were entitled to a basic rate of pay augmented by a complex system of additional emoluments. Between 1852 and 1868 this remained unchanged. The daily rate of pay ranged from 15s 11d for lieutenant-colonels (full colonels commanding their regiments were entitled to daily pay at the rate of £1 2s 6d), 14s 1d for majors, 10s 6d for captains, 6s 6d for lieutenants, and 5s 3d for ensigns and second-lieutenants. Each officer was entitled to additional emoluments based on rank. All received a 1s allowance which was meant to cover mess expenses (although, as will be seen, in most units this was insufficient), while captains received a 2s contingent allowance for command of their companies (1s 6d for companies of 75 men and under in strength), and majors and lieutenant-colonels 2s forage allowance, with the latter entitled to 3s command pay if in command of their regiment. Further allowances could be claimed for travel expenses. Officers were liable to a maximum of 9d per mile for conveyance of their baggage (either by rail or otherwise) for all journeys of ten miles or more from their residence within the county, or if travelling from elsewhere from the border of the county, to the place of assembly (the same payable upon return unless they left the training early). However, all journeys from outside of the county were not liable to any financial assistance regardless of the distance, something which was frequently blamed by many officers as further compounding the shortage of

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letter, 16 Oct. 1903; report on Major Blakeney, 25 Jan. 1904; Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*¸ pp. 186, 192-4.

[68] TNA, CO 445/18, Offices and Individuals, 1904: letter, dated 5 July, 1904; CO 445/26, Offices, Individuals., 1907, Vol. III.

officers.[69] To bring both basic rates of pay and total emoluments further into line with those for the regular army, in 1868 the basic rates of pay were increased, captains henceforth liable to 11s 7d per day, majors 16s, and lieutenant-colonels 17s (although that for subalterns was frozen). A War Office circular of 1868 also extended lodging money to militia officers to provide items such as furniture if they were unable to secure private quarters, although if in private quarters they were still liable to half. In 1869 the mess allowance was increased from 1s to 4s. This meant that when compared to the pre-1868 rates, the overall amount an officer could theoretically receive had increased by between a total of 5s for ensigns and second-lieutenants, and 8s 1d for lieutenant-colonels.[70]

The total amount an officer could receive though his basic pay and emoluments remained largely unchanged from 1869 until 1908, matching a similar problem within the regular army (although the total payable to lieutenant-colonels had risen by a further 1s). The only major increases occurred in the technical arms of the service (again reflecting a trend evident within the regular army). Although subalterns in artillery corps were entitled to 4d per day more than their infantry counterparts, officers within engineer regiments and submarine mining corps had significantly higher pay due to the more technical nature of their service. Both lieutenant-colonels (commanding either of the engineer regiments) were liable to a daily total of pay and allowances totalling £2 5s (compared to just £1 11s in infantry regiments and artillery corps); indeed, submarine miners were entitled to the highest amounts, with a major entitled to £1 15s. Pay and allowances could on rare occasions be supplemented by one-off payments. Upon the disembodiment of militia units in 1856, subalterns were given an additional allowance equal to six months' pay, while the surgeon and assistant-surgeons were entitled to an allowance equal to one year's pay, from the date of disembodiment. Similarly, at the conclusion of the South African War all officers were entitled to a £100 allowance for embodied service.[71]

However, pay and allowances were often not enough to allow militia officers to live without also possessing a private income. Upon joining a militia regiment officers also had to pay for their uniform and equipment. In 1852 the same pattern of dress was

[69] PP, *Militia* regulations¸ 32 (1852-53), p. 7.
[70] War Office circulars, 7 April 1868 and 23 April 1869, cited in Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia*, p. 194.
[71] War Office circular, 20 June 1856, cited in Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia*, pp. 178-9; PP, Cd. 2062, (1904), q. 22619.

adopted as the line, with the exception that silver lace was substituted for the gold lace of regular officers. During training and exercise officers were only required to wear the official undress uniform (unless specified otherwise by the commanding officer), although formal dress uniform was usually expected at all social events thus adhering militia officers to the same excessive expenses for uniform as their line compatriots. Additional costs included the purchase of a sword and its accoutrements and the furniture for his lodgings. Much like regular regiments these costs varied from unit to unit. In 1854 one anonymous officer complained that it cost him £75 for uniform alone; by contrast, another officer argued that in his unit uniform could be purchased for just £39 and the basic furniture and equipment for as little as £13. Another officer estimated that in the 2nd West York Regiment subalterns could fully equip themselves from £50 to £60.[72] Financially militia officers were disadvantaged by having to ensure their uniform matched the latest patterns for the regular army even though in each year militia officers might only wear their uniform for two months at most; they simply did not have the chance to wear their uniform out, as in the line. The frequency at which officers updated their uniform could vary, although one officer stated that minor alterations were required on a yearly basis. They received no financial assistance to make alterations meaning such had to be self-funded (unlike in the rifle volunteer corps where officers were liable to a £20 grant for the purchase of their uniform). The only exception came in May1881 when militia officers were expected to change their uniform to match that of their new territorial regiments (or in the case of the artillery, the uniform of the Royal Artillery) while the colour of lace was changed back to gold from silver. Units which completely overhauled their uniform (namely those altered from or to the rifle or highland pattern) were given a one-off sum worth £25 to compensate them.[73] In some instance it appears the high cost of uniform was enough to push some officers towards resigning their commissions altogether. Colonel Hill, commanding officer of the 3rd Gloucestershire Regiment, stated that when he served with the regiment the officers were determined to wear out their existing uniform rather than purchase the updated pattern.[74]

Militia officers also had to meet the necessary contributions towards the running

[72] *The Times*, 4 and 7 September 1857; PP, *Militia regulations*, 32, (1852-53), pp. 6-7; PP, *Royal Commission*, 2553, (1859), q. 3310.
[73] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, qq. 13177; HC Deb., 3 April 1882, vol. 268, cc. 539-40 (c. 540); HL Deb., 20 May 1881, vol. 261, cc. 933-6, (cc. 933-5).
[74] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 747-50; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, Cd. 2063, (1904), qq. 15679-85.

of the mess which could be highly variable depending on the extravagance of the regiment.[75] In theory the Queen's Regulations limited the amount that could be requested for messing. It stated that when appointed officers would be expected to make a contribution of up to 30s for the mess fund and up to 20s for the band fund. When promoted they would again be expected to make a contribution of 'a sum not exceeding the difference on thirty days' pay of the rank attained and that previously held.' They were also liable to annual subscriptions of up to eight days pay for the mess fund, and 12 days pay for the band fund. Despite these limits, militia officers were frequently required to make additional contributions often well above the basic messing costs, while some seemingly flouted the regulations altogether.[76] Upon the reconstitution of the 1st Durham Regiment a contribution of 30 days pay was required up front to form the initial mess fund, although from 1856 the payment could be spread over the year at a rate of three days pay per month until the date of the following training (upon which any remainder would be paid). By 1862 it was agreed to reduce the amount on appointment to just ten days pay and the amount on promotion to five days pay, and from 1886 onwards a fixed sum of £10 was established for first appointments. Officer's annual contributions were also high and rose steadily across the period. From 1858 to 1864 as little as four days pay per annum was required for basic messing costs, rising to six days pay from 1865 to 1867. Yet from 1870 to 1888 this had risen to an average of 12 days per annum before reaching a height of 26 days pay per annum in 1897, and an average of 20 days pay per annum between 1889 and 1899. The mess allowance (mentioned above) was far from sufficient to cover the total expenses and was appropriated directly by the mess committee for the supplement of the mess fund from 1859 onwards. By 1879 the mess committee of the 1st Durham Regiment carried a motion to require those using the regiment as a means to a regular commission should have to pay 20 guineas upon leaving. High initial contributions were also found in the East Kent Regiment. From 1867 a total of 30 days pay was expected for the mess and band fund upon appointment, while they were also expected to pay a one-off payment of £25 towards the mess fund if transferring to the regular army. Similarly, upon the reconstitution of the Cambridgeshire Regiment the initial mess and band contributions were set at a flat rate of £2 10s each, regardless of rank, totalling £5 per officer, although this was quickly found to be

[75] Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, p. 115.
[76] War Office, *The Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army*, (London: HMSO, 1868), par. 290-4, 374.

insufficient to meet expenses.[77]

Militia regiments faced a dramatic rise in costs when first encamped or embodied owing to the necessity of purchasing the necessary accoutrements and equipment which, when disembodied, was usually simply hired or supplied by hoteliers during the annual training. One anonymous officer complained to *The Times* that upon appointment to the rank of captain he was required to pay a total of 90 days pay upon the embodiment of his regiment during the Crimean War, a result of having to purchase the equipment, furniture, additional uniform and accoutrements needed for the possibility of service abroad.[78] These costs could be even higher if there was the need to purchase or hire huts or tents while encamped, although those stationed in larger towns and cities were able to take advantage of competition which enabled greater economy in messing costs. In the Royal Montgomery Rifles (later 4th South Wales Borderers) annual subscriptions rose throughout the 1880s owing to the frequent encampment of the regiment during the annual training and the subsequent need to purchase a mess hut. By 1889 subscriptions rates hit unprecedented levels at 13 days pay for messing and four days pay for the band, and although the following year the rates remained broadly the same (except messing costs had been reduced to 12 days pay), an additional four days pay was required to meet the interest payments upon the purchase of the new mess hut. However, the mess was once again located at a Welshpool hotel for the 1891 training meaning that the subscriptions were comparatively modest at four days pay for messing and five days pay for the band fund.[79]

Some units intentionally sought economy. In 1854 officers of the Royal South Middlesex Regiment, messing at a local hotel, could purchase breakfast for only 1s 6d and dinner for just 2s 9d, while only the officers drinking wine were charged for such.[80] There also appears to have been some drive towards a fairer system of mess contributions within the 3rd East Surrey Regiment. For instance, from 1893 a graded scale of mess contributions was introduced so that field officers paid a proportionally larger share of the expenses: the lieutenant-colonel £10, both majors £5, captains £3, lieutenants £2 and

[77] DCRO, D/DLI 2/4/274, 'Minute Book of Officer's Mess Meetings of the 1st Durham Regiment of Militia, 23 December 1854 – 16 June 1868', and D/DLI 2/4/275, 'Minute Book of Officer's Mess Meetings of the 1st Durham Regiment of Militia, 1870-1919'; NAM, 2001-02-439, 'Bound volume of regimental memoranda relating to the East Kent Regiment of Militia, 1852-1881'; Cambridgeshire Archives, L79/2, 'Mess Meeting Minute Book, with Accounts of Mess and Band Funds, 1853-1854'.
[78] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), q. 7303; *The Times*, 4 Sept. 1857.
[79] TNA, WO 68/453, 'Royal Montgomery Rifles, Mess Committee Book'.
[80] *The Times*, 12 June 1854.

recently commissioned subalterns just £1.[81] Certain regiments also made efforts to drive down the extravagance and cost of messing so that it was affordable to more modest means. In the Cornwall and Devon Miners Regiment, in 1860, dinner and board could be purchased for a total of 5s per night, while lunch and breakfast could be purchased for an additional 1s 6d each (with the cheapest room priced at just 1s per night). To avoid excessive drinking there was a rule laid down in 1858 that limited all officers to drink only one-third of a bottle of wine per day, although the fact that it was no longer noted in the mess minutes meant it was largely ignored by the 1870s (after which the wine bill was again split equally among the officers regardless). By the turn of the century there was another drive towards controlling mess bills with the decision to manage the catering in house as opposed to hiring a civilian caterer. This reduced the daily messing cost from 7s 6d to 3s 8d per day.[82]

Even if an officer was able to make his pay cover his basic mess contributions there existed (as with the regulars) a standard of living which officers were expected to meet, and thus ample opportunities for additional expenditure. It was common practice for officers to buy gifts for the wider benefit of the mess upon special occasions. In the East Kent Regiment, in August 1858, a new candelabra was funded by subscriptions of one and a-half days pay each (although Colonel Brockman donated £25 out of his own pocket the following January) while in 1860 it was carried that each officer donate a days pay to pay for the purchase of a silver salt stand to be presented to the bandmaster upon his leaving the regiment. Later, in 1867 Lieutenant-Colonel Deedes and Captain (and adjutant) Knight presented a pair of silver claret jugs to the mess, while Captain Bury presented an oaken desk and writing stand. Similar gifts are also recorded as being presented to the mess in 1872, 1873, 1876 and 1878. In the 4th Norfolk Regiment gifts were usually given upon promotion or appointment, usually cases of wine and champagne, musical instruments, glassware, smoking paraphernalia and silverware. For instance, in 1887 one officer presented to the mess a cigar box, while in 1896, on the occasion of taking command of the regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel Harvey presented 12 bottles of wine (part of a longstanding regimental tradition). In the 1st Durham Regiment a memorial fund was established in honour of the late commanding officer, open to both serving and retired officers, £167 9s being raised towards a memorial window at a local

[81] SHC, ESR/4/1/4, 'Officer's Mess Minute Book, 1899-1933'.
[82] Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *Royal Miners*, pp. 68, 69-70, 113.

church and a piece of silverware for the mess (£120 13s from among the serving officers alone). It was also the practice in many regiments for the officers to fund schemes for the benefit of the NCOs and men. In 1869 the officers of the Cornwall and Devon Miners Regiment agreed to fund a library for the use of the permanent staff. This was funded through annual subscriptions graded by rank so that field officers contributed £2, captains £1 and subalterns 10s each.[83]

Additional contributions were also secured through a system of fines. These were not just a way of providing additional revenue; they were also a crucial tool in maintaining mess etiquette and ensuring the decorum of its officers. This was the case within the 3rd Durham Light Infantry, whereby officers were liable to a range of fines for various offences. Any regimental property broken or damaged was liable to a fine, fixed after 1877 at 2s 6d per offence. Officers could be fined 4s for omitting to remove their name from the mess sheet before 2.30pm if not attending, or for failing to notify the attendance of guests, and were liable to a pay a full share of all wine drunk if failing to update their wine sheet. Additional fines were liable for breaking etiquette by drinking or betting before toasting the Queen's health (5s), introducing or enticing a dog into the mess (2s 6d and 5s), drawing a sword in the mess, being late or leaving without permission before 10.30 pm, being inappropriately dressed, or taking newspapers (2s 6d each). Far from strictly maintaining etiquette, it was common and apparently normal for officers (including the commanding officer) to break the rules rather regularly, providing another additional expense on top of the messing bill. For instance during the 1890 annual training there were 72 individual fines totalling £10 18s, while in the following year they totalled £10 3s.[84]

The high cost of messing did not go unnoticed by the government and the press. While it was the government's desire to check the worst cases of over extravagance there were fears that over regulation could put-off county gentlemen from joining, and therefore the issue remained relatively neglected. Nevertheless, by 1881 the issue was deemed of such importance that a general order was issued attempting to clamp down upon excessive messing costs through providing guiding regulations for the proper

[83] NAM, 2001-02-439, entries for 1858, 1860, 1867, 1872-3, 1876 and 1878; Norfolk Record Office (NRO), MC 500/1, 'Mess Bet and Presentation Book'; DCRO, D/DLI 2/4/275; Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *The Royal Miners*, p. 72.
[84] DCRO, D/DLI 2/4/284, 'Regimental fines book of the South Durham Militia, later the 3rd Durham Light Infantry, 1888-1902'; D/DLI 2/4/285, 'Fines Book of the officers' mess of the 3rd…Durham Light Infantry, 1890-1907'.

organisation of mess finances. Commanding officers were urged to discourage extravagant living in their regiments and to resist unnecessary subscriptions and expenses so officers of limited means could live comfortably. In line with this it forbade the custom of luncheon marquees at race meetings, and requested that all balls and regimental events needed the sanction of the commanding officer upon consultation of the General Officer Commanding (GOC) each district. There was to be no pressure put on officers to contribute to such events, therefore meaning they could only be funded by those agreeing to contribute pay, which itself was to be determined in days' pay (as opposed to a fixed amount) in order to make it fairer to junior officers and those of lesser means. Furthermore, extra subscriptions required to defray the cost of unnecessary items were prohibited, while it was made clear gifts were not to be mandatory upon appointment or promotion. The order also insisted monthly mess subscriptions were to be paid by the 7th of each month, with failure to pay by the 14th meaning suspension from the mess and potential repercussions from the GOC; if still unpaid officers could be arrested or suspended from duty altogether at the discretion of his GOC, after which the case would be reported to the Adjutant-General. Similarly, if on leave for more than seven days an officer was required to ensure his mess bills were paid, while all expense accounts were to be audited at quarterly meetings examined by general officers during their inspections. Commanding officers could also face repercussions if they consistently failed to deal with undue inflation in messing costs with the possibility that in such instances they would not be recommended for further promotion.[85] In reality this was as far as the government was willing to go in combating excessive mess bills. As an alternative measure, the government was unwilling to increase pay as they felt an officer's status was determined not by his level of his earnings, but his social background (believed to be vital in maintaining order over the rank and file); therefore, they did not want pay to become the new arbiter of an officers suitability for a commission.[86]

* * *

In conclusion, it is clear that the Militia Act of 1852 did little to radically alter the source

[85] NAM, 2001-02-440: 'Bound volume of regimental memoranda relating to the 3rd and 4th The Buffs (East Kent Regiment of Militia), 1882-1896, entry for 1881.
[86] A. Tucker, 'Army and Society in England 1870-1900: A Reassessment of the Cardwell Reforms', *The Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (May, 1963), pp. 110-141, (p. 129).

and means by which militia officers were obtained. Initially the authority to appoint commissions remained with the lords lieutenant, although in practise it was often left to commanding officers to nominate individuals. Promotion was theoretically based upon seniority, although the retention of property qualifications for the rank of captain and above ensured the highest ranks were, before 1869, largely out of reach of officers who did not qualify. By 1854 most serving officers had been commissioned after the force's reconstitution, although their remained a useful nucleus of field officers who were commissioned prior. County connections and patronage remained crucial for successfully securing a commission, although there were attempts to open commissions to retired regulars, while the abolition of qualifications for subalterns meant professional families and those connected to business, finance and industry were able to make some inroads. Yet throughout the period it became ever harder to find enough officers to meet the needs of the force. This was largely due to the changing social composition of the force itself. By the 1870s the traditional link between the militia and landed gentry began to weaken (except for in the senior ranks) meaning that landed gentlemen found it increasingly difficult to find the time and money necessary to maintain himself as a militia officer. This was largely due to the impact of agricultural depression which meant the number of independent landed gentlemen, who were reliant largely upon land rents for their income, decreased. Subsequently, they were replaced professionals and businessmen for whom a militia commission acted as a means of gaining respectability in local county society. Nevertheless, the biggest shift was in the number of young officers simply using the 'militia backdoor' as a means of obtaining a regular commission without attending either Sandhurst or Woolwich. This led to a high turnover amongst the junior ranks which contributed towards the growing deficiency of junior officers (particularly amongst captains). However, it is important not to overplay this national trend. There was variation in the proportion of gentlemen surviving in different units owing to the circumstances of the local economy and the personal links of commanding officer. Furthermore, the opening of line commissions to militia officers failed to foster closer links between the line and militia as officers frequently transferred to other units and in some cases even to colonial units. Finally, a further reason why the militia struggled to maintain its strength (and why many of more humble means could not afford to serve) was due to poor rates of pay and allowances, combined with the high costs of uniform, equipment and messing (although again there was variation between units).

3. The Rank and File

What is clear from studies of the regular army during the Victorian and Edwardian period is that recruiting sufficient manpower to meet its needs was a constant concern, one which the military authorities often struggled to deal with.[1] It is clear that, for the militia, recruitment was also a particular challenge across the later half of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The adoption of voluntary enlistment signalled a clear break with the militia of 1757 to 1831 which was recruited by the ballot.[2] Much like the regular army the militia had to rely on financial inducements in order to attract volunteers, which were increasingly far from sufficient to attract the sort of men many officers desired. Again, much like the regulars, wastage remained a constant drain on manpower which in most years surpassed the number of recruits enlisted, the chief causes being desertion and the transfer of men to the regular army. As a result of this it was increasingly difficult for militia regiments to retain their men, with many also choosing instead to purchase their discharge instead of serving their full term of enlistment. Both desertion and the transfer of men to the regular army were exacerbated during periods of embodiment meaning that recruitment often struggled at times when the militia was in most need of manpower. As a result there was always a significant deficit in the enrolled strength compared to the establishment in every year from 1852 to 1908, and aside from altering the entry standards, in much the same way as the regulars, there was little the military authorities could do to resolve this issue. It was hoped that through changing the way in which the enrolment bounty was paid, through the abolition of the 10s enrolment bounty, desertion and fraudulent enlistment could be reduced. However, this ended up making the militia less attractive to those unskilled and casual labourers (as well as seasonal agricultural labourers) for whom service was a form of temporary unemployment relief, a group which was increasing in many regiments. Similarly the creation of brigade depots failed to better enable militia regiments to recruit within their district; in effect localisation and the creation of territorial regiments in 1881 stripped the militia of the ability to recruit its own men, instead passing the duty to the regular NCOs of the brigade depot.

However, it would be wrong to suggest that recruiting difficulties were uniform

[1] A. R. Skelley, *Victorian Army at Home: the Recruitment and Terms and Conditions of the British Regular, 1859-1899*, (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp. 235-80; Strachan, *Wellington's Legacy*, pp. 51-7; Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 118-51; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 31-60; Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, pp. 41-63.
[2] Western, *English Militia*, pp. 245-300.

across the country. Hitherto historians examining the militia's rank and file have merely hinted at the fact that recruitment could vary wildly between different regiments.[3] In fact, the main factor which governed recruitment at a local level was the nature of the local economy, something which also influenced the social composition of each regiment. Generally speaking one can categorise militia regiments into three broad groups which best describe their shifting social composition. Firstly, there were those regiments that had historically recruited from among the agricultural workforce, but who were unable to compensate for the decreasing proportion enlisting into the force by recruiting instead in urban areas. Secondly, there were regiments which, although expected to recruit from across their county, instead relied heavily or exclusively on the urban workforce, initially from among skilled industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen, but increasingly from among casual unskilled labourers. Finally, there were regiments which had traditionally always recruited industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen from within large urban areas, some of which came to increasingly rely on casual unskilled labourers, although as will be seen, some managed to buck this wider trend. Various social groups tended to enlist in the militia for different reasons. For instance, agricultural workers in arable counties had always used the militia as a means of finding temporary relief when out of season. Similarly, casual unskilled labourers saw the militia as a form of temporary unemployment relief. On the other hand, many skilled or semi-skilled industrial workers often saw militia service as a form of paid holiday, particularly when employment was plentiful meaning that they could serve within the militia and have no fears that they would be unable to find employment when returning. Furthermore, there were those for which militia service acted a as a stepping stone towards service in the regulars, either through design or through acclimatisation to military life. This was exacerbated by the loss of the militia's ability to control its own recruiting in 1881 which in turn made it easier for regular NCOs to poach the best recruits before they reached their regiments.

* * *

Overall, an analysis of recruitment figures demonstrates that voluntary enlistment meant it was extremely difficult for the militia to maintain a sufficient level of manpower. As demonstrated by Figure 2, at no point did the total enrolled strength of English and Welsh

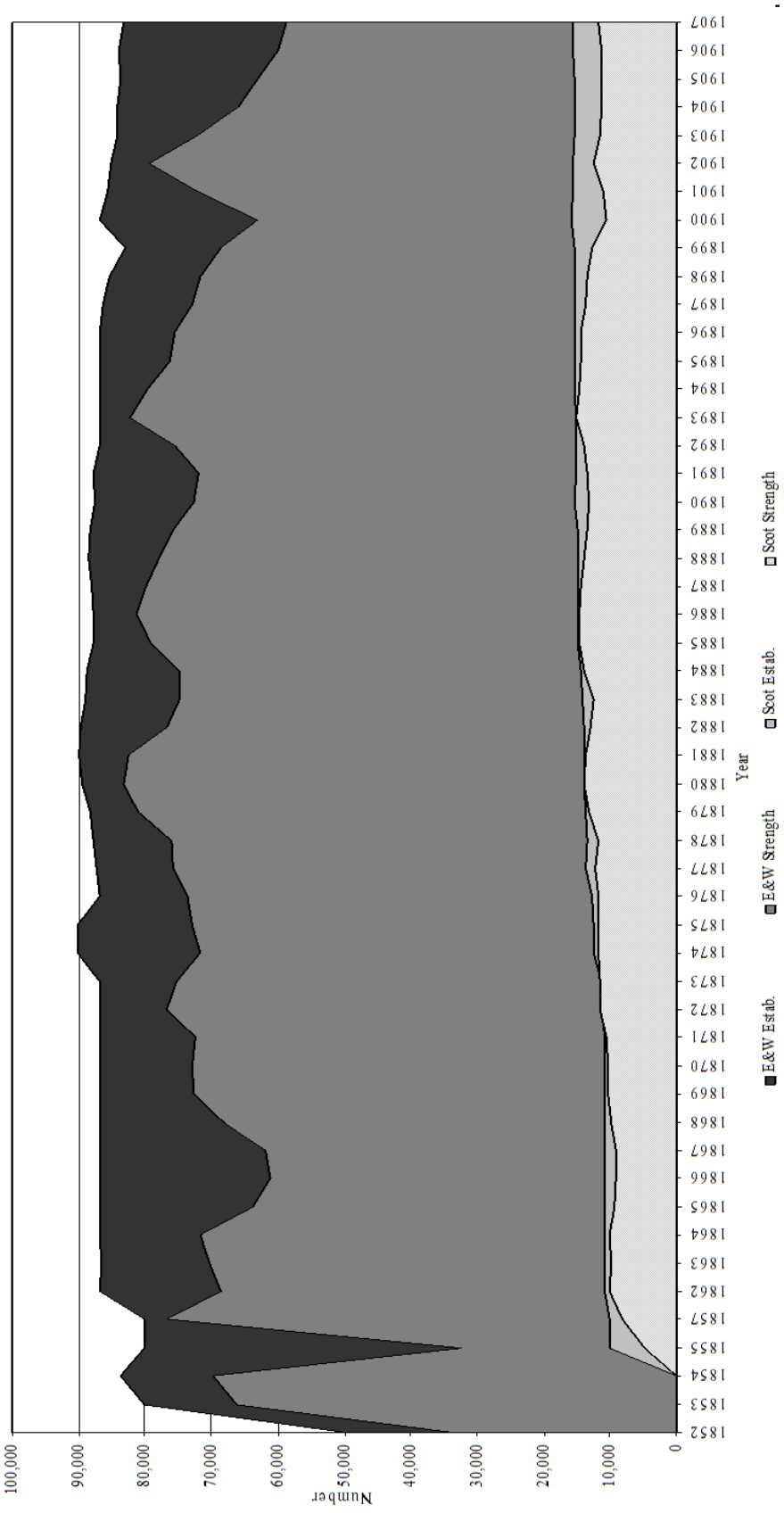
[3] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 154, 186-7; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 210-1.

regiments meet the establishment voted by Parliament. This varied considerably across the period. In 1855 just 40.6 per cent of the establishment was enrolled at the height of the Crimean War, although by 1893 this had risen considerably to a high of 94.8 per cent. Scottish regiments faced similar difficulties, although on the whole they were better able to maintain their strength. For instance, in 1893 the Scottish militia had an enrolled strength of 99.6 per cent of its establishment. Recruiting difficulties were made worse by the fact that militia regiments were largely restricted from recruiting above their establishment, meaning that in areas where recruitment was plentiful (predominantly urban areas) no advantage could be gained in order to offset recruiting difficulties elsewhere; as a result in 1889 and 1890 there were repeated calls to abandon such a principle.[4] Even more concerning was the fact that the proportion of men who actually attended the annual training was often significantly lower than the total enrolled strength. For instance, in 1853 only 51,561 men were present at the annual training, representing just 64.5 per cent of the total establishment. Similarly, of the 82,237 men enrolled in English and Welsh regiments in 1893 just 69,326 attended that year's annual training, representing 79.0 per cent of the establishment.

Despite a consistent deficit in manpower it is possible to identify some general trends. Firstly, recruitment in the initial years was only partially successful, varying significantly between regiments. In 1852 the government set an establishment of 80,000 men for English and Welsh regiments, with 50,000 being raised from September to December that year and the remainder in 1853. In total only 33,714 men volunteered by the end of 1852 and by the end of 1853 the total had only risen to 66,280.[5] However, the government was not overtly concerned at the deficiency. Walpole dismissed concerns in Parliament over the difficulties acknowledging that although recruitment was slow – stating that the machinery for raising the militia had only been recently established in August – six counties had in fact completed their quotas by the end of September. Examined on a regimental basis it was indeed the case that the initial success of recruitment varied widely. Of the 75 initially tasked with raising volunteers, a total of 40 were able to reach at least 80 per cent.[6] What is clear is that many of the initial deficiencies were among regiments that recruited heavily from urban and industrial areas.

[4] PP, *Army and militia*, C. 5922, (1890), p. xi.
[5] PP, *Militia. Return of the quota of militia men for each county in England and Wales for the year 1852*, 74, (1852-53); PP, *Militia. Return of the quota of militia for each county in England and Wales for 1853*, 153, (1854).
[6] HC Deb., 25 February 1853, vol. 124, cc. 670-92, (cc. 688-91).

Figure 2: The Strength of the Rank and File in the English, Welsh and Scottish Militia, 1852-1907.[7]



[7] See Appendix 4 for the figures upon which this is based.

In Lancashire only 2,802 of the 5,628 men set by the quota for the county volunteered in 1852. To put this into perspective, in neighbouring Cumberland the whole of the quota of 545 men was met by the end of the year despite it being more sparsely populated. Similarly in the West Riding of Yorkshire there were difficulties; only 1,672 men of the 3,885 required were found.[8] Indeed, Sidney Herbert noted that of the 5,175 absences recorded across 52 regiments, as many as 3,924 occurred in just 14 regiments all of which recruited in the 'metropolitan and manufacturing districts.' By far the worst deficiencies occurred in the 1st and 2nd Tower Hamlets Regiment where 1,221 men were recorded as deserters, nearly a quarter of the total.[9]

However, there were other influences which negatively affected recruitment. Duncan Anderson has argued that anti-militia and pacifist resistance presented the greatest difficulty for recruiters as opposed to inefficiencies with the permanent staff which, as argued by J. R. Western, had always been present.[10] One such impediment was the hostility of benefit and friendly societies which prohibited their members from any form of military service upon the threat of a withdrawal of financial support. Historically this had been a relatively minor issue as during the French and Napoleonic Wars only a small proportion of the population belonged to such organisations. However, by mid-century they numbered over 14,000 while membership had increased to nearly half of the population.[11] Ian Beckett noted how three privates of the Buckinghamshire Regiment had all been refused benefit after joining the regiment.[12] A similar situation befell four recruits of the Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles who were denied not only the advantages of membership but also the cumulative sum of £58 3s paid into the society prior to joining the militia. The decision was made on the grounds military service would put them at greater danger and thus more likely to claim some form of benefit. Fortunately the magistrates found the society at fault believing it unreasonable to deny the men the benefits of membership when they were not liable to be in any great danger due to their

[8] PP, *Militia. Return of the quota*, 74, (1852-53).
[9] WSHC, 2057/F8/II/G/4, Memorandum on the regiments of militia inspected, 1847-1852.
[10] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', pp. 319-22.
[11] *Ibid*., p. 322.
[12] The commanding officer (and Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire) Lord Carrington was petitioned by the three in November 1852 who had all been refused benefit by societies in Sherrington, Langley Marsh and Stoke Poges. He found that there was no legal basis to force the societies into giving benefits to militiamen, although his decision to compensate each man out of his own pocket at least forced the Sherrington society into reversing its decision. Buckinghamshire Record Office, *Carrington*, 28/A/2, quoted in Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, p. 149.

service as militiamen compared to those within the regular army or navy.[13]

A further cause for concern came from the concerted efforts of the pacifist movement to attack the reconstituted militia through discouraging potential volunteers from enlisting. From August 1852 the Peace Society disseminated provocative anti-militia hand-bills and placards in recruiting areas, particularly among rural towns and districts, the most notorious of which graphically depicted that militiamen could be flogged for certain disciplinary offenses. Local resistance often coalesced around Anglican clergymen; one such example in Rutland was recorded as hiring an individual to tear down all anti-militia bills. To combat this, the government decided to encourage magistrates to prosecute 'rank and file pacifists' responsible for disseminating anti-militia literature for seditious libel.[14] As a result local magistrates attempted to prosecute those found to be circulating anti-militia placards in Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Suffolk, while one individual, who could not afford bail, was imprisoned awaiting trial. The decision to attack the peace movement on the ground was an astute move as it played upon the reservations of the movement's leadership and certain members towards resisting the government. In fact, the leaders of 62 societies promised the Home Secretary that they would bare responsibility for any attempts to disrupt recruitment, while furthermore two members of the Peace Society resigned over the issue. As a result, and after receiving multiple letters of complaint, the society ceased the distribution of all anti-militia materials and agreed not to replace any hand-bills already removed. Despite the return to government of Palmerston (the peace movement's political nemesis) as Home Secretary from 28 December 1852, by 1853 he decided to drop all charges against peace activists largely because their efforts to disrupt recruiting had been at best only of very limited success. There appeared to have been some success in disrupting recruitment in the West Riding of Yorkshire although, as Derby commented, this was due to a combination of high wages and the concerted activities of individuals such as the notable peace activist Richard Cobden who stood for and won unopposed his West Riding constituency. However, in all three counties in which peace activists were prosecuted recruitment had been very successful; the Royal Buckinghamshire Regiment and Hertford Regiment completed their full quotas by the end of 1852 while both the West

[13] *North Wales Chronicle*, 21 January 1853.
[14] TNA, TS 25/269,'Militia: Placards relating to flogging in the Militia'; HO 45/5458, 'Militia: Flogging, inflammatory bills, in the Militia'; M. Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention: The British Peace Movement and International Relations, 1730–1854*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 487-9.

Suffolk Regiment and Suffolk Artillery Regiment found a total of 757 volunteers out of an establishment of 949 men for the county.[15]

Similarly, potential volunteers were also dissuaded from service in parts of Wales due, in part, to non-conformist hostility towards military service. On the whole, those regiments which struggled to find sufficient recruits were located in the eastern and southern Welsh counties with particular difficulty found in Carmarthenshire, Cardiganshire, Glamorganshire, Pembrokeshire and Caernarvonshire. For instance, by early December 1852 both the Royal Carmarthen Rifles and Royal Cardigan Rifles had only enlisted 68 and 46 volunteers out of quota of 241 and 302 men respectively. The influence of non-conformist hostility to militia service was believed to be the chief cause of poor recruiting in both regiments. Indeed by the first annual training of the Royal Carmarthen Regiment in October 1853 (with over a year given over to recruiting) the number enlisted had risen to only 200 volunteers out of an established strength of 547 men, owing in part to the enlistment of men from neighbouring counties. Similarly the Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles could only find 166 volunteers out of a quota of 241. One dissenting minister preached that the reconstitution of the militia was simply a means through which 'the oligarchical class' could impose their will 'at the expense of the community.' A further concern was the potential use of flogging and the misapprehension that volunteers would be liable for foreign service. There were also fears that non-conformist recruits would be liable to attend Church of England services on Sundays as opposed to their own services. Recruitment was not aided by the fact that official recruiting material was only printed in English whereas many anti-militia posters were also available in Welsh.[16]

A second trend evident in recruitment figures is that periods of prolonged embodiment were far from conductive to militia recruitment. All three major embodiments saw a corresponding drop in the enrolled strength. Figure 2 demonstrates that by 1855 the militia faced the greatest recruiting crisis of the reconstituted period despite the addition of Scottish and Irish regiments first reconstituted in 1854. In total the enrolled strength of the militia fell to just 58,287 men. A similar, albeit lesser slump in

[15] HC Deb., 21 February 1853, vol. 124, cc. 357-62, (cc.357-60); *North Wales Chronicle*, 22 October 1852; Letter, Earl of Derby to Spencer Walpole, 20 September 1852, quoted in Anderson, 'The English Militia', p. 329; Ceadel, *The Origins of War Prevention*¸ pp. 489-90.

[16] Owen, *History of the Welsh Militia and Volunteer*, pp. 41, 80, 107; *North Wales Chronicle*, 10 September 1852, 1 October 1852, 29 October 1852, 5 November 1852, 3 December 1852, 11 February 1893; *Preston Chronicle*, 13 November 1852.

Table 3.1: The Establishment and Strength of a Sample of Eighteen English, Welsh and Scottish Militia Units, 1854-1905.[17]

	Establishment											*Present Date of Inspection / Embodied*										
	1854	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*1880*	*1885*	*1890*	*1895*	*1900*	*1905*	*1854*	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*1880*	*1885*	*1890*	*1895*	*1900*	*1905*
Royal Carnarvon Rifles / 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers	407	428	428	406	576	848	848	848	848	652	637	…	390	406	392	566	762	679	600	588	453	389
Royal Cornwall (and Devon) Miners Artillery	379	396	396	378	386	384	384	384	384	395	384	…	192	331	343	277	341	211	271	272	209	227
1st (Royal South) Gloucestershire / 3rd Gloucestershire	1,047	1,083	1,083	1,046	1,060	848	848	848	848	868	849	…	558	660	778	754	680	508	614	564	413	423
Hampshire / 3rd Hampshire Regt.	1,153	1,109	1,031	994	1,010	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,084	1,061	…	408	673	919	861	862	843	782	617	527	465
East Kent / 3rd East Kent	1,047	1,083	1,083	1,046	1,060	1,272	636	848	848	652	637	…	…	660	823	738	994	582	652	496	574	517
4th East Kent	…	…	…	…	…	…	636	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	124	…	…	…	…
6th Lancashire / 3rd (5th) Manchester	1,257	1,299	1,299	1,256	1,272	1,272	848	848	848	868	849	…	461	710	752	815	1,036	718	656	542	576	723
4th (6th) Manchester	…	…	…	…	…	…	848	848	848	868	849	…	…	…	…	…	…	719	669	632	484	737
Royal Monmouthshire R. Engineers (L.I. 1855–1860)	785	815	815	784	798	798	798	798	798	797	1,000	…	407	627	663	713	650	469	586	692	793	885
2nd (East) Norfolk / 4th Norfolk	941	848	743	717	768	848	848	848	848	868	849	…	568	599	669	646	784	663	580	625	496	508
Northumberland L.I. / 3rd (5th) Northumberland Fusiliers	1,257	1,081	1,081	1,044	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,060	1,084	1,061	…	497	678	816	859	907	868	824	890	610	836
Nottinghamshire / 4th Sherwood Foresters (Nott's & Derb's Reg't.)	1,280	1,322	1,322	1,279	1,295	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,272	1,084	849	…	536	808	987	836	968	1,147	1,092	1,024	629	675
1st Stafford / 3rd South Staffordshire	1,012	…	1,048	1,011	1,272	1,696	848	848	848	868	849	…	…	712	944	1,093	1,455	796	646	755	716	748
4th South Staffordshire	…	…	…	…	…	…	848	848	848	868	849	…	…	…	…	…	…	743	629	687	874	715
1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets / 7th Rifle Brigade	1,216	…	1,252	1,215	1,219	848	848	1,060	1,060	1,084	1,061	…	…	777	767	583	734	720	829	826	508	699
2nd West Yorkshire / 3rd West Yorkshire	1,085	1,121	1,121	1,084	1,096	1,060	848	848	848	868	849	…	600	714	772	814	1,033	854	570	664	537	623
Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders / 3rd Gordan Highlanders	…	806	806	775	789	1,060	1,060	848	848	868	849	…	574	571	670	359	812	550	433	475	309	356
Dumfries, Roxburgh, Kirkcudbright and Selkirk / 3rd Scottish Borderers	…	719	723	682	702	848	848	848	848	868	849	…	531	633	647	585	798	774	630	682	430	457
Edinburgh Artillery	…	…	250	235	516	516	516	516	672	838	672	…	…	230	229	407	437	466	488	566	628	629

* Figures included NCOs and men only except for those for 1860 and 1865 which include the permanent staff.

[17] WSHC, 2057/F8/3/B/136, Return on the regiments of militia in England and Wales: the quota of volunteers for each regiment, the actual number of volunteers, and date of training, 1854; PP, *Militia. Return showing the establishment of each regiment of militia in the United Kingdom…*,14, (1863); *Ibid*., 179, (1866); *Ibid*., 82, (1871); *Ibid*., C. 1430, (1876); *Ibid*., C. 2785, (1881); *Ibid*., C. 4675, (1886); *Ibid*., C. 6261, (1890-91); *Ibid*., C. 7939, (1896); *Ibid*., Cd. 579, (1901); *Ibid*., Cd. 2697, (1906).

Table 3.1 (continued): The Establishment and Strength of a Sample of Eighteen English, Welsh and Scottish Militia Units, 1854-1905.

	Enrolled Strength on Date of Inspection / Embodied											*Percentage of Establishment Enrolled*										
	1854	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*1880*	*1885*	*1890*	*1895*	*1900*	*1905*	*1854*	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*1880*	*1885*	*1890*	*1895*	*1900*	*1905*
Royal Carnarvon Rifles / 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers	308	425	448	413	618	848	741	704	647	455	409	75.7	99.3	104.7	101.7	107.3	100.0	87.4	83.0	76.3	69.8	64.2
Royal Cornwall (and Devon) Miners Artillery	333	206	375	371	313	365	224	314	344	209	277	87.9	52.0	94.7	98.1	81.1	95.1	58.3	81.8	89.6	52.9	72.1
1st (Royal South) Gloucestershire / 3rd Gloucestershire	1,035	606	688	861	827	730	574	716	619	469	435	98.9	56.0	63.5	82.3	78.0	86.1	67.7	84.4	73.0	54.0	51.2
Hampshire / 3rd Hampshire Regt.	1,116	500	761	972	956	901	1,027	856	669	539	495	96.8	45.1	73.8	97.8	94.7	85.0	96.9	80.8	63.1	49.7	46.7
East Kent / 3rd East Kent	922	…	748	902	859	1,213	616	749	551	633	567	88.1	…	69.1	86.2	81.0	95.4	96.9	88.3	65.0	97.1	89.0
4th East Kent	…	…	…	…	…	…	169	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	26.6	…	…	…	…
6th Lancashire / 3rd (5th) Manchester	…	545	870	768	1,151	1,128	891	803	670	618	1,019	…	42.0	67.0	61.1	90.5	88.7	105.1	94.7	79.0	71.2	120.0
4th (6th) Manchester	…	…	…	…	…	…	883	803	776	521	960	…	…	…	…	…	…	104.1	94.7	91.5	60.0	113.1
Royal Monmouthshire R. Engineers (L.I. 1855-1860)	733	453	674	720	830	723	518	707	810	810	1,028	93.4	55.6	82.7	91.8	104.0	90.6	64.9	88.6	101.5	101.6	102.8
2nd (East) Norfolk / 4th Norfolk	885	597	636	697	672	797	690	588	656	496	539	94.0	70.4	85.6	97.2	87.5	94.0	81.4	69.3	77.4	57.1	63.5
Northumberland L.I. / 3rd (5th) Northumberland Fusiliers	1,118	600	795	925	992	1,012	1,024	983	1,012	612	901	88.9	55.5	73.5	88.6	93.6	95.5	96.6	92.7	95.5	56.5	84.9
Nottinghamshire / 4th Sherwood Foresters (Nott's & Derb's Reg't.)	1,004	695	877	1,034	919	1,115	1,279	1,185	1,127	682	745	78.4	52.6	66.3	80.8	71.0	87.7	100.6	93.2	88.6	62.9	87.8
1st Stafford / 3rd South Staffordshire	949	…	801	982	1,175	1,648	883	684	839	828	867	93.8	…	76.4	97.1	92.4	97.2	104.1	80.7	98.9	95.4	102.1
4th South Staffordshire	…	…	…	…	…	…	822	684	760	942	828		…	…	…	…	…	96.9	80.7	89.6	108.5	97.5
1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets / 7th Rifle Brigade	911	…	864	831	712	800	792	1,064	1,030	515	809	74.9	…	69.0	68.4	58.4	94.3	93.4	100.4	97.2	47.5	76.2
2nd West Yorkshire / 3rd West Yorkshire	987	732	778	825	939	1,066	894	625	764	688	691	91.0	65.3	69.4	76.1	85.7	100.6	105.4	73.7	90.1	79.3	81.4
Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders / 3rd Gordan Highlanders	…	638	612	709	384	1,044	648	551	545	383	397	…	79.2	75.9	91.5	48.7	98.5	61.1	65.0	64.3	44.1	46.8
Dumfries, Roxburgh, Kirkcudbright and Selkirk / 3rd Scottish Borderers	…	612	663	678	687	879	861	688	766	630	532	…	85.1	91.7	99.4	97.9	103.7	101.5	81.1	90.3	72.6	62.7
Edinburgh Artillery	…	…	256	240	510	499	544	571	670	636	700	…	…	102.4	102.1	98.8	96.7	105.4	110.7	99.7	75.9	104.2

the enrolled strength accompanied the second more limited embodiment during the Indian Mutiny, whereby in 1860 the total enrolled strength fell to 88,434 men. The same was again true towards the end of the century as a result of the South African War, the enrolled strength plummeting from 102,396 men in 1899 to just 88,859 in 1900. This trend was also seen widely on a regimental level as most units experienced a fall in their enrolled strength. For instance, the 4th Sherwood Foresters Regiment saw a fall in its strength from 89 per cent of its establishment in 1895 to just 67 per cent in 1900 before returning to a healthier level at 87 per cent in 1905. Similarly the Edinburgh Royal Garrison Artillery (militia) saw a drop from an almost complete establishment in 1895 to just 76 per cent in 1900. After 1902 the strength of the force dropped to a level unprecedented since the end of the previous embodiment in 1860 reaching a low of 86,681 in 1907, representing just 71 per cent of the establishment. Nevertheless, this again varied between regiments, as demonstrated in Table 3.1.

Thirdly, there also appears to have been a rapid collapse in recruiting from 1865 to 1867. However, this can be explained as a statistical anomaly; recruitment was in fact not struggling, but had purposefully been relaxed. From August 1864 until October 1867 regiments were prohibited from recruiting if their strength exceeded 600 privates. The government had hoped that a reduction in the overall establishment by 30 per cent would enable the militia to be trained for four weeks rather than just three, thus making it more efficient at no increased cost to the treasury and also making larger regiments more manageable. Despite this policy, returns detailing the strength of the force continued to show the original quota, thus giving the impression that regiments which had ceased to recruit above the new limit appeared to be well below their establishment. This was seized upon by those who desired to reform the force, including figures such as Lord Elcho, a prominent advocate of a return to the ballot.[18] However, if one examines recruitment on a regimental basis it is apparent that recruitment continued to recover across the decade. Of 16 sampled regiments in 1865, twelve of which had an establishment of over 600 privates, all were recorded with an enrolled strength above the cap. For instance, the 6th Lancashire Regiment recorded a total enrolled strength of 870 out of a recorded establishment of 1,299 men, 710 of whom were present at the day of inspection. Similarly the 2nd (East) Norfolk Regiment recorded an enrolled strength of

[18] HC Deb., 16 March 1865, vol. 177, cc. 1761-823, (cc. 1773-4); HL Deb., 29 March 1867, vol. 186, cc. 804-13, (cc. 805-6); *Dublin Evening Mail*, 3 October 1864, p. 2.

610 out of a recorded establishment of 743 men, 599 of whom were present at inspection and a further seven absent with leave.[19]

Clearly, recruiting for the militia was as large and consistent a struggle as that for the regular army. Ultimately the key reason for this was due to the principle of voluntary enlistment which, unlike the ballot, relied simply upon financial incentives. To encourage recruitment each recruit was liable to receive a bounty payable by instalments over the term of their service. At first the total bounty of £6 was split so that volunteers received 10s as an immediate incentive upon enlistment (with no guarantee they would attend the preliminary training in the spring). The remainder was payable at the completion of the annual training in instalments of £1 1s for the first four and £1 6s upon completion of the fifth or upon re-engagement – there was some discretion available to commanding officers who, at first, could after enlistment pay a further 10s after completion of the first annual training and the remainder at a rate of 2s per month, payable in either monthly or quarterly instalments. (Additionally up to six months of the next instalment could be paid to men at the completion of the second training who were deemed worthy at the behest of the commanding officer.) In 1873 the terms of service were altered so that each militiaman could enlist for an additional year, although there was no increase to the overall bounty. This meant militiamen received just £1 after each training (as opposed to £1 1s, while the 10s upon enrolment was also withdrawn) meaning militiamen were year for year financially worse off (although the commanding officer could authorise the first year's bounty in two payments in order to provide more immediate financial relief). In 1877 the 10s on enrolment (from 1883 payable only after the completion of the preliminary drill) was reintroduced, increasing the total bounty to £6 10s. An additional 10s could be gained if a recruit chose to train upon enlistment (as opposed to during the preliminary drill) from 1881 onwards. Despite this, a militiaman's bounty remained virtually the same throughout the late nineteenth century as it was not until 1901 that the bounty was significantly increased for the first time to £9 (an additional 10s continued to be liable to those drilling on enlistment) payable at a rate of £1 10s after every training. Significantly an additional non-training bounty totalling £3 was payable each year to militiamen after the completion of two annual trainings, as a means of encouraging men to remain in the force. As a result, those completing their term of service could theoretically earn a total bounty of £21 10s if they had trained upon enlistment.

[19] See Table 3.1.

On top of the bounty there was an additional payment liable for former regular NCOs serving as sergeants in the militia of 30s (payable after each annual training), while militiamen who undertook a course at an authorised school of instruction received an additional payment of £1 upon completion. Additionally there were financial inducements to re-enlist towards the end of or after the expiration of a militiaman's term of service. From 1852 until 1873 each man could re-enlist after four trainings for a further five years' service where upon they received the remainder of their bounty alongside a further 10s and the 5s bringing money (as the recruit acted as his own bringer). After this they would once again receive the remainder of their bounty in instalments of £1 1s (£1 6s in the final year), although in addition they were entitled to a yearly gratuity of 10s meaning each re-enlisted man would receive a total of £8 15s if they served the entirety of the second enlistment, and once again after four trainings would be liable to re-enrol for a further five years. This was altered from 1874 so that a militiaman could re-enrol after serving for a period of five and a half years for a total bounty of £9 payable in instalments of £1 10s after each training, although this was reduced in 1877 to £7 10s when the period of re-enlistment was cut to just four years, £1 10s payable upon re-enlistment and the remainder once again after the annual training. Special rates for re-enlisted men were finally abolished in 1901.[20]

In addition to the bounty, militiamen were liable to the same rates of pay as regular soldiers when assembled for training or embodied. However, the rates of pay, in both the regular army and militia, remained largely unchanged since the beginning of the century amounting to a basic rate of pay of 1s for infantry privates and 1s 2d for gunners. Members of the permanent staff and NCOs received slightly higher rates. In total drummers received 1s 1d (1s when disembodied) while corporals received 1s 2¼d and sergeants 1s 6¾d (reduced to 1s 1d and 1s 6d respectively for disembodied drummers and sergeants of the permanent staff). The basic rate of pay was not increased until 1867, when each man received an additional 2s in line with an increase in pay for regulars. Militiamen were also able to supplement their pay with an additional 1d beer money for each day assembled for training or embodied and could claim lodging or billet allowance of 2d and later 4d per day for up to 28 days. It was also possible to receive 2s compensation if they could not be provided with a pair of boots and had to use their own.

[20] Appendix XIV, PP, *Militia* regulations, 32, (1852-53), pp. 1-2; PP, *Report of the* committee, C.1654, C.1654-I, (1877), p. 513; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Appendices*, Cd. 2064, (1904), Appendix LV, p. 98.

When taken together with the cost of clothing, necessities and provisions provided free, it was estimated, in 1871, that an infantryman could receive as much as £2 18s 5d for the preliminary drill, and £5 1s 2¾d for each subsequent training; a gunner would earn slightly more at £3 3s 1d and £5 12s 11¼d respectively. If they re-enlisted then, due to the 10s gratuity, they could earn even more.[21]

The fact that both pay and the bounty had not increased in any meaningful way meant militia service was decreasingly financially attractive. This was arguably a contributory factor as to why there was an acute shortage of NCOs across the period as their rates of pay were largely only attractive to former regulars drawing a pension which could supplement their income from service with the militia, of which there was a shortage joining from the army (see below).[22] Furthermore, all militiamen were liable to numerous stoppages to their pay for replacement kit, necessities and provisions which in turn reduced the amount they received. This meant militia service compared poorly to all but the worse paid jobs. For instance, in 1867 it had been estimated that an unskilled labourer working in London could earn £4 9s for 28 days work; by 1899 this had risen to £5 16s 8d, an increase of 31.1 per cent. On first appearances the rates of pay received by militiamen appear competitive. However, when adjusted to exclude the cost of clothing, necessities and provisions, as well as any billet or lodging money payable, the comparison is less favourable. At best an infantry private could earn £2 5s over the course of a 28 day preliminary drill and £2 14s 9d after each annual training of 27 days, while a gunner could earn a little more at £2 9s 4d and £2 19s 3d for the same (both excluding the additional 10s gratuity for a re-enlisted man).[23] Nevertheless, stoppages were less of an issue within the militia than the regulars due to the fact that four weeks' annual training and a relatively short period of preliminary drill for recruits meant kit and clothing often lasted longer than in the regular army. Indeed, militiamen were entitled to take items of clothing and their boots away at the end of each training period.[24]

All recruits joining the militia had to meet basic entry requirements which on the whole were more lenient than those for the regular army. At first recruiting was restricted

[21] WSHC, 2057/F8/II/F/9, Details on the Estimates, including comparison of pay in regular army and militia in 1802 and 1852; PP, *Militia regulations*, 32, (1852-53), p. 7-10.
[22] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/A/11, Letter, Lord Salisbury to Sidney Herbert, 14 June 1853.
[23] PP, *Army (yearly wage). Return showing what is the estimated equivalent yearly wage, and at what periods paid, and by what amount of service earned, of a private soldier in the militia artillery, militia, militia reserve, army reserve 1stclass, army reserve 2nd class, and yeomanry.*, 326, (1871), pp. 1-2; Spiers, *The Late Victorian Army*, pp. 133-5
[24] HC Deb., 25 July 1867, vol. 189, cc. 118-40, (cc. 125-6).

to those between 18 and 35 years of age, although volunteers over 35 and discharged soldiers up to the age of 45 could be attested, if passed fit by a military or medical officer and subsequently recommended by the adjutant to the Secretary of State for War. Additionally all recruits were to meet minimum physical standards of 32in around the chest and a minimum height of 5ft 4in, although men of 5ft 3in could be enrolled with the permission of the Secretary of State for War. There were slightly higher standards set for the artillery and engineers, 5ft 6in for the former and 5ft 5in for the latter. [25] Much like the regular army, the militia was able to control the influx of manpower by tailoring its entry requirements, raising standards when recruitment was more plentiful and reducing them when not. In 1893, when the enrolled strength of the militia reached its peak, the decision was taken to raise the entry requirement as the strength of the force exceeded that laid down in the estimates. Therefore, the minimum height requirement was raised by an inch in November and the practise of accepting boys aged 17 was suspended, even if they met the physical standard.[26] Nevertheless, the fact that entry requirements were normally more relaxed for the militia than the regulars meant many militiamen were comparably smaller in physical stature than their regular counterparts. For instance, in 1880 a total of 60.2 per cent of regular NCOs and men measured more than 5ft 7in in height; by comparison, between 1879 and 1880 only 28 of the 156 militia regiments and artillery corps recorded an average above that height among their men.[27]

Finding the required manpower to fill the county quotas remained the ultimate responsibility of the lords lieutenant. To establish each county's quota the recent 1851 census was used as a guide so that one in 174 men would be required in 1852 and one in 286 men in 1853. (Recruiting for Scottish and Irish regiments remained inactive as they were governed by separate legislation and thus were not reconstituted until 1854 owing to the mounting manpower requirements of the army during the Crimean War; subsequently their establishment was fixed at 10, and 30,000 respectively on top of the 80,000 for England and Wales.) The term of engagement was set at five years (rising to six in 1874) after which militiamen could either be discharged or re-engage for a further term of service, although they were liable to purchase their discharge at any time for a sum of £1

[25] PP, *Militia regulations*, 32, (1852-53), pp. 1-2; PP, *Army and militia. Annual report of the Inspector General of Recruiting*, C.2832, (1881), p. 12.
[26] PP, *Army and militia. Annual report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1893*., C. 7291, (1893-94), p. 12; PP, *Army and militia. Annual report of the Inspector General of recruiting for 1894*., C. 7659, (1895), p. 12.
[27] PP, *Army and militia. Annual report of the Inspector General of Recruiting for 1880*, C.2832, (1881), p. 12; Skelley, *Victorian Army at Home*, p. 307.

(later rising to £1 10s). Recruits had to be resident in either the county of the regiment they wished to join or an adjacent county, although men could expect to serve anywhere in the United Kingdom with their regiment. Any deficiencies in a particular regiment could be filled by recruiting men from another county. All potential recruits were to face medical examination and if approved recited the oath before a magistrate or deputy lieutenant in their county, riding or place.[28]

On the ground recruitment was ultimately the responsibility of the adjutant who supervised the efforts of the permanent staff. Once Cardwell introduced brigade depots for regular and militia regiments in 1873, which in turn were consolidated by Childers as territorial regiments in 1881, the responsibility for recruiting both regular and militia recruits fell to the district commander. The methods by which regiments recruited varied depending on the ease with which recruits could be obtained at headquarters – many recruits could be directly obtained from the headquarters or nearby towns if they contained sufficient willing volunteers. Members of the permanent staff were usually sent to find volunteers by 'beat of the drum' at out-stations located in the surrounding towns, after which the adjutant, surgeon and often the sergeant-major would proceed from station to station to enrol recruits. Usually there would be a defined period in which recruiting was carried out, principally during winter and spring, although if recruits were slow to come forth sergeants could be posted at out-stations for the entirety of the non-training period. In the 3rd Lancashire Regiment, the headquarters of which were located in Preston, there were ample men willing to enlist without the need to recruit beyond. Similarly, the Worcestershire Regiment also avoided sending recruitment parties away from the headquarters in Worcester, as sufficient recruits came from the surrounding countryside and manufacturing towns (namely Kidderminster, Droitwich and Stowbridge). By comparison, regiments with headquarters located in small towns usually recruited from elsewhere. For instance, in the North-East, regiments tended to recruit away from their headquarters: both the Northumberland Artillery, the headquarters of which were located in Berwick, and the Durham Fusiliers, whose headquarters were located in Barnard Castle, drew the majority of their recruits from the manufacturing areas around the Rivers Tyne and Tees. In the case of the Northumberland Artillery, the significant distance from Berwick to Newcastle and Tynemouth contributed in part to the high cost for the regiment of £7 per recruit. By comparison it cost the Durham Fusiliers

[28] PP, *Militia regulations*, 32, (1852-53), pp. 1-2

as little as 4s 6d per recruit, although this was largely due to the more efficient use of surgeons living in the recruiting areas.[29] On top of their recruiting duties for the militia, members of the permanent staff were also briefly tasked with finding recruits for the regular army, a function authorised by the War Office from 15 August 1857 until finally being suspended on 7 May 1861.[30]

All those involved in recruiting received not just financial compensation for their efforts, but also financial incentives to recruit as many men as possible. Adjutants were initially liable for a 5s allowance for every day spent undertaking recruitment duties, later altered to a yearly allowance of £3 per company. This was supplemented by 5s lodging money whilst stationed away from headquarters and 2s forage allowance to cover travel expenses. It was expected that a surgeon would accompany the recruitment party, receiving 15s a day if five or more recruits were examined (or 2s 6d per recruit if less than five whilst stationed at headquarters) and the same inn and forage allowances as adjutants. Recruiting sergeants and drummers received full compensation for travel costs by rail with an additional 10d to cover food expenses, or if travelling by road marching money at 1s 1d per day to cover expenses (in addition to their daily pay of 2s ¾d for a sergeant-major, 1s 6¾d for a sergeant, and 1s 1d for drummers, with the daily addition of 1d beer money).[31]

Supplementing the official recruiting parties was the payment of bringing money of 5s (later reduced to 2s 6d) to any individual deemed a *bona fide* bringer – any individual that it was deemed had brought forth a volunteer in good faith. This was also aimed at incentivising militiamen to try and encourage others to volunteer, a practice which was widespread; for instance, in 1876 a total of 85 regiments encouraged or allowed militiamen to bring recruits.[32] However, the system was open to widespread abuse and created a high degree of resentment within the force. In 1859 the lieutenant-colonel of the 1st Derbyshire Regiment complained that many of the recruits for whom a bringer had been paid simply failed to attend the preliminary training, the bringer receiving the payment regardless. As a result it was not uncommon for half the bringing money to be paid when a recruit was first brought, the other half during the training. It

[29] TNA, WO 43/903, 'Militia. Beating orders (authority to recruit by drumbeat). Royal warrants 6 September 1852 and 8 December 1854'; WO 33/21a, 'Memorandum on Militia Recruiting', 1870.
[30] BLARS, LC/Mil/4/3/1, Draft out-letters and incoming War Office letters and circulars, 1858-85: War Office Circular, 27 Gen. No. 1267, 7 May 1861.
[31] PP, *Militia regulations*, 32, (1852-53), pp. 5-6.
[32] *Ibid*., p. 13; Appendix II, PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), pp. 398-492.

was also common for those with every intention of enlisting to claim to have been brought by an individual who, upon payment, would pass a share onto the recruit. This was particularly resented by recruiting sergeants who felt they were in essence being cheated of the right to gain the bringing money for themselves. There were even 'professional touts' who made a habit of convincing as many volunteers to defraud the regiment.[33] The dubious place that bringing money had in what was meant to be a system of voluntary enlistment, and the belief that such a system encouraged desertion, meant it was finally abolished for both the regular army and militia by Royal Warrant in April 1888. In the following years calls from many militia officers for its reintroduction were rejected owing to the fact that abolition appeared to have had little effect upon the success of recruitment.[34]

There is also evidence that in the years immediately after reform policemen were used as bringers, although this varied depending on the attitude of chief constables to the role of finding recruits. During 1852 and 1853 the chief constable of Lancashire was happy for his men to be intimately involved with recruiting for the militia and he actively encouraged them to collect the 5s bringing money, although in the 3rd Lancashire Regiment this had ceased by 1859. In Wiltshire the county constabulary was responsible for bringing three-quarters of recruits for the county regiment and continued to bring recruits throughout the 1850s. Additionally in both counties the police also assisted the clerks of the lieutenancy by filling out notices for attested militiamen.+ In both counties the burden of such rested heavily upon the police, as the clerks of lieutenancy were not paid to fill out notices, and in Lancashire the chief constable noted his men were forced to complete such notices in one night. The police involvement varied across the country however. In 1859 it was remarked that the police were not available for recruiting purposes in counties adjoining Wiltshire. Similarly in Caernarvonshire, Devon, Shropshire, Nottinghamshire and Forfar the police were of no assistance in bringing in recruits.[35]

* * *

[33] TNA, WO 33/21a; PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553, (1859 Session 2), q. 6295; PP, *Report of the* committee, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), q 1637.
[34] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), pp. xi-iii.
[35] PP, *First report from the Select Committee on Police; with the minutes of evidence*., 603, (1852-53), qq. 1702, 1706-16, 2462-5; PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553, (1859 Session 2), qq. 358, 382, 676, 1031-4, 2655-6, 3119, 5509, 6012-4.

The inherent weaknesses of relying on voluntary enlistment, as opposed to the ballot, meant it was a constant struggle to combat manpower wastage. It is clear that wastage was a growing problem as between 1872 and 1907 there was a net decrease of enrolled militiamen in 22 of the 33 recorded years (see Table 3.2). This was primarily due to two reasons: high rates of desertion and the increasing reliance upon the militia as a source of recruits for the regulars, both of which contributed to poor rates of manpower retention.[36] Table 3.2 shows that in any one year desertion accounted for between 10.1 and 41.2 per cent of the total decrease in manpower (in 1901 and the year from 1 September 1878 to 30 October 1879 respectively), although on average it accounted for 23.3 per cent of all wastage across the period. Table 3.2 also shows that very few deserters ever rejoined their units meaning the majority were permanently lost to the force. Yet rates of desertion were far from static: in fact, they could vary significantly from year to year. Table 3.2 clearly demonstrates that the rate of desertion increased in the years militia units were embodied, doubling to 16,699 in 1854, reaching a peak of 26,166 in 1858 and rising significantly during the first year of the South African War reaching 11,920 in 1900 (although this dropped considerably the following year). The reason for such an increase was not simply due to the hardship of prolonged embodied service: in Sidney Herbert's view, it was also due to the fact that the labouring classes (both agricultural and industrial), from which the militia recruited a significant part of its manpower, were best disposed towards short-term disembodied service which would allow them to supplement irregular and often seasonal periods of employment. Lengthy embodiments simply made it harder for militiamen to retain or find employment, thus leading to the higher rates of desertion.[37]

High rates of desertion during the Indian Mutiny prompted the government to try and mitigate its worst excesses, some of which appeared to have succeeded. Firstly, in 1858 it was suggested that the most aggravated cases should, as a deterrent, be tried by courts-martial (instead of summarily by magistrates, explored in Chapter 4). Secondly, the Militia Act of 1859 transferred the power to decide when units would assemble from the Lord Lieutenant to the Secretary of State for War. With the disembodiment of the remaining embodied units in 1860 and 1861, these measures did help to limit desertion

[36] For the purposes of this study the terms 'desertion' and 'absence without leave' are not interchangeable. For the greater charge of desertion there had to be some proof of intent to permanently absent oneself. *Manual of Military Law*, (London: H.M.S.O, 1907), pp. 18-19.
[37] HC Deb., 26 June 1860 vol. 159, cc. 1030-45(c. 1034).

Table 3.2: Increase and Decrease of the Rank and File of the Militia of the UK, 1853-1907.[38]

*Year**	*Increase*				
	Recruits	*Re-enlisted*	*From Desertion*	*Other Sources*	***Total Increase***
1853	35,813	…	…	…	…
1854	35,014	…	…	…	…
1855	72,069	…	…	…	…
1856	28,247	…	…	…	…
1857	26,702	…	…	…	…
1858	27,507	…	…	…	…
1859	26,704	…	…	…	…
1861	32,737	…	…	…	…
1863	29,414	…	…	…	…
1865	22,680	…	…	…	…
1867	…	…	…	…	…
1869	…	…	…	…	…
1871	33,097	…	…	…	…
1873-4	25,324	…	644	312	**26,280**
1876-7	40,821	…	816	1,048	**42,685**
1877-8	42,561	…	769	3,541	**46,871**
1878-9	34,032	…	943	19,600**	**54,575**
1881	24,965	519	610	…	**26,094**
1883	33,764	1,760	607	…	**36,131**
1885	40,657	2,652	825	…	**44,134**
1887	33,597	3,039	1,229	…	**37,865**
1889	33,354	2,901	797	…	**37,052**
1891	39,783	2,327	1,034	…	**43,144**
1893	45,771	3,161	1,489	…	**50,421**
1895	35,148	1,947	949	1	**38,045**
1897	38,246	1,760	902	…	**40,908**
1899	40,653	2,012	1,069	…	**43,734**
1900	37,853	1,342	2,449	1,222	**42,866**
1901	37,644	1,212	1,179	3,537	**43,572**
1902	41,486	2,986	1,224	6,686	**52,382**
1903	25,774	3,623	1,013	133	**30,543**
1904-5	29,941	4,001	1,053	35	**35,030**
1906-7	28,575	4,094	739	22	**33,430**

*The transfer of militiamen to the regular army was suspended in October 1859. Additionally, Irish regiments were not trained from 1866 to 1870 and 1881 to 1882. Furthermore, the figures for 1903 are from 1 January to 30 September only.

** The large number recorded as joining the regulars in 1877-8 was due to mobilisation of militia reservists for the Zulu War, who subsequently rejoined the following year.

[38] PP, *Militia, &c. Returns relating to the militia, &c.*, 380, (1860); PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877); PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890); PP, *Annual report of the Inspector-General of recruiting*, C. 2832, (1881); C. 3503, (1883); C. 4314, (1884-85); C. 4984, (1887); C. 5652, (1889); C. 6275, (1890-91); C. 6906, (1893-94); C. 8770, (1897); PP, *General annual report on the British army for the years ending 30th September, 1907, with which is incorporated the annual report of recruiting. Prepared by command of the Army Council*, Cd. 3798, (1908).

Table 3.2 (continued): Increase and Decrease of the Rank and File of the Militia of the UK, 1853-1907.

*Year**	*Decrease*							*Net Increase /Decrease*
	Discharged	*Dead*	*Desertion*	*Joined Regulars*	*Joined Navy /Marines*	*Other Sources*	***Total Decrease***	
1853	…	…	8,616	…	…	…	…	…
1854	…	…	16,699	9,911	1,247	…	…	…
1855	…	…	12,132	17,864	979	…	…	…
1856	…	…	4,391	10,796	622	…	…	…
1857	…	…	13,865	5,742	167	…	…	…
1858	…	…	26,166	16,314	536	…	…	…
1859	…	…	9,402	5,695	1,669	…	…	…
1861	…	…	6,100	…	…	…	…	…
1863	…	…	7,700	…	…	…	…	…
1865	…	…	6,725	…	…	…	…	…
1867	…	…	3,963	…	…	…	…	…
1869	…	…	4,438	…	…	…	…	…
1871	…	…	8,186	…	…	…	…	…
1873-4	14,044	511	9,105	4,876		2,736	**31,272**	-4,992
1876-7	16,852	472	10,670	10,151		1,424	**39,569**	3,116
1877-8	13,859	501	14,046	29,631**		1,686	**59,723**	-12,852
1878-9	10,831	463	13,188	7,103		419	**32,004**	2,971
1881	14,778	505	7,530	8,528		110	**31,451**	-5,357
1883	18,078	511	11,330	12,450	321	55	**42,745**	-6,614
1885	14,113	417	10,924	14,513	308	43	**40,318**	3,816
1887	16,929	421	10,288	11,504	283	210	**39,635**	-1,770
1889	17,283	363	8,670	12,599	523	462	**39,900**	-2,848
1891	17,463	443	10,706	13,542	395	383	**42,932**	212
1893	16,102	335	14,048	14,314	485	95	**45,379**	5,042
1895	16,996	422	7,643	12,234	666	126	**38,087**	-42
1897	19,647	412	8,417	14,052	699	28	**43,255**	-2,347
1899	22,020	503	10,144	13,518	722	2,344	**49,251**	-5,517
1900	12,064	813	11,920	10,715	247	12,496	**48,255**	-5,389
1901	13,561	852	3,366	14,907	666	116	**33,468**	10,104
1902	22,653	706	10,454	18,373	621	…	**52,807**	-425
1903	21,004	352	9,435	11,870	559	…	**43,220**	-12,677
1904-5	17,906	369	4,999	12,103	330	…	**35,707**	-677
1906-7	16,246	397	4,995	12,113	646	422	**34,819**	-1,389

rates in the following years; never again did such a large proportion of the militia fail to attend the annual training. However, by no means was the issue of desertion solved; in fact, it remained one of the largest single sources of annual wastage throughout the period (as shown by Table 3.2). The report of a second royal commission examining the militia, published in 1877, argued that little more could practically be done to further reduce desertion rates. They could only recommend increased vigilance by recruiters (to prevent fraudulent enlistment) and that the alteration of the law so that those frequently deserting automatically face a prison sentence without the possibility of a fine.[39]

Desertion and absence without leave were particularly prevalent among recruits and militiamen undertaking their first year of service. Table 3.3 demonstrates that the number of recruits recorded as absent without leave from their preliminary drill, or their first annual training, accounted for a significant proportion of those recorded as deserters in Table 3.2 (although it is important to remember that not all of those recorded as absent necessarily went on to be permanently struck off as a deserter). For instance, between the trainings of 1873 and 1874 a total of 4,806 of those recruited were recorded as absent from the preliminary drill, compared to a total of 9,105 men recorded as having deserted in the same period (in Table 3.2). The key reason desertion was most prevalent among recruits was that, before 1873, recruits were liable for 10s immediately upon their enrolment as an incentive for them to recruit, but without their need to spend a single day in training. This not only encouraged recruits to desert, but also to try and fraudulently enlist into several units as a means of gaining as many bounties as possible. It was also expensive: it was estimated that those who failed to attend the preliminary drill, or who were medically rejected, cost the exchequer between £8,000 and £10,000 *per annum.*[40] Although the report of the Royal Commission examining the militia in 1859 suggested that all recruits should be trained immediately upon enrolment, receiving their enrolment bounty after completing their recruit training, it was not until 1873 that the decision was taken to prohibit the payment of the enrolment bounty upon enlistment.[41] Instead recruits were paid £1 after each training period, with the first year's bounty split into two payments at the discretion of the commanding officer. However, despite the change, there was little tangible improvement. In fact, Table 3.2 shows that the number of deserters struck off increased after the change, while Table 3.3 also shows that the proportion of

[39] PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), p. xiii
[40] *Ibid.*, p. xiv.
[41] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, (1859), pp. x-xii.

recruits absent without leave, between the trainings of 1876 and 1877, had also increased. This failure was largely due to the fact that, at the same time as the 10s enrolment bounty was abolished, legislation (36 and 37 Vict. c. 68) increased the length of a militia recruit's service from five to six years without any additional increase to the amount of his bounty (as discussed above). The failure to control desertion meant that in 1877 the decision was taken to reintroduce the 10s enrolment bounty on top of the existing total of recruits (from 1881 onwards) the option of being drilled immediately upon enlistment, for which they would immediately receive a portion of their yearly bounty.

By again offering recruits a bounty upon enrolment, so long as they trained immediately when enlisted, the government were able to bring the level of absenteeism and desertion amongst recruits down to more manageable levels. Table 3.3 shows that in the year after the 10s enrolment bounty was restored the proportion of recruits recorded as absent without leave from their recruit training dropped from 12.9 per cent (in the year 1880 to 1881) to just 3.9 per cent (in the year 1881 to 1882). However, despite the conclusion of the Royal Commission of 1890 that the change in system had largely succeeded – returns showed that 80 per cent of recruits preferred to train on enlistment[42] – the drop in absenteeism amongst recruits did not correspond to an overall drop in desertion rates. Table 3.2 demonstrates that in the corresponding years (1880 to 1882) the number struck off as deserters remained relatively stable; indeed, there was only a small drop to 7,530 in 1881 compared to 9,299 the previous year. Furthermore, it was later recorded that between 1902 and 1907 most of those who deserted continued to do so in the first year of their service. In 1902, half of all recorded cases occurred among recruits serving their first year, one-quarter serving in the second year and half as many again in their third year.[43] Indeed it was the conclusion of Colonel Arthur Robson, commanding the Northern Division Royal Artillery (militia), that the possibility of desertion lessened the more experienced men became.[44]

[42] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), pp. x, xiii.
[43] Table 6, PP, *General annual report*, Cd. 1496, (1903), p. 84; Table 7, *Ibid.*, Cd. 1904, (1904), p. 123; Table 7, *Ibid.*, Cd. 2268, (1905), p. 119; Table 7, *Ibid.*, Cd. 2696, (1906), p. 119; Table 7, *Ibid* , Cd. 3365, (1907), p. 121; Table 7, *Ibid.*, Cd. 3798, (1908), p. 111.
[44] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), q. 6182.

Table 3.3: Recruit's Absent Without Leave from the Preliminary Drill among the Militia of the UK, 1873-1894.[45]

Year	*Recruits Raised*			*AWOL from Preliminary Drill*			*AWOL from First Annual Training*	*Percentage of Recruits AWOL*
1873-74		29,148			4,806		…	16.5
1876-77		40,821			9,929		…	24.3
1877-78		42,651			9,053		…	21.2
1878-79		34,032			5,739		…	16.9
1879-80		30,408			4,459		…	14.7
1880-81		26,120			3,358		…	12.9
	Recruits Training on Enlistment	*Recruits at Preliminary Training*	*Total Recruits Raised*	*AWOL from Enlistment Training*	*AWOL from Preliminary Training*	*Total AWOL*		
1881-82	15,482	7,950	23,432	200	716	916	1,118	3.9
1882-83	19,434	12,615	32,049	236	1,291	1,527	1,456	4.8
1883-84	26,872	9,195	36,067	428	125	553	2,271	1.5
1884-85	32,994	7,923	40,917	576	85	661	3,768	1.6
				Before Recruit's Training	*During Recruit's Training*	*Total AWOL*		
1885-86	…	…	40,011	…	754	…	4,058	…
1886-87	28,291	8,552	36,843	…	493	…	3,236	…
1887-88	23,455	8,360	31,815	…	333	…	2,090	…
1888-89	…	…	32,348	…	386	…	1,685	…
1889-90	24,878	8,469	33,347	…	534	…	1,717	…
1890-91	28,015	9,472	37,487	673	646	1,319	3,026	3.5
1891-92	34,049	10,750	44,799	989	783	1,772	3,883	4.0
1892-93	39,425	10,936	50,361	1,170	814	1,984	5,594	3.9
1893-94	29,392	8,430	37,831	624	495	1,119	3,281	3.0

Although the level of desertion broadly decreased over the course of the period, it was increasingly supplanted by those leaving the militia for the regular army, Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Table 3.2 illustrates that by the 1880s this became consistently the largest cause of wastage (second only to the total of those formally discharged). Much like desertion and fraudulent enlistment, this had been a somewhat commonplace occurrence during the embodiments of the 1850s as the manpower needs of the militia were clearly subservient to the line. The impact was deemed to be of such damage to the efficiency of the force that in 1859 a Parliamentary commission suggested the immediate

[45] PP, *Recruiting. Statistical tables relative to recruiting for the army and militia*., C. 1205, (1875), XIV; PP, *Army and militia Annual report*, C. 2832, (1881); C. 3169, (1882); C. 3503, (1883); C. 3911, (1884); C. 4314, (1884-85); C. 4677, (1886); C. 4984, (1887); C. 5302, (1888); C. 5652, (1889); C. 6275, (1890-91).

suspension of the practice. Although their recommendation went unheeded (due to the Secretary of State for War, Jonathan Peel's, suspension of the remit of the commission to examine the practice) Sidney Herbert (as Secretary of State for War in Palmerston's new administration) officially suspended all transfers in June 1860 despite the fears of some, such as the Duke of Somerset, that recruitment for the regular army would suffer as a result.[46] However, there remained those who were convinced of the need for greater integration of the army and militia – Peel remained a continued advocate in recruitment from the militia to the line. It was not long before calls for its reintroduction were heeded and in May 1866 a circular re-established recruitment from the militia to the line due to poor rates of recruitment within the army for which it was again hoped the militia could be a useful source of manpower. As a result militia officers were once again encouraged to persuade as many men to transfer as possible.[47] After its re-introduction the militia found itself providing an increasing proportion of manpower for the regular army. For instance, from 1872 to 1873 a total of 4,324 militiamen enlisted into the regular army, navy or marines, 15.8 per cent of the total wastage of 27,549 men recorded for the year. By 1883 the number had increased threefold as 12,450 men transferred to the line, with 321 to the navy or marines, representing 29.9 per cent of the total wastage of 42,745 men. In fact there were only three years in which the proportion of men transferring accounted for less than 30 per cent of the annual wastage, while in 1885 it hit a high (before the South African War) of 14,513 transferring to the line and 308 to the navy or marines, or 36.8 per cent of the total wastage of 40,318 men for the year.

Clearly the militia had become a vital source of manpower for the regular army. In total, 327,496 men passed to the regulars from the Militia from 1882 to 1904, representing 35.4 per cent of the army's total manpower.[48] What was particularly concerning for the militia was not just simply that a large number of their existing manpower were being drawn into the regular army, but that regular recruiters were poaching militia recruits before they even had a chance to join their units. The creation of joint brigade depots as part of Cardwell's localisation scheme meant that recruitment for both the regular and militia battalions (if the latter had its headquarters located there) fell under the responsibility of the regular depot staff. Combined with the abolition of the

[46] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553, (1859 Session 2), pp. v, vii, xiv; WSHC, 2057/F8/V/B/414, Letter from the Duke of Somerset to Sidney Herbert, 1 June 1860; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 155.
[47] HC Deb., 14 June 1866, vol. 184, cc. 378-9.
[48] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 187.

payment of 10s immediately upon enlistment, which meant most recruits elected to train when they enlisted at the depot, militia officers and NCOs had very little supervision and influence over their recruits. This meant they were easy targets for regular recruiters preying on their ever growing familiarisation with military life. This led to calls in 1890 for militia colonels to supervise recruit drill and for a militia officer to always be present if at least 25 militia recruits were present.[49] Nevertheless, this did not stop the regular army from making it even harder for militia units to replace serving militiamen who were increasingly likely to leave the force, many for the regular army; the militia was, in effect (to quote Viscount Haldane in 1921) 'plundered at one end and pillaged at the other.'[50]

The consistent annual loss from desertion and the increasing transfer of men to the regular army meant it was unlikely any single militiaman would serve the full period of his enlistment. Although Table 3.2 demonstrates that in any one year a large proportion of the total decrease was accounted for by discharged men, in fact very few men actually served the full term of their enlistment. Table 3.4 illustrates that less than half of those discharged in each year completed their full term of enlistment. Furthermore, compared to 1880 and 1881, the number completing their full term of enlistment continually declined until the height of the South African War due to the fact that the ability to purchase one's discharge was formally suspended (with a result that, as Table 3.2 shows, desertion increased) while continuous embodiment, and the pay it brought, encouraged a greater proportion of men to see out their full term of service. This meant that, before 1901, on average for every 100 militiamen serving only ten would complete their full term of service, and even during and after the South African War this only increased to an average of 23.

What is also clear is that the ability for militiamen to purchase their discharge, prior to the completion of their full term of engagement, was a significant drain upon the militia's manpower. Prior to 1877 regulations permitted militiamen to only be released early from their term of service upon the repayment of all enrolment expenses and if they could provide a substitute under the discretion of the commanding officer, which the majority facilitated. However, a committee examining the militia in 1877 successfully recommended that the requirement to provide a substitute should be dropped and that all disembodied militiamen should henceforth be allowed to purchase their discharge for a

[49] Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 160-1; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 14-5, 24, 205-6; PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), p. xvii.
[50] HL Deb., 10 August 1921, vol. 43, cc. 371-90, (c. 376).

Table 3.4: The Cause of those Formally Discharged within the Militia of the UK, 1880-1907.[51]

Year	*Termination of Engagement*	*As Invalids*		*By Purchase*	*As Bad Characters*		*Other*	*Total*
1880	5,177	3,879		4,609	985		…	14,650
1881	5,958	2,994		4,904	922		…	14,778
		Medically Unfit	*Rejected after Attestation*		*Conviction*	*Misconduct*		
1889	4,097	3,703	…	8,816	…	667	…	17,283
1890	4,382	3,867	…	9,348	…	710	…	18,307
1891	4,145	3,211	…	9,462	…	645	…	17,463
1892	3,319	4,193	…	8,645	…	742	399	17,298
1893	3,109	3,471	631	7,952	…	801	138	16,102
1894	3,374	3,207	537	8,595	…	726	74	16,513
1895	3,724	3,296	459	8,738	…	707	72	16,996
1896	3,973	2,878	444	9,953	…	774	143	18,165
1897	4,369	2,864	633	10,772	…	758	251	19,647
1898	4,870	2,803	710	10,266	…	778	324	19,808
1899	4,775	3,155	877	11,793	487	332	601	22,020
1900	2,531	4,995	578	1,830	260	516	1,354	12,064
1901	7,559	1,853	444	1,607	289	479	1,330	13,561
1902	13,106	2,630	816	3,712	371	497	1,521	22,653
1903*	9,518	2,293	933	6,793	439	434	594	21,004
1903-4	10,714	2,529	1,011	5,578	563	558	571	21,524
1904-5	7,740	2,554	1,323	4,442	523	521	803	17,906
1905-6	8,383	2,506	887	4,078	508	376	707	17,445
1906-7	7,569	2,291	658	3,932	570	525	701	16,246

*Records for 1 January to 30 September only.

fee of just £1 provided they had a good reason, such as if they were seeking employment and could no longer afford the time necessary for service. It was hoped such a change in policy would encourage men to enlist who had previously been put-off due to the fear it would hurt their chances of finding or retaining civil employment. However, the result was more damaging as in the last two decades of the nineteenth century the number purchasing their discharge grew from just 4,609 in 1881 to a high of 11,793 in 1899. [52]

Furthermore, a significant minority of wastage was accounted for by those rejected upon enlistment or later discharged on medical grounds, or upon misconduct or conviction. Indeed, between 1892 and 1895, Table 3.4 shows that the total number of those rejected on medical grounds exceeded the number of men who had served their full term of enlistment. For instance, in 1892 a total of 4,193 militiamen were rejected as

[51] PP, *Annual report of the Inspector-General of recruiting*, C. 2832, (1881); C. 3169, (1882); C. 6906, (1893-94); C. 8770, (1897); PP, *General annual report*, Cd. 3798, (1908).
[52] PP, *Annual report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the year 1900.*, Cd. 519, (1901), pp. 17, 20.

medically unfit, with a further 742 men discharged due to misconduct; by comparison only 3,319 men had completed their full term of service. To avoid this all recruits, prior to attestation, were expected to face inspection by the regimental surgeon or one of his assistants, or failing that by two private civilian practitioners, although if two were unavailable one would ultimately suffice. However, in some regiments, there were concerns from surgeons that civilian practitioners were passing as fit men who were ultimately unsuitable, thus contributing to an unnecessarily high rate of wastage. This appears to have been a particular concern for the 1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets Regiment which, of all those attested in 1870, saw just 34.5 per cent rejected as unfit prior to completing their term of service. Earlier in 1858, the regiment's adjutant complained that from a batch of recently attested volunteers three were found to be 'not the stamp of men wished for' and reminded the civilian practitioner who had passed them to be more thorough in his examination. Even by the late 1880s and 1890s when, as shown in Table 3.1, the battalion was able to recruit with relative ease, high rates of medical rejection meant the adjutant had to seek permission to recruit above the establishment in anticipation that many recruits would fail to meet the necessary standards. For instance, in 1890 the battalion was permitted to recruit 100 men in excess of their establishment due to the belief that as many as 150 recruits (of the 360 it was believed necessary for the year) would fail to attest, the vast majority on medical grounds.[53]

Similar concerns were also voiced by the surgeon of the Royal Wiltshire Regiment who remarked in 1859 that, upon his appointment, he found a large number of the recruits previously passed by civilian practitioners to be unfit, particularly those recruited away from the headquarters; this included one individual whom he found under examination to have a fractured leg which the civilian practitioner had either missed or purposefully ignored. The surgeon of the Bedfordshire Regiment also complained of the recruits sent by civilian practitioners noting how one individual had been found, on subsequent investigation, to be flat footed and afflicted with ulcers making him totally unsuitable for service. It was also remarked by the commanding officer of the 2nd West York Regiment that compared to his own surgeons those passed by civilian practitioners

[53] TNA, WO 68/436, 7th Battalion, Rifle Brigade, formerly 1st or King's Own Royal Tower Hamlets Militia Enrolment Book, 1869 to 1880; WO 68/429/6, Letter Book, 1st or King's Own Royal Tower Hamlets Militia, 16 May 1854 to 29 Dec. 1862, letter from Capt. J. Grey to Lieut. Walmisley, 29 August 1858; WO 68/429/9, Letter Book, 7th Rifle Brigade, 24 April 1888 to 26 October 1891, Letter from Capt. A.S.E Somerset to the Officer Commanding, Scots Guards, 15 February 1890.

were frequently later found to be unsuitable.[54] The reason for this was that whereas regimental surgeons and their assistants were paid a flat rate for attesting their men – the daily pay for surgeons when examining volunteers amounted to 11s 4d, but only if they passed as fit five or more individuals per day, otherwise they would receive an allowance of 2s 6d for each man passed – whereas private civilian practitioners received 2s 6d per recruit regardless of whether or not they were attested.[55]

In 1876 the Secretary of State for War, Gathorne Hardy, reformed the role of regimental surgeons in examining recruits, building upon the reforms of his predecessor Cardwell. By royal warrant the regulations were altered so as to prohibit surgeons from examining recruits in regiments that now placed their headquarters at a brigade depot. Instead this role was to now be undertaken by army surgeons based at the depot which it was hoped would not only save the service additional costs, but also relieve the difficulties militia surgeons faced in managing their private practice with their role in the force. Nevertheless, in regiments which continued to recruit independently the duty of inspecting recruits remained with the regimental surgeon and his assistants.[56] Nevertheless, even by the end of the century it was still found necessary to continue to rely on civilian practitioners due to the fact that there were simply too few medical officers to process recruits in every regiment despite the fact that certain regiments retained their own regimental surgeons (as argued in 1889 by the Surgeon-General W.A. Mackinnon).[57]

The fact that so many militiamen were lost prior to serving their full term of enlistment demonstrates how poor the force was at retaining its manpower. What was also concerning was that it was increasingly likely militiamen would not re-enlist for a further term of service. As Table 3.5 shows, in each year only a relatively small number of militiamen chose to further their engagement. Poor rates of re-enlistment were particularly concerning as it was widely agreed by militia officers and War Office officials that re-enrolled men provided a steadying influence upon often young and inexperienced recruits, while they were also less likely to volunteer for the regulars.[58]

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[54] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, 2553 (1859 Session 2), qq. 1688-3, 2558, 3290-2.
[55] PP, *Militia Regulations*, 32, (1852-53), pp. 1, 11, 13.
[56] HC Deb., 7 Aug. 1876, vol. 231, c. 697.
[57] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), qq. 8376-8.
[58] It was the opinion of the Duke of Cambridge, among others, that there was no conflict of interest with encouraging militiamen to re-enrol as they were not likely to ever join the line and would otherwise be lost altogether. PP, *Report of the committee*, C.1654 C.1654-I, (1877), qq. 1927, 4662, 4717, 4815-8, 5055, 6011-2, 6016-8, 8662-4, 9186-70, 9174, 9267.

Table 3.5: Rates of Re-Enlistment within the Militia of the UK, 1871-1903.[59]

Year	*Re-enrolled men*	*Total number of re-engaged militiamen serving*	*Discharged Soldiers*
1.4.1871 - 30.3.1872	7,975	…	…
1.4.1872 - 30.3.1873	5,548	…	…
1.4.1873 - 30.3.1874	3,643	…	…
1.4.1874 - 31.12.1874	2,214	…	…
1877	5,335	…	…
1878	1,825	…	…
1879	1,957	…	…
1880	4,730	…	…
1881	6,000	…	…
1882	9,192	…	…
1883	9,171	29,264	1,496
1884	7,069	28,778	2,454
1885	7,354	29,529	3,089
	Number re-enlisted after completion of engagement		
1.1.1885	4,174	28,778	2,454
1.1.1886	5,001	29,529	3,107
1.1.1887	6,202	31,618	3,990
1.1.1888	6,838	31,498	4,756
1.1.1889	6,808	30,763	5,362
1.1.1890	6,957	31,422	6,008
1.1.1891	6,631	32,127	6,478
1.1.1892	7,488	33,108	6,905
1.1.1893	5,888	34,010	6,866
1.1.1894	7,446	35,225	7,816
1.1.1895	6,659	33,588	7,535
1.1.1896	6,561	33,729	7,745
1.1.1897	6,214	33,404	7,997
1.1.1898	6,019	34,014	7,909
1.1.1899	5,933	34,716	7,851
1.1.1900	5,797	31,462	7,691
1.1.1903	5,976	17,712	4,413

Furthermore, it was also cheaper to retain militiamen than to replace them. One War Office official estimated that, when pay and additional costs (beer money, lodging allowance and clothing) and provisions for the 56 days of preliminary drill were taken into account, a recruit cost either £9 3s for artillerymen or £8 2s for infantrymen; by comparison a re-enrolled man cost just £5 1s and £4 11s respectively.[60] Despite this it was widely realised that by increasing the term of engagement and altering the way the bounty was paid in 1874 had somewhat diminished the immediate financial attraction of re-enrolment. Prior to this all militiamen who re-enrolled were entitled to receive the

[59] PP, *Recruiting. Statistical tables*., C. 1205, (1875); PP, *Army and militia. Annual report*, C. 2832, (1881); C. 4677 (1886); C. 5652, (1889); C. 6275, (1890-92); C. 7659, (1895); Cd. 110, (1900); Cd. 1778, (1904).
[60] *Ibid.*, qq. 9438-42.

remainder of their bounty, amounting to 1s 6d for the final year, in addition to the 10s enrolment bounty for their next term of engagement. Added to this was the right to claim 'bringing money' of 5s for acting essentially as their own bringer, meaning that upon re-enrolling each individual received an immediate total of £2 1s before their first training. Under the new scheme they would continue to receive 10s as an advance on their first year's bounty, although the right to claim 'bringing money' upon re-enrolment was abolished. On top of this men who would have enlisted after 1873 would only receive £1 as the remainder of their first bounty, meaning that the immediate financial gain before the first training dropped by as much as 11s to just £1 10s. With all this considered there was also the additional deterrent of an increase in the term of service from five to six years, a key reason why the period of re-enlistment was shortened to just four years in 1877. Furthermore, there were insufficient financial provisions for men with families meaning, in times of embodiment, there was often a loss of married men who could not afford to serve indefinitely.[61]

On a regimental level, it is clear that a similar pattern, whereby it was increasingly difficult to retain manpower, was evident in every unit sampled, although there was some variation between units. In 1860 the Hampshire Regiment saw 49.3 per cent of those attested that year go on to complete their full term of service or re-enrol for a further term. By 1875 this had fallen to just 27.8 per cent and by 1885 to just 10.7 per cent; this continued so that by 1905 it measured just 0.4 per cent. As with the national picture, this corresponded with a greater proportion of men opting to purchase their discharge, or more likely, by opting to transfer to the regular army. Whereas initially, in 1860, 4.9 per cent of those attested went on to repay their enrolment expenses (and provide a substitute), by 1875 the proportion of those now able to simply purchase their discharge rose to 15 per cent and in 1905 fell only slightly to 12.2 per cent. This was matched by a corresponding rise in those transferring to the regulars, rising from 5.6 per cent in 1860 to 22.1 per cent in 1875 and to a high 74.9 per cent by 1905. However, unlike many other units, the Hampshire Regiment also struggled with comparably high rates of desertion right across the period, remaining as high as 19.8 per cent in 1885, although this dropped to just 1.5 per cent in 1905. In the East Kent Regiment, in 1890, just 6.6 per cent of those attested in the year served their full term of enlistment or re-enlisted before hand, while 23.1 per cent had purchased their discharge and 56.6 per cent transferred to the regulars.

[61] *Ibid.*, qq. 2198-201, 3389, 3482-3, 3513-5, 3628.

By 1905 only 0.5 per cent of those attested went on to complete their term of service (although 5 per cent were offered a free discharge in 1907, on account of the battalion's transfer to the Special Reserve), while 11 per cent purchased their discharge and as many as 73.8 per cent transferred to the regular army. A similar pattern was seen in the 2nd (East) Norfolk Regiment, although the proportion of those transferring to the regular army remained no higher than, for instance, the 42.7 per cent of those attested in 1905. By comparison, the 1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets Regiment appeared to have an even harder time retaining its manpower. Of those attested in 1870, just 21 per cent went on to serve their full term of enlistment or to re-enlist for a further term, and although this rose to 29.1 per cent by 1880, by 1895 it subsequently fell to just 8 per cent and then again in 1905 to just 2.2 per cent (as seen above medical rejection rates were, by comparison with other units, particularly high). Similar patterns can be seen in Scottish units including the Edinburgh Artillery and the Highland (Inverness) Light Infantry. However, the Edinburgh Artillery managed to somewhat buck this trend, recording 34 per cent of its volunteers attested in 1905 as having previously served in the regiment.[62]

* * *

In order for recruitment to be effective it needed to allow militia regiments to access as wide a pool of potential recruits as possible. Nevertheless, what is clear is that, for many regiments, the changing nature of the national and local economy, and the way this impacted on those volunteering for service in the militia, was arguably the key factor in maintaining their strength and effectiveness. Traditionally it was expected that the militia attracted men who normally would avoid service with the regular army, most notably agricultural labourers, who were regarded as both physically and morally superior compared to their urban counterparts, and less predisposed to the growing radicalism and liberalism amongst the urban population.[63] It was expected that the local landed gentry,

[62] TNA, Militia Enrolment Books, WO 68/35-8, 128-30, 407, 436; Militia Attestation Forms, WO 96/32-44, 86-93; 202-14; 1239-81; 1344-51; KHLC, L/M/7/1-3, 'Returns of volunteers enrolled for the East Kent Militia, 1852-1860'.

[63] Many militia supporters made reference to the direct, albeit imaginary, link between the contemporary force and that of the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods, emphasising the distinct nature of a militia of private citizens organised upon a rural county basis compared to a predominantly urban regular army. Strachen, *Reform of the British Army*, p. 53; G. Wawro, *Warfare and Society in Europe, 1792-1914*, (Oxford: Routledge, 2000), p. 42; Haggard, *The Militia*, pp. 30-3; Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 1-3.

Table 3.6: The Social Composition of the Rank and File within the Militia of the UK, 1858-1904.[64]

*Year**		*Agricultural Labourers*	*Mechanical Labourers*	*Artisans*	*Others*			*Not Trained*
1858		43.3	23.4	22.2		11.1		…
					Miners	*Fishermen*	*Others*	…
1881		28.3	24.0	19.1	…	…	28.7	…
1882		27.6	25.9	18.4	…	…	28.1	…
1883		34.4	28.3	16.5	…	…	20.8	…
1884		31.6	22.7	16.8	7.4	1.9	19.6	…
1885		31.9	22.2	15.9	7.9	1.8	20.3	…
1886		31.5	22.2	15.0	7.6	2.0	21.0	0.7
1887		31.6	22.7	15.2	7.9	2.5	20.0	…
1888		33.8	20.9	14.6	7.6	2.4	20.0	0.8
Year	*Corps*							
1904	Artillery	21	31	10	15	3	20	…
	Engineers	3	27	29	29	3	9	…
	Infantry	22	21	11	10	4	32	…
	Sub. Miners	10	11	9	2	47	21	…
	RAMC	5.6	21.9	45.5	…	…	27*	…

*Irish regiments were not trained from 1881 to 1882.

who continued in many regiments to officer the force, would use their influence to encourage their tenants to enlist into a local regiment. Even the decision to hold the annual training of most regiments during the spring was intended to create as little disruption for agricultural labourers who were likely to be heavily employed during the harvest. However, even during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century this idealistic view simply did not match reality. Many recruits were, owing to the use of the ballot, substitutes and were, themselves, often manual labourers. Nevertheless, the organisation of the militia upon a county basis, which limited recruitment to men from their own or a neighbouring county, meant there was still a far higher proportion of agricultural workers compared to the regulars. It somewhat complemented the system of recruitment in the regular army, which was conducted on a largely ad hoc basis from among the large manufacturing towns and through the personal contacts of the officers, by drawing upon local recruits that were partially untapped by regular recruiters.[65]

Table 3.6 also demonstrates that in 1904 there was a clear difference in the social

[64] NRS, GD224/192/19, War Office summary of the confidential reports of the disembodied militia at the training of 1858; PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), Appendix V; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*. *Appendices*, Cd. 2064, (1904), Part IV, pp. 192-221.
[65] French, *Military identities*, pp. 209-11; Western, *The English Militia*, pp. 256-9, 271-2.

composition of the militia's infantry, artillery, engineers and submarines miners. On the whole, the artillery and infantry recruited from a similar cross-section of society, although the former recorded a higher proportion of industrial workers than any of the other arms of the service. Unsurprisingly, due to their proximity to the coast, the submarine miners recruited a disproportionate number of fishermen and sailors compared to the rest of the force, while both engineer regiments saw a roughly equal proportion of industrial workers and artisans, which was higher than the national average. For instance, the Falmouth Division Royal Engineers (Submarine Miners) Militia recruited from among a mixture of urban labourers, boatmen and sailors, although competition from other auxiliary units and the unpopularity of militia service meant recruiting was difficult. For instance, in 1903 there were only 49 NCOs and men out of an establishment of 70 due to competition from the Royal Naval Reserve in the town and concerns over the quality of uniform issued to the men.[66]

In addition to the differences between the various arms of the force, the militia's social composition also varied upon a regional basis, although that is not to say that there were national trends. After 1852 it is clear that although the militia continued to attract agricultural workers, and despite this period being the height of Britain's agricultural economy, they were by no means the only source of recruits. The militia was also heavily reliant upon skilled and semi-skilled industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen, and an increasing proportion of often under-employed and unskilled labourers. Table 3.6 demonstrates that in each of the years for which national figures are available agricultural workers continued to comprise the single largest group within the militia (except for in 1904). In 1858 it represented by far the largest group of militiamen, although the militia also contained a significant minority of mechanical labourers and artisans. By the 1880s this had fallen. In 1883 agricultural labourers still accounted for one-third of total manpower, the proportion of mechanical labourers remaining broadly the same while the proportion of artisans clearly declined when compared to 1858. (The comparatively low proportion of agricultural labourers in 1881 and 1882 can be accounted for by the fact that Irish regiments were not trained. Compared to the militia as a whole, Irish regiments were far more reliant on recruiting in rural areas due to a smaller urban population.) By

[66] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Minutes of evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. (Volume II.)*, Cd. 2063, (1904), qq. 18672, 18734, 18758-62,

Table 3.7: The Social Composition of Militiamen Serving in a Sample of Nine Regiments.[67]

	Year	*Labourers (Agricultural & General)*	*Miners & Quarrymen*	*Industrial Workers*	*Tradesmen*	*Artisans & Craftsmen*	*Retailers & Street Sellers*	*Service*	*Sailors & Fishermen*	*Other*	*Unknown*	***Total Sample***
East Kent / 3rd East Kent	1853	71.0	…	2.4	2.1	12.9	3.7	3.4	0.3	…	4.2	**379**
	1857	62.6	…	4.1	8.1	9.8	0.8	4.1	…	…	10.6	**123**
	1870	67.0	…	8.6	2.2	10.0	2.5	8.2	0.4	0.4	0.7	**279**
	1890	69.1	…	1.3	3.4	4.7	8.2	7.7	1.3	2.1	2.1	**233**
	1895	57.9	…	3.4	2.8	4.5	12.4	11.8	1.1	4.5	1.7	**178**
	1905	33.9	…	11.5	5.5	4.7	15.5	19.4	1.3	5.2	2.9	**381**
Hampshire / 3rd Hampshire	1852	72.7	…	3.4	3.9	2.6	1.3	1.7	0.6	0.4	13.3	**466**
	1860	71.1	…	9.2	6.3	4.9	2.8	4.2	…	1.4	…	**142**
	1865	82.5	…	1.6	5.8	3.7	2.1	3.2	…	0.5	0.5	**189**
	1870	78.0	…	3.4	3.4	6.5	1.7	5.2	…	1.4	0.3	**291**
	1875	80.0	…	1.7	3.3	5.4	3.8	5.0	…	0.8	…	**240**
	1880	56.5	…	2.2	5.9	4.1	2.2	21.8	0.4	6.3	0.7	**271**
	1885	61.6	…	5.2	3.7	4.6	6.0	13.7	2.1	2.5	0.5	**562**
	1905	37.6	…	6.5	8.7	7.6	7.6	27.4	…	3.0	1.5	**263**
R. Monmouthshire L.I / R. Monmouthshire RE	1852	46.5	13.7	10.7	3.6	12.4	3.0	4.3	0.2	1.1	4.5	**467**
	1875	39.7	13.0	26.3	1.5	6.1	0.4	1.9	0.0	2.3	8.8	**262**
	1880	38.1	13.7	15.7	9.9	12.8	2.3	2.0	0.9	1.5	3.2	**344**
	1885	36.1	17.7	14.3	6.1	7.5	…	3.4	4.1	6.8	4.1	**147**
	1900	34.6	25.8	13.1	5.9	5.9	5.6	1.6	2.3	4.2	1.0	**306**
	1905	24.3	18.4	17.6	12.6	9.6	2.9	7.9	1.7	5.0	…	**239**
2nd (East) Norfolk / 4th Norfolk	1855	49.2	…	5.6	4.4	25.0	1.2	5.6	3.6	0.8	4.8	**252**
	1860	45.1	…	5.8	3.5	30.6	5.2	3.5	0.6	…	5.8	**173**
	1865	51.9	…	9.2	3.1	22.9	6.9	3.1	2.3	…	0.8	**131**
	1870	54.7	…	5.4	6.1	16.9	4.1	2.0	6.8	3.4	0.7	**148**
	1875	53.2	…	6.9	2.2	11.3	3.5	3.5	16.0	1.7	1.7	**231**
	1880	39.5	…	6.7	3.6	10.3	3.1	4.0	25.6	2.2	4.9	**223**
	1885	54.7	…	8.6	2.5	8.6	3.3	5.8	9.9	2.9	3.7	**243**
	1890	53.4	…	6.0	2.6	15.1	6.0	5.2	6.9	0.4	4.3	**232**
	1900	56.2	…	8.0	2.9	13.1	8.0	7.3	2.2	1.5	0.7	**137**
	1905	43.1	…	2.8	1.2	11.3	4.4	12.9	2.4	1.6	20.2	**248**
Northumberland L.I / 3rd Northumberland.	1852	40.5	1.9	15.2	1.9	28.2	5.4	3.1	…	0.2	3.5	**514**
	1855	29.8	3.1	18.0	3.4	26.4	1.7	3.1	1.4	0.7	12.5	**295**
	1895	83.3	5.1	1.3	…	…	…	6.4	…	1.3	2.6	**78**
	1900	56.9	10.3	5.2	1.7	3.4	5.2	10.3	1.7	1.7	3.4	**58**
	1905	74.6	1.9	6.2	2.4	3.3	3.8	2.9	1.4	2.4	1.0	**209**

[67] Details of the sources from which these figures are drawn can be found in Appendix 5.

Table 3.7 (continued): The Social Composition of Militiamen Attested in a Sample of Nine Regiments.

	Year	*Labourers (Agricultural & General)*	*Miners & Quarrymen*	*Industrial Workers*	*Tradesmen*	*Artisans & Craftsmen*	*Retailers & Street Sellers*	*Service*	*Sailors & Fishermen*	*Other*	*Unknown*	***Total Sample***
1st (R.C.O.) Tower Hamlets / 7th Rifle Brig.	1860	43.4	…	1.9	11.3	24.5	7.5	3.8	…	…	7.5	**53**
	1865	41.4	…	7.2	4.4	24.1	7.2	8.0	…	2.4	5.2	**249**
	1870	38.0	…	8.0	9.8	23.2	11.6	5.8	…	0.4	3.3	**276**
	1875	45.6	…	3.1	2.5	20.0	13.4	8.1	…	4.1	3.1	**320**
	1880	29.7	…	4.7	2.7	20.3	8.8	15.5	…	13.5	4.7	**148**
	1895	38.0	…	5.5	4.6	16.0	6.8	21.5	0.4	4.6	2.5	**237**
	1905	33.7	…	8.4	5.1	7.9	8.4	24.7	2.2	6.2	3.4	**178**
R. Carn. / 4th R. Welsh Fus.				*Industrial Workers & Artisans*				*Other*				
	1870	40.0	21.8	30.2				8				**427**
	1905	71.4	8.9			3.6		5.4	1.8	8.9		**56**
Edinburgh Artillery / Edinburgh R.G.A. (mil.)				*Industrial Workers*	*Tradesmen*	*Artisans & Craftsmen*	*Retailers & Street Sellers*	*Service*	*Sailors & Fishermen*	*Other*		
	1855	15.8	6.0	17.6	5.3	28.9	8.8	9.2	…	1.8	6.7	**284**
	1860	16.2	…	21.9	7.6	33.3	5.7	10.5	…	1.9	2.9	**105**
	1865	23.8	2.5	18.8	1.3	27.5	5.0	12.5	…	1.3	7.5	**80**
	1870	17.2	3.3	13.1	3.3	36.9	4.1	18.9	…	1.6	1.6	**122**
	1875	34.6	…	14.5	1.3	25.2	2.5	17.6	…	4.4	…	**159**
	1880	46.8	0.5	5.3	5.9	14.4	3.7	16.5	…	3.7	3.2	**188**
	1890	47.4	…	10.4	1.5	4.4	…	3.0	…	5.9	27.4	**135**
	1900	50.2	2.2	5.9	2.9	7.7	2.6	8.1	1.5	2.6	16.5	**273**
	1905	37.6	4.3	3.2	1.1	4.3	1.1	8.6	…	3.2	36.6	**93**
Highland LI / 3rd Cameron High.	1855	61.8	…	4.2	1.7	15.5	0.2	5.3	0.8	3.2	7.2	**471**
	1865	65.2	…	3.9	1.4	20.3	0.5	4.3	0.5	2.4	1.4	**207**
	1870	70.6	…	1.4	2.4	19.4	0.9	1.9	0.9	1.9	0.5	**211**
	1875	84.5	…	3.2	…	6.5	1.3	2.6	0.3	1.3	0.3	**315**
	1880	73.3	…	1.7	0.9	15.1	0.4	3.4	1.3	0.4	3.4	**239**

1904 the proportion of agricultural labourers had declined even further to a low of just 22 per cent within the infantry and 21 per cent within the artillery.

One of the excepted explanations as to why the proportion of agricultural labourers serving in the militia declined was due to the declining state of British agriculture and the more general shift towards an increasingly urban and industrial society. By 1850 the UK was the most urbanised and industrialised country on Earth, with approximately 50 per cent of the population already living in urban areas (compared to just 30 per cent in France and Prussia, and 10 per cent in Austria and Russia). Despite this, the 1850s and 1860s represented the pinnacle of British agriculture. The impact of falling international import costs from North America and Russia were initially disrupted by the Crimean War and later the American Civil War. However, by the 1870s they began to contribute to a growing agricultural depression meaning it became increasingly difficult for landowners and tenants alike to make a living from arable farming (not without diversifying into other forms of farming).[68] This, set against the backdrop of increasing urbanisation more generally, had several direct effects upon the ability of the militia to attract rural recruits. Firstly, it drew young men from rural areas into the towns and cities in order to find work, meaning there was a lessening pool of remaining agricultural workers from which to draw recruits. There was a considerable decline in the number of farm workers in the UK from 1.4 million in 1861 to just 1 million in 1911, with the problem particularly bad in areas with a higher concentration of arable farming such as parts of eastern England. Secondly, it had the knock on effect of driving up wages (which by 1911 had risen, compared to 1870, as high as 50 per cent) in areas which had been depopulated meaning the relatively meagre financial inducements, which may have once proved attractive, no longer had the same allure. For instance, the 3rd West Yorkshire Regiment was unable to attract agricultural workers because their wages averaged 18s per week; by comparison the average infantry recruit would earn 11s 3d per week (see above). This also had the knock-on effect of making employers less willing to let agricultural workers join the militia for fear of loosing them. As early as 1867 there were concerns that agricultural labourers were increasingly being employed on an annual, as opposed to a weekly, basis which made it more difficult for recruits to find the spare

[68] E. J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Capital, 1848-75*, (London: Abacus, 1975), p. 205; Wawro, *Warfare and Society*, p. 42; C. Ó Gráda, 'Agricultural Decline 1860-1914', in R. Floud and D. McCloskey ed., *The Economic History of Britain Since the 1700s*, vol. 2: *1860s to the 1970s*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 175-97, (pp. 176-9); R. Perren, *Agriculture in Depression, 1870-1940*¸ (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 1-3.

time required to regularly attend the annual training. It was for these reasons that the Durham Light Infantry was unable to recruit more than a handful of agricultural workers despite the willingness of many to join in the regiment; in fact, it was reported that at local hiring fairs a common question asked by potential employers was whether or not an individual was engaged with the militia.[69]

As a result it is unsurprising that units which struggled to maintain their strength were often located in areas in which arable farming had been commonplace, but with little means of offsetting a reduction in agricultural recruits from growing urban centres. This did not go unnoticed by the government as, in 1904, the Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces commented that the majority of regiments considerably below their establishment were those in the south and east of England, with the exception of those regiments which recruited in or around London (the example of which given were the 3rd Royal West Surrey and 4th East Surrey Regiments, both of which recruited predominantly in the metropolitan parts of the county).[70] Of the sampled regiments, those that struggled to maintain their strength continued to rely on a higher than average proportion of agricultural labourers and were, for various reasons, unable to offset their declining strength with urban workers. For instance, the Hampshire Regiment had been highly reliant upon agricultural workers as a source of recruits. Table 3.7 shows that labourers made up a majority of recruits within the regiment across the period, of which the vast majority were agricultural workers. In 1865 this accounted for as much as 82.5 per cent of those attested while in 1885 the proportion fell to 61.6 per cent. In terms of the overall social composition of the regiment, records show that in 1891 the proportion of agricultural labourers remained as high as 75 per cent, and although, by 1903, this had fallen to just 40 per cent of their total strength, this was far above the national average. However, the fact that the regiment continued to rely so heavily on agricultural labourers came at a price: its overall strength, as shown in Table 3.1, fell from 97 per cent of the establishment, in 1885, to just 47 per cent in 1905. The reason for this, aside from increases in wastage (mentioned above), was that the regiment was unable to successfully recruit in major towns, such as Southampton, to plug the gap from a decline in the agricultural workforce. Competition from the local volunteer corps meant many urban workers had little reason to enlist, but who might otherwise have been suitable for service

[69] Perren, *Agriculture*, p. 17; TNA, WO 33/21a, pp. 10, 12; HL Deb., 29 March 1867, vol. 186, cc. 804-13, (cc. 811-2).
[70]PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 3809. 3811.

with the militia. The commanding officer of the regiment remarked that, during the South African War, the recruiting officer in Southampton, who was the adjutant of 2nd Hampshire Rifle Volunteer Corps (the headquarters of which was based in Southampton, while that of the militia battalion was based in Winchester), admitted to ensuring the volunteers were serviced with recruits, leaving only a small proportion of the worst men for the militia.[71]

A result of the difficulty of recruiting in rural districts was that in the late 1890s the government reduced the establishment of 27 infantry battalions and an artillery corps by either one or two companies, amalgamated four others into just two battalions while increasing the establishment of three battalions in which recruiting remained healthy. For instance, in 1897 the 3rd East Kent Regiment saw a reduction in its establishment by two companies from 848 NCOs and men to just 652; similarly, the 4th Sherwood Foresters also saw its establishment reduced.[72]

Other units also relied upon labourers as a source of many of their recruits, although not all relied as heavily upon agricultural labourers. Even in the early years after reconstitution the 2nd (East) Norfolk Regiment recruited a significant proportion of its manpower in major towns, such as Norwich and Great Yarmouth, without a complete overreliance upon the agricultural workforce. Table 3.7 shows that, on the whole, the proportion of labourers remained relatively unchanged, accounting for 49.2 per cent of volunteers in 1855, slightly more at 53.2 per cent in 1875 and 56.2 per cent in 1900. More specifically, it can be estimated that roughly 33 per cent of those attested in 1870 were urban labourers, agricultural workers accounting for 27 per cent.[73] Initially there were also a high proportion of artisans and tradesmen, although by the end of the period this had declined. In 1855 this amounted to 29.4 per cent of those attested in 1855, and although afterwards the proportion fell away slightly, as low as 11.1 per cent of volunteers in 1885, it remained on average the third largest occupational group until 1900, after which there was a rise in the proportion of those undertaking some form of service. There was also a temporary rise in the proportion of fishermen and sailors from 1870 to 1890, from just 2.3 per cent of volunteers in 1865, to a high of 25.6 per cent in

[71] PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers*, C. 288, (1871), pp. 27-8; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 17665, 17668.
[72] PP, *Army and militia. Annual report*, C. 8770, (1898), p. 9; C. 9185, (1899), p. 17; Cd. 110, (1900), pp. 18-9.
[73] PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871), p. 45.

1880, before falling away again towards the end of the century.[74] A similar trend is also evident in the East Kent Regiment, which relied heavily on recruiting men from towns such as Canterbury, Chatham, Dover and Maidstone. In 1853 a total of 71 per cent of the enlisted recruits were recorded as labourers, of which, it can be estimated, at least 22 per cent were agricultural labourers, while 14 per cent were artisans or tradesmen. By 1870 the proportion of labourers had fallen only slightly to 67 per cent, of which at least 25 per cent were agricultural labourers. Towards the end of the century the proportion of labourers declined, somewhat surprisingly replaced by those engaged in some form of retail or street selling and those in some form of service: by 1905 only 33.9 per cent of recruits were labourers, and of those just 6 per cent were recorded as agricultural labourers, while retailers and street sellers, and those in service, rose to 15.5 per cent and 19.4 per cent respectively. Therefore, it is clear the regiment was increasingly relying on a greater proportion of urban recruits although, to an extent, it had always relied on recruiting in such areas.[75]

Other regiments were instead almost exclusively recruited from urban and industrial areas with little or no reliance upon rural communities. Initially the Northumberland Light Infantry consisted of a far higher proportion of labourers and industrial workers due to the fact that the regiment recruited almost exclusively from in and around Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Table 3.7 shows that, in 1852, labourers accounted for 40.5 per cent of all recruits, most of who were recorded as 'mechanical' labourers, while a further 15.2 per cent accounted for skilled industrial workers and a further 28.2 per cent for light industrial craftsmen and artisans. However, by 1905 the proportion of labourers had risen significantly to 74.6 per cent at the expense of the proportion of industrial workers and artisans, both of which had fallen to just 6.2 per cent and 3.3 per cent respectively.[76] Many of those categorised as semi-skilled and skilled industrial workers, and deemed a better class of recruit in the opinion of the battalion's commanding officer, were employees at the major heavy industries based on Tyneside, most notably the arms manufacturer, Armstrong and Whitworth, and the shipbuilders, Palmers. Such large companies were on the whole more willing to permit their employees to take the necessary time away from their work to train each year than smaller employers due to the

[74] TNA, WO 68/128-30; WO 96/202-14.
[75] KHLC, L/M/7/1-3; TNA WO 96/32-44.
[76] Fusiliers Museum of Northumberland, Northumberland LI Enrolment Book; TNA, WO 96/86-93.

size of their workforce, the loss of which for a month the latter could not afford.[77] What is clear is that the regiment was highly reliant upon recruiting from the Tyneside region, despite the headquarters of the regiment being located over 30 miles north in Alnwick. The reasons for this were, firstly, that the regiment simply had no problem from filling its ranks from manufacturing areas alone; there was no need to attempt to recruit in rural areas. It was the commanding officer's opinion in 1890 that, despite effort to attract them, rural workers were not inclined towards militia service, in Northumberland at least, while in 1904 it was remarked that due to the lack of interest they had only sent a recruiting party into the countryside on one occasion and with little success.[78] Secondly, unlike neighbouring Co. Durham, there was difficulty recruiting from growing colliery and mining towns such as Ashington. This was because the regiment had to compete with other auxiliary forces, most notably the Northumberland Hussars Yeomanry, which established troops in many small towns and mining villages across the county, including Ashington. As a result the proportion of miners and colliers joining the regiment was very small, only 3.1 per cent in 1855 and 1.9 per cent in 1905.[79] For similar reasons there were no attempts made to enlist sailors or fishermen on the coast as they were largely the source of recruits for the Royal Naval Coast Volunteers, established in 1853 (later superseded by the Royal Naval Reserve's Second-Class Reserve and the Royal Naval Volunteer Artillery in 1873).[80]

In London, similar patterns could be observed among recruits of the 1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets Regiment, although there were subtle differences. They too were heavily reliant upon labourers, principally those working as dock labourers. Nevertheless, unlike many other units, the proportion serving with the battalion remained relatively stable across the period. Whereas, in 1860, 43.4 per cent of recruits had been labourers, by 1905 the proportion had declined to 33.7 per cent, bucking the wider trend evident in many other units. Initially the regiment had also been heavily reliant upon artisans and craftsmen working in light industries, but not upon those working in heavier industries; indeed, the proportion of recruits employed in heavy industries remained comparably small, just 8.4 per cent at its height in 1905. Yet although the proportion of artisans and

[77] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 4841-2, 4866.
[78] PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890), q. 3322-4; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 5036-40, 5165-7.
[79] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 1, Cd. 2062, (1904), qq. 5044-6; Hewitson, *Weekend Warriors*, p. 64.
[80] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/A/7: Letter from Lord Grey to Sidney Herbert, 26 July 1853; Letter from Sidney Herbert to Lord Grey, 29 July 1853.

craftsmen declined from a high of 24.5 per cent in 1860 to just 7.9 per cent by 1905, the decline was offset by a significant increase in the number of recruits engaged in some form of service, many as carters, porters or van guards.[81] In terms of the impact of its social composition upon its recruitment figures, Table 3.1 shows that the battalion somewhat bucked the general trend in that it initially struggled to maintain its strength, but improved significantly from 1880 onwards. By 1889 there was such confidence in the ability of the battalion to recruit from among the local population that its establishment was successfully augmented by a further two companies (see Table 3.1). Two years later the commanding officer again expressed his confidence that it could be increased again, although his request was unsuccessful. Nonetheless, it is clear that while other units were finding it increasingly difficult to attract recruits, 1st (King's Own) Tower Hamlets Regiment (now the 7th Rifle Brigade) was able to take advantage of a readily available source of manpower. As was recognised by the adjutant, this was despite the difficulties of combating relatively high, and increasing, rates of wastage (principally from desertion and those rejected upon medical inspection, as identified above).[82]

There were also variations in the social composition of Welsh and Scottish units when compared to their counterparts in England. In several Welsh counties the militia tended to rely more heavily upon industrial workers and miners, whereas the northern Welsh counties had a large proportion of agricultural labourers. As Table 3.7 shows, in 1870 the strength of the Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles was comprised largely of labourers, 40 per cent in total, of whom half came from the countryside, while 21.8 per cent were employed as miners or quarrymen working predominantly in the slate industry (the remainder being artisans and craftsmen). Like many other units, by 1905 the battalion saw the proportion of labourers increase, in this case, at the expense of the proportion of miners and artisans. Other units in North Wales saw similar patterns. For instance, in 1870, the Royal Anglesey Light Infantry was largely comprised of labourers (nearly all agricultural), artisans and miners, comprising 39.2 per cent, 19.8 per cent and 25.6 per cent respectively; similarly the Merionethshire Regiment was also heavily reliant upon agricultural labourers and slate miners.[83] By comparison, units based in South Wales saw a far greater reliance upon industrial workers, many of whom were based in

[81] TNA, WO 68/407, WO 68/436 and WO 96/1239-81.
[82] TNA, WO 68/429/9, Letters from Capt. A.S.E Somerset to Officer Commanding Scots Guards, 15 February 1890, 16 January 1891, 26 February 1891 and 17 October 1891.
[83] PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871), pp. 4, 10, 41; TNA, WO 96/445-8; P. Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales, 1536-1990*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2014), p. 234.

the iron and copper industries, or as colliers, with less reliance upon agricultural labourers. As shown in Table 3.7, in 1852 most men enrolled into the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry were labourers (46.5 per cent), the majority mechanical labourers of some sort, while the remainder were principally either colliers, iron workers or light industrial artisans. This remained relatively stable, although the proportion of industrial workers had increased dramatically – by 1870 it had reached a height of 26.3 per cent of those attested that year. However, the conversion of the regiment from light infantry to engineers in 1877 meant that, unlike many other units, a greater reliance was placed upon men engaged in skilled occupations. This is why, by 1905, the proportion of labourers attested had fallen to 24.3 per cent, while the proportion of colliers and industrial workers had risen to 18.4 per cent and 17.6 per cent respectively; there also remained a smaller, but still significant, proportion of artisans and tradesmen. Such a reliance on industrial labour, with very little to no reliance upon agricultural workers, as well as the higher rates of pay given to engineers (as detailed above), helps to explain why the regiment was able to maintain its strength before and after the South African War (as seen in Table 3.1).[84]

In Scotland, lowland units recruiting in and around Glasgow and Edinburgh unsurprisingly relied more heavily upon an urban workforce compared to those recruiting in the sparsely populated highlands and western coast. For instance, Table 3.7 shows that, in 1855, the Edinburgh Artillery was heavily reliant on artisans (and craftsmen), and industrial workers recruited from within the city and its immediate surroundings, accounting for 28.9 per cent and 17.6 per cent respectively (the remainder being either unskilled labourers, retailers and street sellers, or those involved in some other service) . As in other urban units, the abundance of unskilled labourers helped to maintain the strength of the unit as those from more skilled occupations declined. By 1880 the proportion of artisans and craftsmen had fallen to just 14.4 per cent and the proportion of industrial workers to just 5.3 per cent, whereas those in retail and service remained the same. What had changed was that there was a far larger quantity of unskilled labourers, rising from just 15.8 per cent in 1855, to 46.8 per cent by 1880. This trend continued so that, by 1900, unskilled labourers accounted for 50.2 per cent of recruits while the proportion of industrial workers and artisans had fallen to 5.9 per cent and 7.7 per cent

[84] Gwent Archives, LLMISC P5-0026, Return of volunteers enrolled in the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, 23 September to 31 December 1852; MCRM, RMRE/4/3-4, Registers of Enlistments, 1872-1887 and 1889-1915; TNA, WO 96/1297-1307; Jenkins, *Modern Wales*, pp. 228-9.

respectively (the remainder being principally retailers and street sellers, or those in a form of service). The increasing reliance upon unskilled labour meant it was one of a few units to buck the general decline in the strength of the militia, as shown in Table 3.1: in fact, its establishment increased significantly from 250 NCOs and men in 1865, to 672 by 1895, an increase that was met with ease. Other lowland units based in the counties surrounding both Glasgow and Edinburgh had a greater reliance upon agricultural workers, although they too had to rely on urban workers to find enough recruits. For instance, in 1870, the 1st Lanark Regiment recruited most of its men in Glasgow, the majority being industrial workers (predominantly iron workers and weavers), who accounted for 50 per cent of the battalion's strength, with colliers accounting for 20 per cent.[85]

Units recruited in the highlands, or in counties situated upon the western coast, were far more reliant on agricultural workers. As Table 3.7 shows, the Highland (Inverness) Light Infantry (which also encompassed Banff, Elgin and Nairn) was primarily comprised of labourers, the vast majority of whom were agricultural workers, mainly crofters, representing, for instance, 61.8 per cent of attested men in 1855 and as many as 84.5 per cent by 1875; the remainder were predominantly artisans from the towns. This balance remained largely unchanged, even after the South African War. Although attestation records for this period are lacking, the commanding officer (of what was now the 3rd Cameron Highlanders), Colonel N. Macleod, informed the Norfolk Committee that the majority of his men were crofters from the Western Isles. In fact, most of them were migratory workers who continued to use militia service as a means of temporarily maintaining an income: after tending their crofts in early spring, they would serve their annual training in June before moving to the east coast as fishermen in early July. Later, in winter, many would move to Glasgow to take up casual labour. The inflexibility of this working calendar did not prove a difficulty in maintaining the strength of the battalion so long as the training remained in June, allowing the men to be on their way by July. However, from 1896 onwards, the decision to brigade the battalion outside the district meant it became increasingly difficult to maintain its strength.[86]

There were various reasons why men decided to join the militia. In regiments with a high proportion of recruits from among the urban workforce there were usually two

[85] TNA, WO 68/35-8; WO 96/1344-51; PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871), p. 77.
[86] TNA, WO 68/378, Highland Light Infantry, 3rd Cameron Highlanders, enrolment books, 1854-1860, 1860-1867 and 1867-1882; PP, *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871), p. 76; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*¸ Cd. 2063, (1904), qq. 19224-6, 19230, 19271-7, 19324.

Table 3.8: The Age of the Other Ranks Serving in the Militia of the UK (expressed as a percentage), 1875-1908.[87]

*Year**	*Under 17*	*17to Under 19*	*19 to Under 25*	*25 to Under 30*	*30 to Under 35*	*35 & Over*	*Not Known*	*Total*
1875	1.8	15.7	43.1	21.2	10.4	7.9	…	107,114
1880	1.4	18.4	40.9	21.2	10.1	8.0	…	122,342
1893	0.8	20.9	34.8	17.1	13.9	12.4	…	112,426
1895	0.7	17.6	37.5	17.0	13.6	13.7	…	112,544
1900	0.8	19.2	32.2	16.4	13.7	12.9	4.8	102,165
	Under 18	*18 to Under 19*						
1905	6.4	11.1	44.5	15.4	10.7	11.9	…	85,814
1908 (M)	1.1	3.5	47.8	20.7	10.1	16.8	…	8,385
1908 (SR)	7.3	11.3	38.2	17.4	10.6	15.2	…	61,286

*Figures from 1875 to 1900 are on 1 January; thereafter 1 October. The year 1908 is split between the Militia (M) and Special reserve (SR).

Table 3.9: The Average Age of Attested Militiamen in a sample of Nine Regiments, 1852-1905.[88]

	1852	*1855*	*1860*	*1865*	*1870*	*1875*	*1880*	*1885*	*1890*	*1895*	*1900*	*1905*
East Kent / 3rd East Kent	23 (1853)	22 (1857)	…	…	…	20 (1874)	…	…	18	18	19	18
Hampshire / 3rd Hampshire	22	…	20	21	22	21	20	20	…	…	…	18
2nd Norfolk / 4th Norfolk	…	20	21	23	23	21	21	21	18	…	18	19
Northumberland LI / 3rd (5th) Northumberland Fusiliers	24	23	21	24	22	23 (1874)	…	…	22	19	19	21
1st Tower Hamlets / 7th Rifle Brigade	…	…	27	24	25	22	23	…	…	20	20	19
Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles / 4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers.	…	…	…	…	…	23 (1874)	…	…	…	…	22	21
Royal Monmouthshire LI / Royal Monmouthshire RE	22	…	…	…	…	22	22	23	…	…	23	23
Edinburgh Artillery / Edinburgh RGA (Militia)	…	23	23	24	24	25	23	…	24	…	23	26
Highland LI / 3rd Cameron Highlanders	…	21	…	22	23	22	21	…	…	…	…	…

[87] Table 85, PP, *General annual return of the British Army for the year 1875*, C. 1633, (1876), p. 78; Table 78, PP, *General annual return of the British Army for the year 1879*, C. 2731, (1880), p. 77; Table 12, PP, *General annual report*, Cd. 1496, (1903), p 90;) Table 12, PP, *General annual report on the British army for the years ending 30th September*, 1908, Cd. 4493, (1909) p. 116.

[88] For figures for 1874, see PP, *Recruiting*, C. 1205, (1875), No. 15, pp. 12-4. For all others, refer to Appendix 5.

reasons for joining. For unskilled labourers, agricultural labourers and those temporarily out of work, militia service represented a form of temporary financial relief from intermittent employment, as already seen with the case of crofters in the 3rd Cameron Highlanders. On the other hand, for those with settled and secure employment working in mining, heavy industry or semi-industrial work (and to a lesser degree artisans and tradesmen), militia service provided somewhat of a paid annual holiday and a temporary release from the toil of their daily work. For instance, even though the average wages of miners and industrial workers in the West Riding far outstripped that which could be earned serving in the militia – such individuals could earn between 6s and 8s per day – for many it was worthwhile taking the cut in weekly pay due to the recreational and health benefits of replacing life underground or in the factory for fresh air and exercise.[89] However, if the local economy stagnated, the fear of losing employment (or missing out on potential future employment) could deter potential recruits from volunteering. For instance, a healthy local economy enabled the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers to recruit relatively successfully from 1895 to 1908. In 1898 a widespread and unpaid miners' strike led to 250 recruits joining the regiment in order to provide some form of financial relief, many of whom soon after purchased their discharge once the strike was over. Similarly the commanding officer of the 3rd Royal Lancaster Regiment believed that the reason why Lancashire was so successful in recruiting was due to the majority of recruits coming from manufacturing areas, the motivation behind enlisting that they saw militia service as a temporary escape from their work.[90]

In addition to the clearly identified social trends, it is also of note that the militia's rank and file was, much like the regular army, recruited from a young demographic. Table 3.8 shows that the majority of militiamen in each of the sampled years were under the age of 25. However, what these figures mask is the fact that the average age of recruits, in fact, fell over the course of the period, principally due to the increasing reliance on young labourers who were encouraged to join the regular army shortly after starting their militia service. It is for this reason that the proportion of serving militiamen in each age bracket appears broadly the same, such figures masking the increasing turnover of recruits and the poor rates of retention (examined above). Examined on a unit by unit basis, Table 3.9 clearly shows that the average age at which militiamen were

[89] TNA, WO 33/21a, p. 10.
[90] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*¸ Cd. 2063, (1904), qq. 16799-800, 18867-9.

attested fell in the majority of the units examined. This was most notable in those units increasingly reliant upon the labouring classes for recruits, with units such as the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers managing to recruit from an older and, as Table 3.7 shows, a more skilled demographic.

* * *

In conclusion, it is clear that the militia faced the same problems in managing its manpower demands as the regular army. Initially there were fears that abandoning the ballot and embracing voluntary enlistment would make it extremely difficult to recruit enough men. In many ways such fears were well founded as at no point did the enrolled strength of the force meet the establishment voted by Parliament. Nevertheless, one thing that has become clear is that although the militia existed as a single force, the characteristics of its recruitment and its rank and file could vary significantly upon a unit by unit and regional basis; thus it is wrong to speak of the militia in terms of simply its success or failure as a whole. Initially there was difficulty in reconstituting the force in urban areas due to local political and religious agitation. The fact that recruitment, on the whole, could not match the quota laid down hides the fact that many regiments were able to recruit quite successfully. Similarly it is important to understand that the embodiments of the 1850s had an extremely negative effect on what was in practical terms a force still undergoing reconstruction. As a result the strength and efficiency of the force was somewhat diminished. However, the militia was able to successfully rebuild during the 1860s so that until the South African War its strength remained relatively stable, despite some fluctuation. Nevertheless, recruitment represented a constant challenge and one which, towards the end of the nineteenth century, the force was finding ever more difficult to meet. The alteration of recruitment mechanisms had arguably altered the force for the worse. The creation of brigade depots not only stripped officers and NCOs in many regiments from proper supervision of recruitment, but also encouraged recruiters to place the needs of the regulars above that of the militia. Furthermore, the withholding of the 10s enrolment bounty upon enlistment may have eventually helped to alleviate the worst effects of desertion, yet it had the side-effect of making service less popular to those that relied upon the immediate financial relief it brought. On the whole, wastage increasingly accounted for the annual loss of manpower as very few militiamen ever

completed their term of service, the majority either deserting or transferring to the regular army, while a decreasing minority decided to re-enlist. What is also clear is that there was a shift in the social composition of the force as, in many rural areas, agricultural workers increasingly gave way to urban labourers due to agricultural depression from the 1870s onwards. As a result the militia became increasingly urban in nature with a broad reduction in the strength of regiments in rural areas in the late 1890s, those units able to supplant rural workers with those from the towns and cities able to withstand the worst deficiencies. However, one cannot go as far as to say that reliance upon urban workers was a wholly new trend. In fact, there was much variation between regiments with some recruiting skilled or semi-skilled industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen right across the period, with little or no reliance upon agricultural areas, for whom militia service acted as a form of annual holiday away from the rigours of working in industry or urban areas. One clear trend, however, is that, much like the regular army, it was increasingly young unskilled labourers, many of whom went on to transfer to the regular army, that were meeting the burden of militia service as rates of pay and financial inducements lagged behind those in more skilled professions. This meant that, for many recruits, militia service was in essence a temporary refuge from underemployment, although it was widely recognised by many connected to the force that such individuals were unlikely to see out their full term of service (either deserting or being further induced to join the regulars).

4. Discipline.

Maintaining discipline in what remained a part-time force was a particular challenge for the reconstituted militia. Despite this, it is one that scholars have largely ignored when examining the discipline of the army more widely.[1] What little historiography does concern discipline within the militia largely brushes over the issue entirely and fails to appreciate that there was variation between units from different parts of the country.[2] Regimental histories provide little more than anecdotal accounts of particular disciplinary incidents at best, but usually omit any detailed discussion of them at all. Instead they focus upon the mundane yet usually competent experience of regiments whilst unembodied, and as most were written by individuals intimately connected with the unit in question they have a tendency to portray such in the best light possible.

Despite this historiographical paucity, the part-time nature of militia service meant that instilling and maintaining discipline was hugely important if it was to function as a credible military force. However, the militia encountered several problems in its ability to maintain discipline, most of which ultimately came down to the part-time amateur nature of the force while disembodied. Despite this, and to provide a framework for discipline, from 1757 onwards the militia was for the first time brought under the remit of military law. This meant that, after reconstitution in 1852, the force was only to be liable to the provisions of the Mutiny Act and Articles of War (and, from 1881, the Army Act) when embodied or assembled for annual training. Discipline itself was maintained by a combination of courts-martial and summary punishment, although in practice the vast majority of disciplinary cases were dealt with via the latter, either by commanding officers (in the case of minor offences) or by local magistrates (usually in cases of desertion when the force was disembodied). Although courts-martial were, in peacetime, relatively rare and used for only the most serious of military crimes – serious civil crimes such as murder were dealt with via the civil courts – their frequency did increase as more serious cases of desertion were dealt with in such a manner (opposing a general trend within the regular army for a lesser reliance upon courts-martial towards the end of the century). In keeping with improving discipline within the regular army and the

[1] Skelly, *Victorian Army*, pp.125-79; Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 71-5; French, *Military Identities*, pp. 180-202; Bowman & Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, pp. 42-3, 54-5, 58-62.
[2] Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', p. 354; Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, pp. 150-1.

move towards wider reform of the penal system, it will be shown that the militia saw a drop in the total number of offences recorded. However, this did not prevent the harsh realities of active service during the South African War, the first time that it was liable to the full weight of military law, from causing several units to struggle in maintaining discipline, often in cases relating to drunkenness.

In terms of the most common disciplinary issues which affected the militia across the period, arguably the greatest remained desertion. This was particularly problematic during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. After this, the government was able to curb its worst excesses. Yet, from the 1860s onwards, rates remained well below those experienced during the 1850s, desertion remained an ever present concern. Urban units reliant on migratory semi-employed labourers, with no fixed address, were particularly affected due to the ease with which their men could avoid detection or fraudulently enlist into other regiments. Permanent emigration or, in coastal counties, temporary absence at sea also prevented many militiamen from attending their training, even if they had no intention of permanently deserting. There were also concerns that desertion and fraudulent enlistment were difficult to combat due to the inexperience or, in many cases, indifference of local constabularies towards tracking down absentees, although it is without doubt they were crucial as a means of tracking down many deserters. Another major disciplinary concern were the frequent disturbances and riots experienced when embodied or assembled for training, most of which had a tendency to spiral out of control due to the ease of access to alcohol. On the whole instances of riotous behaviour were relatively infrequent when units are examined in isolation, but collectively many across Great Britain were, at some stage, involved in such disturbances, while many more minor instances doubtless went unreported. Such events were further compounded by the necessity of billeting most units, something which generated much animosity among local people.

* * *

Ever since its reconstitution in 1757, the militia was progressively brought under the remit of military law. Nevertheless, this did not mean in any way that discipline was wholly upheld via the implementation of the Mutiny Act and Articles of War: in fact, discipline within the militia continued to be only partially regulated by such. Historically

section seven of the first Mutiny Act held that the militia was exempt from the authority of the Mutiny Act and Articles of War unless such was made applicable by subsequent legislation.[3] It was not until 1757 that the militia was first brought under their remit. Initially this only extended to the force when it was embodied, although in 1762 this was soon extended to include the period of annual training, but no punishment could extend to 'life or limb'. This was further altered so that, from 1786, those absent without leave, who hitherto were only liable to be punished with a fine, could be tried as deserters under the Mutiny Act if they absented themselves whilst embodied. It was also in this year that members of the permanent staff were first placed under military law while not embodied, meaning they were liable to it at all times. All this was reaffirmed by the Militia Act of 1802, meaning that, immediately prior to reconstitution in 1852, the militia continued to be only partially governed by military law.[4]

Little changed regarding the extent to which military law was applied to the militia in the years immediately after the 1852 reform. An exception was that, in 1854, all those who were absent without leave from the annual training (as opposed to just the embodiment) were henceforth to be declared as deserters. Furthermore, it was that year in which any militiamen temporarily attached to either the permanent staff or regular army were also liable to be tried under military law – from 1867 this was also extended to militia reservists serving with the regulars.[5] Nevertheless, the militia remained only partially governed by military law as it was not until 1875 that militia recruits were also brought under its authority during their preliminary drill. Similarly, despite the fact military law applied to members of the permanent staff at all times, it was not until 1877 that it was also applied at all times to militia officers. From 1879 until 1882 the legislation regulating discipline within the regular army and auxiliary forces was further consolidated: firstly, through the Army Discipline and Regulation Act of 1879, and secondly, through the Army Act, of 1881 and the Militia Act of 1882. As before, officers and members of the permanent staff were at all times subject to military law, while the rest of the rank and file were only liable whilst embodied, assembled for training, or when attached to the regulars. Furthermore, owing to the creation of territorial regiments,

[3] 1 W. & M., c. 520.
[4] 30 Geo. II, c. 25, ss. 36-40, 45, 47; 2 Geo. III, c. 20, ss. 99, 116, 121; 4 Geo. III, c. 17. s. 8 [by which military law was extended to drummers]; 26 Geo. III, c. 107, ss. 681 881 95, 98-9; 42 Geo. III, c. 90, ss. 89, 103, 111, 115-6; *Manual of Military Law*, (1907), pp. 170-1; Western, *English Militia*, pp. 419-20.
[5] 17 & 18 Vict. c. 105, ss. 45, 53; 17 & 18 Vict. c. 106, s. 58; 17 & 18 Vict. c. 107, s. 28; 30 & 31Vict. c. 111; *Manual of Military Law*, (1907), p. 171.

Table 4.1: Cases of Courts-Martial, Summary Trial and Minor Punishment, and Drunkenness within the Militia of the UK.[6]

Year	*Trials by Court-Martial*	*Minor / Summary Punishment*	*Men fined for drunkenness*
1882	486	36,819	3,607
1883	525	37,966	4,104
1884	431	32,873	3,753
1885	551	35,944	3,775
1886	418	30,254	3,576
1887	302	24,060	2,665
1888	336	21,820	2,769
…	…	…	…
1892	422	25,831	3,682
1893	352	26,327	3,495
1894	1,126	22,117	2,796
1895	1,035	19,532	2,901
1896	853	20,690	3,090
1897	976	21,754	3,412
1898	846	21,519	3,093
1899	786	19,218	3,029
1900	4,647	113,288	13,309
…	…	…	…
1902	1,236	…	1,862
1903*	610	…	1,455
1903-1904	510	…	1,868
1904-1905	369	…	1,829
1905-1906	283	…	1,632
1906-1907	309	…	1,740
1907-1908	299	…	1,344

*Figures for 1 January - 30 September. Years hereafter are for the 1 October until the 30 September following.

regular officers could now sit on militia courts martial indiscriminately and visa versa.[7]

Despite the increasing implementation of military law as a means of more effectively maintaining discipline within the militia, an analysis of disciplinary figures shows that discipline was just as much a problem for the militia as for the regular army. Table 4.1 shows that instances of summary and minor punishments fell by almost half when the figures for 1883 and 1899 are compared. This was also accompanied by a

[6] Appendix 6 in PP, *Report of the Committee*. C. 5922, (1890), p. 316; Appendix 50 in PP, *Royal Appendices to the Minutes*¸ Cd. 2064, (1904), p. 93; Tables 8 and 9 in PP, *General Annual Report*¸ Cd. 1496, (1903), pp. 86-7; Tables 9 and 10 in *Ibid*, Cd. 1904, (1904), pp. 125-6; Tables 9 and 10 in *Ibid.*, Cd. 2268, (1905), pp. 123-4; Tables 9 and 10 in *Ibid.*, Cd. 2696, (1906), pp. 120-1; Tables 9 and 10 in *Ibid*., Cd. 3365, (1907), pp. 122-3; Tables 9 and 10 in *Ibid.*, Cd. 3798, (1908), pp 112-3; Tables 8 and 9 in *Ibid.*, Cd. 4493, (1908), pp. 111-2.

[7] 38 & 39 Vict., c. 7, s. 2; 38 & 39 Vict., c. 69, s. 59; 42 & 43 Vict., c. 33; 44 & 45 Vict., c. 58, ss. 46, 175-6; 45 & 46 Vict., c. 49, ss. 42-3; Lt-Col E. Gunter, *Outlines of Military Law and Customs of War with New Tables and Examples*, (London: William Clowes and Sons Ltd., 1897), pp. 30-8, 65-75, 177-80; *Manual of Military Law*, (1907), p. 171.

similar, albeit lesser, drop in the number of men fined for drunkenness. This was a trend that was also evident in the regular army: the number of courts-martial fell from 14,290 in 1872, to just 9,676 in 1898, while, over the same period, the number of fines for drunkenness fell from 51,501 to just 26,243 and the number of summary punishments (issued by commanding officers) from 249,179 to 217,236. Therefore, discipline appears to have been dealt with increasingly effectively in both the militia and regular army, a conclusion shared by the Royal Commission examining the militia in 1890.[8] What is also evident is that instances of indiscipline peaked in years that the militia was embodied, although this was perhaps unsurprising as such periods simply afforded militiamen more time in which to commit an offence (something which was no doubt compounded by the length and monotony of such service). Table 4.1 shows that, in the first full year of the South African War, the number of courts-martial, summary and minor punishments, including fines for drunkenness, all increased dramatically. A similar trend was evident in the 1860s: in 1861 the number of recorded cases of insubordination fell to just 17 from a high of 124 the previous year – this was notable as 1860 was the last full year in which just under one-third of the total militia establishment were embodied.[9]

Although military law applied to the militia at all times that it was embodied or assembled for training, very few offences were ever dealt with by courts-martial. National figures are lacking for the entire period, nevertheless Table 4.1 shows that courts-martial accounted for only a small proportion of offences in each year from 1881 to 1908, the vast majority being dealt with summarily either by magistrates or, if less serious in nature, by commanding officers. One reason why so few militiamen faced trial by courts-martial was that they required the permission of the Secretary of State for War to whom each case was referred, something which was often declined.[10] It is also apparent from Table 4.1 that the use of courts-martial increased in the run-up to the South African War, something which runs contrary to the general trend in the regular army where the use of courts-martial declined for units stationed in the UK.[11] Evidence also suggests that this was due to the increased tendency for some units to try aggravated cases of desertion by courts-martial, something which had been previously suggested by

[8] PP, *General Annual Return of the British Army*, C. 1323, (1875), p. 37; Skelley, *Victorian Army*, pp. 128-31; Spiers, *Late Victorian* Army¸ pp. 74-5; PP, *Report of the Committee*¸ (1890), p. x.
[9] PP, *Army, &c. (insubordination). Returns of the number of cases of insubordination tried or punished, at home or abroad, under the Mutiny Act, in the army, militia, and yeomanry cavalry, in each year from 1860 to 1870 inclusive*, 296, (1871).
[10] PP, *Report of the committee*, (1877), qq. 4930-2.
[11] Skelley, *Victorian Army*¸ pp. 128-9, 140-1.

the War Office in 1858.[12]

Despite their rarity, within the militia courts-martial were usually reserved for those accused of serious military offences such as desertion (although, as will be seen, while disembodied, this was commonly dealt with summarily by magistrates in many units), fraudulent enlistment, violence and disobedience towards superiors, disgraceful conduct, drunkenness, theft and minor insubordination and neglect of orders. Crimes such as murder, manslaughter, rape and other serious civil offences could also theoretically be tried by courts-martial, although in practice militiamen stationed in the UK would usually be tried in civil courts if accessible, just like their regular counterparts.[13] In the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, most recorded courts-martial were held during the embodiments of the 1850s, usually in cases of desertion or absence without leave (which when disembodied would have been tried summarily by magistrates, as seen below). In one rare instance, a private was charged, attempting to excite others to 'mutinous conduct', the severity of crime meaning the commanding officer had little choice but to apply for a general court-martial. To show their rarity in peacetime, between 1877 and 1878 there were just two courts-martial recorded in the regiment, one such example relating to an aggravated case of drunkenness of a member of the permanent staff (due to his escape from confinement) which resulted in a district court-martial. Records of courts-martial in the North Yorkshire Rifles show that there was just one recorded court-martial prior to the regiment's embodiment in December 1854. Yet from January to April, the following year, there were eight recorded courts-martial, all involving desertion, drunkenness, violence towards superiors, theft, or a combination of the above. In the Oxfordshire Light Infantry there were just 50 recorded courts-martial between 1859 and 1881, two-thirds of which were cases involving desertion or absence without leave; the remainder related principally to theft of regimental property or insubordinate and violent behaviour.[14] Later figures, shown in Table 4.2, demonstrate that, within the militia of the UK as a whole, desertion and absence without leave consistently comprised the greatest proportion of offences tried, followed by offences relating to drunkenness,

[12] NRS, GD/224/192/19, Memoranda and returns relating to the militia, WO 'Summary of the Confidential Report of the Disembodied Militia at the Training of 1858'.
[13] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 72.
[14] MCRM, RMRE/13/1, Adjutant's letter book, 1852-1854, letters, Vaughan to the Brigade Major, Carmarthen, 19 June and 23 August 1854, adjutant to the Brigade Major, Carmarthen, 12 July 1854, and adjutant to Horse Guards, 13 July 1854; RMRE/13/4, Adjutant's letter book, 1877-1878, letters, Col. Payne to Commanding Royal Engineer (CRE) South Wales, 6 and 12 June 1878; TNA, WO 68/197, North Yorkshire Rifles courts-martial records, [1853-1855], and WO 68/413, 4th Oxfordshire Light Infantry, courts-martial records, 1859-1881.

Table 4.2: Summary of Offences tried by Courts-Martial within the Militia of the UK, 1902-1908.[15]

Offence	*Percentage of Total Offences by Year*						
	1902	1903*	1903-4	1904-5	1905-6	1906-7	1907-8
Desertion	21.6	22.9	19	17.9	11.1	13.2	18.3
AWOL	14.5	28.9	26.4	18.2	27.6	15.1	13.7
Fraudulent enlistment	2.1	3.1	4.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	4.6
Offences regarding enlistment	1.1	4.4	4.9	7.6	9.5	2.4	3.6
Violence & disobedience to superiors	8	4	7	9.4	9.2	10.5	6.5
Disgraceful conduct	0.9	0.1	2.1	0.5	2.2	1.6	4.3
Minor insubordination & neglect of orders	4.9	3	3	4.4	3.5	8.9	6.7
Quitting or sleeping on post	8.2	0.8	0.2	0.2	…	…	0.2
Drunk on duty	9.6	4.8	6.8	7.1	5.1	7	1.9
Drunkenness	9.2	5.3	4.9	12.6	10.5	12.9	9.6
Making away with necessities	9.5	12.5	11.7	5.3	2.9	9.7	…
Wilfully injuring Public Property or Equipment	…	…	…	…	…	…	0.7
Loss of Equipment, Clothing or Necessaries	…	…	…	…	…	…	19.0
Misc.	10.6	10.3	9.6	11	12.7	12.9	10.6
Total Offences	1,453	776	633	435	315	371	415
Punishments	*Percentage of Total Punishments by Year*						
	1902	1903*	1903-4	1904-5	1905-6	1906-7	1907-8
Penal Servitude	0.1	…	…	…	…	…	…
Reduced to a lower rank	17.9	19.0	22.8	33.3	28.4	34.3	31.4
Reduction and Imprisonment	2.9	1.5	1.2	3.2	8.1	4.5	6.3
Stoppage from Pay, Fine or Forfeiture	2.9	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.7	2.4	1.6
Imprisonment with or without hard labour	76.0	78.5	75.8	63.2	62.7	58.8	60.7
Discharged with Ignominy	0.2	0.5	…	…	…	…	…
Total Punishments	1,189	599	492	348	271	289	560
Acquitted, Pardoned etc.	*Number Acquitted, Pardoned etc .by Year*						
	1902	1903*	1903-4	1904-5	1905-6	1906-7	1907-8
Acquitted	19	14	10	11	4	8	12
Pardoned	…	…	…	…	…	…	
Sentence wholly remitted	15	3	3	6	1	4	5
Sentence quashed	13	6	4	4	7	8	15
Total Acquitted, Pardoned etc.	47	23	17	21	12	20	32

*Figures for 1903 are from 1 January to 20 September. Figures for 1 January - 30 September. Years hereafter are for the 1 October until the 30 September following. Figures for 1907-8 include the Special Reserve.

theft, and violence or disobedience towards superiors, etc.

The majority of disciplinary offences dealt with by courts-martial saw some form of custodial sentence awarded, either imprisonment with or without hard labour or, in more extreme circumstances, penal servitude. However, these were by no means the only punishments available: courts-martial could also award fines or stoppages from pay,

[15] Table 8 in PP, *General Annual Report*,Cd.1496, (1903), p. 86; Table 9 in *Ibid*., Cd. 1904, (1904), p. 125; Table 9 in *Ibid*., Cd. 2268, (1905), p. 123; Table 10 in *Ibid*., Cd. 2696, (1906), p. 121; Table 10 in *Ibid*., Cd. 3365, (19-7), p. 123; Table 10 in *Ibid*., Cd. 3798, (1908), p. 113; Table 9 in *Ibid*., Cd. 4493, (1909), pp. 112-3.

reduce an NCO a step in rank, or discharge an offender with ignominy. As in the regular army, the ability to award a particular punishment depended upon the type of courts-martial convened, with only district courts-martial able to try an NCO, while only general courts-martial were able to award punishments of penal servitude or try an officer.[16] Nevertheless, a custodial sentence remained by far the most common punishment awarded to privates, with NCOs customarily reduced in rank as an alternative (although sometime additional punishments were given in severe cases). In the North Yorkshire Rifles all of the eight recorded cases saw those convicted given a term of imprisonment, ranging from just ten days, in one instance, to 180 days with hard labour in another. In the Oxfordshire Light Infantry, 38 of the recorded cases involved custodial terms ranging from 14 to 112 days, the remainder being NCOs reduced in rank.[17]

Controversially it remained theoretically possible that militiamen tried by courts-martial could be sentenced to corporal punishment despite the legislation governing the militia forbidding any punishment against 'life or limb'. According to the Mutiny Act militiamen were liable to be flogged for offences 'as were comprised in the terms immorality, disobedience, or neglect of duty' (although, as will be seen, this usually was confined to serious cases of desertion and instances of violent disobedience).[18] There was a great deal of public dissatisfaction with this arrangement, most notably from members of the Peace Society for whom the issue played a central part of the wider campaign to disrupt militia recruitment (as seen in Chapter 3). This frequently brought them into conflict with the authorities. One particular placard entitled 'Flogging in the New Militia', and as a result of the accompanying demonstrations, saw their publishers prosecuted for seditious libel (a charge which was subsequently dropped). More widely, by October 1852 prosecutions had taken place in Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.[19] In Parliament there had previously been an attempt by the Liberal MP John Bright to introduce an amendment to the Militia Bill of 1852 which would forbid the practice on the ground that it would hinder recruitment, and that if there was the need to resort to the ballot, men who would have no choice but to serve would be liable to face corporal punishment. Although the amendment was defeated by 199 votes to 92, most

[16] *Manual of Military Law*, (1907), pp. 35-6.
[17] TNA, WO 68/197 and WO 68/413.
[18] HC Deb., 7 May 1852, vol. 121, cc. 371-413, (c. 394).
[19] TNA, TS 25/269,'Militia: Placards relating to flogging in the Militia'; TNA, HO 45/5458, 'Militia: Flogging, inflammatory bills, in the Militia'; *Leicester Journal*, 15 October 1852; *London Standard*, 1 October 1852; *The Leeds Times*, 26 February, 1853.

MPs had little affection for the practice and most found it morally reprehensive. Nonetheless, they recognised that it had its uses in maintaining discipline and that, crucially, unless the issue was also resolved in the army it would be unfair to spare just the militia. (A similar amendment, inserted by the Liberal MP Joseph Hardcastle, was also later defeated upon similar grounds.)[20] There were also fears flogging would adversely impact militiamen's willingness to volunteer for service in the regular army, or even for service abroad. For instance, after a regular soldier was flogged at Anglesea Barracks, Portsmouth, in January 1858, one private (whose letter was published in *Reynolds Newspaper*, edited by the radical journalist George W. M. Reynolds) in the 2nd West Yorkshire Regiment, who had been stationed there, asked, 'Do the authorities expect we will volunteer for foreign service, after witnessing the cruel and beastly exhibition of a flogging?' It was reported that later, when the men were asked who would be willing to volunteer for the line, only seventeen stepped forward despite the expectation 150 would do so.[21]

Despite such concerns, flogging was rarely used as a punishment within the militia, and then only whilst the force was embodied, meaning there were no recorded cases after 1859. In 1857 there were just five recorded cases: two for disgraceful conduct, two for insubordination and one for violence towards a superior. In 1858 this increased to 13 cases, while in the following year there were fourteen. Nevertheless, this paled in comparison to the number in the regular army: in 1857 there were 107 cases, in 1858 a total of 205, rising to 498 in 1859.[22] In the militia most instances were reserved only for serious offences. In November 1857 a private in the Nottinghamshire Regiment was sentenced to 50 lashes (reduced to 25 after the intervention of the surgeon) for striking two NCOs whilst they attempted to seize him for being out of his billet, the punishment taking place in front of the regiment in order to act as a deterrent. Similarly, while stationed at Aldershot, in August 1859, a drummer in the Oxfordshire Light Infantry was sentenced to 20 lashes alongside 168 days imprisonment with hard labour for striking an

[20] HC Deb., 7 May 1852, vol. 121, cc. 371-413, (cc. 393-413); HC Deb, 20 May 1852, vol. 121, cc. 806-37, (cc. 810-17).
[21] *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 31 January 1858.
[22] What is of note is that a high proportion of these cases were in Irish regiments: four in 1857, six in 1858 and eight in 1859. By contrast, there were no cases in Scottish units. This begs the question whether the practice was deemed more acceptable in Irish units, although that is difficult to confirm. PP, *Flogging (army). Return of the number of persons flogged in the army and militia of Great Britain and Ireland, in the year 1857*, 519, (1857-58), p. 4; PP, *Flogging (army and militia). Return of the number of persons flogged in the army and militia of Great Britain and Ireland, in the year 1858*, 47, (1860), p. 5; PP, *Flogging (army and militia). Return of the number of men flogged in the army and militia of Great Britain and Ireland, in the year 1859*, 366, (1860), p. 9.

NCO while drunk. However, certain commanding officers appeared to use flogging simply as a form of exemplary justice, as in a few cases offenders received lashes for non-violent offences. In August 1858 a private in the 2nd (King's Own) Staffordshire Regiment was sentenced to 50 lashes for being drunk at his guard post and for disposing of his kit, although official records recorded his offence as desertion. The sentence was carried out in full view of the regiment, although the public had been barred from entering. Eventually, upon the orders of the surgeon, his punishment was ceased at 33 lashes. Although in this instance medical concern saw the punishment cease, this was far from the norm; only eight out of a total of 32 cases saw the punishment stopped upon medical grounds.[23]

Growing social revulsion towards corporal punishment within the army more widely meant that flogging remained a controversial issue. Spurred on by the death of a young regular solider, Private Robert Slim (of the 74th Highlanders) in 1867, the government altered the Mutiny Act so that, in peacetime, only 'category II soldiers' (those deemed bad characters) could be flogged. Although the practice continued to be used against regulars, increasingly dramatically during the Zulu War, while several influential senior officers (including the Duke of Cambridge, Lord Wolseley, Redvers Buller and Lord Chelmsford) continued to believe in its necessity in order to maintain discipline, the Liberals were eventually able to successfully campaign for its abolition, succeeding in getting the maximum amount of lashes halved to just 25, and the practice abolished outright in 1881.[24]

However, flogging was not the only controversial punishment that some militiamen faced in the early years after reconstitution. Courts-martial could also punish bad characters and deserters through branding (using 'BC' for the former and 'D' for the latter). Although rarely used, there were a few instances of militiamen being sentenced to what remained, much like flogging, a deeply divisive practice. For instance, while embodied, a militiaman from the Edinburgh County Regiment was sentenced to be 'marked' as a deserter (alongside a punishment of 90 days imprisonment with hard labour) in June 1856.[25] Similar to flogging, pressure from the press and within Parliament meant the practice was also abolished as part of Cardwell's wider reforms of the

[23] *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 12 November 1857; *Reading Mercury*, 6 August 1859; *Grantham Journal*, 28 August 1858.
[24] Skelly, *Victorian Army*, pp. 129, 147-52; Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, pp. 73-4.
[25] NRS, GD224/192/21, Militia Correspondence, May-December 1856, letter, Bowman to Buccleuch, 18 June 1856.

recruiting system in 1871.[26] Furthermore, concerns were also raised by MPs in 1867 over the possibility that courts-martial could potentially punish militia deserters to twelve months penal servitude in the army as a means of deterring desertion. Despite its insertion into the Militia Reserve Bill, the Secretary of State for War, Sir John Pakington, dropped the clause once he realised it would be impossible to get through Parliament due to the high levels of opposition.[27]

Although most serious military offences were dealt with by courts-martial, cases of desertion and fraudulent enlistment were habitually deferred to local magistrates during disembodied periods. After 1854, militiamen summarily tried in this manner were liable to a fixed fine of between 40s and £10 (raised to £20 in 1859, and to £25 in 1881) or, if they could not afford to pay, up to three months imprisonment (raised to between two and six months in 1859), usually with hard labour. Upon the suggestion of the Royal Commission examining the force in 1859, all deserters were liable to serve an additional period corresponding to the length of time they were absent from their unit. Such financial penalties were far out of the reach of many militiamen despite the fact that it was extremely rare for an individual to receive the maximum sentence; indeed, of all the cases examined none were given the maximum sentence. Deserters also forfeited the right to any bounty liable to them, while those partially absent (or those guilty of misconduct) could have all, or a portion, of their bounty withheld.[28] All militiamen found to have fraudulently enlisted into another unit, as well as those who re-enlisted in the same regiment under a false name, were meant to be treated in the same manner as deserters. However, in practice there was a degree of leniency shown towards those who were not discovered to have fraudulently enlisted until after they had joined their new unit. A War Office circular of November 1853 established that, in order to avoid the inconvenience of trying such men, many of whom would have joined the line, as a rule all future cases would see 1d stopped from their daily pay for a period of 18 months (as permitted by section 57 of the Mutiny Act). It was stressed, however, that such was not to apply to those men attempting to fraudulently enlist, but who were discovered prior to their attestation. One senior officer, Major-General I. L. A. Simmons, stated that, subsequently, the vast majority of cases of fraudulent enlistment were dealt with in such a

[26] Spiers, *Late Victorian Army*, p. 73.
[27] HC Deb., 20 May 1867, vol. 187, cc. 775-6, (cc, 775-6).
[28] 17 & 18 Vict., c. 105, ss. 40, 45, 47 ; 17 & 18 Vict., c. 106, ss. 58-9, 61; 17 & 18 Vict., c. 107, ss. 23, 25, 28; 22 & 23 Vict., c. 38, s. 12; 42 & 43 Vict. c.33; 44 & 45 Vict. c. 58; 45 & 46 Vict. c. 49; PP, *Report of the commissioners*, (1859), pp. x-xii

manner. This no doubt helped the regular army ensure those who joined from the militia illegally could remain, yet it meant there was little punitive deterrent to those who were tempted to chance fraudulently enlisting for financial gain.[29] In 1854 it was recorded that, of a total of 11,809 recorded as transferring to the regular army that year, 1,483 did so without permission, although in reality the proportion of cases unaccounted for in official figures meant the proportion was probably much larger.[30] Furthermore, such a small stoppage in pay was little to deter individuals from attempting to fraudulently enlist in multiple regiments in order to gain as many enrolment bounties as possible.[31] Despite this, it was eventually reconfirmed in the Militia Act of 1859 that all cases of fraudulent enlistment should be treated in the same manner as desertion.[32]

Samples of desertion cases in several disembodied militia units demonstrate that summary trials by magistrates were the standard way of dealing with such cases. They also demonstrate that, in most cases, magistrates often opted for the smallest possible sentence, particularly if there was some form of mitigating circumstance. In the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry (after 1877, as Royal Engineers) cases of desertion were dealt with by magistrates, usually drawing the minimum 40s fine with the threat of imprisonment upon default. Cases of drunkenness could also be dealt with in a similar manner. In one case, in November 1875, a militiaman was awarded a 10s fine with an additional 13s 6d of costs, although, due to his default, he was instead imprisoned for 14 days. Records of desertion cases in Anglesey across the 1870s show that in most cases the punishment awarded was again just a 40s fine with between 3s and 12s costs on-top. Again if in default of the payment the sentence to be awarded was either two or three month's imprisonment, with or without hard labour, again the minimum set out in the legislation. A sample of desertion cases in Kent, recorded in the local press between 1859 and 1883, show a similar degree of leniency, most cases drawing the 40s and between 7s and 10s 6d worth of costs The fact that in a coastal county, such as Kent, desertion was often the result of militiamen taking work at sea – indeed, at least six of the 25 recorded

[29] HantsALS, Q30/3/5/102, WO Circular, E/Militia/24, 21/11/53; PP, *Second report of the commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution and practice of courts-martial in the army, and the present system of punishment for military offences; together with the minutes of evidence and appendix.*, 4114-I, (1868-9), q. 5151.
[30] PP, *Militia. Return of number of volunteers from each regiment of militia into the regular service, between 1 January and 31 December 1854, stating the quota of each regiment, and also whether the men have volunteered with or without previous sanction*, 235, (1854-55).
[31] HC Deb., 26 June 1860, vol. 159, cc. 1030-45, (cc. 1031-3); *Ibid.*, 4 March 1859, vol. 152, cc. 1310-41, (cc. 1324-5); PP, *Report of the committee*¸ (1877), qq. 4930-2.
[32] 22 & 23 Vict., c. 38, s. 10.

cases were due to such – magistrates ensured they stuck to the minimum possible sentence. Nevertheless, the fact many others received the same minimum sentence questions the extent to which this was truly a measure of compassion.[33] It was argued by many commanding officers that magistrates were often too lenient in sentencing. Several of those called to give evidence before the Royal Commission examining the militia in 1859 argued that such summary trials tended to let offenders off with too limited a punishment, and that in many cases, particularly cases of aggravated desertion, it would be better to seek trial by regimental courts-martial.[34]

There is also evidence that some magistrates and commanding officers bent the rules so as to allow themselves to award sentences below that legally required if they felt the individual concerned had mitigating circumstances. This irked the government which warned them of the possible consequences of such actions upon the potential deterrence of summary punishments. In 1868, a magistrate took leniency upon a militiaman in the Royal Lancashire Artillery who had been charged with desertion, but subsequently defaulted upon the payment of the 40s fine, by reducing his sentence below the minimum permitted by the existing legislation. He justified this by claiming that the Small Penalties Act of 1865 allowed him to reduce the sentence of two months imprisonment to just two weeks because the man in question had taken a job out at sea, and thus been unable to attend his training. This led to the magistrate in question being subsequently reprimanded, while the regiment's commanding officer felt an insufficient punishment had been given. This was not an isolated incident. In Hampshire a similar offender only received a 5s fine with the possibility of two weeks imprisonment upon default. In 1870 the issue of whether the Militia Act should be amended (to allow magistrates such discretionary powers) was brought before the Secretary of State for War. Nonetheless, Edward Cardwell felt that, referring to a similar case of three men from the Kent Artillery, that magistrates were right to apply the minimum possible sentence with little

[33] MCRM, RMRE/13/1-4, Adjutant's letter books, 1852-1854, 1865-1872, 1874-1877, and 1877-1878; *Ibid.*, RMRE/13/5/2, Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1874-1895, ff. 49-61; Anglesey Record Office, WQ/S/1871-79, Quarter session papers. The sample of desertions in Kent is an amalgamation of those in the East and West Kent Regiments, and the Kent Artillery. *Kentish Chronicle*, 3 September, 1859; *Kentish Gazette*, 16 September 1862, 12 October 1869 and 2 October 1883; *Kent & Sussex Courier*, 28 May 1875; *Maidstone Telegraph*, 4 May 1867, 4 April 1868, 3 April 1869, 28 May 1870 and 8 April 1871; *Whitstable Times and Herne Bay Herald*, 15 February 1868, 2 October 1869, 28 May 1870, 17 and 24 April 1875, and 3 March 1877; *Dover Express*¸14 and 21 December 1866, 10 May 1867, 12 June 1868, 30 April 1869, 17 June 1870 and 18 April 1873.

[34] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, (1859), qq. 758, 767-8, 760, 1064,-5, 1194-5, 1518, 2,352-3, 2658- 61, 2799-801, 2942, 3551, 4565, 5335-9.

need to give them further powers of discretion.[35] Both commanding officers and the lords lieutenant were also capable of leniency in their decision on whether or not to prosecute militiamen in cases of desertion. There are several examples of such in the Edinburgh County Regiment, one, in July 1856, in which a deserter's sentence of imprisonment for 90 days was remitted due to the fact that he pleaded his family were close to entering the poor house. Leniency was also shown when, the following year, the Lord Lieutenant of Midlothian, the Duke of Buccleuch, accepted the resignation of the regiment's sergeant-major after he was absent without leave (the former not having to provide a reason to the War Office for accepting the resignation), clearly mindful of the man's long service and the fact that an ignominious discharge would have prevented him from joining another unit (as he subsequently did).[36]

Just as in the regular army, minor offences which could be dealt with summarily by commanding officers were by far the most common disciplinary offences within the militia, making up the bulk of the figures for minor and summary punishments (as seen in Table 4.1). Individual units also drew up their own list of minor punishments. Such was the case in the Edinburgh County Regiment for militiamen guilty of minor misdemeanours. This principally consisted of additional periods of parade and drill or fines given to those either missing from, or late to, parade and drill, or for irregularities in barracks such as poorly maintained arms and equipment, and instances of minor insubordination.[37] Records of the 1st Durham Fusiliers (later 3rd Durham Light Infantry) show that, for much of the period, minor offences were dealt with through a system of summary fines, the most common offence that of being temporarily absent from drill or parade, or lateness upon assembly. For instance, in 1882, the vast majority of the 127 recorded fines were due to militiamen arriving one day late to march with the battalion, for which each individual was fined 2s 6d.[38] From 1881 commanding officers were bolstered in their ability to give out summary punishments as an alternative to courts-martial under section 46 of the Army Act, including imprisonment with or without hard labour, temporary withdrawal of pay for absence up to five days, fines for drunkenness up to 10s, and stoppages from pay in lieu of damages and loss of goods and equipment.

[35] TNA, HO 45/8061, 'Small Penalties Act 1865'; HC Deb., 8 August 1870, vol. 203, c. 1686.
[36] NRS, GD224/192/21, letters, Bowman to Buccleuch, 3 and 24 July 1857, GD224/192/22, Militia correspondence, 1857, letters, Buccleuch to Bowman and replies, 30 September, 1 and 2 October 1857.
[37] NRS, GD224/192/16, Memoranda, lists and returns relating to the militia, 1855-1857, 'Scale of Punishments'.
[38] DCRO, D/DLI/2/4/283, 'Fines book of the Durham Fusilier Militia, later the 3rd Battalion…The Durham Light Infantry' 1869-1914.

Minor punishments, including confinement to barracks and extra guard duties, could also be handed out by commanding officers for minor offences and combined with summary punishments as seen fit.[39]

Clearly, for much of the period, discipline was maintained in the militia with little recourse to courts-martial. For units which served abroad during the South African War, however, there was no such luxury. Here the militia was for the first time subject to the application of military law whilst on active service. It appears that, for some, maintaining discipline was a struggle. Records of district and field-general courts-martial, summarised in Table 4.3, show that between July 1900 and November 1901, in a sample of 13 British militia units, there were 324 trials held to deal with 455 separate offences. The most common offences were those relating to drunkenness (most seriously those whilst on duty), being asleep on or quitting a post and, more worryingly, violence or disobedience towards a superior. Unlike those units stationed in the UK, courts-martial for desertion and absence without leave were less common due to the greater difficulties of doing so upon active service (compared to during disembodied periods in the UK). A few militiamen were also charged with the most serious of offences, principally murder. There was also a degree of variation in the number of courts-martial among different units. Some of this can be explained by the fact that several units differed greatly in size – both the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) and Edinburgh R.G.A. (Militia) had taken just a company each to South Africa. Others were simply stationed in South Africa for longer periods before returning home. Nevertheless, certain units experienced a greater difficulty in maintaining discipline than others. Both the 3rd East Kent Regiment and 3rd South Wales Borderers served in South Africa for approximately the same length of time – from March 1900 until January 1902 for the former, and February 1902 for the latter. Despite this, the 3rd South Wales Borderers saw more men charged by courts-martial than the 3rd East Kent Regiment.[40] What is also clear is that militiamen brought up before courts-martial had little chance of avoiding a conviction, just 14 having been acquitted out of 324 cases.

Since the abolition of corporal punishment, courts-martial were limited to using various forms of imprisonment as a means of enforcing discipline, and during the war the same applied to the militia. Most offenders were sentenced to a term of imprisonment with hard labour, although some were instead sentenced to penal servitude or one of the

[39] 44 & 45 Vict., c. 58, s. 46.
[40] Hay, *Constitutional Force*, pp. 239-41, 309-12.

Table 4.3: Offences charged by District and Field-General Courts-Martial during the South African War, July 1900 to November 1901, within a Sample of Thirteen Militia Units.[41]

Unit	*Number of CMs*	*Offences*												
		Total	Desertion	AWOL	Fraudulent Enlistment	Violence or disobedience to superiors	Disgraceful conduct	Minor insubordination or neglect of orders	Quitting or sleeping on post	Drunkenness	Relating to clothing, equipment & necessities	Conduct to the prejudice of military discipline	Other	Unknown
4th Bedfordshire	43	60	1	6	…	10	2	2	8	22	…	5	1	3
3rd Durham Light Infantry	8	10	…	…	…	4	3	1	…	1	…	…	…	1
3rd East Kent	16	25	…	…	…	5	3	1	2	9	…	1	4	…
5th Manchester	28	31	…	…	…	5	2	3	11	6	1	1	1	1
6th Middlesex	37	58	…	2	…	13	8	2	6	11	3	4	7	2
3rd Norfolk	20	34	…	2	…	4	7	4	6	3	…	4	3	1
4th Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire	24	39	…	3	…	10	…	…	7	14	1	3	1	…
4th Somerset Light Infantry	29	35	…	8	…	5	1	1	11	4	…	5	…	…
Royal Monmouthshire R.E. (Militia)	4	6	…	…	…	…	1	1	…	4	…	…	…	…
3rd South Wales Borderers	42	54	…	8	…	9	2	1	7	20	…	1	6	…
4th Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders	20	34	…	3	…	4	6	1	1	15	…	4	…	…
3rd King's Own Scottish Borderers	39	45	1	2	1	1	1	…	7	16	4	1	5	6
Edinburgh R.G.A. (Militia)	14	24	…	2	…	5	…	4	2	3	3	2	3	…
Total	324	455	2	36	1	75	36	21	68	128	12	31	31	14

[41] TNA, WO 92/8-10, Field-general and district courts-martial registers, July 1900-November 1901.

Table 4.3 (continued): Offences charged by District and Field-General Courts-Martial during the South African War, July 1900 to November 1901, within a Sample of Thirteen Militia Units.

Unit	*Acquitted*	*Sentences*					
		Imprisonment or Penal Servitude	Field Punishment No. 1 or 2	Reduced to a Lower Rank	Stoppage from Pay, Fine or Forfeiture	Discharged with Ignominy	Unknown
4th Bedfordshire	3	28	2	11	6	…	2
3rd Durham Light Infantry	1	7	…	…	…	…	…
3rd East Kent	…	1	…	…	…	…	…
5th Manchester	1	22	3	4	…	1	…
6th Middlesex	3	30	…	7	2	2	…
3rd Norfolk	1	13	2	4	…	…	…
4th Nottinghamshire & Derbyshire	1	17	…	7	1	1	2
4th Somerset Light Infantry	3	24	…	3	…	1	…
Royal Monmouthshire R.E. (Militia)	…	3	…	1	1	…	…
3rd South Wales Borderers	…	1	…	…	…	…	…
4th Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders	…	14	1	5	1	…	…
3rd King's Own Scottish Borderers	1	26	9	4	8	2	1
Edinburgh R.G.A. (Militia)	…	1	…	…	1	…	…
Total	14	187	17	46	20	7	5

two forms of field punishment. NCOs were almost always reduced either a step in rank or, if the offence was of sufficient gravity, straight to the ranks (with many also sentenced to a period of imprisonment). On top of this, some militiamen were fined or had stoppages taken from their pay, usually used in conjunction with other sentences. Yet despite the apparent regularity with which militiamen (who, ultimately, remained amateur soldiers) were subjected to the sentence of courts-martial, it was relatively common for sentences to be partially (or, in a few cases, wholly) remitted.

Although all the cases sampled in Table 4.3 related to members of the rank and file, there were a few rare cases where militia officers also faced trial. Arguably the most notorious case was that of Lieutenant W. Judkins of the 5th Rifle Brigade (former 2nd Tower Hamlets Regiment), tried as part of the 'Cape "Ragging" Case' in June 1903. Alongside six other officers, it was alleged that whilst drunk they had abducted, hazed and later beat a local journalist during the early hours of Christmas Day 1901 (sardonically holding a 'mock' courts-martial in the process of doing so), all the result of a disagreement between them and the victim at a ball held that evening. Despite being a militia officer, there is no evidence to suggest Judkins was to be afforded any special treatment when a general court-martial was eventually convened. Although all were eventually found not guilty of breaching section 16 of the Army Act ('behaving in a scandalous manner'), despite already having paid damages amounting to £1,500 (plus fees) to the victim whilst still serving in South Africa, the scandal became national news; it was even raised before the Secretary of State for War in Parliament.[42]

* * *

Aside from individual cases of indiscipline common to the regular army and other auxiliary forces alike, there were three major disciplinary issues which continued to be problematic for the militia across the whole period: desertion (as already alluded to), riotous behaviour and, linked to the latter, billeting. Clearly efforts to control desertion through punitive means largely failed to help curb all but its worst excesses. Yet in reality there was little the government could do to control it. The 'migratory' nature of much of the urban workforce which, as seen in Chapter 3, comprised a large proportion of recruits

[42] *The Times*, 24 June 1903.

in and around the major towns and cities, meant it was relatively easy for such individuals to desert. As already mentioned above, in 1853 it was found that of 5,175 absentees recorded in 52 militia regiments, a total of 3,924 occurred in just 14 regiments, all of which recruited in the 'metropolitan and manufacturing districts.' By far the worst deficiencies occurred in the 1st and 2nd Tower Hamlets Regiment where 1,221 men were recorded as deserters, nearly a quarter of the total.[43] Examination of desertion rates among a sample of units across the period show that, on average, the units with the highest rates of absence were those in urban and industrial areas. For instance, in the 6th Lancashire Regiment (later the 3rd and 4th Manchester Regiment) the average rate of desertion was 13.3 per cent of the enrolled strength, while in the 1st Tower Hamlets (later 7th Rifle Brigade) and Edinburgh Artillery (later Edinburgh R.G.A Militia) it was 11.5 and 10.9 per cent respectively. By comparison, the 2nd (later 4th Norfolk) Regiment had an average of just 2.6 per cent across the period although it would be wrong to suggest that all predominantly rural counties had small rates of desertion; for instance, the Hampshire Regiment saw a period where desertion reached far above the national average.[44] Unlike in many rural areas, it was less common for urban recruits to have a permanent address as such individuals frequently moved to find work, sometimes unintentionally failing to inform the authorities of their movements.[45] Representatives of the 1st Lancashire, Royal East Middlesex, Scottish Borderers and 2nd Tower Hamlets Regiments all testified, in 1877, to the high levels of desertion owing to a reliance on the floating manufacturing population. For example, Lieutenant-Colonel George G. Walker of the Scottish Borderers Regiment noted how desertion rates had increased from an average of 20 to around 80 per year as they increasingly relied on recruits from manufacturing areas. As a practice, desertion and fraudulent enlistment were more difficult in rural areas where agricultural workers made up the bulk of recruits as they tended to live at settled addresses, and were thus easier for the authorities to locate. Major George Toseland, of the Bedfordshire Regiment, stated that few recruits were absent as Bedfordshire was a predominantly rural district in which most men had fixed addresses. Similarly, in 1890, Colonel Hugh Pearson, commanding the Twelfth Regimental District (Suffolk & Cambridge), stated that the reason for such low levels of desertion was

[43] WSHC, 2057/F8/II/G/4, Memorandum on the regiments of militia inspected, 1847-1852.
[44] See Table 3.1, Chapter 3, for source.
[45] This was the conclusion of the Royal Commission examining the militia in 1877. PP, *Report of the committee*, C. 1654, C. 1654-I, (1877), p. xiii.

because his men were locally employed and largely agricultural labourers, thus making them easier to trace as those that did desert tended to go straight to their homes.[46]

A further cause of desertion was due to permanent emigration or temporary absence whilst at sea, identified by the War Office as one of the key causes of desertion in 1858.[47] Unsurprisingly coastal counties were particularly susceptible to losing militiamen in such a manner. Cornish units (especially the Royal Cornwall and Devon Miners) lost a higher proportion of men to emigration due to the tendency for miners, who comprised a significant proportion of their manpower, to travel domestically and internationally in search of work. It was the contention of Major Sir John St. Aubyn of the Cornwall Rangers that many had no intention of making off fraudulently, but due to the circumstances of their employment had no choice but to do so. As examined above, similar difficulties were experienced in Kent. In one instance, four members of the Kent Artillery were also found guilty of desertion under similar circumstances in 1870, their absence blamed upon their employment aboard a steam ship laying submarine cables, which in turn caused them to miss their annual training. By 1890 it had become the informal practice of the Northern Division Royal Artillery (former Durham Artillery) to exempt absentees from charges of desertion if they could prove that they had been absent while working at sea, for instance, with the production of shipping discharges. Instead they were required to serve an extra year, although they remained on the strength of the regiment. Even as late as 1904 emigration and migration in pursuit of work was blamed as the chief cause of desertion in the 77th Recruitment District based at Aberdeen.[48]

There were also concerns that desertion and fraudulent enlistment were difficult to combat due to the inexperience, and in many cases indifference, of local constabularies towards tracking down absentees. During the 1850s rural constabularies had little experience in catching absentees, while many were only formed in the preceding years. In 1874 the Home Office believed that this was far from an isolated trend. For instance there were no reported cased of desertion within the Durham Artillery throughout the whole of 1874 despite 42 reported cases of absence without leave that year. Similar concerns were evident within the 2nd Tower Hamlets Regiment in which Major

[46] PP, *Report of the committee*¸ C. 1654, C. 1654-I, (1877), qq. 2361-2, 2901, 2933, 3359-61, 3365, 5788-91, 9683-6, 9845-9; PP. *Report of the committee*, C. 5922, (1890) q. 1373.
[47] NRS, GD/224/192/19, WO 'Summary of the Confidential Report of the Disembodied Militia at the Training of 1858'.
[48] PP, *Report of the committee*¸ (1877), qq. 7515-20; HC Deb., 8 August 1870, vol. 203, c. 1686; PP. *Report of the committee*, (1890) q. 6183; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, (1904) , q. 19634.

Maxwell, before the 1877 commission, argued that the police gave little to no assistance in tracing and catching deserters unless pressed to do so, with little success. The situation was still patchy by the early twentieth century. In giving evidence to the 1904 Norfolk Committee, Lord Raglan, commanding the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), stated that there was little effort towards tackling desertion from the local police; in fact, only three per cent of the regiment's deserters, over a ten year period, were apprehended by police. Yet the issue of police compliance varied even in neighbouring counties. Lord Raglan subsequently stated that in Staffordshire there was less absence without leave because the county constabulary took the issue far more seriously than in Monmouthshire.[49]

Although desertion was consistently the most common serious disciplinary issue facing the militia across the period, it was closely followed by the all too often riotous behaviour of militiamen while assembled. This was particularly problematic during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny. In early 1855 there was widespread discontent among many units over the decision – a promise Earl Grey had extracted from the Duke of Newcastle – to allow those men enlisted prior to the embodiment to be discharged upon completion of 56 days service, this being the maximum statutory length permitted for the annual training. Although eventually Newcastle's 'act of grace' permitted such men to take their discharge (despite being offered a £1 if they stayed), the initial confusion in addition to the anger from those later enlisted (and thus excluded from the 'act of grace') led to widespread dissatisfaction in several units and near mutinies in 'at least nine regiments'.[50] For instance, on the morning of 28 March 1855, a total of 260 men serving in the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment refused to be re-enlisted. After being discharged, the majority headed straight to several public houses in the immediate vicinity. However, a War Office circular received the same day required them to attend the afternoon drill before their discharge could be permitted. Unsurprisingly the heavily inebriated men turned upon the officers and men (and several civilians) sent to return them to barracks. In the end it took 34 of the remaining militiamen to force them back into the drill field at bayonet point before the station was brought under control.[51]

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[49] TNA, HO 45/9374/39832, 'Deserters'; PP, *Recruiting. Statistical tables relative to recruiting for the army and militia*, C.1205, 1875, p. 9; PP, *Report of the committee*¸ (1877), qq. 3359-61, 3365; PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*, vol. 2, (1904), q. 16800.
[50] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 153-4.
[51] Davis, *Second Royal Surrey Regiment*, pp. 245-7; HC Deb., 4 May 1855, vol. 138, cc. 105-76, (cc. 117-32).

Riotous behaviour was also present in regiments stationed aboard during the Crimean War. Those based in the Mediterranean during the 1850s came into conflict with each other and members of the local populace on several occasions. Four of the regiments stationed on Corfu were involved in a brawl after members of the 3rd Middlesex Regiment verbally insulted men from the Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire Regiments (perhaps owing to the fact that the latter three regiments recruited predominantly from rural areas; the 3rd Middlesex Regiment recruited within London). This confrontation led to a 'free fight' between the two groups, afterwards necessitating a court of inquiry. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the regimental history of the Oxfordshire Regiment insisted they were not involved, quoting the praise offered by the general officer commanding towards the regiment in keeping out of the fray, again illustrating how such histories attempted to show the regiment in the best light possible. There was also evidence of tension between militiamen and the local populace which, in the case of the Wiltshire Regiment, saw a militiaman murdered due to growing hostility (one of the many hardships faced by militiamen serving upon the Ionian Islands, explored further in Chapter 5). According to an officer of the 1st (King's Own) Staffordshire Regiment, similar growing antipathy between militiamen and the local populace almost turned to violence while stationed on Cephalonia.[52]

Despite the specific causes behind the rioting of time expired men, one point is clear: riotous behaviour most often resulted from prolonged access to alcohol. When combined with the monotonous nature of lengthy embodied service and tensions with local civilians, the possibility of riotous disorder was always high. In July 1854 a confrontation in a Deptford pub between members of the Lancashire Regiment and a host of Irish labourers turned into an all night brawl after several of the militiamen proceeded to attack the latter with their bayonets. That November, the commanding officer of the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, Colonel H.M. Clifford, lamented how drunkenness was rife while the regiment was stationed at Newport. Elsewhere, in May 1856, members of the 3rd West York Regiment were attacked after an initial confrontation between several militiaman and local civilians, after which the remainder of the regiment were

[52] Beckett, *Citizen Soldiers*, p. 26; Lt.-Col. F. Willan, *History of the Oxfordshire Regiment of Militia (Fourth Battalion Oxfordshire Light Infantry)*, (Oxford: E. W. Morris, 1900), p. 65; NAM, 1987-11-115, Papers relating to Sgt.-Maj. Richard Mills, King's Own Staffordshire Regiment; *Salisbury and Winchester Journal*, 27 October 1855.

forced back to barracks by the crowd, all the while being pelted with stones.[53] Drunkenness also meant initially isolated quarrels had a tendency to spiral into violent riots as militiamen (even if not involved directly) frequently intervened to assist their comrades. For instance, on the evening of the 1 January 1858, members of the 1st (King's Own) Staffordshire Regiment, stationed at Edinburgh Castle, were involved in a drunken brawl with local civilians. In turn, the men of the picket sent to retrieve their comrades were themselves involved in another fight, this time with two civilians and a policeman, the latter of whom was stabbed. The previous weekend, similar scenes erupted in Dublin when members of the Shropshire Regiment, alongside men from the Grenadier Guards, fought against regulars from the 30th and 50th Regiments on three separate days, all originated from a drunken quarrel in a local public house (and causing much damage to property in the surrounding streets).[54] Such disturbances were not just limited to the newly reconstituted force, although instances of riotous behaviour do appear to have occurred less frequently by the end of the century. During the South African War members of a local regiment stationed in Birmingham were involved in a drunken brawl with civilians which saw one man unconscious and six others injured.[55]

More worryingly was the alarming regularity that relatively small instances of drunken and boisterous behaviour escalated into full blown riots, some involving hundreds of militiamen at a time, and many of which the police and pickets struggled to control. At Warwick, in 1866, an initially minor quarrel between two militiamen of the 1st Warwickshire Regiment and a group of gypsies escalated into an armed street brawl in which many were seriously injured, one individual surrounded and almost kicked to death by a group of up to 20 militiamen. Despite this, no militiaman faced prosecution for their part in the riot due, most likely, to the fact that their victims were gypsies as opposed to members of the local population.[56] It was no coincidence that some of the worst examples of rioting usually occurred when militiamen received their bounty which was often spent on drink in local public houses. For instance, a particularly serious incident occurred on such an occasion at Penicuik, Edinburgh, garrison of the 3rd Royal Scots Regiment in July 1881. A fight between the men spiralled into what was described as a battle with the few local policemen, and local townspeople, totalling approximately

[53] *John Bull*, 1 July 1854; *The Belfast News-Letter*, 30 May 1856; WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B/204, letter, Clifford to Herbert, 22 November 1854.
[54] *Cheshire Observer*, 1 and 2 January 1858; *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 3 June, 1901.
[55] *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, 3 June, 1901.
[56] *Sussex Advertiser*, 16 May 1866.

400 individuals. After a series of serious and unprovoked attacks upon civilians, the mob forced the militiamen to retreat to the barracks with a full blown rush upon the host only prevented by the fixed bayonets of a hastily assembled picket. Similar scenes in Lanark upon the disembodiment of the local regiment, in June 1860, saw a drunken mob break out into a series of brawls after which 200 of the regiment chased and attacked two of the regiment's sergeants.[57]

A further factor in exacerbating riotous behaviour (already seen in many of the examples seen so far) was the often fractious relationship between militiamen and the police. In one instance, members of the Berkshire Regiment confronted the police at the Reading Races after it was claimed the authorities had interfered with their gambling. In other cases resistance against the police was more organised. For instance, members of the Northumberland Light Infantry appropriated the grievances of locals during their 1866 annual training at Alnwick (despite the fact few recruits came from the town) as a result of the physical mistreatment of a young tobacconist by the arresting officer. Members of the regiment armed with fire pokers, belts and bayonets as weapons, planned and carried out a series of violent attacks against police officers resulting in their gaining complete control of the town for around three hours. To their credit the men did not attack any local persons or property, confirming that this was far from an arbitrary act of violence. The response of the commanding officer illustrated the limited means at his disposal to punish mass acts of civil disobedience and the difficulty of identifying those involved: he simply stated on parade that anybody involved in any subsequent disorder would face the withdrawal of their pay and upon disassembly would be handed to the police.[58]

Many more of these disturbances took place while regiments were stationed at the large military camps or when placed into barracks in close proximity to other units. Indeed, quartering regulars and militiamen together provided the tinder for antagonism between the two (as in the case with the Shropshire Regiment serving in Dublin, seen above). In May 1856 several regiments were involved in a fracas with regular soldiers stationed at Colchester, but most notably between the Essex Rifles and the 88th Regiment, after it was alleged regular soldiers taunted their militia counterparts. Further disturbances between both regiments followed including a bloody street fight, while there were also reports of minor skirmishes involving other militia regiments. Elsewhere, a

[57] *Glasgow Herald*, 11 July 1881; *Moring Chronicle*, 15 June 1860.
[58] *The Racing Times*, 21 August 1855; *Morning Post*, 6 June, 1866.

particularly serious instance saw one militiaman killed when members of the 24th Regiment and 2nd (King's Own) Staffordshire Light Infantry came to blows on Christmas Day 1859 while quartered together. After a drunken squabble escalated into a fight between parties of the two regiments (armed with broom handles and other blunt instruments), some members of the former gathered their rifles and shot dead a militiaman while seriously wounding three others. Later, in May 1861, members of the Denbighshire Regiment, stationed at Wrexham, broke out into a riot after the band of the Liverpool Volunteers played the tune 'Battle of the Boyne' as a slight against Catholic members of the regiment.[59] As brigading regiments together for the annual training became increasingly frequent after the 1870s, inter-regimental feuds were no longer predominantly a feature of embodied service. In June 1875, for instance, the 14th and 18th Regiments fought with members of the 3rd Middlesex Regiment while encamped at Aldershot. As a result four men were seriously wounded while many others required minor medical care. Likewise large groups from the Royal London and Derby Regiments almost came to blows, in June 1885, after the former insulted the latter with offensive names.[60] During the South African War, in July 1900, men from the 3rd Gloucestershire Regiment and 5th Royal Irish Fusiliers, stationed at Bulford Camp in Wiltshire, came to blows when members of the latter taunted the former over the surrender of their regular battalions at Nicholson's Nek. Hostilities came to a head the following day when several fusiliers, alongside men from other Irish regiments, attacked the Gloucester's camp armed with knives and various other weapons. Elsewhere, in April 1900, some of the worst instances of inter-unit relations occurred among regiments stationed at Portsmouth, often involving Irish units. For instance, a mass brawl involving 100 or more militiamen and regulars resulted in the serious injury of two militiamen after they were stabbed with bayonets. As a result punishments ranging from ten to 90 days imprisonment were given to those involved.[61]

Indiscipline was also encouraged due to the practice of billeting militiamen upon public houses and licensed victuallers during annual training and in periods of embodiment. Although from the 1880s the tendency was to camp militiamen if they

[59] *The Times*, 27 March 1856; *Reading Mercury*, 31 December, 1859; WSHC, 2057/F8/V/C/3, *Liverpool Mercury*¸25 May 1861.
[60] *Manchester Evening News*, 21 June 1875; *Huddersfield Chronicle*, 23 June 1885.
[61] This involved militiamen from the Royal Munster Fusiliers, Northamptonshire Regiment, West Surrey Regiment, Royal Dublin Fusiliers and members of the regular Royal Garrison Artillery stationed there. *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 8 July 1900; *Royal Cornwall Gazette*, 12 April 1900.

could not be provided with sufficient barrack space, for the first three decades after reconstitution the military authorities were fully aware that a lack of permanent barrack accommodation (or space at military camps) meant it was somewhat of a necessary evil.[62] Compared to the sheltered surroundings of the barrack house or large military camps, where it was relatively easy to supervise the men, the disperse nature of billets meant it was practically impossible for NCOs to ensure militiamen were effectively supervised at night. Even though the sergeants were expected to ensure every militiaman was in their billets no later than 11pm, there was little to stop them from leaving afterwards, while it was also far too easy for men to avoid pickets despatched to ensure the men were not loitering in the streets. For instance, during the annual training for 1869 of the 1st Royal Lancashire Regiment in Lancaster, the superintendant of police remarked that, on Saturdays, there were 'usually at least a hundred Militiamen to be seen about the town the greater part of the night'. Similarly, in the same year one fisherman from Hartlepool, where the Royal Durham Artillery were undertaking their annual training, informed the authorities that it was not uncommon for them to find drunk militiamen asleep in their boats each morning during the training period. In another instance, only five militiamen during a random late night inspection were found to be in their billets, the majority of the remainder spread throughout the 'lowest bars in the town' still clad in uniform. The prevalence of drunkenness in billeted units was all too clear when the War Office, comparing four regiments records, found that when billeted the recorded rate of drunkenness was four and a half times higher compared to when they were previously stationed in barracks during the previous embodiment (although they recognised this may have also be partially due to the greater discipline found in units that had been embodied for a lengthy period).[63] It was for this reason that, in 1877, Major St. Aubyn, of the Cornwall Rangers, noted his relief that his regiment were relocated to a camp after having been consistently billeted, much to the improvement of their discipline and sobriety.[64]

The poor behaviour of billeted militiamen prompted frequent attempts by local people to lobby the government to provide alternative accommodation for what were perceived as problem units. In Pontefract local people petitioned for the removal of the

[62] PP, *Report from the Select Committee on the Billeting System*, 363, (1857-58), p. iv.
[63] TNA, WO 33/20, 'Notes on the System of Billeting the Militia, as seen in five English and two Scotch Regiments, during the Training of 1869.'
[64] PP, *Report of the committee*¸ (1877), q. 7590.

West Yorkshire Rifles owing to their frequent drunken and anti-social behaviour. Nevertheless, the presentation of the petition to the local MP only exacerbated such disturbances as some members of the regiment threatened to damage the property of the signatories, leading to an attack on the property of the local mayor and several arrests for similar damage throughout the town. In Brighton the town council pleaded with Lord Panmure to remove the locally billeted regiment due to their persistent drunken behaviour and the corruptive effect upon not just the local population, but also on themselves. Later, the town clerk of Newport, Thomas Woullett, pleaded with the Lord Lieutenant of Monmouthshire, Lord Llanover, for members of the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry to be placed into barracks so as to avoid the disciplinary problems associated with billeting them in public houses, a request which was later rejected due to its cost to the War Office. The same year the Mayor Aldermen and Burgesses of Kingston upon Thames petitioned the Home Secretary for the construction of 'proper barracks' which would ensure men of the 3rd Royal Surrey Regiment, many of whom were young and recruited from Lambeth and Bermondsey, were properly supervised so as to prevent the almost daily occurrences of 'violence and lawlessness' which accompanied them. In Lancaster the poor behaviour of men from the 1st Royal Lancashire Regiments (detailed above) eventually prompted, in 1874, members of the local association of licensed victuallers to request an alteration to the law which would see regiments encamped as opposed to billeted. Similar concerns were aired at the annual dinner for the association representing Loughborough[65]

Those upon whom the difficulties of billeting militiamen were most apparent often faced little chance of meeting the expectations of the units which they were required by law to host, with little chance of escaping the obligation to do so. In one instance, in March 1855, the Quartermaster-Sergeant of the West Essex Regiment applied for a summons against a landlady for failing to provide four officers with single rooms (owing to their being embodied and thus eligible for the same rights as regulars). The case was eventually thrown out by the magistrates (among which sat the regiment's Colonel); yet the cheers which sounded throughout the court hinted at the tension the issue of billeting could cause within local communities. Similarly, in May 1854, a

[65] *Leicester Chronicle*¸15 September 1855; *The Wells Journal*, 11 August, 1855; *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 31 January 1856; Gwent Archives, LLCMV/21/22, letter, T. Woullett to Lord Llanover, 25 March 1862, and letter, J. Vaughan to the Clerk of the Lieutenancy, 29 March 1862; TNA, HO 45/7340, 'Militia billeted at licensed premises at Kingston upon Thames', 1862; *Lancaster Gazette*, 26 September 1874.

landlady from Leicester was fined 40s when a property managed by her son was deemed not fit for purpose, default upon which would have meant one month's imprisonment.[66] Some landlords attempted to avoid billeting by claiming circumstantial or legal reasons as to why they were not liable. For instance, one landlord was fined £2 and costs (albeit the lowest amount possible) after refusing to continue to provide accommodation for four militiamen on account of his wife's ill health and the claim that they had cheated him out of his payment. Elsewhere, an innkeeper offered to pay a fine in lieu of billeting the men and horses of the Tower Hamlets Regiment during the Crimean War. Legal precedent settled the case through citing that of a similar incident from 1843.[67] There were also complaints that the billeting system was far from uniformly implemented across Scotland. For instance, in Glasgow houses of £3 rental were liable to receive one or two militiamen, while elsewhere only houses of £5 rental were liable. There was no supervision of the individuals that parcelled out billets, and claims that certain areas received favouritism, or conversely were unfairly targeted. Furthermore, there were complaints from Paisley stated that only 10,000 of the 60,000 residents were liable to provide billets.[68]

Initially the disciplinary issues associated with billeting militiamen were a particularly sore issue in Scotland as, unlike elsewhere in the UK, soldiers were liable to be billeted upon private householders instead of public houses and other licensed victuallers. This legislative quirk arose simply due to the fact that prior to the Act of Union in 1707 separate legislation had required private houses to provide billets, and when, in the following year, the provision of the Mutiny Act was extended to Scotland, a clause ensured that the existing laws governing the practice remained in force. It was only in 1857 when the practice was banned through the alteration of the Mutiny Act to ensure Scotland came into line with the rest of UK.[69] Despite this, during the Crimean War the system caused a great deal of tension between Scottish communities and the militia. In Parliament particular attention was drawn to the situation in Dalkeith by the Duke of Buccleuch, the Lord Lieutenant of Midlothian, when approximately 400 men of the Edinburgh County Regiment were billeted upon the town. Residents' initial fears over their conduct appeared to be confirmed, one resident describing to a local MP 'scenes of

[66] *The Morning Post*, 17 March, 1855; *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 22 February, 1855; *The Leicester Chronicle*, 27 May, 1854.
[67] TNA, WO 43/906. 'Billetting [sic] of militia troops and horses'.
[68] HC Deb., 7 April 1856, vol. 141, cc. 566-89, (cc. 566-8).
[69] *Manual of Military Law*, (1907), pp. 178-9; HL Deb., 5 July 1855, vol. 139, c. 433; 20 Vict., c. 13, s. 73.

drunkenness and blasphemy' as a result. After a long campaign – this included a series of veiled threats that, if necessary, the townspeople would, despite their legal obligation, simply refuse to billet the men any further – to remove the regiment, eventually a petition, signed by 513 of the townspeople, was delivered to Buccleuch himself, and in November plans were put in place to move as many men as possible into Edinburgh Castle. Similar concerns were aired by the residents of Dumfries in October 1855, from which part of the regiment were forced to relocate, three companies subsequently billeted to outlaying local towns. In Dundee 670 locals signed a petition calling for the end of the billeting system, presenting it to their local MP for consideration. Sir James Anderson, MP for Stirling Bridge, complained to the House of Commons that members of the Stirlingshire Regiment had been billeted upon householders to much disquiet, despite the barracks at Stirling Castle remaining largely empty.[70]

Yet living conditions for the militiamen could also be difficult whilst billeted and hardly conductive to maintaining discipline. In 1855 one private of the Somerset Regiment noted that, in his billet, up to three men were forced to sleep in a bed at any one time, while many other militiamen were quartered in lodgings that were frequently visited by prostitutes. Later, in 1869, the War Office found that in a sample of units, on average, the space afforded to each billeted militiaman was less than that considered necessary in barracks, or even the workhouse, with nearly every man forced to sleep two to a bed. For instance, in Lanark, in one room housing six militiamen, each man had less than 150 cubic feet of space each, the minimum accepted amount for a barrack room being around 600, or in the workhouse between 300 and 500 cubic feet. It was also all too common for militiamen to be quartered in what amounted to little more than brothels, such being the case in Durham, Hartlepool and Lancaster in 1869. There is also evidence to suggest that, as a result of many militiamen being quartered in (or in close proximity to) brothels, and in Scotland with families or single women, promiscuous sexual behaviour was rife. There is even evidence to suggest that rates of illegitimate child birth matched the times that militiamen were billeted in certain towns. For instance, in Lanark

[70] NRS, GD224/192/9, Miscellaneous militia correspondence, 1854-1855, letter from Buccleuch to Lord Panmure, 14 November 1855, and reply, 20 November 1855; GD224/192/10, Miscellaneous militia correspondence, [1855-1859], letters from Buccleuch to Sidney Herbert, 21 and 22 January 1855, Statement by medical practitioners of Dalkeith on the billeting of the Edinburgh County Regiment, 22 January 1855, letter from a committee of inhabitants of Dalkeith to the Secretary of State for War, 22 January 1855, letters fro Buccleuch to Mitchell (head of the town committee), 23 and 27 January 1855, and reply, 27 January 1855; GD224/192/15, Petition to Buccleuch, [1855]; HC Deb., 6 July 1855, vol. 139, cc. 540-3, (cc. 540-1); *Ibid*., 7 April 1856, vol. 141, cc. 566-89, (c. 566); *Ibid.*¸ 5 March 1855, vol. 137, cc. 111-57, (CC. 154-5); Weir, *King's own Scottish Borderers*, p. 59; *Dundee Courier*, 9 May, 1855.

the rate of illegitimate births in the first six months of 1868 was one in seven, whereas prior to this, in the corresponding months of 1859, a year in which the local regiment was embodied permanently away from the town, the rate was just one in 14. By comparison, the rate in Rutherglen, a larger town in the same county, but with no associated militia unit, the rate was just one in 25.[71]

* * *

Maintaining discipline in what was, when disembodied, a part-time amateur force proved a constant challenge right across the period. Brought increasingly under the remit of military law from 1757 onwards, and reconfirmed by the Militia Act of 1852, militiamen were under the remit of military law whenever embodied or assembled for annual training. Although technically exempted from any punishment to 'life or limb', the controversy over the application of flogging, albeit in only a few of cases, highlighted the concerns at how amateur soldiers were to be treated. When embodied, discipline was maintained through a combination of courts-martial and a system of minor punishments, much the same as in the regular army. However, when disembodied, it was far more common for serious disciplinary offences, most commonly desertion, to be dealt with summarily by magistrates, courts-martial only being convened for the most serious of military crimes. Serious civil crimes such as murder were already dealt with via the civil courts. One pattern that did emerge was that the frequency of courts-martial increased towards the end of the period, most likely due to serious cases of desertion being more commonly dealt with in such a manner (opposing a general trend within the regular army for a lesser reliance upon courts-martial towards the end of the century). Furthermore, the number of disciplinary cases, as a whole, fell across the period, in keeping with a wider trend of improving discipline within the regular army and the move towards wider reform of the penal system. However, this did not prevent the harsh realities of active service during the South African War, the first time that it was liable to the full weight of military law, from causing several units to struggle in maintaining discipline, usually in cases relating to drunkenness. Despite the disciplinary difficulties experienced on active service, arguably the most common disciplinary issue for the militia as a whole remained desertion. This was particularly problematic during the embodiments of the 1850s and

[71] *Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette*, 26 May 1853; TNA, HO 45/7340.

although, in subsequent years, the government was able to curb its worst excesses, it remained an ever present concern. Urban units reliant on migratory semi-employed labourers, with no fixed address, were particularly affected due to the ease with which their men could avoid detection or fraudulently enlist into other regiments. Permanent emigration and, in coastal counties, temporary absence at sea also prevented many militiamen from attending their training, even if they had no intention of deserting. Furthermore, there were also concerns that desertion and fraudulent enlistment were difficult to combat due to the inexperience, and in many cases indifference, of local constabularies towards tracking down absentees. Another major disciplinary concern was the frequent instances of major disturbances and riots, usually resulting from bouts of excessive drinking, made worse by the periodic payment of their bounty and often exacerbated by a shared sense of solidarity among militiamen against any external threats, be that other regiments, the public or police. This was only compounded by the necessity to continue to billet regiments across the period, something which created a high degree of animosity between the militia and local people to the extent that many petitioned for the removal of certain units, most notably in Scotland.

5. Embodied Service and the South African War

Unlike the other auxiliary forces, our understanding of the wartime experience of the embodied militia remains incomplete. Much of the existing historiography has simply generalised the militia's role, with very little account of the day-to-day experience of embodied service in either the Crimean War or Indian Mutiny, or later during the South African War. Works by Olive Anderson, Hew Strachan and Edward Spiers have considered the debate over the wider military function of the force during the 1850s, but fail to investigate the nature or experience of embodied service in any great detail. Contemporary regimental histories and other works do provide more details, although they largely fail to put the experience of individual units into a wider context.[1] Ian Beckett has gone some way to rectifying this, arguing that the militia's primary role was to take over garrison duties within the UK, aside from also providing a direct source of manpower for the regular army. He also details how some units served in the Mediterranean.[2] By comparison, there is a greater degree of scholarship regarding the militia's experience in the South African War. The seven volume history of the South African War by Leo Amery mentions the process by which the militia were embodied as well as some of their subsequent movements while in South Africa, but omits any discussion of the day-to-day experience of service.[3] Later, Colonel John K. Dunlop stated that most militia units serving in South Africa were used for garrison work although some formed part of the flying columns used in the latter stages of the war. He argued that this was the force was capable of undertaking due to being a 'a collection of units' ranging wildly in efficiency and not capable of taking the field as a unified force; indeed he argued that the militia reserve was the only part of the force which could hope to match regulars in anywhere near their levels of efficiency.[4] More recently Stephen Miller has explored the service of citizen soldiers serving in South Africa, although he does so with very little discussion of the militia; much of his supporting evidence instead was based upon sources regarding the yeomanry.[5]

There is clearly room for a more comprehensive examination of the service of the

[1] Hay, *Constitutional Force*.
[2] Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, pp. 152-5.
[3] L. S. Amery, *The Times history of the war in South Africa: 1899-1902.*, vols. I-VII, (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, Ltd., 1899–1909).
[4] Dunlop, *British Army*, p. 42, 43, 91-2.
[5] Miller, *Volunteers on the Veld*.

embodied militia. As already argued in Chapter 1, upon its reconstitution the militia was primarily organised for home defence. Yet when the majority of regiments were embodied in 1854 and 1855, after the outbreak of the Crimean War, there was no credible threat of invasion. Instead, the primary motive behind the embodiment was the need to find additional manpower for the regular army. Most commanding officers complied with this liability, some more enthusiastically than others, with few refusing to do so outright. However, the embodied militia also had the more practical role of replacing regular units stationed in domestic garrisons to enable them to serve abroad. Many militia units also volunteered for active duties abroad, ten units doing so in the Mediterranean during the Crimean War. Yet for the vast majority of militiamen undertaking domestic duties the experience of embodied service was far more mundane, consisting of parade and drill upon the barrack square not dissimilar to their disembodied training. Some units were camped at the major military stations (such as at Aldershot) or in regular barracks, although many remained billeted in local towns (contributing to some of the difficulties identified in Chapter 4).

By comparison, the militia's role during the South African War was unprecedented. Although initially the government intended to use the militia as garrison troops much in the same way as during the 1850s, the scale of the defeats suffered during 'Black Week' meant they had little choice but to use the militia as an additional source of discrete units (and drafts) for service abroad. In the end over 65,000 officers and men served abroad in some form, most as part of discrete units (under the command of their own officers) garrisoning lines of communication and stations dotted right across South Africa. Although this was designed to avoid most militia units having any major role in the fighting (a reason perhaps why their service has been largely ignored by historians – by comparison, the other auxiliaries were more involved in active operations), the fragmented and increasingly mobile nature of the conflict meant militia units played a more active role than has previously been acknowledged. Several units came into direct contact with the enemy: although only a few were used in any major active operations, many units experienced intermittent skirmishes with Boer commandoes, a consequence of so many militiamen serving on the extensive lines of communication crossing the veldt, while some trained and detached mounted infantry to serve as part of Lord Kitchener's flying columns. Garrison duties at isolated stations meant everyday life could be tough, although most were able to bear the strain; some units did so for considerable

periods. By contrast, for those serving in units at home (or in the Mediterranean garrisons), the embodiment was in many ways similar to those of the 1850s. Once again they acted as garrison troops, several units serving in Ireland and a few in the Channel Islands, some again sent to relieve regular garrisons in the Mediterranean. However, compared to the 1850s, many more were able to take advantage of more comprehensive training arrangements (as seen in Chapter 1 during disembodied periods) which meant there was a greater focus upon field exercises simulating defensive duties against invasion and raiding, despite their being little credible threat of such. There was also far less of a need to billet militiamen, many instead serving at military camps.

* * *

When reconstituted in 1852 the militia was a force designed primarily for home defence, a decision (explored in chapter one) borne against a backdrop of public and governmental paranoia over the threat of French invasion. Yet in March 1854 Britain stood alongside France in a war which would challenge this *raison d'être*. The Crimean War exposed the fact that the regular army was ill prepared for a continental war, predisposed as it was for the maintenance of colonial garrisons. Combined with rural depopulation and widespread immigration from Scotland and, particularly, Ireland, the government struggled to find the initial 26,000 men required for Lord Raglan's army.[6] It is therefore unsurprising that by the end of April the government were already considering the embodiment of some English and Welsh militia units as a means of allowing regular units to serve abroad, despite the fact that there was no credible threat of Russian invasion and thus technically no legal basis upon which to do so. To circumvent this, Viscount Palmerston, the Home Secretary, argued that commercial ports were vulnerable to small-scale raiding parties despite there being no clear invasion threat. Therefore, he suggested that the militia should be embodied in order to support additional coastal artillery batteries, a measure which would be more than adequate to mop up any potential landing parties; indeed, it was this decision which led towards the creation of 22 militia garrison artillery corps for such a purpose by 1856.[7] By acknowledging the remote possibility of coastal raiding, the government was able to take a loose interpretation of the existing legislation which permitted the embodiment of the militia when the country was threatened with invasion.

[6] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 152.
[7] WSHC, Herbert Papers, 2057/F8/III/B, no. 155, Palmerston to Herbert, 30 April 1854.

In May the matter was settled by new legislation (17 and 18 Vict. c. 13) authorising the embodiment of the militia whenever a state of war existed.

Reaction from the militia colonels was generally supportive, although there were some concerns. For instance, the commanding officers of the 3rd Royal Surrey, Oxfordshire and Sussex Regiments all informed Herbert of their willingness to serve wherever required. Similarly, the colonel of the West Essex Regiment felt it a slight on the honour of his regiment that the East Essex Rifles had been selected for embodiment over his own. By contrast, the colonel of the 3rd West Yorkshire Regiment complained that the government's assumption of his regiment's willingness to serve was merely implied, while another stated that many of his officers were against permanent embodiment owing to the impact upon those engaged in a profession.[8] By the end of the month seven infantry battalions had been embodied, with a further four in June, three in July and four in August, taking over garrison duties from regular units sent to the Crimea. Nevertheless, for the majority, including Scottish and Irish regiments which remained in a state of suspended animation, the first few months of the war were largely indistinguishable from peacetime.[9]

It soon became clear that the embodiment of a few militia regiments was insufficient to arrest the growing demands for manpower placed upon the regular army. Therefore, both Palmerston and Sidney Herbert, the Secretary at War, began to consider the embodiment of all English and Welsh regiments despite the fact that there remained no credible threat of invasion. They acknowledged that there was insufficient barrack accommodation to house the majority of units and that they would be forced to resort to the contentious practice of placing men into billets. Yet by November it was clear the government were less concerned with what the force could do at home and rather how it could be used as an immediate source of recruits for the army. Previously, in March, the government dropped the requirement that militiamen discharged prematurely had to repay their 10s enrolment bounty and 8s 6d for additional expenses while also procuring a substitute to serve in their place, and in April they offered an additional 10s in order to make sure no man was at a financial loss if he chose to terminate his enlistment and opt

[8] *Ibid.*, 2057/F8/III/B, no.157, Lt.-Col. Chaloner to Herbert, 5 May 1854, no. 158, Col. F. Loftus to G.D. Ramsay, 5 May 1854, no. 159/a , Col. de Villiers to Herbert, 7 May 1854, no. 161, H. Goulburn to Herbert, 7 May 1854, no. 162, Duke of Richmond to Herbert, 15 May 1854, and no. 163, Col. Maynard to Herbert, 19 May 1854.

[9] PP, *Militia. Return showing the services of all embodied regiments of militia of the United Kingdom from 1 January 1852 to 31 March 1861*, 508, (1861).

to transfer. Although these measures provided an initial boost to the number transferring – 5,703 men transferred by November, despite Herbert's acknowledgement more probably fraudulently enlisted – the fact that the burden fell predominantly upon the eighteen regiments embodied in the summer meant the rate at which men were transferring fell sharply. Therefore, in November, Herbert stated his intention to embody the remainder of the force, a decision founded upon the belief that embodied service enthused militiamen with martial spirit and made them more likely to enlist for regular service. It was also for this reason that the government opted to reconstitute Scottish and Irish units as a further means of expanding the available manpower pool. In the same month, Herbert issued a further circular authorising that all embodied regiments (except those serving abroad) would be required to provide up to 25 per cent of their established strength towards the regular army; disembodied regiments were allowed to also permit volunteers but were not required to meet this target. To encourage this, the government provided the further incentive of an additional £1 on top of the regular recruitment bounty and offered each regiment the chance to nominate an officer for a regular ensigncy for every 75 men contributed to the army. Furthermore, the circular proposed to give priority to regular recruiting parties from regiments with a similar county connection so long as it was destined for service in the Crimea, although ultimately militiamen were free to join any regiment they pleased so long as they met the basic medical requirements; the guards, however, were permitted to recruit nationally due to their more stringent entry requirements.[10]

As a result of the November circular there was a significant increase in the proportion of militiamen transferring to the regular army. Table 5.1 demonstrates that between the date of the circular and the end of 1856 29,944 militiamen transferred in addition to the 5,703 which did so prior to the circular (although the majority before December 1855). Proportionally both Scottish and Irish regiments provided a higher proportion of their respective strength due largely to the fact that prior to the November circular the vast majority of volunteers came from English and Welsh regiments. On the whole the commanding officers of most militia regiments accepted the need for their regiments to yield to the needs of the regular army, although that is not to say all were happy about losing such a high proportion of their men. During the Indian Mutiny the militia was

[10] WSHC, Herbert Papers, 2057/F8/III/B, letters, Palmerston to Herbert, 13 and 23 November 1854, J. Young to Herbert, 14 November 1854, WO Memorandum, 17 November 1854, and WO Memorandum, 23 November 1854; HL Deb., 21 December 1854, vol. 136, cc. 685-732, (cc. 689-90).

Table 5.1: Volunteers from the Militia to the Regular Army during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny Embodiments, 1854 to 1861.[11]

Crimean War

	Prior to 20 November 1854			*20 November 1854 to 31 December 1855*			*1 January to 31 December 1856*			*Total*
	Effective Strength	Transferred	Percentage	Effective Strength	Transferred	Percentage	Effective Strength	Transferred	Percentage	
England & Wales	55,520	5,703	10.3	55,520	13,538	24.4	59,200	3,963	6.7	23,204
Scotland	…	…	…	7,260	2,306	31.8	10,132	697	6.9	3,003
Ireland	…	…	…	20,780	6,084	29.3	29,612	3,356	11.3	9,440
Total	55,520	5,703	10.3	83,560	21,928	26.2	98,944	8,016	8.1	35,647

Indian Mutiny

	1858								*1859 to 1861*	*Total*
	First Quota		Second Quota		Third Quota		Total		Transferred	
	Quota	Transferred	Quota	Transferred	Quota	Transferred	Quota	Transferred		
England & Wales	3,460	3,320	1,275	924	1,700	672	6,435	4,916	1,745	6,661
Scotland	426	423	223	87	300	50	949	560	270	830
Ireland	1,367	1,561	825	451	1,100	184	3,292	2,196	1,100	3,296
Total	5,253	5,304	2,323	1,462	3,100	906	10,676	7,672	3,115	10,787

again called upon as a source of manpower, temporary enabling legislation passed in December 1857 permitting such, although the fact that fewer regiments were embodied meant far less men transferred than previously, the vast majority in the first full year of the embodiment.

The proportion of men transferring to the line varied between units and was often dependent upon the willingness of the commanding officer. Although most commanding officers facilitated the transfer of willing volunteers, some quite willingly, there was a natural desire to send no more than they were required for fears that unchecked recruiting would significantly damage the efficiency of their regiments. The officer commanding the Oxfordshire Regiment, Colonel Bowles, was more than happy to place the needs of his own regiment in subservience to the regulars, providing 357 men by the end of 1855

[11] PP, *Militia. Return of number of volunteers*, 235, (1854-55); PP, *Militia volunteers. Return showing, by regiments, the number of militia volunteers released from their militia engagement to serve in the regular forces of Her Majesty (including the Royal Marines), between 1 January 1854 and 31 March 1861, showing also the quota of each regiment*., 435, (1861).

and a further 341 between 1858 and 1860. Several other officers demonstrated that they were happy to co-operate including those commanding the West Essex, 2nd Somerset, 1st Royal Lanark, 1st Royal Lancashire and Royal Wiltshire Regiments, contributing 476, 628, 419, 347 and 465 men respectively during the Crimean War. One officer, Earl Fitzhardinge, commanding the South Gloucestershire Regiment, even went as far as to initially offer 10s to the first 100 men volunteering in addition to the recruitment bounty, an offer which was also matched in the North Gloucestershire Regiment.[12] Nonetheless, some officers expressed a level of dissatisfaction at the arrangement, even if they felt little choice but to allow men to transfer. During the Crimean War the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry lost 473 men to the regular army, the officer commanding, Colonel H.M. Clifford, having willingly pledged to co-operate. Despite this, he resisted calls to allow regular recruiting parties to directly recruit where his regiment was stationed for fear of demoralising his own men. By December 1855 the 1st Staffordshire Regiment had sent 310 men to the regulars despite the fact that the commanding officer, Colonel P. Talbot, was furious at the Adjutant-General's suggestion his regiment should be providing even more. He also bemoaned the 'surreptitious practices' of a regular officer who petitioned him with the names of those who wished to transfer (instructions which Talbot claimed came directly from Woolwich). The commanding officer of the King's Own Tower Hamlets Light Infantry, who allowed 652 men to transfer across both embodiments, was clear to ensure that individuals who fraudulently enlisted were returned and charged with absence without leave. For instance, in March 1855 he also chastised the adjutant of the 94th Foot over the conduct of one of his sergeants who had enlisted a man without his leave.[13] Some commanding officers took more direct action by actively resisting the government's demands for manpower. Lord Carrington, Colonel of the Royal Buckinghamshire Regiment, was overtly hostile to the idea. On one occasion he attempted to dissuade his men from transferring by informing them that they would not only lose their recruitment bounty (in order to provide their kit), but that they could

[12] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B, letters, H. Goulburn to Herbert, 20 November 1854, Col. Loftus to Herbert, 22 November 1854, Col. Pinney to Herbert, 23 November 1854, Lord Belhaven to Herbert, 23 November 1854, Col. Clifton to Herbert, 23 November 1854, and Lord Methuen to Herbert, 24 November 1854; MCRM, RMRE/13/1, letter, Col. Clifford to the Brigade Maj., 13 June 1854; PP, *Militia. Return of number of volunteers*, 235, (1854-55); PP, *Militia volunteers. Return showing, by regiments*, 435, (1861); *Bury and Norwich Post*, 3 May 1854.

[13] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B, letters, Col. Clifford to Herbert, 18, 22 and 26 November 1854, and Col. Talbot to Herbert, 10 December 1854; TNA, WO 68/429/5, letters, Capt. Gray to the Adjutant, 94th Foot, 9 May 1855, Capt/ Gray to the Adjutant, 94th Foot, 14 July 1855, and Lt.-Col. Grant to Panmure, 29 September 1855.

be shipped to the Crimea as early as the following week. Even though a recruiting sergeant for the Grenadier Guards believed he would have been able to secure between 200 and 300 recruits, Carrington permitted just 21 of his shortest to leave, all of whom were under the necessary 5ft 6in to join the Guards.[14]

Aside from providing manpower to the regular army, Herbert and Palmerston also began to consider the militia as a means of providing further expansion abroad by allowing entire regiments to volunteer for foreign service. The decision to permit the militia to volunteer for service abroad was not without precedent (explored further in Chapter 1) as, during the Napoleonic Wars, a militia brigade was formed for service with the Duke of Wellington's army in France, serving there in 1814. Despite there being no intention to send militiamen to the theatre of war, Herbert was well aware even a limited form of foreign service was impossible under the existing legislation – the Solicitor General for England and Wales, Sir Richard Bethell, had already made such clear by informing him that any such move would require a further act of Parliament.[15] Therefore, in December the government acted quickly to introduce legislation, passed on to the statute book the following January, which laid the foundation for service abroad. The Militia (Service Abroad) Act permitted each regiment to volunteer up to three-quarters of its established strength for service in the Mediterranean, the remaining cadre to provide for the continued training of recruits. Crucially, it was stressed that the offer was to be voluntary, although as an incentive those who volunteered were liable for an initial bounty of £2 with an additional £1 for extra necessities, and a total of £5 at a rate of £1 per year for the length of the engagement, or 5s per quarter. Furthermore, all officers and men serving abroad were subject to the Mutiny Act meaning they would for all intents and purposes be serving as regular troops.[16]

It was not until later that year that the first units began to be despatched abroad, although during the war as a whole just ten regiments saw service in the Mediterranean: six stationed in the Ionian Islands (the majority on Corfu, but with some detachments on Cephalonia and Zante), two on Malta and two at Gibraltar. However, although only ten units served abroad, 32 English and Welsh, four Scottish and 12 Irish regiments offered

[14] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B, Horse Guards memorandum, 24 November 1854.
[15] *Ibid*., letter, R. Bethell to Herbert, 12 October 1854.
[16] 18 and 19 Vict., c. 1, ss. I-III, X; War Office circular, 15 January, 1855, cited in Raikes, *Historical Records of the First Regiment of Militia*, pp. 168-9.

to serve overseas, three of them in the Crimea itself.[17] Several militia colonels were keen to stress the willingness of their officers and men for such service. For instance, Colonel Lord Methuen assured Herbert that the Royal Wiltshire Regiment was eager to undertake foreign service and that his men 'look forward with great glee to an early occupation of Corfu', although their apparent willingness no doubt had a lot to do with fact that Methuen personally offered additional financial incentives to cover their travel expenses in addition to the government bounty. The Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry had been the first regiment to offer its services abroad in January 1854 and did so again in 1857, although both times they were refused despite the fact many desired to proceed to the Crimea itself and the fact that the officers had together pledged £5,000 to equip the regiment with the necessities for such service. Similarly, the colonel of the 1st Derbyshire Regiment was able to successfully persuade his officers and two-thirds of his men to volunteer for overseas service after an impassioned speech in which he urged them not to remain 'feather bed soldiers' (although the offer went unheeded by the government).[18]

However, the decision as to which regiments should be selected for service overseas was based largely on their strength and efficiency, not impassioned pleas from their commanding officers. Initially Herbert was clear that he would only consider offers from the eighteen regiments embodied from May to August 1854 who were 'well advanced in their training' although four were later selected from among those later embodied.[19] Each regiment also tended to be some of the strongest: Table 5.2 shows that in June 1855 only the Royal Berkshire Regiment possessed less than 600 men. Also of note is that large urban regiments tended to take a smaller proportion of their rank and file abroad compared to smaller rural county regiments. For instance, the East Kent Regiment provided almost, to a man, the same number as the far larger 1st Lancashire Regiment. Furthermore, the decision was also decided by difficulties in recruitment. The 3rd West Yorkshire Regiment had to withdraw its offer (which had been accepted) after it became clear there were insufficient recruits to offset the loss of 310 men who refused to be re-attested.[20] What appears to have played little effect is the proportion of former regular officers whose experience of foreign service might have been valuable for units

[17] PP, *Militia. Return of the regiments of militia in the United Kingdom, that volunteered for service abroad during the late war*, c. 286, (1856); Beckett, *Britain's Part-Time Soldiers*, p. 153.
[18] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B, no, 222, Lord Methuen to Herbert, 17 December 1854; *The Morning Chronicle*, 22 January 1855; MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 235, Lt.-Col. Vaughan to Col. Barnard, 16 June 1854; *Derby Mercury*, 11 July 1855.
[19] WSHC, 2057/F8/III/B, no. WO Memorandum, 27 November 1854.
[20] Raikes, *Third West York*, p. 170.

which had never served outside the UK; Table 5.2 shows that only a small proportion of those who proceeded abroad had previously served in the regular army. The Royal Wiltshire Regiment, with the greatest proportion, although this still only comprised one-third of the total; by contrast, the 3rd Royal Middlesex Regiment had none except for an individual who had served in the Austrian Army.

On the whole the experience of these regiments tended to be similar regardless of the station. Each regiment was expected to take over the role of the regular one it had replaced, with their daily duties predominantly involving drill and manoeuvres upon the parade ground and the provision of details for guard and picket duty. In many respects the duties of the 1st Staffordshire Regiment were typical in that they initially garrisoned Fort Neuf in order to maintain and protect it and its artillery which dominated the local town, although they were also charged with guarding sick and wounded men returning from the Crimea. Similarly, the Oxfordshire Regiment undertook guard duties; for instance, on the 2 January 1856 providing 135 officers and men for the day's guard and 22 NCOs and men for picket duty. One problem, however, was that it was often necessary for regiments to be split among garrison outposts, particularly those stationed in the Ionian Islands. Shortly before the 1st Staffordshire Regiment was ordered to move to garrison Cephalonia in August 1855 a detachment of one captain, one subaltern, two sergeants and 41 privates proceeded to the island of Ithaca. Once on Cephalonia the remainder of the regiment was split, one detachment consisting of a captain, subaltern and 50 men sent to Luxuri, while on the same day a subaltern and 30 men were to garrison Fort George. As a result of this it became difficult to drill the men in anything larger than companies. On a few occasions they would be exercised in brigade, although usually only for the purposes of parade. For instance, in October 1855 the East Kent Regiment was twice paraded and inspected by the officer commanding the forces on Malta, Lieutenant-General Sir John Pennefather, alongside the 51st Foot and the Royal Malta Fencibles.[21] For the officers, service in the Mediterranean was also similar to that within the UK in that it did not stop them from furthering many of their favoured pastimes. The proximity to the Albanian coast meant officers stationed on Corfu and the Ionian Islands organised frequent hunting expeditions. Furthermore, officers continued to organise balls and entertainment with the assistance of their families. In the Royal Berkshire Regiment five of the officers' wives

[21] NAM, 1987-11-115; 2001-02-439, entry for 1855;Willan, *A History of the Oxfordshire Regiment* p. 65; H. Wylly, Charrington & Bulwer, *Historical Records of the 1st King's Own Stafford Militia: Now 3rd and 4th Battalions, South Staffordshire Regiment*, (A. C. Lomax, 1893) p. 31.

Table 5.2: Militia units despatched abroad during the Crimean War.[22]

Regiment	*Station*	*Date embodied*	*Date sent abroad*	*Months abroad*	*Strength of the rank & file on 30 June 1855*		*Proportion of former regular officers*	
					Within UK	Abroad	Total	Ex-regulars
Royal Berkshire	Corfu	1 Jan. 1855	Aug 1855	10	164	…	25	1
East Kent	Malta	25 May 1854	March 1855	15	48	557	27	5
1st Royal Lancashire	Corfu and Zante	19 June 1854	March 1855	16	374	558	25	6
3rd Royal Lancashire	Gibraltar	Dec. 1854	June 1855	12	191	738	35	3
3rd Royal Middlesex	Corfu	6 Feb. 1855	Aug 1855	10	604	…	28	…
Northamptonshire	Gibraltar	8 July 1854	June 1855	12	56	547	32	4
Oxfordshire	Corfu	6 Dec. 1854	June 1855	12	132	552	25	2
1st Staffordshire	Corfu & Cephalonia	25 May 1854	March 1855	19	390	543	28	5
Royal Wiltshire	Corfu	15 June 1854	May 1855	17	146	606	31	11
2nd West Yorkshire	Malta	29 May 1854	May 1855	12	126	582	30	6

travelled with the regiment, one of whom organised a ball on New Year's Eve 1855. The following month Lord Methuen similarly entertained officers of the fleet, while two more balls were later hosted by the Lord High Commissioner to the Ionian Islands, Sir John Young. Sport continued as a means through which to bind both officers and men in healthy competition against other regiments. For instance the Royal Berkshire Regiment competed in two matches on Corfu in June 1856, one against the officers of the garrison and the other against members of the Royal Artillery.[23]

Service abroad was, nonetheless, fraught with various difficulties and hardships. Although most officers and men proceeded to their stations with relative ease, the journey by sea of the Oxfordshire Regiment was far from uneventful due to the capture by pirates of a small detachment of officers and ladies forced to land on the Tangiers coast after their rowing boast almost capsized in rough seas; they had been given permission to row ashore while the main vessel was becalmed. Held hostage for the night, their release was only secured the following day after the intervention of the British Consul. When the

[22] Hart, *New Army List*, July 1855; PP, *Militia. Returns showing the strength of each English regiment of militia on the 30th day of June last*, 520, (1854-55).
[23] E. Thoyts, *History of the Royal Berkshire Militia (Now 3rd Battalion Royal Berks Regiment)*, (Reading: E. Thoyts, 1897), p. 185; Willan, *History of the Oxfordshire Regiment*, p. 62; *Reading Mercury*, 7 June 1856.

militia eventually reached their garrisons they were immediately faced with often cramped conditions in facilities which varied greatly in size and condition. For instance, the fortifications on Corfu were on the whole regarded as defective. For instance, Fort Neuf, in which numerous regiments were temporarily garrisoned, was in a poor state due mainly to insufficient drainage. On Gibraltar an officer of the 3rd Lancashire Regiment remarked that there was barely enough room to house the men meaning they were forced to share accommodation at separate barracks, his alongside those of the Northamptonshire Regiment. This overcrowding affected the officers too: all 27 officers had to try and fit into just 18 rooms, the result being that some instead were forced to find alternative accommodation in hotels over a mile and a half from the parade ground (a major disadvantage considering parade started at 5.30 am every morning). More worryingly (and explored further in Chapter 4), militiamen stationed on the Ionian Islands also faced the potential threat of insurrection from among the Greek and Albanian inhabitants who were more likely to sympathise with the Russians due to their shared Orthodox faith. This meant that men of the 1st Staffordshire Regiment enjoyed rather tense and hostile relations with the local population. Men of the Royal Wiltshire Regiment also frequently clashed with locals; tensions even built to the point that one militiaman was murdered.[24]

It was common for officers and men to become temporarily ill once they landed due to the change in climate and diet. When the Royal Berkshire Regiment landed on Corfu several men became ill, due partly to the poisoning from local wine.[25] However, the greatest threat to both officers and men was cholera. While stationed on Zante the 1st Lancashire Regiment lost 40 men to the disease. In Gibraltar the majority of the 3rd Lancashire Regiment contracted cholera which in turn led to 25 fatalities. Elsewhere, by the autumn of 1855 the 1st Staffordshire Regiment, stationed on Corfu, also lost 25 men, and by the following year, while stationed on Cephalonia, 140 out of a total of 420 men were hospitalised. The Berkshire Regiment also suffered 50 fatalities from an outbreak of cholera while stationed on Corfu; in fact, it was commented that the number of men volunteering as hospital orderlies often outnumbered those required for garrison duties. It was the belief of a regimental captain that such high levels of affliction owed to the initial

[24] *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 8 August 1855; TNA, CO 136/157, Correspondence with the Governor, 1855, entry for 16 July 1855; *Reading Mercury*, 24 November 1855; *Preston Chronicle and Lancashire Advertiser*, 4 August 1855; NAM, 1987-11-115, letter dated 20 April 1856; *Devizes and Wiltshire Gazette*, 27 September 1855.
[25] *Reading Mercury*, 24 November 1855.

difficulties faced by the regiment on the rough crossing from Britain. He noted that the men had grown tired of the limited salt beef and biscuit rations on board so that upon arrival they feasted upon cheap fruit and wine poisoned by copper.[26]

The mundane reality of garrison duty abroad did little to dampen celebrations when militia regiments returned as often leading local figures took charge of organising celebratory events for both the officers and men. For instance, the return of the service companies of the Oxfordshire Regiment prompted the local notables to organise a ceremonial dinner for the NCOs and men, followed later in the week by a public banquet for the officers. Both were well funded through private subscriptions and organised by a committee including the Vice Chancellor and college deans of Oxford University and the town's mayor. Similarly, an advertisement placed in the *Reading Mercury* called for subscriptions towards similar entertainments upon the return of officers and men of the Berkshire Regiment in June 1856, while a variety of events were also put on to celebrate the return of the Northamptonshire Regiment in July 1856. After parading on the race course in front of packed stands, the officers, NCOs and men were feasted at a dinner paid for and organised by the county elites who included the Marquis of Exeter, Earl Spencer, Earl Fitzwilliam and Earl of Euston, all with connection via land or ties to Northamptonshire.[27]

It was not until the South African War that militiamen again served abroad as distinct units. Although the idea was contemplated as a result of the Indian Mutiny, none of those embodied served abroad despite the introduction of legislation (21 & 22 Vict, c. 85) again enabling them to do so. Yet for the majority of militiamen, service represented a far more mundane affair. Those embodied were, aside from providing manpower for the regulars, expected to take over garrisons vacated by regular regiments dispatched to the front. As the recent Militia Act stipulated, while embodied militia regiments were liable to serve anywhere within the UK, most ended up spending prolonged periods away from their county. In total 81 English and Welsh, 17 Scottish and 45 Irish regiments served across Great Britain or Ireland during the Crimean War, while two years later a total of 30 English and Welsh, seven Scottish and sixteen Irish regiments again served domestically during the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny. It was relatively common for

[26] NAM, 1987-11-115, undated entry [1855]; *Preston Chronicle and Lancashire Advertiser*, 22 September 1855; Wylly, Charrington, Bulwer, *1st King's Own Stafford Militia*, p. 350; Thoyts, *History of the Royal Berkshire Militia*, p. 186; *Reading Mercury*, 24 November 1855.
[27] *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 28 June 1856; *Reading Mercury*, 21 June 1856; *Northampton Mercury*, 28 June, 1856 and 12 July 1856.

English and Welsh regiments to serve in either Scotland or Ireland but less common for either Scottish or Irish regiments to serve outside their respective countries; in fact no Scottish regiment served in either England and Wales or Ireland during the Crimean War, although ten of the 45 embodied Irish regiments were garrisoned at some stage within England and Wales. By contrast, during the Indian Mutiny most Scottish and Irish regiments were predominantly stationed outside their home country. Only one Scottish unit spent the whole of its embodiment in Scotland (the Edinburgh Artillery). Similarly all Irish regiments were stationed at some time in England and Wales (while one also served in Scotland and another in both Scotland and England). The reason for this was that the government dropped the conditions that Irish regiments could spend no longer than two years in England, that no more than one-third of regiments could be stationed abroad at one time and that simultaneously no more than one-fourth of English regiments could be in Ireland. Also the government was particularly concerned not to have Irish militia regiments embodied and armed within Ireland due to the fear that arms could pass to Fenian groups.[28]

Approximately half of all embodied regiments spent at least a portion of their embodied service stationed at one of the major military camps. Aldershot alone housed 53 militia regiments totalling 34,500 men across both embodiments. Aside from just parade and basic company and battalion drills, Palmerstone argued that the assembly of 'large bodies of troops at Aldershot' allowed them to 'practice those military evolutions which they would have to perform if called into the field.' As already alluded to in chapter one, this was the first time regiments had such an opportunity (something which was not extended to peacetime training until the latter 1860s), a point noted by Aldershot's commanding officer Lieutenant-General W.T. Knollys when he later commented that the militia regiments first under his command were lacking in all but the basics of training.[29] Both the 1st Middlesex and 1st Surrey Regiments were among the first to be brigaded at Aldershot in May 1855, although several other regiments were encamped once the weather improved; the Bedfordshire Regiment did such between August and December. The following year it was joined by the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment which along with the 1st Somerset, Cavan and Royal London Regiments

[28] PP, *Militia. Return showing the services of all embodied regiments*, 508, (1861); HL Deb., 9 August 1859, vol. 155, cc. 1243-53, (c. 1243); HC Deb., 19 February 1900, vol. 79, cc. 396-447, (cc. 424-5).
[29] HC Deb., 5 June 1857, vol. 145, cc.1251-75, (c. 1527); PP, *Report of the commissioners*, Session 2, c. 2553, (1859), q. 5185, 5188.

formed part of the 6th Brigade. Regiments continued to serve there during the Indian Mutiny, the East Kent Regiment for a year from June 1858 and which gave it the opportunity to take part in field days and 'sham battles' with other regiments. Similarly the Bedfordshire Regiment, stationed there in 1858, also took part in a brigade exercise: one was of such a scale that it involved the whole of the north and south camps. Other regiments had similar experiences including the 3rd West York Regiment, which formed part of the 2nd (and later 3rd) Brigade alongside the 4th Lancashire, Berkshire, Dumfries, Nottinghamshire, South Down and Louth Regiments, and later by the City of Dublin and Donegal Regiments as well as the cadre of several regular regiments.[30] Other camps were also garrisoned by militia regiments, most notably that at the Curragh in Ireland. During the Indian Mutiny the King's Own Tower Hamlets Light Infantry was stationed at the camp from March 1858 until the following November. Afterwards they also spent a period at Aldershot.[31]

The main problem resulting from the increased practice of brigading embodied regiments was finding the space to house them. In order to provide the additional space for more embodied regiments the capacity at many stations, including Aldershot, was increased. At Aldershot a new series of wooden huts was constructed meaning many militiamen avoided the need to quarter under canvas, enabling more to remain stationed there throughout the winter months. Nevertheless, living conditions remained challenging even within the newly constructed huts, particularly during the winter months when conditions at the camps deteriorated rapidly. For instance, upon arriving at the North Camp in Aldershot in February 1856, the 2nd Royal Surrey Regiment was quartered in huts so recently erected that wood shavings still littered the floor, while poor weather also meant it was difficult to move about the camp as rain turned it into an ankle deep quagmire, no lines or paths being set down prior to its arrival. There were also concerns that the camp lacked sufficient ground to practice musketry due to the difficulty of securing nearby land free of men and livestock.[32] Aside from enlarging the major camps, the government also took the measure of creating new camps at existing barracks. Such was the case in Colchester where the facilities were expanded with new barrack huts,

[30] SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entry for 1855; Sir J. M. Burgoyne, *Regimental Records of the Bedfordshire Militia from 1759 to 1884*, (London: W. H. Allen & Co., 1884), pp. 72, 78; Davis, *Historical Records of the Second Royal Surrey*, p. 258; NAM, 2001-02-439, entries for 1858 and 1859; Raikes, *Third West York*, p. 183.
[31] TNA, WO 68/429/5, Lt.-Col. Grant to the Quarter Master General, 12 November 1857.
[32] Davis, *Second Royal Surrey*, p. 258; HC Deb., 13 July 1855, vol. 139, cc. 856-8, (c. 586); *Ibid*., 5 June 1857, vol. 145, cc.1251-75, (cc. 1252-3).

while additional land was also purchased at Middlewick in order to provide a new range.[33] This gave, for instance, the East Norfolk Regiment its first chance to form part of a brigade when it was transferred to the camp in January 1856.[34]

Those regiments unable to gain a place at one of the military camps were often quartered in the barracks vacated by regular regiments serving abroad. On the whole their daily duties were in many regards similar to those stationed in the military camps, consisting of guard duties, parade drills and exercises, although there was a greater emphasis on maintaining guard pickets. For instance, when the Essex Rifles was stationed at the Tower of London, as a relief for the 35th Foot, the regiment conducted field exercises in Hyde Park three days per-week, drilling on every other day within the dry moat of the Tower. Yet maintaining the garrison meant guard duties were ever present, each militiaman managing 'less than four nights in bed to one out of bed' per week. The following year the regiment was transferred to the barracks at the Royal Ordnance Depot at Weedon Bec, Northamptonshire, although its duties remained largely similar.[35] In Wales, the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry spent the entirety of the Crimean War in barracks. In May 1854 it proceeded into the cavalry barracks at Newport, although unlike elsewhere there was less of a need for night sentries meaning each man could expect upwards of 30 nights in bed before their turn. The following February it proceeded to relieve the 31st Foot at Pembroke Dock where it remained until July 1856, principally to guard the artillery overlooking Milford Haven manned by the Pembroke Artillery. Its stay was largely uneventful, the only exception being that on Christmas Eve 1855 the regiment was responsible for rescuing a detachment of 75 gunners belonging to the Pembroke Artillery serving on Thorn Island. They had become isolated after a storm cut all communication with the mainland, and it was only when contact was finally re-established that it became apparent the detachment had nearly run out of food.[36] By contrast, other regiments saw service at multiple stations across the length and breadth of the UK. For instance, between late August 1854 and January 1855 the Bedfordshire Regiment was garrisoned at Berwick-upon-Tweed. Yet after it was forced to return to

[33] 'Barracks', *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 9: The Borough of Colchester*, (1994), pp. 251-255, URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=21996 Date accessed: 8 October 2012.
[34] TNA, WO 68/123, entry for 1856, and WO 68/126, East Norfolk Regiment Permanent Order Book, March 1856 to April 1864, entry for 1856.
[35] *Daily News*, 17 June 1854; *The Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*, 31 May 1854; J. W. Burrows, *The Essex Regiment*, (Southend-on-Sea: John H. burrows, [1929]), pp. 161-2.
[36] MCRM, RMRE/13/1, no. 218, Col. Clifford to the Brigade-Major, Carmarthen, 6 June 1854; Capt. W. F. N. Noel, *Some Records of the Royal Monmouthshire Militia, at One Time the Monmouth and Brecon Militia*, (Monmouth: Bailey & Son, 1886), p. 64; Watson, *Militiamen and Sappers*, p. 58.

Bedford for the purposes of recruitment, and a subsequent period spent at Aldershot, in December 1855 the regiment proceeded to Ireland for the purposes of garrisoning several stations across the country. This meant that until the following April the regiment was split between its headquarters consisting of three companies garrisoned at Galway while three others were isolated at outlying stations in the surrounding hinterland, two to Loughrea and one to Oughterard. Later the regiment reconvened when it was garrisoned at both the Richmond and Linen Hall barracks in Dublin from April to June 1856. Throughout its second embodiment the regiment again served at multiple locations across the county, initially garrisoning and guarding the port at Dover and later those at Portsmouth.[37]

The duties of embodied militia artillery corps were in some respects similar to those of the infantry counterparts, although unsurprisingly a larger portion of their time was spent upon artillery drill. On the whole embodied militia artillery corps were seen as a means of replacing Royal Garrison Artillery batteries required for the Crimea. During the Crimean embodiment the Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery spent its embodiment stationed at Pendennis Castle, Falmouth, with a detachment sent across the bay on 30 March 1855 to garrison St. Mawes Castle, both guarding the entrance to the port. The majority of its time was spent drilling with the field guns and drag-ropes used to move them.[38]

One of the main benefits of garrisoning regiments in either military camps or barracks was that it avoided the contentious issue of billeting them upon local people. Yet whereas billeting during peacetime was only a temporary inconvenience (albeit one which caused considerable tension with local people, as seen in Chapter four), during lengthy embodied periods it became far more damaging. The government was well aware of the relative disadvantages of billeting compared to encampment or garrisoning militiamen in barracks: not only was it detrimental to the militia's overall discipline, but also regiments were more isolated and thus less likely to have any chance of training alongside other units. Yet despite the obvious drawbacks it was unavoidable: militia regiments lacked any permanent accommodation of their own for the majority of their men and there was simply not the capacity at the military stations such as Aldershot and the Curragh to encamp them, or for that matter enough vacant barracks. This meant that although a total of 25,000 militiamen had been embodied by May 1855, only 6,000 were

[37] Burgoyne, *Bedfordshire Militia*, pp. 72-4, 80-1.
[38] Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *Royal Miners*, pp. 64-5.

garrisoned in barracks or encamped at a military station, although the situation was worse in Scotland as the existing barracks had a capacity for just 2,000 men (out of an establishment of 10,000).[39] Therefore, it was not uncommon for regiments to spend at least a portion of their embodied service in billets. For instance, the King's Own Tower Hamlets Light Infantry spent all eight months of its first embodiment billeted in East London. Such was the case throughout East Anglia where there was initially a lack of available accommodation in many of the major towns including Norwich, Yarmouth, Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds or Colchester. This meant, for instance, that when the East Norfolk Regiment was embodied in late December 1854 there was no choice but to billet the men upon public houses throughout Yarmouth until the following October when they were eventually transferred into a local Naval hospital. The West Essex Regiment had similar difficulties and was forced to billet 650 men at 40 separate public houses and inns across Chelmsford.[40] One major problem with billeted regiments was that they often lacked access to the facilities available to their counterparts in barracks or at the military camps meaning they could undertake little more than rudimentary drill or exercises. For instance, the 1st Derby Regiment spent the whole of the Crimean embodiment at its headquarters; yet owing to the price of land there was difficulty finding suitable grounds on which to enable it to train within the £6 allowance. The regiment managed to find some open space, but owing to the proximity of a railway on one side and a road on the other, it was unable to practise musketry. In fact the only opportunity the men got to fire their weapons was at an officer's funeral. Therefore, most of the embodiment was spent drilling in the street.[41]

Although billeting was recognised as a necessary evil some limited reform was attempted. In order to significantly reduce the proportion of billeted regiments the government planned to greatly increase the number encamped once the weather improved in the spring and summer of 1856.[42] Some attempts were also taken to tackle the issue in Scotland specifically due to particularly vehement opposition to the legal necessity of billeting upon private households as opposed to public houses. In June 1855 Peel, while Under-Secretary of State for War, informed Parliament that some recourse had been

[39] HC Deb., 4 May 1855, vol. 138, cc. 116-32, (c. 123), *Ibid.*, 5 June 1857, vol. 145, cc.1251-75, (cc. 1252-3), and *Ibid.*, 29 June 1855, vol. 139, cc. 305-7.
[40] TNA, WO 68/429/5, Capt. Grey to Panmure, 28 September 1855; *Norfolk Chronicle*, 1 September 1855 and 20 October 1855.
[41] PP, *Report of the commissioners*, Session 2, c. 2553, (1859), qq. 6229-35, 6240-1.
[42] *Wells Journal*, 15 March 1856.

attempted by the Board of Ordnance through the hire of additional buildings which could be converted into barracks. Nevertheless, it was unable to find anywhere near the available capacity. It also deemed the cost of encamping Scottish regiments in temporary huts as too high to justify the expenditure meaning that little ultimately could to remedy the situation.[43]

Embodied service also gave officers and men a chance to break the monotony of drill and guard duties. On several occasions militia regiments also provided unique ceremonial duties. For instance, on 16 of October 1857, the 3rd West York Regiment furnished a guard of honour for the Queen upon her arrival at Doncaster station, consisting of a captain, two subalterns, and 100 NCOs and men. Towards the end of its first embodiment the Bedfordshire Regiment was involved in a large review of troops stationed in Dublin.[44] While embodied militia officers also continued to pursue their personal and social interests. For instance, upon the presentation of new colours to the regiment on 31 October 1854, the officers of the 1st Somerset Regiment attended a ball at St. George's Hall, Plymouth, which was noted as being 'brilliantly attended' as a result of the proximity of the embodied regiment to Somerset. While the Bedfordshire Regiment was stationed at Weymouth the officers organised a number of theatrical performances. Officers were also able to maintain their own sporting interests in addition to facilitating sporting events for the benefit of the other ranks. At the Curragh camp officers from both the regulars and militia organised inter-regimental cricket matches while stationed there during the Indian Mutiny. In April 1858 a team of officers from the 16th Foot took on and defeated officers from the Leicestershire Regiment, while earlier that month the 16th Foot played against as team of officers from the Surrey, Worcester and Tower Hamlets Regiments. Similarly, officers of the West Essex Regiment played a match against a local side while stationed at Chelmsford in August 1855, while in the following December the officers organised an amateur horse race in which both officers and the other ranks could gamble.[45]

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[43] HC Deb., 29 June 1855, vol. 139, cc. 305-7.
[44] Raikes, *Third West York*, p. 183; Burgoyne, *Bedfordshire Militia*, pp. 73-4.
[45] Kerr, *1st Somerset Militia*, p. 60; Burgoyne, *Bedfordshire Militia*, p. 80; *Bell's Life in London and Sporting Chronicle*, 16 May 1858; *The Essex Standard, and General Advertiser for the Eastern Counties*¸ 15 August 1855; *The Racing Times*, 10 December, 1855.

After the disembodiment of the last embodied regiments in 1861 there was no wide-scale embodiment of the force until the South African War. The only exception to this came in 1885 when six infantry battalions and two militia garrison artillery brigades were temporarily embodied between March and September 1885 as a reaction to the fall of Khartoum, and growing tensions in South Africa and Central Asia.[46] Stationed within the UK, their main role was once again to replace line regiments which had been stationed abroad – it was established prior to the embodiment that there was no intention to send any militia units abroad.[47] For instance, the 3rd Durham Light Infantry was embodied on 9 February and stationed at Colchester, although its service was largely uneventful despite some tense relations with the local population. Although only a limited number of units were embodied, others had their annual training extended for that year. The 2nd Brigade Scottish Division and 3rd brigade Welsh Division, Royal Artillery, alongside the Royal Anglesey Engineer Regiment had their training periods extended to 34 days. The Royal Monmouthshire Engineer Regiment had its extended even further to 42 days, while the Southern Submarine Miners was authorised to train for the maximum of 56 days.[48]

The scale of the 1885 embodiment was a far cry from that which the militia would undertake during the South African War. In total 170 separate units were embodied, while 60 infantry battalions, six artillery companies, three engineer companies and two engineer sections served in South Africa, and a further 9 infantry battalions in the Mediterranean (one of which subsequently proceeded to South Africa). In total 45,566 militiamen served in South Africa while 5,922 also served in the Mediterranean. In addition to this 13,598 militia reservists served in the line meaning that a total of over 65,000 men experienced foreign service in some form, most for the first time.[49] Such an unprecedented degree of participation by the militia was in stark contrast to any embodiment the force had previously experienced. In part this was enabled by major legislative changes (charted in chapter one) which saw the creation of the militia reserve (permitting militiamen to serve with the regulars in wartime), the closer association of the militia and line through localisation and territorialisation which encouraged the increased

[46] Those embodied were as follows: 2nd Brigade Southern Division Royal Artillery; 3rd Brigade Western Division Royal Artillery; 3rd Battalion East Kent Regiment; 3rd Battalion Royal Fusiliers; 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Regiment; 3rd Battalion East Surrey; Regiment; 3rd Battalion Durham Light Infantry; 5th Battalion Rifle Brigade. *The London Gazette*, 20 February 1885; *The Times*, 21 March 1885.
[47] HC Deb., 2 March 1885, vol. 294 cc. 1803-6; HC Deb., 23 February 1885, vol. 294, cc.1035-6, (c. 1036).
[48] DCRO, D/DLI/2/4/220, Civil disturbance between militiamen and civilians at Colchester, 3 August 1885; *The North-Eastern Daily Gazette*, 26 February 1885; *The Times*, 1 July 1885.
[49] PP, *Militia (service outside United Kingdom)*., 172, (1905).

transfer of men to the regulars, and finally the enshrinement in law of the militia's right, when embodied, to voluntarily serve in Malta and Gibraltar, altered in 1898 so that a militiaman could voluntarily serve anywhere abroad for up to one year whether or not the force was embodied.[50] Therefore, by the eve of the South African War the government had never been more able to employ the militia in support of the regular army either as drafts or by using entire units.

Despite this the government's initial plans for the deployment of the militia were in fact similar in scale and scope to that of the previous embodiments. At first Arthur Balfour requested that the Commons postpone any discussion over the embodiment of either the militia or the militia reserve as he believed it was best discussed alongside the general mobilisation scheme which was to be explored alongside the army estimates. The Under-Secretary of State for War George Wyndham even went as far as to suggest that there was little likelihood of the militia reserve being called out, although the government still wanted to draw on all potential sources of manpower that might possibly be required. Even though the government decided it was prudent to embody some units, these were only to be in counties where line battalions had been sent to South Africa. Only a small minority within Parliament dissented, limited mainly to those opposed to the Unionist government. For instance, John Dillon (MP for East Mayo and future leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party) proposed an amendment dropping plans to embody the militia reserve entirely, although he gained little support except from among those with Irish nationalist sympathies and was defeated 36 votes to 299.[51] The culmination of this was that, in addition to calling out of the militia reserve, a Special Army Order of 3 November formally embodied just 38 infantry battalions while subsequent orders raised three more the following day and a further eight on the 28 November.

This relatively limited strategy was subsequently shattered by the disastrous defeats suffered by the army during 'Black Week' (10-17 December 1899) which in turn forced the government into rethinking its mobilisation strategy once it became clear more men were required for service and that the militia would have to play a far more extensive role than hitherto expected. One solution advocated by the Earl of Wemyss was a return to enlisting militiamen by ballot in order to raise the force to its establishment, and thus create a larger pool from which men could be incited to transfer to the regulars.

[50] 45 and 46 Vict., c. 49, s. 12; 61 and 62 Vict., c. 9, s. 2.
[51] HC Deb., 20 Oct. 1899, vol. 77, cc. 385-405, (cc. 386-7); *Ibid*.., 20 Oct. 1899, vol. 77, cc. 405-84; B. Nasson, *The South African War 1899-1902*, (London: Hodder Arnold, 1999), p. 69.

Although he managed to introduce a Parliamentary motion in the House of Lords the following February, it was defeated by 69 votes to 49, gaining only limited support principally from advocates of national service. The Prime Minister, the Marquis of Salisbury, had argued that the political and organisational difficulty of drafting, passing and implementing a new bill was highly undesirable in the current circumstances, while he was also concerned the ballot would provide national service advocates with a stepping stone towards wider conscription.[52]

Instead the government decided upon the far less politically divisive measure of embodying the remainder of the militia and using it both at home and abroad as garrison troops. Limit in the space available in barracks meant this was done in a piecemeal fashion in order to avoid billeting large swathes as during the Crimean War. By February 1900 the government had only been able to increase the number of embodied battalions to 73, although Lansdowne was quick to reassure Parliament of his intention to embody the remainder as soon as they could be placed under canvas during the spring and summer months.[53] However, unlike any previous embodiment, the government's plans went far further: not only was it expected that the militia would again be used to relieve regular units from stations in the Mediterranean, but in a largely unprecedented move it also planned to give men the opportunity to serve in the theatre of war itself. Understandably there were some concerns among ministers over their military efficiency.[54]

There can be no doubt that enthusiasm among the militia for service abroad was high. In total 72 battalions were asked to volunteer for foreign service and only four failed to find the 75 per cent majority necessary to do so. By January 1900 twelve militia battalions had been successfully selected, eight for South Africa, two for Malta and two for the Channel Islands. As in the 1850s there was no power to send men abroad against their will, meaning that those who failed to volunteer formed part of the details at their regimental depot.[55] As a general principal those battalions selected for service in South Africa had to have enough manpower to make it worthwhile sending them, while it was also deemed necessary to spread the burden of service geographically so that one particular area would not be disproportionately affected by having the majority of its

[52] HL Deb 12 Feb. 1900, vol. 78, cc. 1168-95, (1191-1192); *Ibid.*, 20 Feb. 1900, vol. 79, cc. 504-51
[53] HL Deb., 12 Feb. 1900, vol. 78, cc. 1168-95, (c. 1176).
[54] PP., *Report of the Royal Commission*, Cd. 2062 (1904), qq. 884-5.
[55] *The Times*, 3 January 1900; HC Deb., 18 May, 1899, vol. 71, c. 910.

militiamen serving overseas and with as small a disruption to local trade as possible. For instance, it was originally planned to send nine militia battalions abroad: seven from England, one from Ireland and the other from Scotland. When one Scottish battalion failed to volunteer for foreign service in sufficient numbers, another was selected to go in its place. A first it was hoped the minimum age at which militiamen would be permitted to serve in South Africa would be nineteen. However, as seen in chapter three, a significant proportion of the force comprised young men ages seventeen and eighteen meaning up to one-third of the total enrolled strength of the force would be prohibited from such service. Therefore, the age was set at just eighteen meaning that only one-tenth would be unable to volunteer, although this created the quite extraordinary situation that militiamen were permitted to serve in South Africa two years before their regular counterparts, the minimum ages being set at 20 years of age.[56]

As illustrated in Appendix 6, in total there were five separate waves in which those units selected were sent to South Africa. Those initially selected were despatched in two groups: the first (consisting of seven infantry battalions) totalled 4,877 men and was despatched between 11 and 18 January 1900; soon after a second more substantial wave (consisting of 23 infantry battalions, four companies of garrison artillery and two sections and two companies of engineers) totalling 13,536 men was despatched between 10 February and 10 March. These were supported by further drafts, a total of 3,197 more militiamen being sent to their battalions throughout 1900. This meant that by December there were 21,610 militiamen serving in South Africa (exclusive of militia reservists serving with their regular battalions). This far exceeded any of the other auxiliary forces serving: across the whole war the Imperial Yeomanry only numbered 10,195 men, while the City Imperial Volunteers only 1,667, and volunteer service companies only 9,120; this was alongside 11,062 colonial and Indian troops also stationed in South Africa. Even after the fall of both Boer republics, when it became increasingly clear the fighting would continue, the militia was once again called upon to furnish units. In 1901 two waves of reinforcements saw a combined total of 11,043 men sent to relieve those many of the units already serving and included, for the first time, a mounted infantry company (formed from various battalions), two garrison artillery companies and one engineer company. Even in the final months of the war 15 infantry battalions, totalling 9,562 men,

[56] PP, *Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the Military preparations and other matters connected with the War in South Africa*, Cd. 1789, (1903), q. 110; PP, *Minuets of Evidence taken before the Royal Commission on the War in South Africa (volume I)*, Cd. 1790, (1903), q. 5255.

embarked to relieve those battalions which had been serving since 1900. Throughout 1901 and 1902 a further series of drafts helped to keep those units replenished with additional manpower, although it became increasingly difficult to replace men through wastage. From 1 January until 30 September 1901 only two monthly drafts totalling 57 men were sent to South Africa, although this improved slightly in 1902 as 1,603 men proceeded to their battalions.[57]

It was widely believed that the most effective way to use militia units serving in South Africa was as a means of relieving regular units of garrison duty and other more mundane tasks behind the front line, not at all dissimilar to their role within the UK and Mediterranean. Initially Lord Roberts was hopeful that the arrival of the first militia battalions would help facilitate his planned advance to relieve Ladysmith by relieving regulars of such duties. Therefore, the first seven battalions arriving in January and February 1900 were used to replace Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Kelly-Kenny's troops along the lines stretching from Naauwport to Steynsburg, while eighteen battalions arriving in late February were expected to free sufficient regulars for Roberts' planned thrust against Pretoria.[58] The sheer distances involved in guarding the lines of communication meant that, compared to those garrisoned in the Mediterranean or the UK, militia battalions were often split and distributed over large areas, usually as companies, and expected to operate relatively independently of each other. For instance, the 3rd Royal West Surrey Regiment spent most of its service, from April to October 1900, guarding 350 miles of telegraph and railway lines with detachments serving at several isolated stations.[59] The 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment also manned the lines surrounding the town of Volksrust in addition to garrisoning the town and surrounding passes at Laing's Nek and Iketeni Nek. Similarly, men of the 4th Bedfordshire Regiment dug and manned two miles of trenches stretching from Warrenton, a village north of Kimberley, to a nearby railway station; others also provided escorts for the artillery stationed at the village. The battalion was later again involved in guarding outposts

[57] See Appendix 6.
[58] PP, *Report of the Royal Commission*, Cd. 2062 (1904), q. 1141; Amery, *Times History*, vol. III, pp. 347,358.
[59] These isolated stations stretched between Delfontein, Richmond Road, Victoria West Road, Kroom River, Fraserburg Road, and Ketting, with the battalion headquarters at Beaufort West, while some troops were also stationed at Ketting for the purposes of guarding the railway bridges there. Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, p. 237; SHC, QRWS/4/2/1, Photo album of service life in South Africa, 1900-1901; *Ibid*., ESR/4/1/3, entry for 1900.

'between the Modder and Orange Rivers' while stationed at Dronfield.[60]

Once Kitchener sanctioned the construction of thousands of blockhouses and as a means of limiting the manoeuvrability of Boer commando parties, militiamen were often used as a means of providing the necessary manpower to guard them. Both the 3rd and 4th East Surrey Regiment garrisoned various blockhouse lines during their time in South Africa, the 3rd Battalion, for instance, defending the railway from Victoria West to Beaufort West from December 1901 to February 1902, while the 4th Battalion (arriving on 10 April 1902) garrisoned those in the Sterkstroom District until July 1902. In both instances the battalions were split, each company occupying its own stretch of the line. Similarly, a garrison of seven officers and 181 other ranks belonging to the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment took over the blockhouses following the railway between Ingogo and Mount Prospect between December 1901 and June 1902, south of the battalion headquarters at Volksrust. Even though they had only arrived at Cape Town the preceding month, in March 1902 the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders were also moved into a line of blockhouses at Victoria West where they served until the end of the war.[61]

In addition to serving on the lines of communication, many militia battalions were also used for the more mundane task of guarding Boer prisoners and interned civilians. For instance, from October 1900 to July 1901 the 3rd Royal West Surrey Regiment spent the majority of its service at a camp at Green Point just outside of Cape Town. In August 1901 the 5th Royal Irish Rifles also spent time providing frequent patrols at a camp at Vredefort Road, duties which were particularly trying for junior officers acting as orderly officers. As the war progressed and Kitchener increasingly looked to the internment of Boer civilians as a means of denying the commandos support and supplies, there was increased demand upon the militia to provide the necessary guards. Two companies of the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment was stationed in Bloemfontein to guard prisoners and supplies from May 1901 until early 1902, while from June to September 1902 the 4th East Surrey Regiment were increasingly withdrawn from duties manning blockhouses and instead put to use guarding prisoners at Simons Town. One officer serving with the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, which only arrived in South Africa in February

[60] Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, pp. 321-2 ; HertALS, D/EYO/1/55, 'The Hart', 1903, pp. 17-18.
[61] SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entries for 1901 and 1902; ESR/5/1/3, 4th East Surrey Regiment, Digest of Service, entry for 1902; Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, p. 336; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, pp. 321-2; NRS, GD1/739/2, Letters of Second-Lieutenant Charles Cavendish while serving in South Africa, 1902, letter no. 5, 8 March 1902.

1902, was particularly disappointed to find himself as part of a detachment left behind to guard prisoners near Cape Town, although his duties as an orderly officer kept him and his men busy despite the monotony of such service.[62]

For the militia artillery, service in South Africa was hardly distinguishable from that of infantry battalions. When in May 1901 a company of the Norfolk Royal Garrison Artillery was despatched to South Africa it was, after quarantine at Kimberley, divided and split between garrison duty at the Bulfontein Camp (in Kimberley) and convoy duties along the Orange River, its headquarters situated at the latter. Most of their time was spent manning armoured trains and, for a period in late 1901, garrisoning local fortifications.[63] The three companies (and two sections) of militia engineers faced more specialist tasks. Most importantly they helped to construct and maintain many of the lines of communication and blockhouse that other militiamen were helping to guard. For instance, the special service company of Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers Militia, deployed in May 1900, spent most of its service building roads, running construction trains and maintaining over 420 miles of track and across the Orange Free State.[64]

Although garrison duty in some form constituted the mainstay of the militia's service in South Africa, it would be wrong to suggest that meant they were entirely isolated from engaging the enemy. The highly mobile nature of Boer commando parties, particularly after the summer of 1900, meant the militia came into contact with the enemy more frequently than has been previously suggested. In total 175 militia officers and men were killed in action, while 402 were wounded. Furthermore, a total of 51 militia officers received the Distinguished Service Order, while 92 NCOs and privates were recipients of the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Sir Ian Hamilton was, nonetheless, correct in that the militia was rarely involved directly in major offensive operations, although there were some exceptions. The 3rd East Kent Regiment saw more action than most militia units during a lengthy embodiment in which a year and 10 months were spent in South Africa. In June 1900 five companies formed part of a column some 2,000 strong, under the command of Lieutenant-General Kelly Kenny, sent to support Paget's troops invested at Lindley – in a letter to Lord Roberts he later praised the battalion for distinguishing itself

[62] SHC, QRWS/4/2/1, Photo album of service life in South Africa, 1900-1901; TLSAC, MR4/17/308/230, Reade, letter dated 30 Aug. 1901; West Sussex Record Office (WSRO), RSR/MSS/1/118, Bidder letter, 2 May 1901; SHC, ESR/5/1/3, entry for 1902; NRS, GD1/739/2, Second-Lt. Cavendish, letter no. 3, 22 February 2902.
[63] J. Sancroft Holmes, *Diary of the Norfolk Artillery 1853-1909*, (Norwich: Jarrold & Sons, 1909), pp. 136-9.
[64] Watson, *Militiamen and Sappers*.

during the fighting. In the following October the battalion formed part of General Sir Archibald Hunter's column serving in the north-west of the Orange River Colony. Two companies subsequently distinguished themselves in the fighting at Ventersburg on 2 November, after which Lord Roberts himself praised them for their 'conspicuous gallantry'.[65] On a few occasions militia battalions were forced to fight independently of regular support against concerted attacks. Without doubt the most notorious incident was the disastrous surrender of the 4th Derbyshire Regiment, in June 1900, after it was overrun while defending at Roodevar Station (near Rhenoster Kop, situated between Colesberg and Burgersdorp) by a force of Boer commandos estimated at between 3,000 and 4,000 men. The regiment successfully resisted for several hours, although the arrival of Boer artillery and the successful flanking of its position meant the commanding officer decided it was best to surrender, after which the whole battalion were taken prisoner. As a result the battalion suffered some of the highest casualties of any militia units throughout the war: 36 were killed in action while a further 106 were wounded.[66] Later in the war Major Crofton of the 3rd East Surrey Regiment was killed in action while commanding convoy escort at Uitspanfontein in February 1902 after his camp was overrun by a party of Boers, resulting in the death of not just himself but also 22 of his men. Half of the 4th East Surrey Regiment also formed part of the Namaqualand Field Force from April to June 1902. Far from taking a back seat, the battalion took an active role in the fighting, frequently helping to drive the enemy back until it reached Klipfontein on 20 April. Once mounted troops had arrived from Port Nolloth, on 18 April the column marched and attacked Boer positions at Steinkopf during which four men were killed, occupying the town once the enemy on 1 May. Subsequently the commanding officer offered nothing but praise for the militiamen under his command, acknowledging the contribution of all ranks towards the operation.[67]

However, it was not just the few militia units involved in major operations such as the 3rd East Kent Regiment which came into contact with the enemy, or for that matter those unfortunate enough to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time such as the 4th Derbyshire Regiment at Rhenoster. After the fall of Pretoria in June 1900 the war transitioned from a predominantly conventional campaign, bent on annexing the Boer

[65] Lord Roberts's despatch of 15 November 1900, quoted in Capt. C.R. Knight, *Historical Records of the Buffs: East Kent Regiment (3rd Foot) Formerly Designated the Holland Regiment and Prince George of Denmark's Regiment, 1704-1914*, (London: Medici Society, 1935), pp. 594-6.
[66] *The Sheffield & Rotherham Independent*, 12 June 1900; *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 23 June 1900.
[67] SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entry for 1902, and ESR/5/1/3, entry for 1902.

republics and defeating their troops in the field, to one dominated by guerrilla warfare, perpetrated by small highly mobile commando parties able to operate right across South Africa. This brought the war directly to those troops serving on the lines of communication meaning it was relatively common for militiamen to have some experience of combat. While at Vredefort Road the 3rd Durham Light Infantry were involved in frequent skirmishing. They were also involved in heavier fighting on three occasions in which two men were killed and three more mortally wounded. Throughout the summer of 1901 outposts manned by the 5th Royal Irish Rifles (also stationed at Vredefort Road) frequently saw contact with small groups of Boer commandos attempting to move across country. For instance, in August its section of the lines was attacked almost every night while in one encounter, comprised of a corporal and six men, three were mortally wounded. Similarly, the 3rd East Kent Regiment was involved in frequent skirmishes whilst manning blockhouse lines surrounding Kroonstadt and Lindley. Also in April and May 1901 the regiment successfully defended a series of railway sidings around Kroonstadt, while later that year on the 8 August six men of Blockhouse 493/I successfully repelled an attack from 150 Boers. Between December 1901 and June 1902 the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment also fought off a Boer commando raid while manning the blockhouse line between Ingogo and Mount Prospect, Natal. However, not all militia battalions were so successful. In 1902 members of the 4th West Yorkshire Regiment were unable to prevent a Boer commando party from capturing a convoy they had been escorting, and later one member of the battalion was subsequently detained when it was argued he had given up his position too easily.[68]

Militia battalions also furnished men as mounted infantry to serve alongside regular units. The 4th Bedfordshire Regiment furnished men for a mounted infantry company serving throughout the latter half of 1901 as part of Lord Methuen's column, while the 4th Norfolk Regiment provided 'About thirty men' as a company of mounted infantry undertaking 'the same work as regulars all through the war.' The 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment trained a large portion of its men as mounted infantry while encamped at Spitzkop, four miles west of Bloemfontein, which by August 1901 comprised eight

[68] DCRO, D/DLI/2/4/222, Lt.-Col. Wilson to R.T. Richardson, 24 October 1900, and D/DLI/2/4/223, Newspaper cuttings of the 3rd Durham Light Infantry in South Africa, *Teesdale Mercury*¸19 June 1901; Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre (TLSAC), MR4/17/308, Papers of John Henry Loftus Reade in South Africa, no. 230, Reade to anon., 30 Aug. 1901; Knight, *Historical Records of the Buffs*, pp. 595-6; Du Moulin, *Two years on Trek*, p. 322; NRS, GD1/739/2, Second-Lt. Cavendish, letter no. 3, letter dated 22 February 1902.

officers and 225 men. On the whole they had no prior experience of riding and so had to be trained from scratch. Despite this, an officer serving alongside them believed they had played an important part in the defence of Bloemfontein, 'patrolling beyond the outposts, and of escorting convoys to columns in the field.' Although the battalion was disbanded by the end of November 1901, this was not due to its poor efficiency; rather more, there was a desperate shortage of horses for Kitchener's 'moving columns'.[69] It was not just regiments stationed in South Africa that furnished men as mounted infantry. In December 1900, while stationed on Malta, the 3rd Northumberland Fusiliers provided a mounted infantry section of 20 men for service in South Africa; although 41 had applied for the duty, those initially unsuccessful were subsequently trained and sent as a second contingent later in the war. Similarly, in January 1901 the 3rd Royal West Kent Regiment (also stationed on Malta) sent a detachment of twenty NCOs and men. In the following March the 4th East Surrey Regiment, stationed in Ireland, furnished an officer and 35 rank and file as a mounted infantry section in South Africa, only re-joining the battalion in September 1902 (by which time it was itself serving in South Africa). The battalion also provided mounted infantry for service with the Namaqualand Field Force from April to June 1902.[70]

For the majority of officers and men, however, the greatest challenge came not from fighting, but instead the demands (and, at times, monotony) of active service, particularly when stationed away from major settlements. Even prior to arriving at Cape Town militiamen were faced with a lengthy voyage lasting over two weeks, most of which was spent in hot and cramped conditions below deck. One officer serving with the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders noted that many on board did not even have room to erect a hammock and were thus forced to sleep on the deck; this was despite the fact only 1,700 men out of a capacity of 2,500 were on board. Things could become even tougher once they arrived in South Africa. After being stationed at Vredefort Road in August 1900, the commanding officer of the 3rd Durham Light Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel R.B. Wilson, commented that service was 'hard going', with most men only gaining one night of four in bed. He also noted how typhoid began to take hold amongst his men – across its embodiment the battalion lost two officers and 20 men to disease.

[69] Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, p. 287-8; *Daily Press*, 18 September 1902; WSRO, RSR/MSS/1/118, Bidder letter, 11 July 1901; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, pp. 320-1.
[70] Scott, *Northumberland Light Infantry*, p. 121; TNA, WO 68/406/1, Historical record of service 3rd Royal West Kent Regiment, entry for 1901; SHC, ESR/5/1/3, entries for 1901 and 1902.

Similarly, the commanding officer of the 3rd Lancashire Regiment, Lieutenant-Colonel R.D. Parker, noted that his men were 'weary of doing nothing but watch[ing] trains pass up and down the line', despite 20 deaths from 'sickness' by 15 August 1900. One subaltern serving with the 5th Royal Irish Rifles frequently encountered militiamen who were 'sick' of service, particularly during the hot summer months when flies became 'the bain of…existence'. The irregularity of Boer attacks also led to an unsettled life on the lines necessitating constant awareness (and an early rise at 5.30am) in order to watch for patrols. Contact with home was also difficult as letters from many blockhouses could only be sent once a fortnight. Living conditions were extremely challenging particularly when taking over from other long serving battalions. For instance, when in October 1901 the 5th Royal Irish Rifles took over the blockhouse lines around Rhenoster from the 3rd East Yorkshire Regiment, a regiment serving in South Africa since March 1900, conditions were described as 'filthy'. Dysentery was rife and as a result the departing battalion lost 45 men while stationed there. When the 5th Royal Irish Rifles once again relieved the 3rd East Yorkshire Regiment in December 1901, it was described as being in an 'absolutely rotten state'. Similarly, one officer serving with the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders described the filthy state of his quarters after it had quartered men of the 4th West Yorkshire Regiment. Furthermore, the shortage of officers in many battalions meant those serving in South Africa could be extremely overworked. For instance, Second-Lieutenant Reade, serving with the 5th Royal Irish Rifles, found it difficult to manage his responsibility for the defence of a section of railway, which took most of the night to patrol, in combination with his role as the local Railway Staff Officer; thus he found it almost impossible to gain sufficient sleep.[71]

However, many officers were able to maintain a relatively comfortable standard of living, especially if they were serving at or near a major settlement. Hunting was a common pastime, facilitated by the widespread availability of cheap horses which, according to one officer, could be purchased and kept 'for nothing'. For instance, Second-Lieutenant Cavendish of the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders managed to rent a horse and had the opportunity to hunt while stationed near Cape Town in March 1902. Again, if the facilities and duties permitted officers were able to arrange sporting

[71] NRS, GD1/739/2, Second-Lt. Cavendish, letters no. 1 and 2, 2 and 13 February 1902; DCRO, D/DLI/2/4/221, and D/DLI/2/4/222, Wilson to Richardson, 24 October 1900; *Burnley Express*¸15 August 1900; TLSAC, MR4/17/308, no. 230, 231, 237, 241, 243 and 249, Reade to anon., 30 Aug. 1901, 5 Sept. 1901, 18 Oct. 1901, 15 Nov. 1901, 29 Nov. 1901 and 10 Jan. 1902.

events including inter-regimental cricket and polo. If the weather became too hot then many officers would 'slack it', preferring to read and then either hunt or continue with their duties when the weather cooled. General living costs were low so that even a modest saving could be made out of their pay, while servants were also cheap and readily available, that of Second-Lieutenant Reade accompanying him even on patrol duties. If the station permitted officers were able to establish a mess at a relatively small expense. For instance, those of the 3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders stationed near Cape Town, in March 1902, were quick to establish a mess once suitable facilities became available, requiring 5s per day, by no means a small sum. Furthermore, even for those officers posted away from major settlements some comfort could be found in the ability to cherry-pick the best locations within a section of the line to settle in.[72]

Some units were also able to relieve the monotony of their duties through taking on supplementary responsibilities. While stationed at Spitzkop the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment frequently furnished detachments for signalling exercises despite the fact that they were not officially sanctioned to do so. Under the supervision of Lieutenant Bidder, they progressed in skill to the point that by July 1901, when the regular signallers attached to the camp were recalled to their regiment, the battalion took over signal duties full time and without any assistance; indeed, they were later mistaken as regulars due to their high levels of competency. Furthermore, Bidder was also responsible for training those under his command in the use of maxim guns. Although he admitted they would almost certainly not be required to use it in battle, he commented 'It is rather fun being let loose with a Maxim and team on a boundless range with unlimited cartridges (for we have thousands of rounds of condemned ammunition to fire off.' Similarly, the 3rd Royal West Surrey Regiment also had detachments trained and armed with maxim guns.[73]

South Africa was not the only foreign station in which the militia served. Several served on St Helena prior to returning to the UK, primarily responsible for guarding Boer prisoners of war. The 3rd East Kent Regiment was stationed there for six months from January to June 1902, later relieved by the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment from June to August and who were responsible for guarding over 2,000 prisoners at the Broadbottom Camp. Service here seems to have been on the whole more relaxed, compared to similar

[72] TLSAC, MR4/17/308, no. 230, 231, 237 and 245, letters dated 30 Aug. 1901, 5 Sept. 1901, 18 Oct. 1901 and 13 Oct. 1901; NRS, GD1/739/2, Second-Lt. Cavendish, letter no. 4, 2 March 1902.
[73] WSRO, RSR/MSS/1/118, letters dated 1 May, 31 May, 1 June, 5 June, 14 June, 11 June, 21 June 1901; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, pp. 320-1; SHC, QRWS/4/2/1, Photo album of service life in South Africa, 1900-1901.

duties in South Africa itself. For instance, members of the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment freely engaged with their prisoners to the extent that one claimed to have struck up something of a friendship with the Boer leader Christian De Wet, remarking '[He] is now staying close to my abode' and 'will do anything for me.' Indeed, on the day of the coronation of King Edward VII it was recorded that the men of the battalion 'mingled freely' with their prisoners even sharing a celebratory bonfire to mark the occasion. Similarly, the Quartermaster-Sergeant of the 3rd East Kent Regiment, George Johnson, was presented with a wooden box carved by a Boer as a gift.[74]

Furthermore, the militia again saw service within the Mediterranean in order to take over garrison duties from their regular counterparts. The 3rd Seaforth Highlanders Regiment spent its embodied period garrisoned in Egypt (the only militia battalion to do so) from February 1900 until May 1901, at the Citadel Barracks, Cairo. Malta and Gozo were garrisoned by the 3rd Royal West Kent Regiment from January 1900 June 1901.[75] Once again its duties predominantly involved providing pickets, drill and ceremonial parade, although the battalion was able to conduct firing exercises and field training and was involved in the 'combined manoeuvres' with both the fleet and other troops in May 1900, and again undertook field training in February and March 1901. Ceremonial duties were also commonplace, consisting primarily of parade and inspection, and before the battalion left for home it formed part of a ceremonial parade in honour of the Duke of Cornwall.[76] It was not the only battalion that garrisoned Malta during the war, serving served alongside the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers, 3rd West Yorkshire Regiment, 3rd Yorkshire Light Infantry Regiment, 5th Royal Munster Fusiliers, and the 3rd Loyal North Lancashire Regiment (prior to their progress to South Africa in March 1901).[77]

Many militiamen also saw service in South Africa as militia reservists. First mobilised on 7 October 1899, by the end of the war 13,598 militiamen had served with their regular battalions.[78] Militia battalions continued to provide a source of militia reservists throughout the war. In May 1900 the 4th Essex Regiment sent 62 men for service for service with the 1st battalion already serving in South Africa. The 3rd East

[74] Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, pp. 322-3; WSRO, RSR/MSS/3/33, entry for 1902; NAM, 2001-10-74-2, Notes providing information summarising the life and Army career of Quartermaster-Sergeant George Johnson, 3rd East Kent Regiment, 1882-1903.
[75] Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, pp. 407-8; *The Belfast News-Letter*, 30 December 1899.
[76] KHLC, WKR/B3/Zp3, *Military groups and scenes in Malta*, TNA, WO 68/406/1, entries for 1900, 1901 and 1902..
[77] Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, pp. 249-51, 279-80, 378-80, 429-30, 371-2.
[78] Beckett, *Britain's Part Time* Soldiers, p. 200.

Surrey Regiment sent an initial draft of 94 men to join the 2nd Wiltshire Regiment on 21 April 1900. Also, on the 22 May 35 men joined the details of the 2nd East Surrey Regiment prior to service in South Africa. The 4th East Surrey Regiment, while initially embodied in Ireland, sent its first draft of 52 men to the details of the 2nd battalion prior to their embarkation to South Africa on the 8 March 1900, arriving at Cape Town on 22 March. A further draft of 118 men was transferred to the 2nd Hampshire Regiment for service in South Africa on 23 April, and on 29 May 31 men went to the 2nd East Surrey Regiment for service in South Africa after which a further draft of 21 left the battalion on 14 August. Additionally, the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment sent a draft of 123 men for service with the 1st battalion before proceeding to South Africa. Also the 4th Norfolk Regiment provided a considerable number of reservists for South Africa. Prior to the battalion's embodiment, 40 of the reserve proceeded to the 3rd battalion, awaiting transport to South Africa on 25 February; another 50 and 65 reservists were later sent on 8 March and 16 April respectively for service with the 2nd battalion. Once embodied on 1 May another draft of 35 reservists departed with the 2nd battalion, while six recruits made up another draft on 22 September. It was also possible that some men were given duties that took them away from their regiment in an administrative ability. During the battalion's first embodiment, 42 NCOs and men under the command of Lieutenant Stomm were sent, on 3 January, to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst 'for duty there'.[79] Similarly militia officers saw service seconded to regular units, something which placed even more pressure on a force already short on officers (particularly subalterns). For many regular battalions militia officers enabled them to ensure they had a full complement of officers. Within the 3rd East Surrey Regiment officers were seconded for service while the battalion was stationed in Great Britain. For instance, on 16 May 1900 Captain Halkett was seconded for service with the 4th Sherwood Foresters. After secondment from the 3rd Suffolk Regiment to the 1st battalion, Captain Ronald Dowie was killed from wounds received on 20 December 1901 at Kroonstad.[80]

Of those officers and men who served in South Africa, many felt that the military authorities had undervalued the militia as a fighting force, and largely forgotten at home compared to other auxiliaries. The commanding officer of the 3rd Lancashire Regiment bemoaned that 'the Militia has only been brought here to do the dirty work'. This

[79] TNA, WO 68/257, Digest of Service, 4th Essex Regiment; SHC, ESR/4/1/3, and ESR/5/1/3; *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 March 1900; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, p. 319.
[80] SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entry for 1900; *The Times*, 25 December 1901.

extended to members of the rank and file as well. For instance, upon his return from South Africa, one militiaman, serving in the 4th Bedfordshire Regiment, composed a poem in which he vented his frustration at the relative lack of recognition for the militia's service compared to that of the yeomanry and volunteers.[81]

Clearly the militia's contribution to the South African War was unprecedented compared to previous embodiments. Nonetheless, most units, even those which spent a period in South Africa, continued to be quartered within Great Britain and Ireland for much of their embodied service. As during the 1850s many battalions were organised into brigades and stationed at several military camps across the UK. Yet in addition to the usual banalities of parade and inspection many battalions were actively trained to meet the threat of invasion and raiding, despite the at best tenuous nature of any European threat. When the 4th Essex Regiment was encamped at Middlewick camp, Colchester, it formed part of a brigade consisting of themselves, the 4th Norfolk Regiment, 3rd Bedfordshire Regiment, and the 5th Royal Warwickshire Regiment. These battalions took part in several tactical exercises, one of which saw one battalion act as a rear guard holding a position against the other three and aimed at preparing them for defensive duties in the Thames. Similarly, the 3rd Royal Sussex Regiment moved from barracks at Dover into the militia brigade at Shorncliffe, Folkestone, in April 1900, its training focussing upon the defence of Dover and its hinterland. For instance, in early August 1900 the battalion took part in a field day whereby an invading force, under the command of the battalion's commanding officer, the Earl of March, chased and engaged a second force proceeding from Canterbury; it too took part in a simulated attack on the garrison of Dover, in September 1900. Similarly, the 3rd East Surrey Regiment spent its first embodied period from May to October 1900 as part of a brigade encamped on Salisbury Plain, part of one of the largest concentrations of militia units within the UK in which 7,126 Militia and 1,112 regulars formed three brigades. Aside from parade and inspections – on 24 May they took part in celebrations of the Queen's birthday – the battalion also took part in two field days in simulating a possible invasion scenario and mock battle. There was also a somewhat light-hearted element to training. For instance, on 28 September the 3rd East Surrey Regiment, alongside the other ten militia battalions stationed at Salisbury Plain, entered men into a competition testing their marching, trench

[81] *Burnley Express*, 15 August 1900; HertsALS, D/EYo/1/54, Manuscript verses by A Chesher, late of the 4th Bedfordshire Regiment, n.d. [1902].

digging and musketry.[82]

Militia battalions were also liable for involvement in ceremonial parade and duties, with a focus on drill of various kinds. The 4th Essex Regiment was one of the many battalions, alongside the 3rd Royal Sussex and 4th Norfolk Regiment, all of which lined the streets for the funeral of Queen Victoria on 2 February 1901, as well as having the honour of marching in the procession itself. The battalion also furnished two officers and 45 men as part of the 'Imperial Representative Corps' sent to Australia to represent the militia at the opening of the Australian Federal Parliament. Of the 1,000 officers and men of the Duke of York's guard of honour, the 4th Norfolk Regiment was the only militia battalion represented.[83]

Table 5.3: Volunteers posted to and joining the Regular Army, Royal Navy and Marines during the South African War.[84]

	1899	*1900*	*1901*	*1902*	*Total*
Posted to Regular Army	2,156	12,203	89	0	14,448
Joined Regular Army	13,518	10,715	14,907	18,379	57,519
Joined Navy & Marines	722	247	666	615	2250
Yearly Total	16,396	23,165	15,662	18,994	74,217

Once again many English, Welsh and Scottish units were stationed in Ireland in order to replace Irish regiments transferred to Great Britain, the government fearing the potential radicalisation and the threat of Fenianism. The 3rd East Kent Regiment was stationed at Enniskillen in place of the regular garrison from late January 1900 until 10 March, prior to its service in South Africa. The 4th East Surrey Regiment spent its first embodied period stationed in Ireland after they were no longer required for service in South Africa, its headquarters and half the battalion at Enniskillen and the remainder at Londonderry. Shortly after, when the battalion moved into the camp at Finner in County Donegal, it formed part of a brigade alongside the 3rd York and Lancaster Regiment, the

[82] TNA, WO 68/257, entries for 1900, 1901 and 1902; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, p. 319; *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 11 August 1900; *Daily News*, 5 September 1900 ; *The Times*, 30 April 1900; SHC, ESR/4/1/3, entries for 1900 and 1901; *The Times*, 2 October 1900.
[83] TNA, WO 68/257, entry for 1901, and WO 68/123, Digest of Service of the 4th Norfolk Regiment, entry for 1901; Du Moulin, *Two Years on Trek*, p. 319; *Morning Post*, 13 November 1900.
[84] PP, *Army and militia. Annual report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the year 1902*, Cd. 1417, (1903), Appendix D.

3rd Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and the regular 1st Royal Irish Rifles.[85]

A few militia battalions were also stationed as garrison troops in the Channel Islands. Their duties were in many ways similar to those garrisoned on the mainland in so much as it consisted primarily of parade, inspection and drill. The 3rd Suffolk Regiment spent the majority of their embodiment stationed in the Guernsey and Alderney district from January 1900 until April 1901. its main duties involved parading and drill of various kinds. The 4th Norfolk Regiment also served on Guernsey and Alderney from May 1901 until the following July, principally tasked with guarding the entrance to the harbour.[86]

Finally, it is also clear from Table 5.3 that the demands of the war upon the militia's manpower meant that the militia continued to provide a large proportion of recruits for the regular army. Unlike during the 1850s, from the 1870s onwards such a relationship was well established (as explored in chapter one), and there appears to have been little resistance to the widespread use of the militia to augment the strength of the army. Therefore, it is unsurprising the number of men transferring climaxed during the South African War. In total 57,519 men transferred from militia battalions to the regulars during the war although with a further 14,448 posted on a temporary basis (mostly consisting of militia reservists). In contrast to the 1850s, the numbers joining towards the end of the war increased so that in 1902 more men joined the regulars than in any single year previously. Also of note is that a small proportion transferred into the Royal Navy and Marines, although never more than seven per cent of those joining the regulars. The effect of this after the conclusion of the war will be explored in the following chapter. Suffice to say, it had a damaging effect on the strength of the force as the proportion wanting to complete rose from 16.7 per cent in 1899 to a peak of 25.4 per cent in 1901.

* * *

Embodied service was a far cry from the usually mundane experience of training when disembodied. This was especially the case during the South African War when the militia proceeded abroad for active service for the first time *en masse*. By comparison, its embodied service during the Crimean War and Indian mutiny was far more mundane.

[85] Knight, *Historical Records of the Buffs*, p. 539; SHC, ESR/5/1/3, entry for 1900; *Birmingham Daily Post*, 29 May 1900.
[86] Hay, *Epitomized History of the Militia*, p. 273; TNA, WO 68/516, Regimental Order Book 3rd Suffolk, entries for 1900 and 1901, and WO 68/123, entry for 1901.

The decision of whether or not to embody the force at the outset of the Crimean War was far from a straightforward issue. Despite there being no credible threat of invasion to justify embodying the force, the government was able to take a loose interpretation of the existing legislation which permitted the embodiment of the militia when the country was threatened with invasion. By May 1854, subsequent legislation henceforth authorised the embodiment of the militia whenever a state of war existed. Yet there can be no doubt that their primary motive remained the need to find an additional source of manpower for the regular army, a role most commanding officers either willingly or begrudgingly complied with (only a few refusing outright). However, the embodiment also served the practical purpose of enabling regular units stationed in Britain to serve abroad meaning the defence of the UK rested predominantly upon the militia. Some units even had the opportunity to serve abroad after legislation was passed in 1854 which allowed units to offer to serve abroad; yet, although many offered, just ten were sent to garrison stations throughout the Mediterranean. For the many units serving in the UK, the experience of both embodiments was not dissimilar to that of the disembodied training. Their duties consisted largely of drill and parade upon the barrack square. Nonetheless, some were camped at the major military stations while others served in regular barracks across Britain and Ireland.

By comparison, the militia undertook a more active role during the South African War, this despite the government initially intending to use it in a similar domestic role as in the 1850s. Eventually over 65,000 officers and men served abroad, most as part of their own units. Generally they were used as a means of relieving regular troops from garrison duties, only a few ever being used in active operations against the enemy. Yet the fragmented and increasingly mobile nature of the conflict meant many units experienced some form of fighting, while others were trained as mounted infantry and attached to Lord Kitchener's flying columns. Garrison duties at isolated stations meant everyday life could be tough, although most were able to bare the strain; some units did so for considerable periods. By contrast, for those serving in units at home the embodiment was in many ways similar to those of the 1850s. Once again they acted as garrison troops, several units serving in Ireland and a few in the Channel Islands, some again sent to relieve regular garrisons in the Mediterranean. However, compared to the 1850s, many more were able to take advantage of more comprehensive training arrangements which meant there was a greater focus upon field exercises simulating

defensive duties against invasion and raiding, despite their being little credible threat of such. There was also far less of a need to billet militiamen, most serving instead in barracks or military camps.

6. Reform and the Special Reserve, 1902-1914

The unprecedented use of the militia in South Africa proved to be somewhat of a turning point in its fortunes. After 1902 the militia rapidly declined, the strength of its officer corps and rank and file dropping to levels not seen since the 1850s. This, in combination with wider concerns over the efficacy of the army and the auxiliary forces more widely and the need for financial retrenchment, meant both the Unionists and Liberals recognised the urgency of reform. Between 1902 and 1908 three Secretaries of State for War, William St John Brodrick, Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster and Richard Burdon Haldane, presented three separate reform schemes, all of which proposed to fundamentally alter the organisation of the militia. Despite this, scholars have so far presented a fragmented narrative of the attempts to grapple with militia reform as part of the wider drive for the reorganisation of the army. Much of the existing historiography focuses upon the wider nature of Edwardian army reform and, in terms of the auxiliary forces, the eventual creation of the Territorial Force (TF). Perhaps unsurprisingly there has also been more focus upon the successful reforms of Haldane than those of his less successful predecessors. Even those studies which do examine the reforms of Brodrick and Arnold-Forster have, by virtue of their breadth, only partially examined militia reform.[1] Similarly, the creation of Haldane's Special Reserve (SR), and the extent to which such a move represented continuity with the militia which preceded it, has been overshadowed by concern for the TF. However, this has been partially addressed in a wider examination of the Edwardian Army in which, it is argued, the reform represented, for some units at least, a relatively seamless transition from the militia to the SR, although others were more disrupted by the experience. Any idea that the militia simply transferred *en masse* to the SR can be challenged by examining statistics over the proportion of militiamen and officers transferring. Despite this, much of the source material relates to the Irish militia meaning that there is room to test these assumptions in

[1] For an examination of the reforms of the broader nature of Brodrick and Arnold-Forster's reforms, see: Satre, 'St. John Brodrick', pp. 117-139; Tucker, 'The Issue of Army Reform', pp. 90-100, Beckett, 'H.O. Arnold-Forster and the Volunteers' in Beckett and Gooch ed., *Politicians and Defence*, pp. 47-68, and Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 7-25, 41-55, 77-83. For an examination of reforms of Haldane, see: A.J.A. Morris, 'Haldane's Army Reforms, 1906-08: The deception of the radicals', *History*¸ vol. 56, 186, (1971), pp. 17-34; J. Gooch, *The Prospect of War: Studies in British Defence Policy, 1847-1942*, (Abingdon: Frank Cass & Company Ltd, 1981), pp. 92-115; Gooch, 'Haldane and the 'National Army'', in Beckett and Gooch ed., *Politicians and Defence*, pp. 69-86; Spiers, *Haldane*; and Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 100-17. For an examination of the creation of the TF, see Dennis, *Territorial Force*, pp. 4-14.

British units.[2]

Clearly there remains a gap in our understanding of how the reforms of the Edwardian period affected the militia, while questions remain over the degree of continuity between the militia and the SR. The three schemes presented by Brodrick, Arnold-Forster and Haldane each recognised that the militia would, in some form or other, be a key mechanism for the rapid expansion of the regular army, seen to be vital if the difficulties encountered during the South African War were to be avoided. Despite this, each of them had different beliefs on how the militia could be reformed in order to achieve such a goal. Brodrick believed that only the best elements of the militia were worth incorporating into his army corps scheme, while similarly his successor Arnold-Forster saw the militia as largely ineffective and therefore decided it too should have its best units incorporated into his planned 'home service' army. By comparison, Haldane was initially more open to the idea that a large portion of the existing militia would be suitable to continue providing its officers were willing to accept an overseas liability and the drafting of their men directly into the regular army. Each of the three schemes encountered opposition which coalesced around the issue of militia reform. Yet although Brodrick and Arnold-Forster were willing to retain portions of the militia alongside their own existing schemes, the strength of opposition saw them fail. In both cases this was due to a strong lobby of serving and former militia officers within both houses of Parliament (although they were arguably more influential in the House of Lords), although for Arnold-Forster it was opposition from within the cabinet, most notably from the Prime Minister (who like other members believed the militia was capable of being transformed into a secondary line through the provision of whole units abroad), which prevented him from pushing forward with any portion of his plan. Despite facing opposition from members of the radical left wing of the Liberal Party, Haldane managed to secure the support of the Unionist front-bench and thus had more freedom to push forward with his own scheme despite the concerted opposition of militia officers within the Lords and those whose units were marked for disbandment.

It is also clear that the creation of the SR represented more of a transitional moment that an outright break with the past. When it was formed on 1 October 1908 most of its manpower simply transferred as part of their existing militia units to take up their new roles as reserve battalions, although for those units reorganised or disbanded

[2] For an examination of the militia and SR, as part of an examination of the Edwardian Army more widely, see Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, pp. 106-22.

the experience understandably created greater upheaval. Many of the difficulties which had afflicted the militia continued to affect the SR. Not only did it struggle to recruit enough men to maintain its strength, many of whom were increasingly younger due to the longer period of recruits' training, but it also struggled to retain its existing manpower due to high rates of desertion and the continued liability to provide both officers and men for the regular army. Therefore, by the eve of the Great War the SR was arguably in a more parlous state than it had been prior to the reform.

* * *

For the British Army the South African War had been a somewhat humbling experience, clearly demonstrating the urgent need for a more flexible defensive system which would make full use of both regular and auxiliary forces for the defence of the UK and the empire.

As Secretary of State for War since 1895, Lord Lansdowne was well aware of the calls for reform. Despite this at first he had little intention of bringing forth any scheme after war was declared, although by June 1900 he felt the need to clarify his draft proposals for militia reform which on the whole were geared towards further binding it to the regular army. Firstly, he proposed that all militiamen should in future be liable for service abroad without the need for temporary enabling legislation (as required for units serving in South Africa), either as whole units or through drafts. Secondly, he advocated the abolition of both the existing militia reserve and the special service sections, with the aim instead to form a reserve of militiamen which, instead of augmenting the army, would allow the rapid expansion of the force during wartime. This would be formed by those who had completed at least six years' service with the offer of a £2 bounty and the liability to be drilled six times each year. The fact that the measures would mean the loss of the existing reserve, which in 1900 numbered approximately 25,000 men in strength, was of little consequence as, in effect, the plans would transform the whole of the militia into what amounted to a reserve for the army. To increase the militia's ability to fulfil such a role Lansdowne proposed that recruits should be trained for an additional three months (taking the total training period to six months), one month of which was to be under their own officers which it was hoped would breed greater familiarity between the

officers and men.[3] In many ways Lansdowne's proposals echoed those of his successors in that they recognised the need for the militia to be further integrated with the regular army, although without formally uniting the two and still acknowledging that the militia was to remain partially distinct from the line. Nevertheless, the proposals remained just that due to Lansdowne's promotion to the Foreign Office in the wake of the Unionist victory at October's 'Khaki Election'. Despite this the Unionist government remained committed to further reform. Therefore, the Prime Minister, the 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, who had one eye firmly upon such, appointed St John Brodrick as Lansdowne's successor.[4]

From the outset Brodrick was aware of the challenges he would face juggling both the conduct of the war and reform of the army. He knew that in order to present the best chance of success he would have to act before the war was over in order to avoid public distaste for increased military spending in peacetime.[5] In terms of his plans for the auxiliary forces, his proposals were guided by certain beliefs over their future role in relation to the army. Firstly, he envisaged the army moving beyond its hitherto rather limited *raison d'etre* of providing garrisons for India and the colonies (as specified by Edward Stanhope in 1888), instead arguing that the it should be organised on a basis which allowed it as a whole to fight on the continent in the event of a European war. This meant that the auxiliary forces would have to play a more central role in supporting the army by acting both as a source of additional manpower and through taking over the role of home defence. It was hoped such a system would, in the words of Lord Roberts (the new Commander in Chief), give more 'elasticity' to the army and negate the need for a large increase upon the regular establishment. Brodrick was also aware that any scheme would need to maintain voluntary enlistment as its central principal in light of the political and practical inadequacies of conscription – not only was the issue electoral suicide, but also short service conscripts were inadequate for maintaining colonial garrisons. Similarly, there was little political support for an ultimately unsuccessful draft bill introduced by the Earl of Wemyss on three separate occasions, from 1898 to 1900, which called for the reintroduction of the ballot.[6]

[3] TNA, CAB 37/53/54, 'Proposals for Militia', 20 June 1900.
[4] Satre, 'St John Brodrick and Army Reform', pp. 117-39 (pp. 118-9).
[5] TNA, PRO 30/67/6, Brodrick papers, October to December 1900, Brodrick to Salisbury, 18 October 1900.
[6] Earl of Midleton, *Records & reactions, 1856-1939*, (New York (NY): E. P. Dutton and Company Inc., 1939), pp. 138-40; Satre, 'St John Brodrick and Army Reform', pp. 117-39 (p. 121); Williams, *Defending*

Presented to Parliament in March 1901, Brodrick's army reform scheme, aside from an increase to the regular establishment, proposed the formation of six army corps each consisting of 40,000 men, the first three comprised of regular troops for immediate service abroad, while the latter three were formed from a selection of regular and auxiliary units primarily tasked with home defence. To make this a reality Brodrick intended to invite a selection of the most efficient militia, volunteer and yeomanry units to form part of the three home service corps: this included 21 militia artillery batteries and 37 infantry battalions in addition to six yeomanry regiments, 15 batteries of volunteer artillery and 25 volunteer battalions. Each corps would be based at Colchester, York and Edinburgh respectively and would draw upon units from the surrounding counties. This meant that the 4th corps was expected to draw upon the largest and most efficient units from around London, while the 5th corps would draw those based primarily in Lancashire and Yorkshire. The remainder of the militia not invited to form part of the home defence corps would be retained aside from the reduction or merger of some of the least efficient units. In order for his scheme to be a success, however, Brodrick recognised that the militia needed to become more efficient. To achieve this he proposed to give militiamen the additional 3d per day (when either embodied or assembled for training) which had been granted to the regulars three years prior. He also hoped to induce more men to see out their term of service by paying an additional non-training bounty of £3 to each man after the completion of their second annual training, payable in three separate instalments (on the first day of October, December and February) throughout the year. Furthermore, like Lansdowne he proposed to abolish the existing militia reserve and form instead 'a genuine reserve of militia' comprised of experienced militiamen who had served for at least two engagements (totalling a minimum of ten years) and former regulars with a minimum of 14 years' service with the colours and army reserve. Each would be called out for a short period of annual musketry and paid 4d per day, but prohibited from serving outside of the UK. Brodrick hoped that a 50,000 strong reserve could thus be formed which in the event of war would expand the size of the militia without any need to find any additional recruits.[7]

Although the reform scheme passed through Parliament, it was not without its

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the Empire, pp. 10-1; TNA, PRO 30/67/6, Roberts to Brodrick, 9 November 1900; BL, Add MS 88906/16/27, Lansdowne papers, 'Papers on proposals for a Militia Ballot…', 1897 to 1900.

[7] HC Deb., 8 March 1901, vol. 90, cc. 1052-92 (cc. 1063-73); Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 207.

critics. Most of the debate focussed upon its impact upon the regular army and whether or not the money would be better spent on the navy.[8] Nevertheless, some concerns were raised over the practicalities of militia reform. A small minority of regular and militia officers claimed that the scheme was unworkable because there was no way of finding the requisite manpower in order to keep the militia at its present strength while also establishing his new militia reserve. They were later joined by the Duke of Bedford who, not for the last time, bemoaned a scheme which in his view did little to address the militia's wider shortcomings, particularly its shortage of sufficient officers and NCOs. Displaying his contempt for the efficiency of the volunteers, he also feared the fact that Brodrick's scheme spelt the end for the militia's rightful place as the senior auxiliary force. Therefore, he proposed that the best course of action would be for the militia and yeomanry to be transformed into a true 'field army' which in the event of the regular army proceeding abroad would be capable of taking the field against any enemy party which might seek an opportunity to mount a raid.[9] Nevertheless, by the end of 1901 Brodrick remained confident that his scheme could be successfully implemented so long as it was completed before the public taste for increased expenditure began to lapse, although he acknowledged he required not just full cabinet support but also the need to 'entertain a larger recognition of [the] auxiliary forces.'[10]

It was not long before Brodrick began to implement the first elements of his reorganisation of the militia and the auxiliary forces. By August the Militia and Yeomanry Act henceforth incorporated the yeomanry under the same legislation as the militia, transforming the latter into what amounted to a 'mounted militia.' By December 1902 Brodrick was also successful in passing legislation which authorised the establishment of his new reserve of militia alongside a similar reserve for the yeomanry.[11] The same year a committee chaired by the Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces investigated how best to implement the wider reorganisation of the militia. It concluded that on the whole the strength of the infantry should remain the same at 125 battalions (an

[8] Campbell-Bannerman and the Liberal opposition feared the prospect of increased military spending, while a small yet vocal group of young Unionist MPs led by Lord Cecil Hugh (including most notably Winston Churchill, Arthur Stanley and Lord Percy), who all desired to gain recognition within the House, bemoaned the fact that Brodrick's scheme was an unnecessary expense due to the primacy of the Royal Navy in the country's defensive arrangements. Satre, 'St John Brodrick and Army Reform', pp. 117-39 (pp. 122-4); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 13-7.

[9] HC Deb., 11 March 1901, vol. 90, cc. 1241-76 (cc. 1241-2); *Ibid.*, 14 March 1901, vol. 90, cc. 1605-69, (cc. 1624, 1627-8, 1637, 1667); HL Deb., 25 June 1901, vol. 95, cc. 1350-86 (cc. 1350-1, 1360-70, 1380-4).

[10] TNA, PRO 30/67/8, Brodrick papers, July to December 1901, Brodrick to Roberts, [1901].

[11] 1 Edw. VII, c. 14; 2 Edw. VII, c. 39; Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, pp. 207-8.

addition of just one). However, as part of the reorganisation Irish battalions were to be reduced from 38 battalions to just 21 through a reduction in the overall strength of the Irish establishment and the merger of units, the total number of companies falling from 192 to just 158. In stark contrast an additional 22 companies were added to the establishment of the militia in the remainder of the UK, and the number of battalions increased by eight. These alterations were made along the guiding principal that the size of each battalion should be altered depending upon the probable supply of recruits from the associated sub-district, and that in each territorial regiment there should where possible be one militia battalion for each regular battalion. This meant that many militia battalions which were below their establishment were to be retained at a reduced strength while others, principally those in urban and industrial areas, were to be augmented or even split into additional battalions. For instance, it was proposed that the 3rd Oxfordshire Light Infantry would be reduced from eight to six companies on account of its strength being just 391 men. By comparison the 5th and 6th Manchester Regiment, both with an establishment of eight companies and a strength of 1,383 and 1,190 men respectively, were to be augmented by an additional eight companies and form a 7th battalion. The committee also established that the total number of Royal Garrison Artillery (RGA) (Militia) corps was to be reduced from 38 to 21, while an additional 15 field artillery batteries were to be raised for the 3rd, 4th and 5th corps of the scheme in addition to the three already formed in Lancashire. Again Ireland was to face the brunt of the cuts as twelve of its existing RGA (Militia) corps were cut to just four, with those cut converted into six batteries of field artillery or merged into the remaining infantry battalions. The cuts were less severe in the rest of the UK as although the total establishment was reduced by 20 companies the number of corps remained the same with the exception of three which were converted into three brigades of field artillery (namely the Norfolk, West of Scotland, and Yorkshire RGA) [12]

However, as the South African War drew to a close it was clear elements of Brodrick's reforms were facing difficulties. Not only did his six army corps exist only on paper, but aspects of his militia reform were encountering problems. He had based his scheme on the assertion that militia recruitment could be maintained at current levels and that the additional 50,000 reservists would boost the forces establishment to 150,000

[12] It was agreed that there was room for negotiation for corps unhappy with their conversion so long as an equivalent corps from the same areas was willing to be converted instead. TNA, WO 33/249, 'Report of a Committee on the Reorganization of Artillery and Infantry Militia', 1902.

without the need to increase the overall establishment. However, although in 1900 and 1901 recruitment amounted to approximately 37,000 men in each year this quickly fell after the war. Furthermore, the rate at which militiamen and regulars joined the new reserve was far less than that required as by October 1903 only 5,052 men had joined, while a year later this had only risen to 7,082 men.[13] Furthermore, it was increasingly clear that others within the Unionist Party had alternative views as to the role of the militia and the auxiliary forces within his scheme. Most importantly he struggled to convince both Salisbury and Balfour as to the validity of the strategic assumptions his reforms were built on. Both believed the army's primary concern was the defence of India and the colonies and not war in Europe, subscribing to the view of Lord Selborne, the First Lord of the Admiralty, that the Royal Navy would guarantee the defence of the country against invasion. This meant there was little sense in retaining Brodrick's latter three corps specifically for home defence. Balfour had already developed ideas of an alternative role in which the militia would instead provide the means for the expansion of the regular army by providing whole units and drafts for service in India and the colonies in the event of war, while at home the remaining militia units and the volunteers would provide the necessary manpower to defend against raiding. Such a view was later supported by the Committee of Imperial Defence (CID) after Balfour charged it with examining the possibility of invasion in July 1903.[14]

Towards the end of his tenure it was clear Brodrick was becoming an increasingly isolated figure. He encountered growing opposition to his plans for reform of the internal organisation of the War Office from the very individuals he needed to make his wider scheme a success. At the same time his relationship with Lord Roberts deteriorated over his refusal to return more control of the army to the Commander-in-Chief. He also came into conflict with Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who bemoaned the increased expenditure required to make short service and an increase in the basic rate of pay a reality. Similarly, he clashed with Joseph Chamberlain over the nature of his army reforms and lost the support of the King. Furthermore, the Peace of Vereeniging signed in May 1902 meant that it would be increasingly difficult to gain

[13] PP, Army *and militia. Annual report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting for the first nine months of the year 1903*., Cd. 1778, (1904), p. 14; PP, *General annual report on the British army for the year ending 30th September, 1904*, Cd. 2268, (1905), p. 119.
[14] BL, Balfour Papers, Add MS 49707, Selborne to Balfour, 5 April 1903, cited in Williams, *Defending the Empire*, p. 25; TNA, CAB, 37/52/27, Memorandum on army reorganisation, 24 February 1900; *Ibid*., CAB 38/3/71, 'Draft Report on the Possibility of Serious Invasion', 11 November 1903.

support for the increased military spending required to implement the scheme. As a result he began to encounter renewed opposition from a group of young Unionist rebels led by Lord Cecil Hugh and an increasingly unified Liberal opposition over the direction and cost of the reforms. Twice in early 1903 the government faced challenges to the reform scheme and on both occasions they were unable to stop the Unionist rebels from voting in favour of the amendments or abstaining. Crucially, Brodrick also faced continued criticism from the auxiliary forces, most notably from volunteers concerned at his demands for greater efficiency and longer annual camps. Balfour attempted to address some of the concerns voiced by the auxiliary forces with the establishment of a Royal Commission, chaired by the Duke of Norfolk, which was charged with examining the militia, volunteers and yeomanry in detail. Nevertheless, the respite was only temporary as the final blow to Brodrick's position came upon the publication of the report of the Elgin commission, in August 1903, which criticised the general thrust of his reform scheme and the lack of measures to significantly improve the efficiency of the auxiliary forces. As a result Balfour took the opportunity for a cabinet reshuffle, resulting from the resignation of Chamberlain and three other ministers over the issue of tariff reform, to move Brodrick to the India Office.[15]

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When Arnold-Forster began to formulate his own proposals for army reform the guiding principles of his scheme were already well established. A prolific writer on the subject, he believed, unlike his predecessor, that the ultimate security of the UK rested with the Royal Navy and that the army's primary duty was for service in India and the colonies.[16] Recognising the continued need to cut defence spending, the ongoing naval shipbuilding programme meant reductions would have to be found in the army estimates, although Brodrick's short service scheme meant it would be the auxiliary forces that bore the brunt of further cuts (a policy which fit into his preconceived hostility towards the auxiliary

[15] Satre, 'St John Brodrick and Army Reform', pp. 117-39 (pp. 125-30); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 13-7; PP, *Report of His Majesty's commissioners*, Cd. 1789 (1904), p. 63-4, 83.

[16] For the principal examples of his writing, see: H. O. Arnold-Forster, *Our Home Army: Being a Reprint of Letters Published in "The Times" in November and December, 1891*, (London: Cassell, 1892); H. O. Arnold-Forster, *Army letters, 1897-98*, (London: E. Arnold, 1898); H. O. Arnold-Forster, *The War Office, The Army and the Empire: A Review of the Military Situation in 1900*, (London: Cassell, 1900); and H. O. Arnold-Forster, *The Army in 1906: A Policy and a Vindication*¸ (London: John Murray, 1906). TNA, CAB 37/65/35, 'Notes on the Present System of Army Organization and on Some Suggested Changes', May 1903.

forces). He was a long standing critic of the militia, arguing, in 1892, that 'The Militia is a patent and recognised fraud.' He later argued that it had been the victim of mismanagement by the War Office which had simply treated it as a source of officers and men for the regular army. As a result the militia was well below its establishment, while it also lacked sufficient officers, NCOs and no formal organisation above brigade level. He concluded that, as it stood, the militia could neither provide for the defence of the realm, nor provide replacements for the regular army abroad, due to there being no liability for foreign service. Therefore, as he began to set out his plans between January and March 1904, he argued that 'It is essential…that the question of the Militia should be taken at hand at once.'[17]

In essence, Arnold-Forster's reforms looked to bind the best parts of the militia more firmly to the regular army. Firstly, he planned to abandon the principle of linked battalions established by Cardwell by assigning 112 regular battalions for 'general service' abroad (principally in India and the colonies, but also with the capacity to form a strike force in the event of a crisis elsewhere). Secondly, he proposed to take 30 (later rising to 45) of the regular battalions and form them into the nucleus of a 'home service' army which, in wartime, would provide for the immediate expansion of the army abroad. Controversially, he planned to augment its strength with 60 of the most efficient militia battalions. He was initially ambiguous as to the fate of the remaining 64 militia battalions, although his personal preference was that they were to be disbanded saving £690,000 a year from the estimates. There was little need to retain them for domestic defence against possible raiding parties; not only would the home service army be capable of meeting such a threat, but also he planned to retain a reduced volunteer force and the yeomanry for such a purpose. Although he conceded that those battalions selected would be able to retain their current titles and separate identities, Arnold-Forster's proposals would essentially lead to abolition of the militia as a semi-independent force. This seemed at odds with his initial thinking outlined earlier in December and January which demonstrated he was still contemplating the possibility of its reformation. However, it appears his position quickly hardened as he became convinced that 'The greater part of the Force…[would] be improved by better training, by

[17] Arnold-Forster, *Our Home Army*, p. 15; BL, Balfour papers, Add MS 49722, Notes by Arnold-Forster on the 'Auxiliary Forces', May 1904, ff. 149-52, cited in Williams, *Defending the Empire*, p. 46; BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50300, 'Memorandum relating to Some Defects in the Existing System of Infantry Organisation and Recruiting. Part I.', 15 January 1904, ff. 20-8.

its association with the Line, by permanent embodiment, by greater responsibilities, and by being placed under the command of proper officers.' In addition to his plans for the militia's infantry, Arnold-Forster proposed that the RGA (Militia) would be retained but at a reduced strength, with 72 companies not allotted to any particular stretch of coast (predominantly in Ireland) being disbanded, a measure which would see the establishment reduced by 7,200 men with a saving of £104,000. The militia engineers and submarine miners would remain unaffected.[18]

It was not long before opposition from members of the Army Council forced Arnold-Forster to alter elements of his scheme. On the whole they supported the general thrust of his reforms, although they had a preference for an enlarged home service army of 112 battalions, an idea which Arnold-Forster himself had previously put forward as an alternative, and which as a result would mean the abolition of just 42 militia battalions. However, far from showing any concern for the wellbeing of the militia, the Army Council were more concerned with the fact that his scheme involved the disbandment of fourteen regular battalions which, they argued, would be better served joining the home service army in place of the militia.[19] Therefore, in March Arnold-Forster put forward an amended scheme which saw the size of each battalion increased from 500 to 600 men, although he refused to increase the number of battalions to match the general service army. He also altered their terms of service so that they would serve for two years with the colours and six years with the second-class reserve (as opposed to just fifteen months with the colours and six years nine months with the reserve), while during the later they would only be expected to attend two (as opposed to four) periods of refresher training. Crucially, in order to assuage supporters of the militia he proposed to transfer 40 (later reduced again in April to just 30) battalions to the home service army. Most notably, he also temporarily abandoned any plans to disband the remaining battalions with just 24 (later raised to 34) of the least efficient to be disbanded. Furthermore, he also proposed a further saving through the abolition of Brodrick's militia reserve.[20]

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[18] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50300, 'Memorandum relating to Some Defects in the Existing System of Infantry Organisation and Recruiting. Part I.', 15 January 1904, ff. 20-8; *Ibid*., 'Memorandum relating to Some Defects in the Existing System of Infantry Organisation and Recruiting. Part II. Some Suggested Remedies.', 1 February 1904, ff. 46-62; *Ibid.*, 'Reorganization of the Army. Part III. Infantry-Revised Proposals', 26 March 1904, ff. 85-9; *Ibid.*, 'Militia Artillery', 28 March 1904, f. 99.

[19] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50300, Correspondence with, and report of, the Army Council, February and March 1904, ff. 71-7.

[20] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50300, 'Proposals for the Reorganization of the Army', 19 April 1904, ff. 104-17; *Ibid.*, Principles involved in Scheme of Army Reform proposed by the Secretary of State for War', 12 June 1904, ff. 142-4.

Despite his apparent willingness to compromise, Arnold-Forster in fact made it clear he believed the best, and most cost effective, solution was to press forward with his original intention to abolish the militia, something he intended to do once parliamentary opinion was less hostile to the idea. His belief was only strengthened by the findings of the Norfolk commission's investigation, published in May, into the efficiency of the militia and volunteers. They found that alone neither force was capable of adequately defending the country against invasion unless they were continuously drilled so that they could be brought up to a satisfactory level of efficiency. This provided him with all the justification he needed to decide to go ahead with his home service army and the decision to abolish those militia battalions not required as part of it. However, more worryingly for Arnold-Forster, the commission also came to the conclusion that the only means by which any substantial invading force could be defeated without regular support would be through the creation of an army for home defence raised by conscription. They discounted a return to the militia ballot because it would entail exemptions for those serving in the volunteers, thus meaning the latter would simply become a refuge for those attempting to avoid compulsory militia service.[21] Despite this, Arnold-Forster was unwilling to accept any form of conscription as part of his army reform scheme. He used the fact that the commission could not agree upon what size force was required to successfully resist an invasion attempt, or even the likelihood of invasion in the first place (due to disagreement between the Admiralty and the War Office which subsequently deferred the issue to the CID, itself refusing to provide an estimate until their own investigations were concluded) as a way of discrediting the call for conscription.[22]

The Norfolk commission's conclusions had, nonetheless, given impetus to those who advocated compulsory military service as an alternative to Arnold-Forster's reforms. Notably many of these schemes had the historic concept of a citizen militia at their heart. The publication of George Shee's *The Briton's First Duty*, in 1901, by a later founding member (and secretary) of the National Service League (NSL), reaffirmed not only that Britain was open to the threat of invasion, but also that the solution was a 'Pan-Britannic Militia' for home defence. Based upon the Swiss system of short-term term conscription, it would be composed of men aged 18 to 22 and trained continuously for one year before

[21] PP, *Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers. Report of the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers*., Cd. 2061, (1904), pp. 1-16.
[22] HC Deb., 2 June 1904, vol. 135, cc. 620-1.

undergoing periods of refresher training in the reserve (based loosely upon the German system). His view of the existing militia was sympathetic, but nonetheless scathing in terms of their military worth, recognising that 'the material and the spirit of the Militia are excellent' although their lack of strength meant the force was, to quote Arnold-Forster, a fraud.[23] Therefore, his scheme supplanted the militia as it existed, although it retained the wider concept of a citizen militia (a point which much of the NSL literature, examined below, would later focus upon). Initially adopted by the newly established NSL, its failure to attract sufficient members forced them to adapt the scheme to something less radical and more in keeping with the existing militia: instead those aged 18 to 22 would serve just two months under canvas followed by an annual drill of two weeks in each of the following three years.[24] A further problem was that their views were not necessarily shared by others who desired a compulsorily recruited militia. When, in July 1904, the Earl of Wemyss attempted to introduce to Parliament measures which would reinstate the militia, Shee argued against it 'on the ground that it was invidious', Wemyss responding that the ballot represented a far less burdensome form of compulsory service upon the population as a whole.[25] Despite the fact that advocates of compulsion remained split over how best to achieve their goals, Arnold-Forster was nonetheless aware that many senior figures supported some form of compulsory service, noting in August 1904 how the Army Council had been 'solidly conscriptionalist from its earliest days.'[26]

Despite the NSLs calls for conscription, much of the opposition to his militia reforms continued to emanate from Parliament. After his original plans for the total abolition of the force were leaked from the War Office in May, on the 14th a deputation consisting of 20 members of the House of Commons Service Members' Committee, each of whom was associated with the militia, voiced their concerns directly to Balfour. In addition to opposing the total abolition of the militia, they pressed for greater representation of the auxiliary forces through the creation of a separate section at the War Office accountable directly to the Secretary of State for War. Aside from his annoyance

[23] G.F. Shee, *The Briton's First Duty: The Case for Conscription*¸ (London: Grant Richards, 1901), pp. 30-1, 175-8.
[24] A.J.A. Morris, *The Scaremongers: The Advocacy of War and Rearmament, 1896-1914*¸ (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 229; R.J.Q. Adams and P.P. Poirier, *The Conscription Controversy in Great Britain, 1900-18*¸ (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 8-13.
[25] HL Deb., 11 July 1904, vol. 137, cc. 1148-80, (cc. 1171-2, 1179).
[26] BL, Arnold-Forster papers, Add MSS 50339, Diary entry for 5 August 1908, cited in Adams and Poirier, *Conscription Controversy*, p. 26.

that they had tried to circumvent him by directly approaching the Prime Minister, Arnold-Forster maintained that a separate department would threaten the unity of military administration (arguing that a separate 'branch' had already been established and would provide sufficient representation). Again he made it clear 'that the Regular Army is infinitely more important than even the Auxiliary Forces' and that he could thus not make an exception for the militia.[27] In July Arnold-Forster was able to address Parliament directly over his intentions, although division within the cabinet meant he was prevented from bringing a bill before the Commons which, in combination with the recent War Office leaks, meant many had little idea as to what was to happen to the militia. Captain Arthur Griffith-Boscawen of the 3rd Royal West Kent Regiment summed up the concerns of most critics who feared abolition would destroy the militia's vital role as 'the feeding-bottle of the line' and its position as a county social institution. Indeed, he insisted abolition was unnecessary as an improved militia, shorn of its worst units and made liable for service abroad, could provide the means of expansion desired by the government.[28] Similar concerns were also voiced in the Lords, most notably by the Duke of Bedford who argued that the more favourable terms within the home service army would dissuade potential recruits from enlisting for general service (as those in the latter were enlisted for nine years with the colours); retaining the militia was therefore the best alternative as it appealed to a wider social base and avoided the worst of such competition. However, where he and other more reactionary militia supporters differed from others was that they believed compelling militiamen to serve abroad would increase rates of desertion and make the service less attractive to those who wanted to avoid regular service.[29]

Sustained Parliamentary opposition did not force Arnold-Forster to change tack. Spurred on by the general support of the Army Council, who on the whole believed there was little point in retaining the militia alongside a home service army, he denounced the militia's supporters as 'old women who look upon their regiments as a sort of honorary addition to their positions as County Magnates or as leading figures in some dull, ineffective society'.[30] With such a view in mind Arnold-Forster began to push forward

[27] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50303, Minute to the Adjutant-General (AG) and Chief of the General Staff (CGS), 'Representation on the Army Council', 31 March 1904, ff. 45-7; *Ibid*., Arnold-Forster to Balfour and accompanying details on Arnold-Forster's views on auxiliary forces' reform, 5 May 1904, ff. 49-62; *Ibid.*, 'Special Note. Private.', 5 May 1904, f. 63.
[28] HC Deb., 14 July 1904, vol. 138, cc. 51-116 (cc. 88-9, 99-100, 102-4, 106-7, 111-2).
[29] HL Deb., 21 July 1904, vol. 138, cc. 680-743; *Ibid.*, 21 February 1905, vol. 141, cc. 725-51 (cc. 727-9).
[30] BL, Arnold-Forster papers, Add MS 50339, Diary Entry, 15 July 1904, cited in Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*, p. 210.

with some of the preparatory steps required for his plans despite their remaining no firm consensus over whether the force would be abolished. Firstly, he proposed to halt recruitment in all units planned for disbandment, a measure which meant he could avoid the need to request from Parliament any further increase to the estimates. Secondly, in November, Army Order 207 increased the physical requirements for militiamen so that, on the whole, they were almost identical to the line (although chest measurements were permitted to be half an inch less than in the regulars), with special provisions allowed for recruits aged seventeen. Finally, in December 1904, Arnold-Forster consulted with members of the Army Council over which of the least efficient units were to be disbanded or amalgamated. By January they agreed that four infantry battalions were to be disbanded, a further 20 amalgamated with their regiment's sister battalion, while fourteen RGA (Militia) corps were to be disbanded outright (with the possibility that, if volunteer units were available, a further five could be disbanded also), a decision which Arnold-Forster was clear was to be taken without any due regard for the personal objections of militia colonels or local magnates. He also began preparation of a bill which would make the remaining militia liable for foreign service in case of war or in anticipation of hostilities.[31]

Parliamentary opposition was something Arnold-Forster had anticipated. However, it was clear the main obstacle to his reforms came from within the cabinet. Balfour, Selborne and Viscount Cranborne (now the 4th Marquess of Salisbury) – both the latter were active militia colonels in Hampshire and Bedfordshire respectively – all shared the view that a reformed militia was capable of providing the expansionary power the army required so long as it acted upon the recommendations of the Norfolk commission and was made liable for service abroad. Salisbury even claimed that retaining a reformed militia could save as much as £500,000 from the estimates, a figure which he later revised upwards to £750,000.[32] This view was also supported by the Secretary of the CID Sir George Clarke who believed the militia was too ingrained in society to warrant abolition. He even went as far as to develop his own alternative

[31] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50303, Arnold-Forster to AG, 19 August 1904, f. 78; *Ibid*., Minute regarding 'Draft Army Order', 23 September 1904, f. 80; *Ibid.*, 'Army Order 207', 1904, f. 96; *Ibid.*, Add Ms 50313, AGs Minute, n.d., and Secretary of State's Minute, 31 December 1904, ff. 182-5; *Ibid.*, 'The Militia', memorandum to the cabinet, 12 January 1905, f. 192; *Ibid*., Minute by H. Mackinnon, 22 March 1905, ff. 193-5.

[32] TNA, CAB 37/70/58, Memorandum on army reorganisation, 22 April 1904; *Ibid.*, CAB 37/71/80, Memorandum on army reorganisation, 14 June 1904.

scheme for an enlarged militia consisting of a field force of 180,000 men.[33] Nevertheless, Arnold-Forster remained convinced that the militia could not act as a substitute to the home service army, rejecting his colleagues views that retention of any part was incompatible with the Chancellor of the Exchequer's desire for a significant reduction to the estimates. Later he lambasted Clarke over his lack of knowledge of 'the officers and men of the Army' which led him 'to regard all individuals in the…Regular, Militia or Volunteers as practically interchangeable units'.[34]

Arnold-Forster's intransigence brought him into increasing conflict with Balfour. Hitherto the Prime Minister had been hesitant to undermine him by outwardly backing an alternative scheme, although mounting pressure to secure further savings from the forthcoming year's estimates meant he began to explore alternatives.[35] Along with Clarke and Esher, Balfour began to develop his own alternative scheme which substituted a reformed militia for the home service army. Its infantry were to be reduced to just 80 battalions which were to be distributed across ten divisions, each including a proportion of the militia's engineer, RAMC and ASC units along with regular field artillery batteries which would enable the division to serve abroad as a complete formation. Additionally the length of training was to be increased and a greater emphasis placed upon musketry, to be carried out in each man's spare time.[36] In the mean time, and at Balfour's persuasion, Arnold-Forster had agreed to refer the militia issue to a subcommittee of the CID in the hope a compromise could be reached, although he feared that Clarke's inclusion meant he would try to press his own proposals for reform. Arnold-Forster was right to be suspicious as instead of reconciling the opposing views the subcommittee argued overwhelmingly in favour of a Balfour's scheme. Unsurprisingly Arnold-Forster was unwilling to consent. He even went as far as to threaten to resign if any further modifications were made, the result that again the cabinet were deadlocked, something which continued to agitate the militia supporters in Parliament due to the uncertainty

[33] BL, Balfour Papers, Add MS 49700, Clarke to Balfour, 28 December 1904, cited in Tucker, 'Army Reform in the Unionist Government', pp. 90-100 (p. 97); Esher papers, 'Sir George Clarke, vol. II', Unheaded notes by Clarke, June 1904, cited in Gooch, *Prospect of War*, p. 84.
[34] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50326, Memorandum to cabinet, 29 June 1904, ff. 18-9; TNA, CAB 37/74/10, 'Army Reorganization: Correspondence between the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for War', 13 January to 27 February 1905, Arnold-Forster to Balfour, 31 January 1905.
[35] BL, Balfour Papers, Add MS 49707, Selborne to Balfour, 5 April 1903, ff. 120-2, cited in Williams, *Defending the Empire*, p. 50; *Ibid.*, pp. 51-2.
[36] TNA, CAB 37/74/10, Arnold-Forster to Balfour, 31 January 1905; *Ibid.*, CAB 38/8/14, 'Our present minimum military requirements and proposals for fulfilling them by a reorganization of the Regular Army and Militia', 24 February 1905; *Ibid.*, CAB 37/75/54, 'Army Reorganization', 30 March 1905.

surrounding the future of the force.[37]

Clearly Arnold-Forster was unwilling to entertain the idea that his home service army could be replaced outright by a reformed militia. However, he remained wedded to his amended scheme in which battalions not required as part of the home service army would be retained, albeit in a reformed state. In July he met with a deputation of militia officers, including MPs and Peers, with the aim of canvassing their opinions on the direction of militia reform.[38] Most importantly, however, in February he consented to the introduction of a bill to the Lords for the purpose of making militiamen liable to serve abroad if their units were embodied, despite the fact that he made it clear his personal preference remained the amalgamation of the militia into his home service army.[39] The reaction of the militia's supporters was far from unanimous. Once again the more reactionary elements, spearheaded by Wemyss, criticised the bill on the grounds that it would damage recruitment and re-enlistment rates (and in his view put an end once and for all to his desire for a reintroduction of the ballot). Yet more moderate peers, including Raglan, supported the measure, and eventually the vote was passed with ease by 69 votes to 21 after reassurances were delivered that the bill simply aimed to bring the legislative basis of the militia into line with the practicalities of its experience during the South African War; even Bedford, who was initially sceptical, was won round and voted in favour of the bill.[40] However, the success was short lived as before it could be read in the Commons the bill was withdrawn in August on account of the summer recess.

By the end of 1905 the government remained deadlocked with neither Arnold-Forster or Balfour able, or indeed willing, to force a compromise. This state of affairs remained largely unchanged until December when the government were forced to resign. Balfour could not risk removing Arnold-Forster or forcing him into a change of policy, for fear that his resignation would split the party and potentially bring down the government. Although (in 1902) just 48 MPs were serving or retired militia officers, almost all Unionists. This was magnified in the Lords which despite being a smaller

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[37] TNA, CAB 37/78/106, Memorandum by the Secretary of State for War, 9 June 1905; HL Deb., 21 February 1905, vol. 141, cc. 725-51 (cc. 725, 739-42).

[38] BL, Arnold-Forster Papers, Add MS 50326, 'Notes of a Deputation which assembled at the War Office and afterwards met the Secretary of State at the House of Commons on the 21 July, 1905, to discuss Questions concerning the Militia.', 21 July 1905, ff. 23-30.

[39] PP, *Service of militiamen. [H.L.] A bill intituled an act to amend the law relating to the area of service of the regular militia when embodied*., 165 (1905).

[40] HL Deb., 30 March 1905, vol. 143, cc. 1651-91. It also survived a proposed amendment by the Earl of Galloway advocating the provision of 'a bounty not less than thirty day's pay and allowances' in the event militiamen were forced to serve aboard. *Ibid.*, 3 April 1905, vol. 144, cc. 87-9.

chamber contained 52 militia representatives, again almost all Unionist peers.[41] This meant the issue of militia reform had the potential to divide the party, a risk Balfour was unwilling to take. On the other hand, Arnold-Forster remained a politically isolated figure who, despite gaining the broad support of the Army Council, was unable to gain the cabinet support he required to formally introduce a bill to Parliament; this was in spite of the departure of Selborne and Wyndham which, temporarily at least, gave him some hope of a break through.

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The continued failure of army and auxiliary forces reform meant the new Liberal Secretary of State for War, Richard Burdon Haldane, was determined to find a solution. Although driven by a similar urge to see the militia reformed as part of a wider drive to reduce the estimates, unlike his predecessors Brodrick and Arnold-Forster he faced less direct pressure from members of his own party over the direction of his reform. A firm advocate of the 'blue water' school, Haldane echoed the conclusion of the CID that invasion was unlikely. As a result he believed that the chief role of the auxiliary forces was to provide a second line in support of the regular army, particularly in regards to the creation of a striking force which would be ready to serve both throughout the empire and on the continent. However, unlike Arnold-Forster, Haldane initially believed that the militia could provide such an expansionary role without being subsumed directly into the regular army. Therefore, when he began to develop his proposals for an expeditionary force in the early months of 1906, Haldane proposed that the militia would contribute 30,000 men to the overall strength of ten divisions (totalling 154,000 men). To allow this he proposed to make all militiamen liable to service abroad, although he did not intend for militia infantry battalions to serve overseas as whole unit; instead they would simply provide drafts to their territorial regular battalions serving as part of the expeditionary force. By contrast most of the RGA (Militia) would, upon mobilisation, form part of the expeditionary force, serving as additional manpower upon the ammunition columns. Although he discounted any possible threat of invasion, home defence was henceforth to be the responsibility of the volunteers and yeomanry, reorganised into a single 'Territorial Force' (although they too were expected to provide a way to expand the

[41] See Appendix 1 for details.

expeditionary force if required).[42]

Like his immediate predecessors, Haldane encountered a significant degree of resistance to his proposals. While he was drafting his proposals Haldane was in frequent correspondence with Esher and Clarke at the CID, who both had misgivings over his proposals. Esher had little love for the militia (or other auxiliary forces) due to his support for compulsory military service, while he also had concerns over the uncertainty of whether or not Haldane intended for the militia to be placed permanently under the Mutiny Act (as opposed to while embodied or assembled for training). However, Clarke was far more concerned due to his continued faith in the efficacy of his own reform scheme in which the militia would serve abroad as whole units.[43] Nevertheless, once again Haldane's most intractable critics were the militia lobby headed by the Duke of Bedford (including, most notably, Viscount Hardinge, Lord Raglan, Earl of Wemyss, Lord Ampthill and the less dogmatic Marquess of Salisbury), whose chief grievance centred on whether the liability of the militia for service abroad would be as whole battalions or companies, or simply as drafts. They maintained that recruits, many of whom they insisted enlisted in the militia as an alternative to service in the line, would be dissuaded from entering the militia if they were liable to be directly drafted into the regulars and that militiamen would only serve abroad under the command of their own officers within their own units. Haldane acknowledged their fears and thus dropped the liability for the militia to immediately contribute to the expeditionary force; only members of the RGA (Militia) serving in the ammunition columns would face any such liability. He also made assurances that if the militia were to be used abroad they would do so as units under the command of their own officers. As part of the provision for the year's estimates Haldane even consented to experiment with a plan urged by Bedford for 20 militia battalions to train under their own officers for six months, while for the first year recruits would be prevented from joining the line. However, he was unwilling to discount the liability for the provision of drafts. Therefore, on three separate occasions (twice prior to introducing his plans to Parliament, in May and June, and again in September) he was unable to persuade representatives of the force to agree to his

[42] Dennis, *Territorial Army*, p. 6; Spiers, *Haldane*, pp. 48-9, 52, 94-5; Dunlop, *British Army*, pp. 254-6; Williams, *Defending the Empire*, p. 103.
[43] Churchill College, Cambridge, Esher papers, 10/26, Esher to Ellison, 2 February 1906, and 10/38, Clarke to Esher, 2 and 9 February, 1906, cited in Spiers, *Haldane*, p. 99; TNA, CAB 38/11/10, 'The Militia. Note by Sir G.S. Clarke', February 1906.

proposals, or for that matter any agreement on their joining the TF.[44]

Haldane subsequently rejected any further attempts at compromise and, in a stark contrast to his predecessor, was able to forge ahead with a modified version of his original scheme. Instead of attempting to force the militia to accept the liability for the provision of drafts directly to the line, Haldane simply circumvented them by effectively replacing the militia with an entirely new force, but one which would take over its role as a manpower reserve for the line. Under the provision of the Reserve Forces Act, 1882, Haldane allowed men who had never served with the regulars to be permitted to join the first class army reserve as 'special reservists'. Such men would be formed into 74 battalions (66 in England, Wales and Scotland, and eight in Ireland), each one linked to a pair of line battalions for the purpose of providing drafts for the latter in wartime (formalising a role already provided by the militia). This negated the worst aspect of the existing regimental system by providing each pair of regular battalions with a training depot which would support them while serving abroad as part of his planned expeditionary force (as opposed to one line battalion supporting the other while serving abroad, a balance that it had proved almost impossible to manage). These 3rd battalions would be limited to an establishment of between 500 and 600 men and were expected to contribute up to 60,000 men as direct drafts on the outbreak of war. Special reservists would be enlisted for six years as at present in the militia, but crucially they were to be trained for six months upon enlistment and for just two weeks annually thereafter. Each battalion would also act as a practical training ground for their officers, although it was expected that only one-half of all officers serving above lieutenant would come from the militia, the remainder being former regular officers. When in February 1907 Haldane formally introduced the revised plans, he made it clear that the militia was incapable of taking the field as a complete force because it lacked its own cavalry and sufficient field artillery, or as individual units because a significant proportion of the rank and file consisted of seventeen year old boys who would not be permitted to serve abroad in the event of war. In fact, Haldane made it clear no militiamen under the age of twenty would be allowed to serve abroad in such an event meaning that most units would be severely lacking in manpower.[45]

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[44] [44] Dunlop, *British Army*, pp. 247, 257-60; G.D. Phillips, *The Diehards: Aristocratic Society and Politics in Edwardian England*, (Cambridge, Mss: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 95-6; HC Deb., 12 July 1906, vol. 160, cc1074-171, (cc. 1111-5).

[45] HC Deb., 25 February 1907, vol. 169, cc. 1279-345, (cc. 1290-3, 1313-7); TNA, 32/9235, Report of the 84th meeting of the Army Council, 17 January 1907; PP, *Territorial and reserve forces. A bill to provide*

Formally introduced to the Commons in March 1907, the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill unsurprisingly drew opposition, although it was far from unified. Bedford and the militia lobby continued to fear the loss of their own influence and positions within their own units. Yet more broadly there was considerable hostility from the opposition Unionist benches. Spearheaded in the Commons by Balfour and Sir George Wyndham, and in *The Times* by the military correspondent Colonel Charles Repington, they argued that the SR was a poor alternative to a reformed militia, lacking the ability to rapidly expand the army abroad which would be provided by allowing existing militia units to do so, as during the South African War. Balfour's continued insistence that the army's primary focus should be the defence of India meant he believed they could quite easily be used to free additional regular units from garrison duties, something which had not previously been too much to ask of even the youngest militiamen.[46] Nonetheless, Haldane's opponents were far from unified as Balfour and Repington blamed Bedford and the militia lobby for their dogmatic opposition to the provision of drafts which had originally forced Haldane to abandon any hope of incorporating the militia into his scheme; for them the SR was simply the 'result of a hitch and failure to arrive at a satisfactory agreement between the Army Council and the Militia colonels'. This was a charge they vehemently rejected, both Bedford and Hardinge asserting in Parliament that their position had been misrepresented particularly with regards to the widely circulated account of their previous meetings with Haldane and their apparent refusal to accept any form of direct drafting to the line. In their view they had never rejected the liability to provide drafts outright, but simply offered the opinion that the existing Militia Act of 1882 forbade the transfer of militiamen to any other unit without their consent and that any alteration of the clause would not be conductive to getting recruits who would also accept the liability to serve abroad.[47]

Even though the opposition was disunited, Haldane failed to get the bill through Parliament unchanged. Once again the main sticking point proved to be the militia issue. Before it even reached the Lords, where Haldane expected to face his greatest opposition, he was forced into a compromise due to Balfour's exploitation of an anomaly in his

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for the reorganisation of His Majesty's military forces, and for that purpose to authorise the establishment of county associations and the raising and maintenance of a territorial force, and for amending the acts relating to the reserve forces, 92, (1907), cc. 29-34.

[46] HL Deb., 21 March 1907, vol. 171, cc. 1212-58; HC Deb., 9 April 1907, vol. 172, cc. 83-189, (cc. 83-98); *Ibid.*, 23 April 1907, vol. 172, cc. 1584-649, (cc. 1631-2).

[47] *The Times*, 25 April 1907 and 21 June 1907; HL Deb., 25 June 1907 vol. 176, cc. 1016-121, (cc. 1063-5, 1073-5); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 106-9.

proposals which saw twelve Irish militia battalions retained due to the fact there were no volunteer units with which to form territorial units. In conjunction with six regular battalions held back from the expeditionary force, these battalions would not only be expected to provide drafts for units abroad, but would also (like the TF) have the option of serving abroad as whole units to provide an additional means of expansion. Although Haldane tried to play down the anomaly, Balfour argued that if such a system could be applied to Ireland then it could also be applied elsewhere, seemingly backing up the Unionist belief that Haldane's SR scheme was nothing more than a result of his inability to come to an agreement with the militia.[48] This left him with little option but to compromise and on 30 May he summoned Esher, Repington, Colonel Gerald Ellison (his military secretary) and Major-General Douglas Haig (the Director of Military Training) to the War Office in order to discuss meeting some of the more moderate demands previously mooted by Salisbury, which at a subsequent meeting with the latter on 3 June Haldane agreed to.[49] As a result all but the 23 least effective of the 124 militia infantry battalions would be retained and instead used as the foundation of the SR (instead of being simply supplanted by it), meaning that most battalions could retain a degree of continuity and their distinctive regimental traditions. Although as before 74 battalions would become depots for the provision of drafts for their regular counterparts, an additional 15 battalions would also be retained (in addition to the 12 in Ireland) as 'extra reserve' battalions of around 800 men. This meant, in total, 27 'battalions would be available for the immediate expansion of the army (although in wartime they could also be expected to provide drafts). The RGA (Militia) was again to be incorporated into the SR, all but two units, the Antrim and Cork RGA (Militia), being converted into Royal Field Artillery (RFA) Reserve and earmarked for service upon the ammunition columns in wartime. Additionally both regiments of militia engineers were to be also incorporated into the SR with the intent that they would provide the Royal Engineers with a similar capability for expansion. All militia RAMC units, however, were to be disbanded.[50]

The decision to compromise proved to be the breakthrough moment for Haldane's militia reforms. Although it was not perfectly amenable to the opposition, and despite

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[48] HC Deb., 28 May 1907, vol. 174, cc. 1481-579, (cc. 1481-2, 1507-12); *Ibid.*, 10 June 1907, vol. 175, cc. 1102-91, (cc. 1176-8); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 111-2.

[49] Haig's Diary, entry for 30 May 1907, in D. Scott, *Douglas Haig: Diaries & Letters, 1861-1914*, (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2006), p. 266; BL, Balfour Papers, Add MS 49729, Lansdowne to Balfour, 7 June 1907, ff. 296-7, cited in Williams, *Defending the Empire*, p. 114.

[50] HC Deb., 17 June 1907, vol. 176, cc. 180-280, (cc. 182-5, 187); *The Times*¸ 27 May 1907; TNA, WO 32/9235, Minutes of the 84th Meeting of the Army Council, No. 20/Gen.No./2688, 1906.

Arnold-Forster's attempt to introduce an amendment striking the militia from the consideration of the bill entirely, Balfour was willing to back it. Even with the continued protestations of Bedford, Raglan and Ampthill, who largely saw Haldane's concessions as giving too little, they were unable to prevent the Under-Secretary of State for War, Lord Portsmouth, with the support of Salisbury, Lansdowne and Esher, from negotiating the bill through the Lords with only minor alterations. Haldane remained in frequent correspondence with Balfour and Salisbury over their attempts to sabotage the bill. The last ultimately unsuccessful attempt came on 18 July when Bedford proposed an amendment imposing a two year moratorium upon the reforms, subsequently undercut by Brodrick's (now Viscount Midleton) own suggestion of a one year delay which was subsequently accepted, forcing Bedford to withdraw his own amendment.[51]

The only issue left for Haldane to establish was which militia units would be disbanded as part of his scheme. An army order, issued on the 23 December 1907, laid out which 23 infantry battalions would be disbanded. Much of the reasoning was based on a desire to eliminate the least efficient units, although in reality the selection was also guided by several other factors. There is no doubt that many of the disbanded battalions were on the whole weaker than their counterparts: only eight of those disbanded were recorded as having more than 500 men at the beginning on 1908, with one, the 4th Border Regiment, containing just 134 men.[52] However, there remained the need to ensure each territorial regiment had at least one battalion supporting its two regular counterparts. Therefore, in most regiments precedent ensured that if a battalion was to be disbanded it was in most cases the 4th battalion, regardless of whether or not the 3rd was in fact the weakest of the pair. For instance, the 4th Gloucestershire Regiment were selected for disbandment despite the fact that in 1907 they had a higher strength than the 3rd Battalion, which was instead retained. It is also clear that such a decision may have also been based on the extent to which each battalion was integrated into its wider territorial regiment (as argued in the pages of *The Times* by Repington), as seventeen of those disbanded had hitherto maintained their headquarters separately of the regimental depot.[53]

Unsurprisingly there was considerable hostility to the reforms from those

[51] HL Deb., 18 July 1907, vol. 178, cc. 811-92, (cc. 854-85); Williams, *Defending the Empire*, pp. 116-7.
[52] See Appendix 7 for those units disbanded. PP, *Militia units. Return showing the establishment of each unit of militia in the United Kingdom; and the numbers present, absent, and wanting to complete, at the training of 1907*, Cd. 3932, (1908).
[53] *The Times*, 21 January 1908.

connected to the units selected for disbandment. In Cambridgeshire, officers of the 4th Suffolk Regiment (former Cambridgeshire Regiment) convened two public meetings, at Ely and Cambridge, both of which were keenly attended by local notables including the Lord Lieutenant, chairman of the local County Association, the Dean of Ely and the Master of Corpus College, among others. They lamented that the disbandment would sever the county's connection to the army (except through the TF). They also bemoaned that the 5th King's Royal Rifle Corps (formerly the Huntingdonshire Rifles) had managed to survive despite the fact that it was numerically weaker in strength than the 4th Suffolk Regiment, seemingly rubbishing Haldane's claim that the cuts were aimed only at units which struggled to recruit and prompting claims that somehow he had been influenced into sparing them. Later fears were also raised over the economic impact disbandment would have in Ely. A similar response was seen in Buckinghamshire with meetings convened to discuss how to prevent the disbandment of the 3rd Oxfordshire Light Infantry (formerly the Royal Buckinghamshire Regiment), a move which would also sever that county's link to the army. Its officers also stated their dissatisfaction at what was perceived as a slight against the honour of the county due to the fact that the 4th Oxfordshire Light Infantry survived despite being the junior battalion as well as numerically weaker than the 3rd Battalion. As a result members from representatives from Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire formed part of a deputation alongside representatives of the 4th Welsh Fusiliers (former Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles), 4th South Wales Borderers (former Royal Montgomeryshire Rifles) and 4th Yorkshire Regiment (former North Yorkshire Rifles) which aimed to petition Haldane to spare their units. Despite meeting with the representatives on 22 January 1908, Haldane and the army council were unmoved. They argued that 'each case was considered individually on its merits, mainly on the grounds of its suitability…to fulfil the administrative conditions which will in future be required of the majority of the Special Reserve', adding that 'the non-selection of a battalion for retention does not…reflect in the least degree on its military efficiency.' Their only concession was that they would support the idea for the name and traditions of disbanded units to be associated with units in the TF, although this would have to meet the approval of the local County Associations.[54]

There also remained a lingering, but ultimately ineffectual, threat to Haldane's

[54] *Cambridge Independent Press*, 3, 10, 17, 24 January and 7 February 1908; *Bucks Herald*, 4, 11, 18, 25 January, 8 February and 4 July 1908; Letter, E.D.W. Ward (Secretary to the War Office) to the deputation of militia officers, 1 February 1908, reprinted in *The Times*, 4 February 1908.

reforms from members of the NSL who was becoming more assertive in its attempts to establish compulsory military training. However, much of their attention had shifted away from establishing a compulsorily recruited militia and towards reforming the newly established TF. Although attempts to apply compulsory service to the TF failed to gain sufficient support, firstly via an amendment of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Bill and later through two National Service Bills (in 1909 and 1913), there were some signs that the alternate concept of a compulsorily recruited militia was viable.[55] Indeed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, David Lloyd-George, argued that 'we might aim at raising 500,000 armed militia to supplement our Regular Army to provide against contingencies…those liable to serve chosen by lot.'[56] This concept also remained a key feature of much of the NSLs printed material in the years prior to and during the First World War. Two pamphlets, one published in 1909 and the other in 1915, both touched upon the concept, although the latter went further by linking the idea of compulsory service to a tradition of compulsory militia service dating back to the Anglo-Saxon 'fyrd' and subsequently carried down to the present through the militia.[57]

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In many respects the creation of the SR represented a moment of transition as opposed to an outright break with the past. As a whole the SR continued to be organised into several branches, each with a distinct role in support of their regular counterparts. As before, the most prominent were the infantry, comprising 74 reserve battalions and 27 extra reserve battalions. These were followed, in decreasing order of their established strength, by the RFA Reserve (comprising 31 brigades), RGA Reserve (comprising the remaining two Irish militia RGA corps) and Royal Engineer Reserves (comprised of both regiments of militia engineers). Due to the fact that the TF was not extended to Ireland, two units of Irish yeomanry, the North and South Irish Horse, were included upon the strength of the SR while, in 1913, King Edward's Horse was also transferred from the yeomanry. In subsequent years the SR was expanded with additional branches which would enable it to

[55] Adams and Poirier, *Conscription Controversy*, pp. 30-40.
[56] Parliamentary Archives, Lloyd-George papers, LG/C/6/59, Lloyd-George memorandum, 17 August 1910, cited in Adams and Poirier, *Conscription Controversy*, pp. 43-4.
[57] Anon. *Home Defence*¸ (London: National Service League, 1909); F.J.C. Hearnshaw, *The Ancient Defence of England: The Nation in Arms*¸ (London: National Service League, 1915); M. Hendley, Organized Patriotism and the Crucible of War: Popular Imperialism in Britain, 1914-1932, (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2012), pp. 28-9.

support a wider variety of regular units. Soon after its creation the establishment of the force was expanded significantly by the addition of reserve RAMC units (their militia equivalents having been previously disbanded) and, for the first time, reserve Army Service Corps (ASC) units, adding 8,000 and 4,500 to the established strength of the SR respectively (although the former was soon cut to just 4,000 the following year). At the same the Army Veterinary Corps (Special Reserve) was established and by 1 October 1913 three men and 21 officers were upon its strength. Similarly, in 1913, the SR was expanded to support the military wing of the Royal Flying Corps which, on 1 October 1913, had 31 officers upon its strength.[58]

However, one thing which partially distinguished the SR from the militia was that reservists enlisted into different categories of service. Initially Special Army Order issued on 27 December 1907 created two categories: 'A' containing 'Those who must be trained as soldiers and instructed in technical methods peculiar to military service', and 'B' containing 'Those whose duties…will be cognate to their occupations as civilians and who, consequently, need little instruction as soldiers.' Although at first all reservists were enlisted under category A, a Special Army Order of 20 November 1908 permitted the enlistment of men for category B provided they were members of TF units belonging to the branch of the reserve they wished to join (although qualified members of the St. John's or St. Andrew's Ambulance Associations were also permitted to join the RAMC reserve under the same conditions). In April 1912 a third category, 'C', was introduced to allow recruits engaged in a specialised occupations the ability to enlist in the ASC reserve (serving as mechanical transport drivers) with as little disruption to their personal life as possible, meaning they were exempted from attending both the recruit and annual training. Nonetheless, those serving in categories B and C were small in number; for instance, on 1 October 1913 there were 55,606 special reservists serving in category A, compared to 1,283 in B and 2,176 in C. There were also similar distinctions between the officers: most served on the strength of their units, but some were also supplementary to their units while other served upon a similar line to those men enlisted in category B,

[58] PP, *General annual report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September, 1908, with which is incorporated the annual report of recruiting*, Cd. 4494, (1909), pp. 10-4; PP, *The general annual report on the British army for the year ending 30th September, 1909, with which is incorporated the annual report of recruiting, prepared by command of the Army Council*., Cd. 5016, (1910), pp. 7-9; PP, *The general annual report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September, 1913, with which is incorporated the annual report on recruiting, prepared by command of the Army Council*, Cd. 7252, (1914), p. 13.

therefore belonging but remaining supernumerary to their territorial units.[59]

For most units that survived, the transition to the SR was relatively simple, enabling them to maintain their existing traditions and honours and involving very little upheaval. Such was the case with the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers which was simply re-designated as the regiment's 3rd battalion (after the regular 3rd and 4th Battalions, raised during the South African War, were disbanded in order to provide additional savings) and it continued to train at Alnwick Castle just as it had before the conversion. The 3rd East Kent Regiment continued to train at Shorncliffe camp just as it had during previous annual trainings, the recruits having previously assembled for their training. Similarly, the 3rd Bedfordshire Regiment continued to train at Ampthill Park just as it had in the years preceding the reform. It also seems that for the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia) the transition was largely seamless.[60]

However, for others the conversion was more traumatic. Several units saw the order of precedence unceremoniously disregarded, such being the case within the Durham Light Infantry, the 3rd and 4th Battalions of which swapped numbers, the 3rd becoming the 4th Extra Reserve Battalion and the 4th the 3rd Reserve Battalion. The principle reason for this appears to have been based simply on whether or not the reserve battalions were located in areas conductive to recruitment so that they would more easily fulfil their role as draft finding units. The old 4th Battalion (formerly the 2nd North Durham Regiment) had been based at the regimental depot in Newcastle, close to the industrial and urban areas in Tyneside, whereas the old 3rd Battalion (formerly the 1st South Durham Regiment) remained apart at Barnard Castle in the more rural south. Such reasoning was also seen in similar cases in Ireland.[61] Nonetheless, the transition was worse still for the RGA (Militia), several units of which were disbanded immediately after the reform, the Cornwall and Devon Miners RGA, for instance, being disbanded in 1909.[62]

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[59] PP, G*eneral annual report*, Cd. 5016, (1910), pp. 8-9; PP, *The general annual report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September, 1912, with which is incorporated the annual report on recruiting, prepared by command of the Army Council*., Cd. 6656, (1912-13), pp. 14-5; PP, *general annual report*, Cd. 7252, (1914), pp. 108, 113

[60] Adamson and Scott, *Services of the 27th*, p. 141; *Morpeth Herald*, 10 July 1909; *Dover Express*, 11 June 1909; *Luton Times and Advertiser*, 26 June 1908; B. E. Sargeaunt, *The Royal Monmouthshire Militia: Being a Detailed Description of the Regiment from the Year 1660 to the Time of Its Transfer to the Special Reserve*, (London: 1913), pp. 247-8, cited in Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, p. 120.

[61] DCRO, D/DLI 2/4/22, Notes on the history, from 1615, of the Durham Militia and the 3rd, later 4th Battalion, The Durham Light Infantry, entry for 1908. This reasoning was also seen in the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, as seen in Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*, p. 120.

[62] Cavenagh-Mainwaring, *Royal Miners*, pp. 117-9.

Table 6.1: The Destination of Serving Militia Officers and Other Ranks within the Militia up to 1 October 1908.[63]

	Enrolled Strength, 1 October 1907		*Enrolled Strength, Date of Inspection, 1908**		*Transferred to the Special Reserve*		*Still Serving with the Militia on 1 Oct 1908*		*Free Discharge / Resigned, up to 1 Oct 1908*	
	Officers	Other Ranks	Officers	Other Ranks	Officers	Other Ranks	Officers	Other Ranks	Officers	Other Ranks
RFA	…	165	234	291	14	131	…	14	2	14
RGA	…	11,686	610	10,303	297	7,425	9	1,369	52	412
RE	…	1,640	201	1,469	72	1,201	3	79	7	50
Infantry	…	67,741	2,178	51,776	1,539	39,905	122	6,411	230	9,183
RAMC	…	1,077	275	841	17	84	4	513	3	159
Total	2,174	82,331	2,265	64,680	1,952*	48,746	138	8,386	294	9,818

*Exclusive of the 23 disbanded infantry battalions. Total for officers transferred includes 13 on the unattached list.

In order to manage the transition from the militia to the SR, a special Army Order, issued on 27 December 1907, set out the means by which serving officers and men were to be induced to transfer. Firstly, those who opted to join the SR would receive a one-off £2 bounty for accepting the additional liabilities it entailed, either remaining in their units or by transferring to another. Secondly, they could opt to remain serving under their current terms of service, but without the ability to re-engage or the liability to assemble for any further annual trainings; therefore, the old militia would continue to exist in an ever dwindling number until the last men were formally discharged. Thirdly, militiamen not wishing to transfer were given the option of a free discharge (with those in the 23 disbanded battalions having their discharge dated to enable them to receive the non-training bounty due on 1 February), while officers opting not to transfer their services to the reserve of officers were expected to resign their commissions. Those that took the option of a free discharge were allowed to join the SR later and would also be liable for the bounty so long as they were recommended by their commanding officer.[64]

[63] PP, G*eneral annual report*, Cd. (1909), Table 2, p.105; PP, *Army. (Special reserve.) Statement showing, by units, the number of officers and men of the militia (1) present at training on date of inspection, 1908, absent with leave, and absent without leave; (2) transferred to the special reserve up to 1st October, 1908; (3) the number of militia officers who (A) resigned up to 1st October, 1908, (B) remained on that date, (C) joined the reserve of officers; (4) the number of militia-men who (A) took a free discharge up to 1st October, 1908, (B) remained on that date*, Cd. 4608, (1909).
[64] PP, *General annual report*, Cd. 4494, (1909), pp. 10-4.

Table 6.2: The Establishment and Strength of the Special Reserve and Remaining Militia, 1907 to 1913.[65]

	Officers			*Other Ranks*			*Remaining Militiamen*
	Establishment	Strength	Percentage	Establishment	Strength	Percentage	
*1 Oct. 1907**	3,374	2,174	64.4	122,787	82,331	67.1	...
1 Oct. 1908	3,211	1,865	58.1	77,089	61,263	79.5	8,385
1 Oct. 1909	3,056	1,913	62.6	87,608	68,041	77.7	5,134
1 Oct. 1910	2,870	1,964	68.4	83,669	61,122	73.1	2,967
1 Oct. 1911	2,911	2,018	69.3	88,308	58,913	66.7	1,655
1 Oct. 1912	2,900	2,130	73.4	87,013	56,824	65.3	775
1 Oct. 1913	2,832	2,362	83.4	75,832	59,063	77.9	143

*Militia only.

Although most officers and men opted to transfer to the SR, the transition was not entirely seamless. Table 6.1 shows that, in total, 1,952 officers and 48,746 men opted to transfer. Proportionally speaking, militiamen were less inclined to transfer than their officers. An even lower proportion of men serving in the 23 disbanded units opted to enlist in the SR (as shown in Appendix 7); only 4,632 out of a total of 10,307 opted to do so. There was a greater likelihood that officers would opt to join the SR, Table 6.1 showing that 86% chose to do so. This was even the case in the units which had been disbanded. For instance, when the 4th Norfolk Regiment was disbanded twelve of the officers opted to join the 3rd battalion.[66]

Unfortunately for the SR, one aspect in which it was too similar to the militia was its inability to maintain its strength. Table 6.2 shows that at no point prior to the outbreak of the Great War was it able to meet its establishment of officers or men. Between 1912 and 1913 the force's strength reached its lowest level since 1855, although once again this varied from unit to unit. For instance, in 1913 an officer of the 4th Durham Light Infantry commented that the battalion was struggling to maintain its strength.[67] The situation was barely improved when in February 1913 recruitment to RFA Reserve units was closed after it was deemed they were surplus to requirements, with those serving given the option to transfer their service to another branch of the service upon the termination of their service. A key reason why the SR struggled to maintain its strength

[65] PP, *general annual report*, Cd. 7252, (1914), Table 2, p. 108.
[66] TNA, WO 68/123, entry for 1908.
[67] DCRO, D/DLI 2/4/259, Letter, 12 March 1913, and Report on Recruiting, 14 March 1913.

Table 6.3: Manpower Requirements for the Other Ranks of the Special Reserve, 1908 to 1913.[68]

Year (up to)	*Increase*						*Decrease*							*Net Increase / Decrease*	*Re-engaged while Serving*
	Recruits	From Militia	From Irish Yeo.	Re-enlisted	From Desertion	Other Sources	Total Increase	Discharged	Dead	Desertion	Joined Regulars	Joined Navy or R. Marines	Other Sources	Total Decrease	
			Re-enlisted												
30 Sept. 1908	17,781	48,746	448	556	77	…	**67,608**	1,709	22	492	3,955	89	55	**6,322**	61,286	…
30 Sept. 1909	26,157		1,004		492	…	**27,653**	6,851	267	2,551	11,020	651	51	**21,391**	6,262	…
30 Sept. 1910	18,654		626		772	…	**20,052**	13,306	223	2,548	10,209	1,001	59	**27,346**	-7,294	2,461
30 Sept. 1911	20,616		1,271		653	6	**22,546**	11,809	227	2,624	9,783	449	…	**24,892**	-2,346	2,368
30 Sept. 1912	21,391		1,873		672	4	**23,940**	13,017	205	2,734	10,362	…	11	**26,329**	-2,389	4,785
30 Sept. 1913	18,454		1,168		738	6	**20,366**	8,044	163	2,893	9,235	…	44	**20,279**	87	2,486

[68] PP, G*eneral annual report*, Cd. 7252, (1914), Table 4, p. 110.

Table 6.4: Discharged Special Reservists, 1908 to 1913.[69]

Year (up to)	*Termination of Engagement*	*Medically Unfit*	*Rejected after Attestation*	*By Purchase*	*Conviction of a Felony*	*Other Misconduct*	*Under Age*	*Unfit / Unlikely to become Fit*	*Total Discharged*
30 Sept. 1908*	…	269	90	596	64	194	215	281	1,709
30 Sept. 1909	1,089	2,220	…	1,245	292	543	291	1,154	6,851
30 Sept. 1910	7,278	2,466	…	1,535	303	348	233	1,138	13,306
30 Sept. 1911	6,707	1,463	…	1,850	247	292	257	829	11,809
30 Sept. 1912	7,882	1,285	…	2,270	232	203	264	880	13,017
30 Sept. 1913	2,807	1,218	…	2,511	496	355	208	443	8,044

[69] *Ibid.*

was simply that there were too few recruits to make good the yearly total of wastage (a point illustrated in Table 6.3). In 1908 the War Office had hoped that the SR would be more successful at attracting recruits than the militia due to the fact that the six month period of recruit training would be long enough to support unemployed men (principally agricultural workers) through the winter. However, for this to work it required a large pool of unemployed labour, something which was increasingly threatened by an improved labour market and high rates of emigration, thus limiting the availability of recruits. The situation was also compounded by the continued manipulation of the minimum physical requirements when recruiting improved. For instance, on 30 September 1909 the decision was taken to raise the minimum height standards for recruits in both the infantry and RFA Reserve by an inch (being raised to 5ft 3in in the former and 5ft 6in in the latter) on account of the fact that many units had reached close to their established strength. However, this had the knock-on effect of constricting the potential pool of recruits the following year, while it did little to help those units which had not been as successful in reaching their establishment.[70] Furthermore, despite their desire to increase the physical standards of recruits, the average recruit was by comparison younger than those who had previously joined the militia, usually between 17 and 19 years of age. This was again a result of the prolonged period of recruit training which tended to prevent older men, who were more likely to have at least some form of temporary employment, from volunteering.[71]

Another problem which continued to afflict the SR in much the same way as before was the difficulty with which the force retained its manpower. As both Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 demonstrate, on average the greatest drain upon the SR remained the transfer of men to the regular army, followed by desertion, those purchasing their discharge and those discharged as medically unfit. Crucially, no more than one-third of the yearly total discharged were those who had completed their full term of enlistment, a figure which reached a peak of 29.8% in the year up to the 30 September 1912, but quickly plummeted the following year to just 13.8%. There were also similar difficulties in encouraging men to renew their period of engagement. Table 6.3 shows that only a small proportion of each year's increase was accounted for by men who had been re-

[70] PP, *The general annual report on the British army for the year ending 30th September, 1910, with which is incorporated the annual report on recruiting, prepared by command of the Army Council*, Cd. 5481, 1911, pp. 5-6; PP, G*eneral annual report*, Cd. 7252, (1914), p. 7; Letter, E.W.D. Ward to the Mayor of Dover, 5 October 1908, quoted in *Dover Express*¸ 23 October 1908.
[71] PP, G*eneral annual report*, Cd. 7252, (1914), p. 15.

enlisted subsequent to being discharged. Furthermore, it also demonstrates that each year many of those whose period of service was due to expire failed to re-engage for a subsequent term before they were discharged. From 1912 onwards this did begin to improve after a re-engagement bounty of £1 was introduced on 1 May as an additional inducement. The result was that the proportion of men re-engaging before their discharge continued to rise year of year – in the year up to 30 September 1912 a total of 12,667 men came to the end of their service, while in the following year just 5,293 did so; therefore, the proportion re-engaged actually increased from 37.7% (4,785) to 46.9% (2,486).[72]

* * *

Ultimately the creation of the SR did not represent the end of the militia, but rather the logical solution to the best means of finally cementing its place as part of the regular army. However, as Brodrick, Arnold-Forster and Haldane found out, implementing their own separate visions of how best to integrate the militia were far from straightforward as militia reform proved to be one of the most divisive issues faced by either the Unionist or Liberal governments during the period. Each of their schemes shared the common goal of reducing expenditure meaning that the militia would have to play a greater role as a mechanism for the rapid expansion of the regular army than before, whether that be as part of Brodrick's three 'home' army corps, Arnold-Forster's home service army or Haldane's SR. These common goals were not enough to stop each scheme from encountering opposition. Both Brodrick and Arnold-Forster were willing to compromise (although the latter became increasingly entrenched in the efficacy of his scheme), both at some stage permitting the retention of at least a part of the militia in addition to their existing schemes. Nonetheless, the strength of opposition within from the Parliamentary militia lobby headed by Bedford and several other peers, plus in Arnold-Forster's case the criticism of Balfour and other members of the cabinet (who believed the militia was capable of being transformed into a secondary line through the provision of whole units abroad), meant neither of them were able to make their plans a reality. Haldane also faced opposition, although crucially he enjoyed a far greater degree of cross party support than his predecessor despite the continued opposition of several high ranking militia officers. After his initial scheme was rejected by the militia, Haldane took a firmer line by

[72] See Tables 6.3 and 6.4.

attempting to impose his desired reforms regardless of their opinion. However, crucially he was able to make enough concessions to win over key members of the opposition front bench and some of the more moderate militia officers, securing in their view the future of the force through the creation of the SR, and thus giving him the necessary support to see the plans through Parliament.

Although as of 1908 the militia was in name effectively abolished, the creation of the SR represented a moment of continuity rather that an outright break with the past. Not only was it organised upon largely the same basis as the militia, but it also directly inherited most of manpower from the force, many officers and men simply opting to continue their service as part of their existing units in order to take up their new roles as reserve or extra reserve battalions. However, for those units reorganised or disbanded the experience understandably created greater upheaval, particularly the militia's artillery which faced disbandment in subsequent years. The SR not only continued to function in much the same way as the militia, but it also inherited many of their difficulties. Not only did it struggle to recruit enough men to maintain its strength, many of whom were increasingly young due to the longer period of recruits' training, but it also struggled to retain its existing manpower due to high rates of desertion and the continued liability to provide both officers and men for the regular army. Therefore, by the eve of the Great War the SR was arguably in a more parlous state than it had been prior to the reform.

Conclusion

This study set out to undertake a comprehensive investigation of the reformed British militia of the Victorian and Edwardian period in order to explore one of the major remaining gaps in our understanding of the UK's auxiliary forces. It has looked to test the claims laid down in the existing, albeit limited, historiography by moving beyond the limited top-down approach of several works examining the Victorian army, which base their conclusions almost solely upon official records.[1] Instead it taps into a more recent methodological trend utilising both national and local records as a means of ensuring the nuances and local character of the militia are not lost.[2]

It is clear that over the course of the period the militia's *raison d'être* shifted from being organised for national defence towards providing a *de facto* secondary line in support of the regular army. Although only a temporary expedient during the manpower crises of the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny, from 1866 to 1881 the militia was intermittently recast as a more centralised and less independent force for the support of the regular army. Not only did it increasingly provide one of the single greatest sources of officers and men, but during the South African War it allowed for the expansion of the army through the provision of whole units for active service abroad. Furthermore, Cardwell's establishment of brigade depots and the linking of regular and militia battalions, later organised into territorial regiments, meant that for the first time the militia and the line were both organisationally and physically linked. Yet although this would all seem to point to Anderson's claim that the post-Cardwellian militia was little more than an 'anachronistic auxiliary', in fact, his assessment fails to acknowledge that the militia remained a localised force.[3] Several units bucked the national pattern by remaining physically separate from their brigade headquarters meaning that they continued to control their own recruitment and recruit training. Also, although the power of the lords lieutenant to control their units was severely curbed in 1871, they formally retained the power to nominate potential officers for their first commissions. The militia also retained a small but influential Parliamentary lobby that was able to cause considerable difficulty for those attempting to further reform the force after the South

[1] See Spiers, *Victorian Army*, and Skelley, *Victorian Army at Home*.
[2] See Beckett, *Britain's Part Time Soldiers*¸ and Bowman and Connelly, *Edwardian Army*.
[3] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', p. 6.

African War (although , it must be concluded, ultimately unsuccessfully).

On a more specific note, the Militia Act of 1852 reconfirmed the concept of a militia for national defence throughout the UK and independent of the regular army, yet organised and recruited locally under the authority of the lords lieutenant. Although many connected to it argued that a direct link could be traced back to the militia of the Anglo-Saxon period, the reality was that the militia could trace a direct lineage no further back than the foundation of a 'new militia' in 1757. It was this which formed the basis of the 1802 legislation, in turn providing the template for that reconstituted in 1852. The decision to base reform upon the 1802 legislation was, however, far from straightforward. From 1845 growing concerns over the threat of French invasion prompted four separate ministries to explore the idea of militia reform, although there was little consensus as to what form a reconstituted militia should take. Lord Palmerston firmly advocated a regular militia based upon the 1802 legislation; conversely, his personal and political adversary Lord John Russell wished to recast it as a purely local force for service within each county. Nevertheless, it was Palmerston's vision which won through, the decision to abandon recruitment via the ballot, the cause of much social upheaval during the eighteenth century, meant henceforth recruitment would be based upon the less divisive principle of voluntary enlistment (although the ballot would remain upon the statute book as a contingency, not finally repealed until 1921).

As already noted, the militia became a more centralised force under the control of the War Office while its practical role effectively shifted to that of supporting the regular army. However, this was not as comprehensive a shift in the forces *raison d'être* as has been previously suggested.[4] Although the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny shattered any illusion that the militia would be able to maintain itself as an equal and independent counterpoint to the regular army, losing over 46,000 militiamen over the course of both embodiments, this was far from a new role: it had undertaken a similar function during the Napoleonic Wars. Despite calls from individuals, such as Lord Panmure, for the greater integration of the militia and the regular army, Sidney Herbert effectively reaffirmed the pre-war status-quo by prohibiting the transference of militiamen to the line. Although this was not based upon any desire to defer to parochial concerns within the militia, illustrated by his willingness to amalgamate those units deemed too small to be effective, Herbert hoped such a move would ensure the quick recovery of the force's

[4] D. Anderson, 'English Militia in the mid-Nineteenth Century', p. 6.

strength. Once this had been achieved however, his successors not only reopened recruitment to the line, but also began to pursue a policy of greater centralisation of control over the militia which culminated in Cardwell's decision to transfer many of the powers of the lords lieutenant to the War Office in 1871. Even more profound was the implementation of his localisation scheme, later transformed into Hugh Childers' territorial regiments, which for the first time formerly linked the militia and line through the creation of a single brigade depot.

Cardwell's reforms were not simply motivated by a desire for the enhancement of the regular army; he also hoped to make the militia a more militarily effective force. The militia's training was initially rather rudimentary (consisting largely of rudimentary drill and parade upon the barrack square). Similarly, many units were forced to make do with substandard facilities, arms, uniform and equipment. Over the course of the 1860s and 1870s this state of affairs improved significantly. Not only were the training periods extended, allowing for a better grasping of the basics, but opportunities were taken to ensure units had the chance to undertake more complex training by brigading them at military camps throughout the country. That is not to say these improvements were universal: the benefits of brigade training were not available to all units. Furthermore, training away from headquarters could make it harder to attract some recruits. However, there can be no doubt that in peacetime, from the 1870s onwards, the militia was better trained, armed, equipped and organised than prior. Furthermore, the militia was also re-organised so that each branch of the regular service could be supported by corresponding militia units, each with specialist training. After 1877 the militia consisted of not just infantry and garrison artillery units, but also, field artillery, engineers and later submarine miners and a small contingent of medical staff to support the RAMC.

The Militia Act of 1852 did little to radically alter the source and means by which militia officers were obtained. Initially the authority to appoint commissions remained with the lords lieutenant, although in practise it was often left to commanding officers to nominate individuals. Promotion was theoretically based upon seniority, although the retention of property qualifications for the rank of captain and above ensured the highest ranks were, before 1869, largely out of reach of officers who did not qualify. By 1854 most serving officers had been commissioned after the force's reconstitution, although there remained a useful nucleus of field officers who were commissioned before and who helped to form a nucleus around which regiments were able to reconstruct. County

connections and patronage remained crucial for successfully securing a commission despite attempts to open commissions to retired regulars. Yet throughout the period it became ever harder to find enough officers to meet the needs of the force. This was largely due to the changing social composition of the force. By the 1870s the traditional link between the militia and landed gentry began to weaken (except for in the senior ranks) meaning that landed gentlemen found it increasingly difficult to find the time and money necessary to maintain oneself as a militia officer. This was largely due to the impact of agricultural depression which meant the number of independent landed gentlemen, who were reliant largely upon land rents for their income, subsequently decreased. Increasingly they were replaced by professionals and businessmen for whom a militia commission acted as a means of gaining respectability in local county society. Nevertheless, the biggest shift was in the number of young officers simply using the 'militia backdoor' as a means of obtaining a regular commission without attending either Sandhurst or Woolwich. This led to a high turnover amongst the junior ranks which contributed towards the growing deficiency of junior officers (particularly amongst captains). However, it is important not to overplay this national trend. There was variation in the proportion of gentlemen surviving in different units owing to the circumstances of the local economy. Furthermore, the opening of line commissions to militia officers failed to foster closer links between the line and militia as officers frequently transferred to other units and in some cases even to colonial units.

The nature and composition of the militia's rank and file also shifted over the course of the period. Fears that voluntary enlistment would make it difficult to maintain the militia's strength were well founded as at no point did the enrolled strength of the force meet the establishment voted by Parliament. Although as whole initial rates of recruitment did not match the quotas laid down for 1852 and 1853, many units were in fact able to recruit successfully. Recruitment difficulties were largely limited to urban areas, compounded by the agitation of peace activists, while in Wales there was hostility from among non-conformist communities. Despite a rather mixed start, it was embodied service during the Crimean War and Indian Mutiny which did the most damage to the militia's strength, plummeting to a nadir of just 32,449 men in England and Wales, and 4,786 men in Scotland, in 1855.[5] The militia was able to successfully recover during the 1860s, aided by the temporary suspension of drafting to the line from June 1860 until

[5] See Appendix 4

May 1866, when subsequently, it remained relatively stable despite never reaching its full establishment. Therefore, even at its strongest, recruitment represented a constant challenge and one which it increasingly struggled to meet in the wake of the South African War. On the whole, wastage increasingly accounted for the annual decrease in manpower as very few militiamen ever completed their full term of service, the majority either deserting or transferring to the regular army. Only a small and decreasing minority ever opted to re-enlist. This was only compounded by the withholding of the 10s enrolment bounty upon enlistment which, in helping to alleviate the worst effects of desertion, made service less attractive to those who relied upon the immediate financial gain of the bounty. Similarly, Cardwell's shared brigade depots had the unfortunate side-effect of enabling regular recruiters to poach the best militia recruits before they ever reached the care of their own officers and NCOs. When combined with the increasing number of militiamen transferring to the line, the militia was essentially 'plundered at one end and pillaged at the other.'[6]

It is also clear that there was a shift in the social composition of the rank and file, agricultural workers increasingly being supplanted by urban labourers. This is evidenced in the broad reduction in strength of units in rural areas towards the end of the period. Much like the officer corps, this was largely the result of the wider agricultural depression which not only reduced the number of agricultural workers, but also drove up the wages of the remainder. The militia, the rates of pay and financial inducements of which had remained largely stagnant, was unable to compete. Therefore, unskilled urban workers became more prevalent, militia service providing many with a temporary refuge from unemployment or temporary causal labouring. As a result, its units were able to draw recruits from towns and cities which were best able to maintain their strength, particularly when the overall strength of the militia fell significantly after the South African War. However, national statistics mask the fact that social composition varied considerably between different units. Many units raised and trained in urban and industrial areas initially recruited high levels of skilled (or semi-skilled) industrial workers, artisans and tradesmen, with little or no reliance upon agricultural workers. For such individuals militia service acted as a form of annual holiday away from the rigours of industrial work. Furthermore, the militia's rank and file were increasingly recruited from a young demographic. Overall, this demonstrates that the typical militia recruit of

[6] HL Debate, 10 August 1921, vol. 43, cc. 371-90, (c. 376).

the latter period was very similar to his regular counterpart: young, and (at best) underemployed.

First made applicable in 1757, from 1852 the militia was further brought under the remit of military law. Although such only applied when the militia was embodied or assembled for training, this was later extended to include the recruit training while it was also made permanently applicable to officers. Although technically exempted any punishment relating to 'life or limb', several militiamen were flogged during the 1850s. This created considerable controversy over the application of corporal punishment to amateur soldiers, peace campaigners using it as a key feature of their anti-militia campaigning; however, the issue largely subsided after the last recorded case in 1859. Instead, discipline was maintained in the militia through similar means to the regular army: either by courts-martial or, for less serious crimes, a system of minor punishments given by commanding officers. Courts-martial were relatively rare when the militia was disembodied, only being convened for the most serious of military crimes; serious civil crimes such as murder were already dealt with via the civil courts. The punishments inflicted were generally some form of imprisonment with or without hard labour. Yet courts-martial were relatively infrequent because many units deferred cases of desertion and absence without leave (still the most common serious peacetime offences) to the county magistrates. When courts-martial became more common towards the end of the period, this was unsurprising partly due to the decision to try the most serious cases of desertion in such a manner; indeed, there were valid complaints from some officers that magistrates were often too lenient in their sentencing. Notably this was the opposite of a more general trend within the regular army which saw disciplinary offences dealt with more commonly by the summary powers of commanding officers. Despite this, the overall number of disciplinary cases fell, in keeping with a wider trend of improving discipline within the regular army and the move towards wider reform of the penal system. However, this did not stop those units serving in South Africa from struggling to maintain discipline when on active service for the first time. In just 13 units there were 324 separate field-general and district courts-martial for 455 separate offences from July 1900 to November 1901. By far the most common offences were drunkenness and sleeping upon (or quitting) ones post, although more worryingly there were also a high proportion of more serious cases of violence and disobedience.

The most common single disciplinary issues within the militia were desertion and

disobedience caused by the ease of access to alcohol when assembled for training. Desertion was particularly problematic during the embodiments of the 1850s, encouraged by the financial benefit of fraudulently enlisting into several units. Although in subsequent years the government were able to curb its worst excesses, it remained an ever present concern. Urban units reliant on migratory semi-employed labourers who had no fixed address were particularly affected, due to the ease with which their men could avoid detection or fraudulently enlist into other regiments. Permanent emigration and temporary absence at sea also prevented many militiamen from attending their training even if they had no intention of deserting permanently. There were also concerns with the inexperience and indifference of local constabularies towards tracking down absentees which contributed to high rates of desertion in some units. Another concern was the frequency of major disturbances and riots which usually resulted from the ease of access to alcohol when assembled for training. This was often exacerbated by a shared sense of solidarity among militiamen against any external threats, be that other regiments, the public, or police. It was also compounded by the continued need to billet units. This created a high degree of animosity between the militia and local people to the extent that many petitioned for the removal of certain units, most notably in Scotland.

Embodied service was a far cry from the usually mundane experience of training when disembodied. This was especially the case during the South African War when the militia proceeded abroad for active service for the first time *en masse*. By comparison, their embodied service during the Crimean War and Indian mutiny was far more mundane. The decision of whether or not to embody the force at the outset of the Crimean War was far from a straightforward issue. Despite there being no credible threat of invasion to justify embodying the force, the government were able to take a loose interpretation of the existing legislation which permitted the embodiment of the militia when the country was threatened with invasion. By May 1854, subsequent legislation henceforth authorised the embodiment of the militia whenever a state of war existed. Yet there can be no doubt that their primary motive remained the need to find an additional source of manpower for the regular army, a role most commanding officers either willingly or begrudgingly complied with (only a few refusing outright). However, the embodiment also served the practical purpose of enabling regular units stationed in Britain to serve abroad, meaning the defence of the UK rested predominantly upon the militia. Some units even had the opportunity to serve abroad after legislation was passed

in 1854, which allowed units to offer to serve abroad; yet, although many offered, just ten were sent to garrison stations throughout the Mediterranean. For the many units serving in the UK, the experience of both embodiments was not dissimilar to that of the disembodied training. Their duties consisted largely of drill and parade upon the barrack square. Nonetheless, some were camped at the major military stations while others served in regular barracks across Britain and Ireland.

By comparison, the militia undertook a more active role during the South African War, despite the government initially intending to use them in a similar domestic role as in the 1850s. Eventually over 65,000 officers and men served abroad, most as part of their own units. Generally they were used as a means of relieving regular troops from garrison duties, only a few ever being used in active operations against the enemy. Yet the fragmented and increasingly mobile nature of the conflict meant many units experienced some form of fighting, while others were trained as mounted infantry and attached to Lord Kitchener's flying columns. Garrison duties at isolated stations meant everyday life could be tough, although most were able to bare the strain; some units did so for considerable periods. By contrast, for those serving in units at home, the embodiment was in many ways similar to those of the 1850s. Once again they acted as garrison troops, several units serving in Ireland and a few in the Channel Islands, some again sent to relieve regular garrisons in the Mediterranean. However, compared to the 1850s, many more were able to take advantage of more comprehensive training arrangements, which meant there was a greater focus upon field exercises simulating defensive duties against invasion and raiding, despite their being little credible threat of such. There was also far less of a need to billet militiamen, most serving instead in barracks or military camps.

Such a level of unprecedented service during the South African War was to be of little long term benefit to militia. In the immediate years after its disembodiment its strength declined rapidly to levels not seen since the 1850s. Therefore, it was clear to both the Unionists and Liberals that militia reform would have to form part of the wider drive for army reform, itself motivated by the desire for financial retrenchment. Yet as William St. John Brodrick, Hugh Oakley Arnold-Forster and Richard Burdon Haldane found out, ultimately to the cost of the former two, militia reform was a particularly divisive issue. Each of their three separate schemes shared the intention of integrating the militia more firmly to the regular army so that it could provide it with a more effective

means of rapid expansion. Brodrick believed only the best elements of the militia were worth incorporating into his army corps scheme, while similarly Arnold-Forster, who saw the militia as largely ineffective, decided its best units should be incorporated into his planned 'home service' army. Both encountered opposition from the more reactionary members of the militia lobby within Parliament, headed by the Duke of Bedford and several other influential peers with personal connections to the militia. Yet, although both Brodrick and Arnold-Forster were willing to accept the retention of at least a part of the militia as part of their existing schemes, their critics were able to stifle their plans. In Arnold-Forster's case the criticism from the Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, and other members of the cabinet (who believed the militia as it existed was capable of being transformed into a secondary line so long as it accepted the liability to serve abroad) meant he was blocked from even formally introducing his plans into the Commons. Haldane also faced opposition. Firstly, his initial scheme, which saw a large portion of the existing militia retained, so long as its officers were willing to accept an overseas liability and the drafting of their men directly into the regular army, was rejected by the militia's supporters. Secondly, his attempt to circumvent them through the creation of an alternate force, the Special Reserve, was derailed by Balfour and other Unionist militia advocates who argued the retention of the militia in Ireland could be applied across the whole of the UK. Therefore, Haldane was forced to compromise by using the militia as the basis for the Special Reserve. Yet this ensured he had a far greater degree of cross party support than his predecessors and thus giving him the necessary support to see the plans through Parliament despite the continued opposition of militia officers within the Lords and the protestations from units marked for disbandment.

Finally, it is also clear that the creation of the Special Reserve represented a moment of continuity rather than an outright break with the past. Although most units were organised simply as training units for their linked line battalions, much of the militia's former manpower opted to continue their service as part of their existing units, either as reserve or extra reserve battalions. However, for those units reorganised or disbanded, the experience understandably created greater upheaval, particularly the RGA (Militia) which faced subsequent disbandment (except for Irish corps). Continuity was also evident in the fact that the Special Reserve faced many of the same difficulties as its predecessor. Many Special Reservists continued to be young and in casual employment; in fact the increased period of recruits' training meant service was even less attractive for

those from other occupational backgrounds. Like the militia, desertion rates in the Special Reserve remained high, as did the proportion transferring into the regular army, both among officers and men. Finally, it can be concluded that by the Great War the Special Reserve was a smaller and less efficient force than the militia it had replaced. Nevertheless, the reorganisation finally put an end once and for all to any serious doubts as to whether the 'constitutional force' was to maintain any independent role for home defence or whether, as was the case, it would formally be incorporated into the regular army.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The Representation of Militia Officers within Both Houses of Parliament, 1852 to 1908.[7]

Year	*House*	*Serving & Retired Officers*	*Political Party*				
			Conservative	Whig	Liberal	Other	Unknown
1852	*Lords*	50	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Commons	43	26	2	15	…	…
1859	*Lords*	37	23	…	10	4	…
	Commons	59	23	3	27	5	1
1870	*Lords*	23	13	…	6	2	2
	Commons	64	39	3	19	3	…
				Liberal			
1881	*Lords*	24	15	6		2	1
	Commons	28	19	7		2	…
				Liberal Unionist	Liberal		
1902	*Lords*	52	30	9	1	…	12
	Commons	48	36	3	7	2	…
1908	*Lords*	66	44	15	6	…	1
	Commons	19	9	1	7	2	…

[7] All figures are derived from Charles Dod, *Parliamentary Companion*, published in each year (as detailed in the bibliography).

Appendix 2: The Strength of the Officer Corps in the English, Welsh and Scottish Militia, 1862-1908.[8]

Year*	*England & Wales*				*Scotland*			
	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete
1862	3,050	1,951	1,656	1,099	432	280	232	152
1863	3,053	1,928	1,619	1,125	432	265	223	167
1864	3,053	1,921	1,629	1,132	432	270	222	162
1865	3,053	1,878	1,601	1,175	432	264	255	168
1866	3,053	1,868	1,606	1,185	432	260	227	172
1867	3,053	1,867	1,325	1,186	432	271	234	161
1868	3,053	1,841	1,608	1,212	432	265	228	167
1869	3,053	1,857	1,607	1,196	432	271	235	161
1870	3,051	1,882	1,605	1,169	431	276	242	155
1871	3,051	2,116	1,924	935	431	300	269	131
1872	3,051	2,179	1,936	872	442	311	275	131
1873	3,051	2,110	1,971	941	442	310	270	132
1874	2,494	2,118	1,854	376	373	318	239	55
1875	2,494	2,173	1,957	321	373	320	286	53
1876	2,416	2,227	1,948	189	375	341	294	34
1877	2,499	2,269	2,001	230	399	338	301	61
1878	2,506	2,335	2,088	171	395	346	313	49
1879	2,529	2,239	1,918	290	401	345	294	56
1880	2,357	2,203	1,932	154	373	329	284	44
1881	2,371	2,249	1,897	122	374	350	296	24
1882	2,369	2,094	1,757	275	373	327	278	46
1884	2,351	1,858	1,584	493	386	289	243	97
1885	2,330	1,939	1,720	391	398	306	262	92
1886	2,328	2,022	1,738	306	398	314	268	84
1887	2,329	2,095	1,902	234	398	302	262	96
1888	2,360	2,167	1,930	193	400	349	299	51
1889	2,372	2,196	1,990	176	400	367	310	33
1890	2343	2,190	1,952	153	410	362	332	48
1891	2,349	2,131	1,840	218	406	370	315	36
1892	2,326	2,099	1,831	227	406	351	293	55
1893	2,334	2,079	1,836	255	402	344	287	58
1894	2,335	2,054	1,785	281	404	322	278	82
1895	2,339	2,021	1,773	318	404	323	274	81

* From 1880 onwards all figures exclude adjutants.

[8] PP, *Militia (training establishments). Return showing the training establishment of each regiment of militia in the United Kingdom*, 1870-1881; PP, *Militia units. Return showing the establishment of each unit of militia in the United Kingdom*, 1863-1869, 1882-1907. Detailed references can be found in the bibliography.

Appendix 2 (continued): The Strength of the Officer Corps in the English, Welsh and Scottish Militia, 1862-1908.

*Year**	*England & Wales*				*Scotland*			
	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete
1896	2,335	1,993	1,610	342	404	328	281	76
1897	2,321	1,874	1,639	447	404	331	285	73
1898	2,297	1,912	…	385	404	331	297	73
1899	2,235	1,906	1,630	329	404	318	282	86
1900	2,307	1,983	1,982	324	420	352	352	68
1901	2,335	1,909	…	426	417	322	…	95
1902	2,323	1,776	…	547	416	306	…	110
1903	2,265	1,843	1,258	422	406	311	217	95
1904	2,265	1,711	1,507	554	406	290	242	116
1905	2,255	1,656	1,426	599	406	273	227	133
1906	2,261	1,610	1,377	651	408	256	227	152
1907	2,204	1,463	1,279	741	408	251	216	157
1908	2,351	1,858	1,584	493	386	289	243	97

* From 1880 onwards all figures exclude adjutants.

Appendix 3: Notes Regarding the Methodology used for analysing the Officer Corps.

As the basis for the analysis of the militia's officer corps in Chapter 2, several sources have been used as a means of determining the details of each officer's service and (where possible) his social background (or in the case of young officers, their father or the head of their immediate family). These included regimental histories, lists of officers in county record offices and the several appropriate editions of Hart's *Annual Army List.* Detailed breakdowns of the sources used are as follows:

Cornwall and Devon Miners Artillery	Cavenagh-Mainwaring, "*The Royal Miners*, pp. 1-129
East Essex Rifles	Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908
Royal London Regiment	Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908
3rd North Staffordshire Regiment	C. C. W. Troughton, *Historical Records of the 3rd King's Own Staffordshire Rifles (3rd K.O. Stafford Militia), now the 4th Battalion, The Prince of Wales's North Staffordshire Regiment*, (Litchfield: A. C. Lomax's Successors, 1903), pp. 94-145; Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908.
Northumberland Light Infantry	Scott, *Northumberland Light Infantry*, pp. 74-8, 145-52
Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles	Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908
Royal Monmouthshire LI/RE	Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908
Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders	T. Innes, *The Aberdeenshire Militia and the Royal Aberdeenshire Highlanders, now the Third Battalion, the Gordon Highlanders, 1798 to 1882*, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Journal Office, 1884), pp. 1-38
Edinburgh Artillery	Hart's *Annual Army List*, 1854-1908

Appendix 4: The Strength of the English, Welsh and Scottish Militia (rank and file), 1852-1907.[9]

Year*	*England & Wales*				*Scotland*			
	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete
1852	50,000	33,714	...	16,286	...	...	...	...
1853	80,000	66,280	51,561	13,720	…	…	…	…
1854	83,798	69,807	…	13,991	…	…	…	…
1855	80,000	32,449	…	47,551	10,000	4,786	…	5,214
1856	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
1857	80,000	76,762	…	3,238	10,000	8,059	…	1,941
1858	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
1859	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
1860	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
1861	…	…	…	…	…	…	…	…
1862	86,863	68,538	59,796	18,325	10,863	10,076	8,806	787
1863	86,513	70,278	9,271	16,235	10,893	9,946	9,271	947
1864	86,784	71,653	9,223	15,131	10,893	9,958	9,223	935
1865	86,784	63,822	58,089	22,962	10,893	9,237	8,644	1,656
1866	86,784	61,193	55,887	25,591	10,893	9,183	8,566	1,710
1867	86,784	61,934	58,211	24,850	10,893	9,201	8,661	1,692
1868	86,789	68,018	62,631	18,771	10,883	9,880	9,259	1,003
1869	86,789	72,614	67,382	14,175	10,883	10,429	9,780	454
1870	86,785	72,853	65,524	13,932	10,880	10,391	9,760	489
1871	86,785	72,434	65,348	14,351	10,880	10,595	9,800	285
1872	86,785	76,847	68,953	9,938	11,155	11,625	10,373	…
1873	86,785	75,266	64,541	11,519	11,155	11,428	9,640	…
1874	90,085	71,605	62,859	18,480	12,385	11,664	8,824	721
1875	90,092	72,962	63,873	17,130	12,385	11,731	10,207	654
1876	86,876	73,516	63,972	13,360	12,701	11,835	10,273	866
1877	87,363	75,815	63,836	11,548	13,739	12,332	10,178	1,407
1878	87,686	76,091	52,727	11,595	13,457	11,639	8,121	1,818
1879	88,355	81,107	71,748	7,248	13,676	13,129	12,185	547
1880	89,547	83,326	74,078	6,221	13,910	13,848	12,211	62
1881	89,813	82,519	72,951	6,870	13,910	13,772	12,069	138
1882	89,747	76,658	67,594	13,089	13,913	12,901	11,250	1,012

* Figures prior to 1860 are for privates only. Thereafter the figures include NCOs and members of the permanent staff (as does that for 1854).

[9] WSHC. 2057/F8/3B/136-163(a), Memorandum on the regiments of militia inspected, 1847-1852; PP, *Militia. Return of the quota of militia men for each county in England and Wales for the year 1852*, 74, (1852-53); PP, *Militia. Return of the quota of militia for each county in England and Wales for 1853*, 153, (1854); PP, *Militia. Return of the number of volunteers actually serving in each regiment of militia in the United Kingdom on the 1st March 1855*, 353, (1854-5); PP, *Militia. Return of all regiments of militia in the United Kingdom who shall not have completed their respective quotas*, (1857-8); PP, *Militia (training establishments). Return showing the training establishment of each regiment of militia in the United Kingdom*, 1870-1881; PP, *Militia units. Return showing the establishment of each unit of militia in the United Kingdom*, 1863-1869, 1882-1907. Detailed references can be found in the bibliography.

Appendix 4 (continued): The Strength of the English, Welsh and Scottish Militia, 1852-1907.

*Year**	*England & Wales*				*Scotland*			
	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete	Establi-shment	Enrolled Strength	Present at Training	Wanting to Complete
1883	88,990	74,902	65,689	14,088	14,155	12,576	11,180	1,579
1884	88,671	74,752	65,431	13,919	14,363	13,875	11,894	488
1885	87,799	79,173	69,418	8,626	14,793	14,699	12,556	94
1886	87,799	81,211	69,094	6,588	14,793	14,585	12,455	208
1887	87,905	79,915	68,785	7,990	14,793	14,316	12,288	477
1888	88,606	77,846	65,594	10,760	14,894	13,821	11,797	1,073
1889	88,205	75,716	66,683	12,489	14,892	13,360	11,513	1,532
1890	87,545	72,736	63,950	14,809	15,292	13,193	11,312	2,099
1891	87,762	72,020	61,482	15,742	15,183	13,434	11,288	1,749
1892	86,742	75,492	63,506	11,250	15,183	14,004	11,781	1,179
1893	86,760	82,237	69,326	4,523	15,173	15,115	12,453	58
1894	86,855	79,651	66,835	7,204	15,273	14,591	12,239	682
1895	86,884	76,302	67,366	10,582	15,273	14,508	12,461	765
1896	86,762	75,629	61,599	11,133	15,273	14,437	12,223	836
1897	86,306	72,807	62,838	13,499	15,273	13,778	11,440	1,495
1898	85,433	71,649	61,259	13,784	15,273	13,334	11,209	1,939
1899	83,031	68,582	57,737	14,449	15,273	12,652	10,404	2,621
1900	86,705	62,986	56,519	23,719	15,940	10,583	9,612	5,357
1901	85,720	72,252	…	13,468	15,586	10,979	…	4,607
1902	85,029	79,299	…	5,730	15,596	12,456	…	3,140
1903	84,134	72,254	46,956	11,880	15,371	11,568	8,444	3,803
1904	84,134	65,924	57,730	18,210	15,371	11,232	10,051	4,139
1905	83,698	63,042	55,842	20,656	15,371	11,308	10,234	4,063
1906	83,898	59,974	53,303	23,924	15,471	11,256	10,068	4,215
1907	83,119	58,664	52,196	24,455	15,471	11,824	10,355	3,647

* Figures prior to 1860 are for privates only. Thereafter the figures include NCOs and members of the permanent staff (as does that for 1854).

Appendix 5: Notes Regarding the Methodology used for analysing the Rank and File.

As the basis for the comparative analysis of several militia units used in Chapter three, several sources have been used in order to gain the details of a sample of attested militiamen over several years (where possible, every five years). In total, this sample has examined nine units in detail and totals over 13,000 individuals. Providing the source material for Tables 3.7 and 3.9, most details can be found in each unit's enrolment books and returns, principally held either at county record officers or at TNA. For years where these are missing, the attestation forms held at TNA as part of WO 96 have been used, principally for the 1890s and 1900s due to the fact that many returns for earlier years are missing or damaged. Detailed breakdowns of the sources used are as follows:

East Kent Regiment	KHLC, L/M/7/1-3, East Kent Regiment enrolment books, 1852-1860; TNA, WO 96/32-44, East Kent Regiment attestation forms, 1874-[1905].
Hampshire Regiment	HantsALS, Q30/4/5/1-10, Return of volunteers enrolled for the South Hampshire Regiment, 1852; TNA, WO 68/379, Hampshire Regiment enrolment books, 1803-1888; TNA WO 96/641-53, Hampshire Regiment attestation forms, 1876-1914.
2nd (East) Norfolk Regiment	TNA, WO 68/128-30, 2nd (East) Norfolk Regiment enrolment, 1852-1893; TNA, WO 96/202-14, Norfolk Regiment attestation forms, 1882-1906.
Northumberland Light Infantry	FMN, Northumberland L.I. enrolment book, 1852-1871; TNA, WO 96/86-93, Northumberland Fusiliers attestation forms, 1880-1908.
1st Tower Hamlets Regiment	TNA, WO 68/407, 436, 1st Tower Hamlets Regiment enrolment books, 1860-1880; TNA, WO 96/1239-81, Rifle Brigade attestation forms, 1873-1911.
Royal Caernarvonshire Rifles	PP., *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871), p. 10; TNA, WO 96/445-8, Welsh Fusiliers attestation forms, 1892-1908.

Royal Monmouthshire LI/RE	Gwent Archives, LLMISC P5-0026, Return of volunteers enrolled in the Royal Monmouthshire Light Infantry, 23 September to 31 December 1852; CRM, RMRE/4/3-4, Registers of Enlistments, 1872-1887 and 1889-1915; TNA, WO 96/1297-1307, Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers attestation forms, [1905].
Edinburgh Artillery	TNA, WO 68/35-40, Edinburgh Artillery enrolment books, 1854-1890; TNA, WO 96/1344-51, Edinburgh R.G.A. (militia) attestation forms, 1882-1915.
Highland (Inverness, etc) Light Infantry (Militia)	TNA, WO 68/378, Highland (Inverness) Light Infantry, 1854-1882.

With regards to the way in which the various occupational titles have been sorted and categorised, the aim has been to make as clear as possible the various demographics from which the militia was recruited. Some occupational titles are relatively self-explanatory, for instance, those related to mining and quarrying, whereas others, such as the rather generic term ‘labourer’, can prove harder to categorise. Compounding this difficulty is the fact that each return, written by separate individuals, can be more detailed than others in attempting to distinguish between different occupations, most notably between agricultural labourers and general labourers, which generally are referred to under the same title. Therefore, every effort has been taken to try and accurately place each individual into the relevant category, with those unable to be reliably placed, or if lacking any occupational titles whatsoever, marked simply as unknown. Nevertheless, due to the inherent difficulties of classifying a diverse range of occupations, such figures should be taken as representative of the general proportions and trends involved and not as a means of providing statistical exactness. The breakdowns of the occupational categories used are as follows:

Labourers	This comprises both unskilled general labourers and agricultural labourers (including ploughmen, farm servants, etc.). Every effort has been made to use residential information, where available, to distinguish between the two, in addition to cross referenced information in other sources, details of which are presented in the text.[10]
Miners and Quarrymen	Relatively self-explanatory, this category includes anyone working in the mining profession, or in open air quarries.
Industrial Workers	This includes both skilled and, where specified, non-skilled industrial workers working in some form of 'heavy industry', for instance, in the smelting of metals or the production of metal goods.
Tradesmen	This category principally includes painters, plasterers and bricklayers.
Artisans and Craftsmen	This comprises skilled and semi-skilled craftsmen and those engaged in light industries focussed upon the production of goods, including (as one of the most common examples) those involved in making shoes and boots.
Retailers and Street Sellers	On the one hand, this includes anyone involved in the selling of food and goods, including, for instance, bakers and fishmongers and their employees. It also includes street sellers, mainly 'hawkers' and costermongers.
Service	This includes those involved in providing some form of service. Primarily this includes domestic servants, carters, grooms and porters.
Sailors and Fishermen	This is relatively self-explanatory.
Other	This encompasses those not included in the above category, including clerks, musicians and boys taken below the age of 17 onto the permanent staff as drummers and buglers,
Unknown	This includes those with no stated occupation or those which cannot be discerned.

[10] The main point of cross reference has been with material present in Parliamentary Command Papers, most notably in PP., *Questions sent to commanding officers*¸ C. 288, (1871).

Appendix 6: Militia Units Serving in South Africa and the Dates they were Despatched, 1899 to 1902.[11]

	First group: 11 Jan.-18 Jan.1900	*Second group: 10 Feb.-10 March 1900*	*First reinforcements: 29 March-17 June 1901*	*Second reinforcements: 16 Dec.-24 Dec. 1901*	*Third reinforcements: 23 Jan.-8 April 1902*
Infantry	4th Royal Lancaster	3rd Royal Scots	5th Royal Fusiliers	5th Warwickshire	4th Liverpool
	6th Royal Warwickshire	3rd Royal West Surrey	5th Lancashire Fusiliers	3rd Liverpool	3rd Lincolnshire
	4th Derbyshire	3rd East Kent	3rd Scottish Rifles	6th Worcester	3rd East Yorkshire
	9th King's Royal Rifles	3rd Royal Lancaster	3rd East Surrey	3rd York and Lancaster	3rd Leicestershire
	3rd Durham Light Infantry	3rd Norfolk	3rd Royal Sussex	3rd Highland L.I.	4th Yorkshire
	3rd South Lancashire	4th Somersetshire L.I.	3rd South Staffordshire	5th Rifle Brigade	3rd Cheshire
	4th Argyll and Sutherland High.	4th West Yorkshire	5th Manchester		4th East Surrey
		4th Bedfordshire	5th Royal Irish Rifles		3rd Essex
		3rd Yorkshire	3rd Loyal North Lancashire		5th Middlesex
		6th Lancashire Fusiliers			6th Manchester
		4th Cheshire			3rd North Staffordshire
		3rd South Wales Borderers			4th Durham L.I.
		3rd K.O. Scottish Borderers			3rd Argyll and Sutherland High
		4th Scottish Rifles			4th Royal Dublin Fusiliers
		3rd East Lancashire			3rd Northamptonshire
		3rd West Riding			
		4th South Staffordshire			
		3rd Welsh			
		6th Middlesex			
		4th North Staffordshire			
		3rd Leinster			
		5th (later 3rd) Munster Fusiliers			
		5th Dublin Fusiliers			
	4,877	12,663	5,881	4,179	9,562

[11] 'Appendix 5', PP, *Appendices to the minutes of evidence*, Cd. 2064, (1904), pp. 55-75.

Appendix 7: Militia Battalions Disbanded upon the Creation of the Special Reserve.[12]

Regiment	*Strength on 1 January 1908*	*Joined Special Reserve*	*Remained in Militia*	*Free Discharge*
4th Royal Lancashire	383	118	89	113
4th Norfolk	525	146	132	96
4th Lincolnshire	489	257	71	103
3rd Devonshire	470	261	44	72
4th Suffolk	537	257	89	178
4th Somersetshire Light Infantry	380	183	33	140
3rd Royal Irish	621	287	164	124
4th Yorkshire	492	198	57	121
4th Cheshire	474	132	78	220
4th Royal Welsh Fusiliers	408	172	68	105
4th South Wales Borderers	339	205	32	39
5th Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers	439	255	74	76
4th Gloucestershire	548	252	114	151
4th Border	183	99	60	8
3rd Oxfordshire	560	243	86	161
4th Essex	522	207	64	160
4th Shropshire	344	118	98	73
8th King's Royal Rifle Corps	351	187	164	7
9th King's Royal Rifle Corps	600	300	102	110
6th Royal Irish Rifles	594	174	176	93
5th Royal Irish Fusiliers	229	116	38	33
3rd Connaught Rangers	383	187	57	61
6th Rifle Brigade	436	278	85	34
Total	10,307	4,632	1,975	2,278

[12] PP, *Army*, Cd. 3935, (1908), p. 3.

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HINCH 9 papers of the Earls of Sandwich of Hinchingbrooke, military records

Kent History and Library Centre:
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WKR West Kent Regiment papers

Lancashire Archives:
LM Lieutenancy paper

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