

Buckinghamshire; A Military History

by

Ian F. W. Beckett

## Chapter Four: 1792-1815

The militia was embodied once more on 1 December 1792 as a precautionary and preventative measure in anticipation of possible insurrectionary subversion. War had broken out between France and Austria in April 1792 with Prussia joining Austria in July. The French King Louis XIV was seized in August and the monarchy abolished and a republic declared in September. Spain and Portugal were to join the anti-French coalition in January 1793. Louis was executed on 21 January 1793 and the French declared war on Britain on 1 February 1793. There followed almost 22 years of warfare until June 1815. The only intervals were the 14 months of the Peace of Amiens between March 1802 and May 1803 and then the 11 months between Napoleon's first abdication in April 1814 and his return from exile on Elba in March 1815. In that period Britain was the only constant member of seven anti-French coalitions, and the major player between 1807 and 1812.

Britain was frequently under threat of invasion. Other members of the First Coalition against the French Republic had faltered by 1802. Holland was overrun by the French in May 1795 and Piedmont in March 1796. Prussia accepted terms in April 1795, Spain in July 1795 and Austria in October 1797. Spain then entered the war against Britain in October 1796, their fleet added to that of the French and also the Dutch, which had been seized. Only bad weather averted a French landing in Ireland in December 1796 and also frustrated an expedition aimed at Newcastle. A small French landing at Fishguard in Pembrokeshire in February 1797 caused considerable panic in government although the French surrendered after two days. Naval mutinies at the Nore and Spithead in April and May 1797 added to the tension.

While the formerly mutinous crews won Admiral Duncan's victory over the Dutch at Camperdown in October 1797, the French Directory established the

‘Army of England’ on 26 October 1797 under the then General Bonaparte although the latter then led his army to Egypt in May 1798. The Army of England was re-established anew by Napoleon in 1803. The greatest danger was in the period between 1803 and 1805. Even after Trafalgar in October 1805, the danger remained that the French could rebuild their naval strength, not least through acquiring other states’ fleets or agreement with other powers such as that concluded with Russia at Tilsit in July 1807. Such fears motivated the British military expedition to Copenhagen in 1807, and the Walcheren expedition in 1809.<sup>1</sup>

Frustrated in national politics, the Marquess of Buckingham was avaricious for recognition and influence, determinedly pursuing the garter (achieved in 1786) and a dukedom (achieved only by his son). While hard-working, Buckingham’s lack of personal charm and pomposity only added to his difficulties. He threatened to resign on three occasions when Lord Lieutenant (Viceroy) of Ireland between 1787 and 1789. When Irish Lord Lieutenant earlier (1782-83) as Lord Temple, he had actually resigned. He also resigned after just four days as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in December 1783.<sup>2</sup> The latter resignation resulted in a rift with the King, whose refusal to sanction Buckingham’s military appointments as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland speeded his exit in 1789. Buckingham, however, was not without influence. The Bucks lieutenancy had been a significant prize, Rev. John Langham Dayrell of Lillingstone Dayrell writing in 1797 that ‘no County can boast of a more active Lord Lieutenant... he is a great encourager to the learning the use of arms, and

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard Glover, *Britain at Bay: Defence against Bonaparte, 1803-14* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973), 13-20.

<sup>2</sup> James Sack, *The Grenvillites, 1801-29: Party Politics and Factionalism in the Age of Pitt and Liverpool* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1979), 5-6.

even that the Clergy should do so, who in some parts of the County have enrolled themselves.’<sup>3</sup>



*George, 1<sup>st</sup> Marquess of Buckingham (1753-1813) as 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Temple, with the Countess, and their son, Richard, by Joshua Reynolds, c. 1782 (National Gallery of Ireland)*

The Marquess also controlled a number of parliamentary seats - Aylesbury (one), Buckingham (two), Buckinghamshire (one), St Mawes (one), and Winchester (one). He adroitly manoeuvred family, clients and friends into public offices while steadily accumulating valuable sinecures. It is calculated that Buckingham and his two brothers received £900,000 of public money from

---

<sup>3</sup> BA, F22/48, Dayrell to Brewster, 14 June 1797.

office and sinecures.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, apart from Henry Dundas, Home Secretary from 1791 to 1794 and then Secretary of State for War from 1794 to 1801, the other members of the key triumvirate directing national strategy at the start of the war were Buckingham's cousin, William Pitt the Younger, prime minister since 1783, and his own younger brother, William, Lord Grenville as Foreign Secretary. Grenville, who had been elevated to the peerage in 1790, remained Foreign Secretary until 1801. After Pitt's death, Grenville returned to office as prime minister in the 'Talents' ministry from February 1806 to March 1807 and was effectively leader of the Opposition thereafter until 1817. Grenville resided at Dropmore near Burnham, built for him between 1792 and 1795. By comparison with Buckingham, the scholarly Grenville was marginally more affable but still reserved and 'lavished on animals the warmth he held from humans'.<sup>5</sup> The other brother, Thomas Grenville, was very personable, although his chief interest was his library.

As in the Civil Wars, the county occupied an important strategic position astride the main routes out of London. Buckingham was to remind the government of this more than once. In May 1798 Buckingham pointed out the importance of Newport Pagnell to the Duke of Portland for it commanded the 'great roads' from London to Coventry, Chester, Northampton and Lancashire. He re-iterated his views in March 1799, June 1801, July and August 1803, January 1804, and August 1805.<sup>6</sup> Buckingham, however, was scathing about a plan in 1804 to

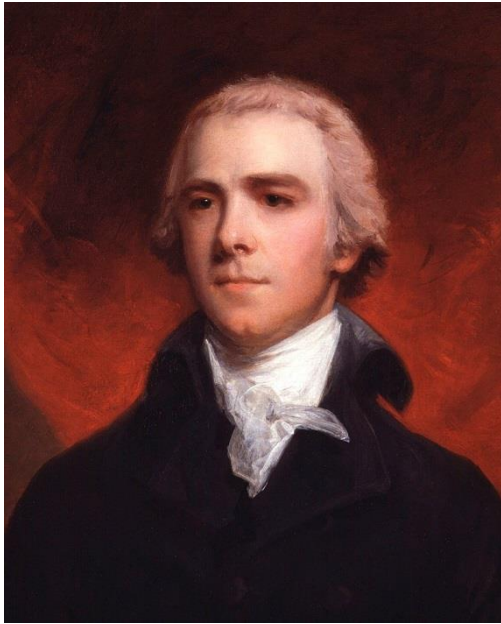
---

<sup>4</sup> Davis, *Political Change*, 21.

<sup>5</sup> Piers Mackesy, *War Without Victory: the Downfall of Pitt, 1799-1802* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 177.

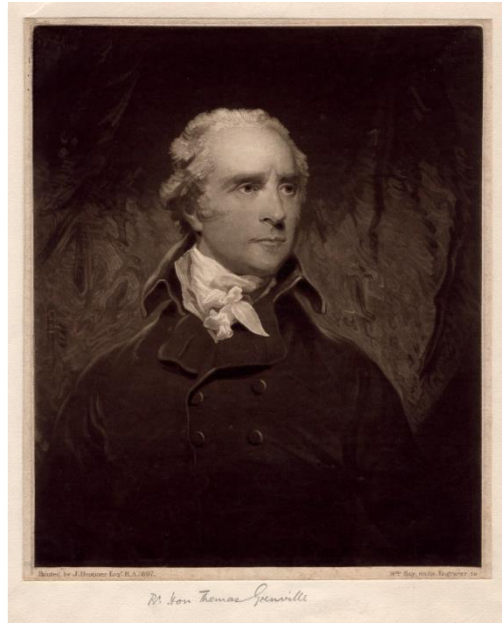
<sup>6</sup> TNA, HO 50/42, Buckingham to Portland, 4 May 1798; HO 50/45, Buckingham to Portland, 8 Mar. 1799; HO 50/50, Buckingham to Hobart, 11 June 1801; HO 50/61, Buckingham to Pelham, 19 July 1803 and Buckingham to Yorke, 26 Aug. 1803; HO 50/96, Buckingham to Yorke, 31 Jan. 1804; HO 50/126, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 25 Aug. 1805.

move 37,000 men through the county in five days in the event of an invasion. One group was to move from Newport to Dunstable and two others from Tingewick to Amersham through Hardwick ‘day and night; in the *sands* of Dunstable and in the *clays* of our vale’ at five miles an hour. It would require the Ashendon, Buckingham, Cottesloe and Newport Hundreds to find 3,047 waggons and 12,235 horses.<sup>7</sup>



*William, Lord Grenville (1759-1834)*

*By John Hoppner, c. 1800*



*Thomas Grenville (1755-1846)*

*after John Hoppner, c. 1808*

Not all militia regiments were immediately called out on 1 December 1792, much to Buckingham’s disgust with respect to Bucks. In the meantime, he had warned his militia staff to assist the civil power if necessary. The militia’s arms were under careful guard at Buckingham and he was fairly certain that there

---

<sup>7</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 232-34, Buckingham to Grenville, 23 Sept. 1804.

would be no troubles except perhaps at Olney due to its isolation from the rest of the county and its want of magistrates.<sup>8</sup>

With most regulars overseas, the militia was the main recourse against any attempted French raids, the French certainly entertaining such plans with the intention of stirring domestic unrest. Indeed, the Bucks militia was called out in a second tranche of militia mobilisation on 5 December 1792.<sup>9</sup> Buckingham then temporarily disembodied the regiment on 2 January 1793 and re-embodied it two days later to enable him to complete the establishment without unnecessary expense.<sup>10</sup> Buckingham invited those whose term of service was about to expire to re-enlist, balloting for the vacancies where men did not wish to do so.<sup>11</sup> It delayed the regiment's departure to Portsmouth. In fact, Buckingham had been wary of calling out more than the 'two-thirds usually drilled'.<sup>12</sup>

The regiment was duly embodied and he reported in March 1793 that it was lacking only 30 men although parliamentary duties had led to two of his captains, Sir William Young of Delaford, MP for St Mawes from 1784 to 1806, and Scrope Bernard of Nether Winchendon, MP for Aylesbury from 1789 to 1806, being urgently recalled to Westminster. His brother, Tom Grenville, MP for Aldeburgh from 1790 to 1796, was engaged on diplomatic duties at Vienna.

---

<sup>8</sup> TNA, HO 50/18, Buckingham to Sydney, 2 Dec. 1792; HMC *Dropmore*, II, 348-50, Buckingham to Grenville, 2 Dec. 1792.

<sup>9</sup> Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, *Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George III* 4 vols. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1853-55), II, 232, Grenville to Buckingham, 5 Dec. 1792.

<sup>10</sup> TNA, HO 50/18, Buckingham to Sydney, 22 Dec. 1792; HO 50/19, Buckingham to Dundas, 2 and 4 Jan. 1793.

<sup>11</sup> TNA, HO 50/19, Buckingham to Dundas, 13 Jan. 1793.

<sup>12</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 352-53, Buckingham to Grenville, Dec. 1792.

Much of the work, therefore, had fallen on him.<sup>13</sup> Both Young and Bernard were long-term adherents of the Grenvilles. By October the regiment was already deemed ‘nearly equal to regular troops’ in efficiency.<sup>14</sup>

There was a revolutionary fringe in Britain and there was some early evidence of attempted subversion of the militia when it was segregated from the population in the manner of the regulars. Buckingham was informed that ‘little books’ were circulating in some regiments in November 1792 with some in the Midlands and North thought susceptible. He also expressed some concern for the security of militia arms stores once the regiments were sent to wartime stations.<sup>15</sup> With the regiment posted to Winchester, Buckingham was equally concerned by the potential influence on ‘country people’ of the French prisoners of war under guard there, who spoke violently against monarchy. Seditious talk was being spread to farmers, shopkeepers and servants at Alresford market by French officers paroled to the town. Exiled French clergy at Winchester had also been threatened. A notorious local radical called Collins had been sending money and victuals to the prisoners.<sup>16</sup>

Bizarrely, the frequent parade performances of the Bucks militia at Cathedral Close in Winchester prompted the ‘great rebellion’ at Winchester College in April 1793 when boys were forbidden by the Warden from attendance. Matters rapidly escalated when Easter leave was cancelled as punishment for an infringement of the rule; the boys hoisted the revolutionary red cap of liberty.

---

<sup>13</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 382, Buckingham to Grenville, 3 Mar. 1793.

<sup>14</sup> *Sun*, 14 Oct. 1793.

<sup>15</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 344-45, 352, Buckingham to Grenville, 27 Nov. and 8 Dec. 1792; Clive Emsley, ‘Political Disaffection and the British Army in 1792’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 48 (1975), 2340-45.

<sup>16</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 401-02, Buckingham to Grenville, 30 June 1793; TNA, HO 50/20, Buckingham to Dundas, 28 June and 17 July 1793.



Buckingham apparently offered the regiment's services in quelling the disturbances but, in the event, military assistance was not required. The incident closed with 31 scholars resigning or being expelled, and the Warden also soon departing.<sup>17</sup>



*Battalion Officer, Bucks Militia 1793, after Sir William Young (BMMT)*      *Grenadier Private, Bucks Militia, 1793, after Sir William Young (BMMT)*

The militia was just as vulnerable to rising food prices as the civilian population, not least when militiamen were meant to purchase flour for dressing their regulation pigtails. With some problems arising among regiments quartered at Brighton in November 1793, Buckingham kept his own men 'most strictly to quarters'.<sup>18</sup> The Oxfordshire Militia mutinied at Seaford in April

<sup>17</sup> Arthur Leach, *A History of Winchester College* (London; Duckworth & Co., 1899, 403-07.

<sup>18</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 452-53, Buckingham to Grenville, 1 Nov. 1793.

1795 over prices, five men being executed.<sup>19</sup> There was one instance at Weymouth in April 1795 when men from the Bucks took meat from butchers' stalls without paying the market price. A few from the grenadier company then engaged in 'gross & highly criminal conduct' on 17 April, with Captain Badcock forced to disperse them. This appears to have been Lovel Badcock's brother, Thomas Badcock from Little Missenden, who was later a major in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mid Bucks Volunteers in 1806.<sup>20</sup> Those apprehended were at once court martialled, Buckingham ominously drawing the regiment's attention to the fate of the Oxfordshire men at Seaton.<sup>21</sup> Buckingham was disgusted that the honour of the regiment had been 'defamed' by the actions of a few and equally scandalised in May by some men demanding money and beer when in Weymouth and others refusing to pay for their beer.<sup>22</sup> Concessions by the military authorities included fixing bread prices, increasing embodied pay and abolition of the pigtail but the militia was still distrusted by some. The fears were unfounded after 1795.

As in the American War, the Bucks Militia passed through a series of mundane garrison duties between 1793 and 1798, and again from 1799 to 1802. Guarding or escorting prisoners of war was just as frequent as in the last war. In June 1793, for example, four companies were sent to Salisbury to escort 1,000 prisoners to Warminster where they would be handed over to other militia regiments.<sup>23</sup> Another detachment guarding 350 French prisoners marched through Amersham in April 1800 en route for Stilton.<sup>24</sup> The regiment would

---

<sup>19</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 72-73; Pamela Horn, 'The Mutiny of the Oxfordshire Militia in 1795', *Cake and Cockhorse* 7 (1979), 232-41.

<sup>20</sup> BA, AR 70/2017 [BMMT 704].

<sup>21</sup> HHL, ST 144 (20), Orders, 18, 20, and 25 Apl. 1795.

<sup>22</sup> HHL, ST 144 (20), Orders, 29 Apl. and 16 May 1795.

<sup>23</sup> TNA, WO 5/101, Order, 15 June 1793.

<sup>24</sup> *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, 23 Apl. 1800.

also be dispersed from quarters in the event of assizes, as was the case at Winchester in July 1793.<sup>25</sup> It was suggested in the *South Bucks Free Press* in 1892 that Samuel Taylor Coleridge served in the Bucks at this time but this was a misreading of Coleridge's letters. In reality, he had been briefly billeted at the Compasses in High Wycombe in March 1794 whilst on his way under the assumed name of Silas Comberbacke to join his new regiment at Reading, the 15<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons.<sup>26</sup>



*Sergeant, Bucks Militia, 1793, after Sir William Young (BMMT)*      *Tamborin Player, Bucks Militia, 1793, after Sir William Young (BMMT)*

The men disliked the tour at Portsmouth in 1795-96 and Buckingham objected to being sent to Bristol on prison duty although one of his officers, Benjamin

<sup>25</sup> TNA, WO 5/101, Orders, 3 July 1793.

<sup>26</sup> *South Bucks Free Press*, 22 Apr. 1892; *Bucks Herald*, 7 Oct. 1905; Ernest Hartley Coleridge (ed.), *The Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* 2 vols. (London: William Heinemann, 1895), I, 63-64.

Way of Denham Place, preferred this to any other post.<sup>27</sup> Again, Buckingham complained of the regiment being sent to guard French prisoners of war at Norman Cross in 1800, claiming this was the worst quarter, the unhealthiest place, and the heaviest duty in England.<sup>28</sup>

The tour at Weymouth, however, where the regiment was responsible for the security of the King where he had repaired for bathing, resulted in the title of the Royal Bucks King's Own Militia being conferred on 26 September 1794.<sup>29</sup> Buckingham was concerned that one of the many 'smugglers' row-gallies' could land undetected and spirit the King away. Despite the King being 'unruly' in his refusal to 'admit common precautions', Buckingham had night walking patrols and sentries posted.<sup>30</sup> A total of 102 men were on duty by day and 152 by night despite sickness among the regiment and the need to drill new recruits. Buckingham felt the naval guard provided by just the 32-gun HMS *Southampton* and two small craft inadequate. In addition, the Ordnance Office declined to give him horses for the two artillery pieces attached to the regiment and only three flints per man for exercise or service.<sup>31</sup> The presence of French prisoners to Weymouth was also a concern.<sup>32</sup>

Altogether Buckingham found that the guard on the King had 'been very painful to me'.<sup>33</sup> Yet, the title was immensely significant for the regiment and the Marquess. Buckingham reminded Lord Hobart in April 1802 that his reference

---

<sup>27</sup> Western, *English Militia*, 385; BA, D-SB/OM/1/7, Way to Bernard, 13 Apl. 1794.

<sup>28</sup> Western, *English Militia*, 385.

<sup>29</sup> HHL, ST 144 (19), Order 25 Sept. 1794.

<sup>30</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 283-87, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 31 Aug. 1794; HMC *Dropmore*, II, 610-12, Buckingham to Grenville, 6 Aug. 1794.

<sup>31</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 622-23, Buckingham to Grenville, 22 Aug. 1794.

<sup>32</sup> TNA, WO 30/117, Buckingham to Pitt, 8 Aug. 1794.

<sup>33</sup> BL, Add Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 20 Sept. 1794.

simply to the Bucks Militia was not acceptable for it was ‘a title of which the regiment is very vain, and you as well as I would be in bad odour with them if we omitted it’.<sup>34</sup>

On 26 February 1797, whilst at Bristol, five companies of the regiment paraded with two of its guns, the 13<sup>th</sup> Foot and the Suffolk Fencible Cavalry on College Green for use against the French landing at Fishguard in Pembrokeshire. The small French force was blown off course when en route to Bristol landed at Fishguard on 22 February. As indicated earlier, it surrendered two days later. Wagons were supplied by the leading merchants to convey the men and their baggage to Pill on the southern bank of the Avon from where the force would be conveyed by skiffs to Tenby.<sup>35</sup> Buckingham placed some local Bristol volunteers in charge of the French prisoners the Bucks had been guarding.<sup>36</sup> The regiment’s eagerness was rewarded by the collection of £80 by the local inhabitants ‘in the space of a few minutes’ to purchase refreshments on the march.<sup>37</sup> Just as they were about to embark at Pill, news came through that the French had already surrendered.<sup>38</sup>

As in the previous war, embodied service resulted in disciplinary problems. Insulting an under-sheriff of Hampshire and fighting in the yard of the White Hart in Winchester with tapsters, coachmen and ostlers brought Joseph Dixon a week in the ‘Black Hole’ remitted as a result of his previous good conduct. Privates John Leeson, Richard Coleshill and Blackwell each received a sentence of 1,000 lashes for stealing from an officer in July 1794. Sergeant Fawcett was

---

<sup>34</sup> BA, D/MH/G/H36, Buckingham to Hobart, 13 Apl. 1802.

<sup>35</sup> E. H. Stuart Jones, *The Last Invasion of Britain* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1950), 153-57.

<sup>36</sup> TNA, HO 50/27, Buckingham to Portland, 3 Mar. 1797.

<sup>37</sup> *Star*, 6 Mar. 1797.

<sup>38</sup> HHL, ST 144 (22), Order, 4 Mar. 1797.

reduced to the ranks for abusing the landlord of the Marquis of Granby at Portsea in April 1796 after complaining that he could get better and cheaper beer than that being offered at 3d a point. Fawcett also scuffled with the man after he was refused further entry. The incomplete courts martial record for the period 1793 to 1795 showed 171 different cases, the majority for absence (61) followed by theft (30) and drunkenness (28). There was also a case of ‘maliciously wounding’ a cow and another of accusing a fellow soldier of ‘an

Table 4.1 Embodied Militia Service, 1792-1802

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| Buckingham           | December 1792  |
| Winchester           | April 1793     |
| Weymouth             | January 1794   |
| South Sea Camp       | June 1795      |
| Portsea Barracks     | November 1795  |
| Bristol              | October 1796   |
| Hungerford           | October 1797   |
| Chelmsford           | November 1797  |
| Dublin               | July 1798      |
| Buckingham           | May 1799       |
| Chelmsford           | June 1799      |
| Buckingham           | November 1799  |
| Chelmsford           | May 1800       |
| Norman Cross         | November 1800  |
| Colchester           | August 1801    |
| Chelmsford           | September 1801 |
| Buckingham/Aylesbury | April 1802     |

Source: TNA, WO 17; HHL, ST 144; STG Military Oversize 3

unnatural crime'.<sup>39</sup>

Service in larger urban centres brought contact with more radical elements. A case that attracted wide publicity was that of Private Joseph Norwood in May 1796. It was alleged in the press that whilst drawn up in Fareham, where it had marched to avoid the election in Portsmouth, Captain William Pigott had accused Norwood of 'an improper noise'. He had knocked him down and struck him. Norwood was then accused of being drunk and attempting to strike Pigott, and received a sentence of 800 lashes from a regimental court martial.

Buckingham then presided over a general court martial at which many men attested that Norwood had not attempted to strike Pigott. Norwood, however, was found guilty and the sentence increased to 1,000 lashes.<sup>40</sup> As a result, a riot ensued in Portsea on 11 August, for which the regiment had to be called out. Generally, the regiment's officers were being hissed at, and pelted in the streets.

<sup>41</sup>

The background was one of continuing labour disputes and food riots in the Portsmouth dockyards. The Royal Bucks had already been called out during an attack on the Portsea gaol by a crowd trying to release three ringleaders of a food riot in April, the magistrates reading the Riot Act and shots being fired.<sup>42</sup> The sentence was commuted by the Royal Mercy to 300 lashes as a result of Norwood's previous good service and large family - he actually received 220 lashes - and a tacit acceptance that Pigott had been 'hasty & inconsiderate' in

---

<sup>39</sup> BA, T/A 2/2.

<sup>40</sup> BA, T/A 2/2.

<sup>41</sup> *Telegraph*, 20 July 1796, 12 and 15 Aug. 1796; *London Packet or New Lloyd's Evening Post*, 3 Aug. 1796; *Evening Mail*, 12 Aug. 1796.

<sup>42</sup> David Wilson, 'Government Dockyard Workers in Portsmouth, 1793-1815', Unpub. PhD, Warwick, 1975, 521.

striking Norwood first.<sup>43</sup> A crowd gathered when the sentence was carried out on 14 August despite the early hour. That night there were more altercations between mobs and officers. Effigies of the 'Bloody' and 'Murthering' Marquis and the 'Flogging Captain' were burned. It was alleged by the *Portsmouth Gazette* that 'loose' women and children had been hired to drag the effigies through the streets, presumably by the radicals it believed behind the disorder.<sup>44</sup>

The regiment won some support, however, for helping to put out a fire in a stable on 28 August.<sup>45</sup> The Resident Commissioner, Sir Charles Saxton, was unsympathetic to the insults aimed at the regiment's officers and wanted the Royal Bucks removed from Portsmouth but the Duke of Portland declined to allow the civil authorities to interfere in military matters.<sup>46</sup> Buckingham, who had promised his men he would seek justice for them, pressed charges against three journeymen who had been arrested during the altercations, one the steward of the radical Portsmouth Constitutional Society.<sup>47</sup> But the regiment had moved on to Bristol by the time the cases came to the Quarter Sessions. The rest of Norwood's sentence had been remitted and he had dropped counter charges against Pigott. Buckingham was relieved to see his regiment 'safe out of this cursed place' fearing more altercations with the inhabitants.<sup>48</sup> In August 1808 an obituary in *The Globe* of the Mayor of Portsmouth at the time of the unrest, Sir John Carter, alleged he had quelled a mutiny in the Royal Bucks. A libel case was immediately launched by the regiment's officers. Carter, far from

---

<sup>43</sup> HHL, ST 144 (21), Order, 3 Aug. 1796.

<sup>44</sup> *Portsmouth Gazette*, 8 August 1796; BL, Add Mss 42058, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 11 and 13 Aug. 1796.

<sup>45</sup> *True Briton*, 2 Sept. 1796.

<sup>46</sup> Wilson, 'Government Dockyard Workers', 563-66; TNA, HO 43/8, Portland to Carter, 17 Aug. 1796.

<sup>47</sup> HHL, ST 11 (21), Order, 14 Aug. 1796; *Hampshire Chronicle*, 3 Sept. 1796.

<sup>48</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 2 Oct. 1796.



‘risking [*sic*] his life’ by ending any non-existent mutiny ‘was with difficulty brought forward to use his Authority and refused to read the Riot Act’ when the regiment was confronted by those attacking their barracks.<sup>49</sup>

At Bristol, it was evident that ‘lower orders’ were taking ‘every opportunity to enter into disputes with the Militia’, resulting in a prohibition on unnecessary interaction with the inhabitants.<sup>50</sup> The Royal Bucks was also confronted in May 1797 by the handbills that were widely distributed to barracks in England drawing attention to the recent naval mutinies at the Nore and Spithead and the inequities of military service. They incited disobedience: ‘We have only two choices, either to submit to the present impositions, or demand treatment proper for men.’<sup>51</sup> Many regiments responded including the Royal Bucks, to whom the ‘infamous hand-bill’ was read by Lieutenant General Rooke on 22 May. On the regiment’s behalf 63 NCOs headed by the Acting Sergeant Major, Thomas Newbery, submitted their answer, penned by the regimental clerk, William Heath. They would ‘use our utmost Endeavours to find out some of those Villains who, under Pretence of espousing our Cause and pointing out Grievances that never have existed and Oppressions that we have never laboured under, endeavour to withdraw us from our Allegiance to the best of Kings, our Duty to our Officers, and to throw the Country into Confusion; and that, should we meet with any such wicked Wretches, we will deliver them over to the Magistrates that they may be brought to condign Punishment.’<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> HHL, STG 2(2), Draft Case by Frogatt & Co.

<sup>50</sup> HHL, ST 144, Order, 11 Oct. 1796.

<sup>51</sup> Clive Emsley, ‘The Military and Popular Disorder in England, 1790-1801’, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 61 (1983), 10-21, 96-112.

<sup>52</sup> Harold Wheeler and Alexander Broadley, *Napoleon and the Invasion of England; The Story of the Great Terror* 2 vols. (London: John Lane, 1908), I, 205; BA, T/A 2/4.

There was no repetition of militia disturbances in a new wave of food riots in 1800 but, in any case, there were new auxiliary forces on which the government could place reliance. In fact, discipline was relatively good as suggested by the courts martial records for 1793-95 cited earlier. In May 1795 four privates were committed to Dorchester gaol for stealing sheep at Winchester while four were acquitted at the Dorset summer assizes of stealing sheep at Wyke Regis.<sup>53</sup> Orders routinely counselled against transgression. In December 1793, after gamekeepers had reported men digging for rabbits, a prohibition was placed on straying more than a mile from quarters. Breaking down hedges was also forbidden.<sup>54</sup> Throwing fish entrails and other offal behind tents was forbidden at Wyke Common in June 1794 as well as for men from ‘making water or easing themselves but in the rear’.<sup>55</sup> In July a search was directed for a woman from the camp begging in Weymouth and ‘the barbarous practice of baiting a Badger’ was also prohibited.<sup>56</sup> ‘Outrageous depredations’ were committed in the potato fields in August. Chesterfield who was commanding in Buckingham’s absence threatened to confine all to their tents unless the culprits were found.<sup>57</sup>

A record of the proceedings of all regimental courts martial from October 1797 to May 1812 show 539 separate offences, of which 247 were for absence (45.8 per cent), 134 for indiscipline and drunkenness (24.8 per cent), 83 for theft including selling or pawning equipment (15.3 per cent) and 44 for disobedience (8.1 per cent). There was one case of self-mutilation and one case of giving

---

<sup>53</sup> *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 7 May 1795; David Clanmer, ‘Soldiers and Civilians: Troops in Dorset, 1793-1805’, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 93 (2015), 210-30, at 221-22.

<sup>54</sup> HHL, ST 144 (18), Order, 13 Dec. 1793.

<sup>55</sup> HHL, ST 144 (19), Order, 17 June 1794.

<sup>56</sup> HHL, ST 144 (19), Orders, 1 and 15 July 1794.

<sup>57</sup> HHL, ST 144 (19), 25 Aug. 1794.

away a child.<sup>58</sup> The latter involved William Cowper (not the poet), who had had a child with a woman in Bristol. The child was being cared for by another soldier's wife until she went on leave with her husband. Cowper claimed the child had hurt its face and he needed to take it to its mother now at Deddington in Oxfordshire. Having obtained a pass from Chelmsford, Cowper actually passed the child to a beggar in Romford for half a crown and a quart of beer. Unfortunately, no sentence is recorded in this instance. Another case at Chelmsford in October 1799 saw 18 men of the artillery company tried together for disobedience in taking a guinea each to enlist in the 16<sup>th</sup> Foot when Buckingham had forbidden further enlistment from the company. All were confined to 'the dry room' with pay stopped until the money was repaid. The case of self-mutilation occurred at Dover in December 1810 when George Whittick claimed his cut thumb was an accident: he was sentenced to 300 lashes, of which he received 100. Two assaults on women - one at Exeter in August 1807 and one at Horsham in February 1808 - resulted in 100 lashes and reduction to the ranks respectively.<sup>59</sup>

An interesting case that came to light only in 1874 was that of a centenarian residing at Tring, Betsy Horam, an orphaned gypsy child who had married Joseph Leatherland of the RBKOM in 1785. She followed him through his militia service until he died in Ireland just before the regiment returned in 1816. In 1874 she was still working in the harvest fields.<sup>60</sup>

Another case shows the extraordinary effort sometimes required to see justice done. In July 1803 Edward Dorrell of the Royal Bucks was tried at Chelmsford for robbing the home of James Hardy back in March. This was on the evidence of Hardy's steward, who claimed to recognise Dorrell as one of three men

---

<sup>58</sup> HHL, STG Military Oversize 2.

<sup>59</sup> HHL, STG Military Oversize 2.

<sup>60</sup> *Buckingham Express*, 15 Aug. 1874.

involved. With Buckingham's own solicitors representing Dorrell's case, ten witnesses were conveyed to Chelmsford from Chalfont St Peter at a cost of £15.1s.0d. Dorrell had only been engaged as a substitute on the previous day to the alleged offence by a Denham farmer, Richard Watts, whose servant had been drawn in the ballot. Dorrell, himself a farmer's son who had previously served in the Royal Bucks, was still staying at the Rose and Crown in Chalfont - 54 miles distant from Chelmsford - when the robbery took place and did not reach Chelmsford until six days after it. Buckingham offered to testify as he was 'anxious to save this poor man from his Irons and from his confinement in Gaol'. Dorrell was acquitted.<sup>61</sup>



*Officer of Royal Bucks King's Own Militia, c. 1807(BMMT)*

Between May 1805 and July 1808 a total of 48 men deserted from the Royal Bucks of whom seven were recovered. A further nine men were committed to

---

<sup>61</sup> HHL, STG Military 1 (13).

various gaols including one at Maidstone for rape, four at Exeter for highway robbery, one at Lewes for robbery, one at Horsham for a capital offence, and one for debt.<sup>62</sup> The same returns show that 41 men died while 72 were discharged for a variety of reasons including Daniel Bushell. Drawn in the ballot at Hambleden in May 1808 he was immediately discharged ‘in consequence of an incontinence of urine which renders him totally unfit for his Majesty’s Service’. Three days’ pay and a travel allowance to get Bushell back to High Wycombe cost 11s.0d.<sup>63</sup> The highway robbery case followed many insinuations against the regiment during the course of the summer of 1806, undoing efforts to refute them. As a result, no man was allowed more than a mile from quarters with a third of each company ordered to patrol the barracks every day from 1300 hours until evening parade. Any among those previously allowed to sleep out of barracks, and thought to be potential risks, were ordered back. Roll calls were held throughout the night. Any found absent were to be court martialled immediately.<sup>64</sup>

Petty theft in the Royal Bucks would likely result in 20-50 lashes, drunkenness 60 lashes, brawling 100 lashes, and desertion to anything between 200 and 400. Such punishments suggested why men would avoid the ballot if they could. At Bristol in January 1797, Robert Pain got 100 lashes for stealing a shirt and selling a coat; he received 120 more a week later for selling two shirts. The greatest number of lashes awarded as punishment between 1797 and 1812 was 1,000 on James Newns at Chelmsford in June 1799 for robbing his officer of £66 in cash and four shirts when in Dublin in October 1798 and then going

---

<sup>62</sup> HHL, ST 147.

<sup>63</sup> HHL, ST 147.

<sup>64</sup> HHL, ST 144 (34), Order, 28 Sept. 1806.

absent. Newns had only now been apprehended. He received, however, only 320 lashes. Others at Chelmsford received 400 of 800, and 500 of 800 lashes.<sup>65</sup>

Given that the government was aware of the general unpopularity of militia ballots, it suggested on 14 March 1794 that the population could assist in raising new forces. They could make voluntary financial contributions intended to provide bounties for voluntary militia augmentation, or raise county 'fencibles' - regular units but only liable for home defence - or independent volunteer corps. It was left to lords lieutenant how they implemented all or any of the measures. Political opponents claimed this was levying men and money without parliamentary sanction, and even soliciting a test of loyalty in terms of the willingness to subscribe. Many including government supporters feared the potential mass arming of the population although, alternatively, some believed that social bonds might be strengthened by incorporation of the less privileged. The response was two pieces of hasty legislation allowing voluntary augmentation of the militia and the acceptance of voluntary offers. The latter was based on the 1782 legislation but with additional clauses to enable units to be used in aid of the civil power under military discipline.<sup>66</sup>

Apart from the 1782 precedent, the volunteer idea also drew on the range of voluntary associations for the prosecution of felons that had emerged in many areas in the 1770s. The Aylesbury Association for the Protection of Persons & Property, for example, was founded in 1785, with 43 members subscribing 2s.6d each. That at Whitchurch was formed much later in 1811. Another

---

<sup>65</sup> HHL, Stowe STG Military Oversize 2.

<sup>66</sup> Kevin Linch, 'Creating the Amateur Soldier: The Theory and Training of Britain's Volunteers', in Catriona Kennedy and Matthew McCormack (eds), *Soldiering in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1850: Men at Arms* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 200-18, at 201.

emerged at Quainton in 1817.<sup>67</sup> Political associations had also emerged including loyalist and political reform organisations, the former in response to events in France in 1792 and the mobilisation of the militia. They numbered at least 1,000 over the country as a whole.<sup>68</sup> One had formed at Buckingham in November 1792, and Buckingham hoped one would also appear in Aylesbury.<sup>69</sup> One also emerged in Beaconsfield in December.<sup>70</sup> William Grenville advised Buckingham not to try and solicit support only from the gentry but instead from ‘as many farmers and yeomen as possible’.<sup>71</sup> Declarations of loyalty were forthcoming from Chenies and Chesham Bois.<sup>72</sup> In 1801 Buckingham pointed out with satisfaction that there was not a single Jacobin club in the county.<sup>73</sup>

While some 5,000 militiamen and 6,000 fencibles were raised, much of the £93,000 contributed by May 1794 was devoted to new volunteer, volunteer cavalry, and mounted yeomanry corps.<sup>74</sup> Some volunteer units had already appeared in maritime counties in 1793, some linked to earlier ‘associations’ although the purpose of the volunteers was primarily military and not political.

---

<sup>67</sup> Elliott Viney, *Aylesbury Association for the Protection of Persons & Property, 1785-1985* (Wendover: Peterhouse Press, 1985), 3-4; G. W. Wilson, *Chronicles of Whitchurch, Bucks* (Privately printed, 1909), 43-44; BA, PR 169/28/11.

<sup>68</sup> Robert Dozier, *For King, Constitution and Country: The English Loyalists and the French Revolution* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1983), 61-62; Jennifer Mori, ‘Responses to Revolution: The November Crisis of 1792’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 69 (1996), 284-305.

<sup>69</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, II, 344, 352, Buckingham to Grenville, 27 Nov. and 8 Dec. 1792.

<sup>70</sup> ‘The Minutes of a Meeting at Beaconsfield’, *Records of Bucks* 7 (1897), 231-35.

<sup>71</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 229, Grenville to Buckingham, 25 Nov. 1792.

<sup>72</sup> BA, PR 42/28/1.

<sup>73</sup> TNA, HO 50/50, Buckingham to Hobart, 11 June 1801.

<sup>74</sup> J. R. Western, ‘The County Fencibles and the Militia Augmentation of 1794’, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 34 (1956), 3-11; Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 73.

While volunteers were to ape regular uniforms and weaponry, they were decidedly different to the militia in the restrictions they were to place on their services and the tendency to adopt light infantry modes of training irrespective of increasing attempts at centralisation by government.

Interpretation as to the motivation of the volunteers and yeomanry differs between fear of insurrection,<sup>75</sup> fear of invasion,<sup>76</sup> and assertiveness on the part of the 'middling sort', especially in urban areas.<sup>77</sup> In terms of the latter, it has been suggested that rather than being evidence of centralisation - government continued to prefer militia to volunteers - volunteering represented self-mobilisation and self-organisation with urban corps often eluding close control by the lieutenancy and gentry. The lieutenancies and the administration of militia, yeomanry and volunteers were linked to central authority but also represented local defence communities. There was difference, however, between regions; loyalism was not the same as 'national defence patriotism'. Patriotism was 'opportunistic, interested and conditional' while loyalism was marked by active anti-radical and anti-democratic political forces and patriotism was less significant than working class pragmatism and the 'town-making' interests of the emerging urban elite. Loyalism did not produce mass volunteering in the way that patriotism did. Thus, there were new opportunities

---

<sup>75</sup> J. R. Western, 'The Volunteer Movement as an Anti-Revolutionary Force, 1793-1801', *English Historical Review* 71 (1956), 603-14.

<sup>76</sup> Clive Emsley, *British Society and the French Wars, 1793-1815* (London: Macmillan, 1979), 38.

<sup>77</sup> Linda Colley, 'Whose Nation? Class and National Consciousness in Britain, 1750-1830', *Past and Present* 113 (1986), 97-117; John Cookson, 'The English Volunteer Movement of the French Wars, 1793-1815: Some Contexts', *Historical Journal* 32 (1989), 867-91.



for 'lesser men' to enter public leadership with concomitant implications for future political representation.<sup>78</sup>

Varied responses might equally have been down to 'peculiarities of place' with region or community more important than religion, class or occupation, although 'comparative prosperity' may have hindered volunteering by encouraging 'the most outrageous localism'. Generally, it is suggested that population density and industrialisation were more congenial to mobilisation.<sup>79</sup> Yet, at the time, while militia service engendered 'apolitical' habits, the threat from France 'levered volunteering away from local interests and loyalties', neutralising potential political challenges from the movement in which the 'comfortable' either saw service only as a safeguard against domestic disorder or declined to serve at all.<sup>80</sup> Equally, it has been argued that volunteering was rooted in local communities, involving a wide variety of men of differing occupations, political allegiances and religious denominations, and further stimulating localism, but also affording new opportunities for the more respectable elements of the urban population. Mobilisation was achieved, however, without concessions to popular reform and in ways which increased central control so that the lack of partisan political activity - as suggested in most initial resolutions on terms of service - was more significant than any implied loyalism.<sup>81</sup> There was certainly a basic loyalty to King and constitution

---

<sup>78</sup> John Cookson, *The British Armed Nation, 1793-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 6-10, 26-27, 66-67, 209-45.

<sup>79</sup> Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992), 292, 294, 298.

<sup>80</sup> John Cookson, 'Service without Politics? Army, Militia and Volunteers in Britain during the American and French Revolutionary Wars', *War in History* 10 (2003), 381-97.

<sup>81</sup> Austin Gee, *The British Volunteer Movement, 1794-1814* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), 8-10, 32-34, 265-68.

together with enormous antipathy to the French and to Catholicism. Inevitably, wartime propaganda also added to the sense of national identity.<sup>82</sup>

All such interpretations have some validity but it can be argued that most volunteer corps formed in 1794 and 1795 were in coastal counties and primarily motivated by the threat of invasion. The mounted yeomanry showed no particular coastal predominance, but most terms of yeomanry service stressed both invasion and insurrection. This was the case in Bucks.

As already mentioned, Buckingham had encouraged the creation of the loyalist associations at Aylesbury and Buckingham in 1792. He forwarded a plan to the Home Secretary, Henry Dundas, as well as to his brother, William Grenville, in February 1794 for a 'militia cavalry' or 'county cavalry' raised by ballot and a separate force of scouts to be raised compulsorily from gamekeepers.<sup>83</sup>

Subsequently, Buckingham was to direct returns to be made of gamekeepers when enacting the provisions of the Defence Act in 1803.<sup>84</sup>

Buckingham also proposed small bodies of 'irregular cavalry' modelled on the associations of 1746 although he actually doubted the response from the farming community or many coming forward for a larger volunteer force. In any case, he was suspicious of arming large numbers who might prove politically unreliable.<sup>85</sup> He was certainly careful to assess potential officers. There were no minimum legal requirements for officers of yeomanry or volunteers although in 1798 captains of armed associations were required to

---

<sup>82</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 307-19.

<sup>83</sup> TNA, HO 42/28, Buckingham to Grenville, 2 Feb. 1794, and Buckingham to Dundas, 15 Feb. 1794; HMC, *Dropmore*, II, 501, Buckingham to Grenville, 29 Jan. 1794; Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 255-56, Grenville to Buckingham, 1 Feb. 1794.

<sup>84</sup> BA, L/P 5/9, Minutes of County Meeting, 14 July 1803 (also in D/CE/Add J/4.

<sup>85</sup> TNA, HO 42/28, Buckingham to Grenville, 2 Feb. 1794.

possess an income of £50 per annum, or to be renting land worth £1,000.<sup>86</sup> Buckingham, however, felt this too low to qualify a farmer for a commission.<sup>87</sup>

A public meeting convened by the sheriff, William Clowes of Delaford Manor at Iver, was held at the George Inn, Aylesbury on 3 May 1794. It opened a subscription for troops of 'armed yeomanry'.<sup>88</sup> Unusually, the purpose had been advertised in advance.<sup>89</sup> The subscription fund was opened on 7 May. The County Committee comprised those who subscribed over £20 as well as representatives from towns. Ten bankers and agents were nominated to receive subscriptions.<sup>90</sup> Advertisements were placed in *The Sun* and in newspapers at Oxford, Northampton and Reading after a further meeting on 27 May, the committee establishing its offices in the London headquarters of the Grand Junction Canal Company at No. 6 Parliament Street.<sup>91</sup> Buckingham asked Sir William Lee of Hartwell to inform his friends and tenants that Tom Grenville was looking for yeomen.<sup>92</sup> Only surplus funds would be devoted to militia augmentation, the cost of adding four officers and 211 men to the militia borne largely by Buckingham and the Earl of Chesterfield.<sup>93</sup> In all, 71 individuals subscribed a total of £5,560.4s.0d, Buckingham and Chesterfield each giving £750.<sup>94</sup> By June 1795 the fund had risen to £8,514.7s.0d.<sup>95</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup> Gee, *British Volunteer Movement*, 121.

<sup>87</sup> TNA, HO 50/41, Buckingham, 22 Apl. 1798.

<sup>88</sup> BA, T/A 3/1c.

<sup>89</sup> Austin Gee, 'The British Volunteer Movement, 1793-1807', Unpub. DPhil, Oxford, 1989, 45.

<sup>90</sup> BA, L/S 5/4.

<sup>91</sup> BA, L/P 10.

<sup>92</sup> BA, D/LE/D 1/49, Buckingham to Lee, 27 May 1794.

<sup>93</sup> TNA, HO 50/21, Buckingham to Dundas, 3 and 29 Mar. 1794.

<sup>94</sup> BA, L/P 5/3.

<sup>95</sup> BA, L/S 3/1.

One other use to which the surplus was devoted was the addition of two brass six-pounder cannon and 40 artillerymen to the militia.<sup>96</sup> Cast by Kinman, the government founder at Woolwich, the guns were to be added to the two ‘government’ guns already issued, the ‘county guns’ being inscribed with the statement that they were the gift of the county to Buckingham ‘in trust for & for the use of’ the militia.<sup>97</sup> Buckingham was inordinately proud of his county guns and continued to subsidise them himself.<sup>98</sup> They are now at Fort Ticonderoga in New York State having been purchased when the remaining contents of Stowe were sold off in 1921.



*Bucks County Gun at Fort Ticonderoga, New York State*

---

<sup>96</sup> BA, L/P 10, Minutes of 20 May 1794.

<sup>97</sup> Ian Beckett, ‘The Buckinghamshire Presentation Guns at Fort Ticonderoga’, *Bulletin of the Fort Ticonderoga Museum* 15 (1992), 323-25; idem, ‘A Tale of Two Guns’, *Bugle & Sabre* 2 (2008), 11-12.

<sup>98</sup> TNA, HO 50/26, Buckingham to Portland, 20 Nov. 1796; HO 50/126, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 7 Aug. 1805; BA, D/MH/G/H42, Buckingham to Hobart, 19 Aug 1803.

The articles of enrolment for the ‘Armed Yeomanry of the County of Bucks’ were formulated by Tom Grenville.<sup>99</sup> It was agreed that yeomen would not seek pay unless embodied or called out by direction of the Crown in the case of invasion and by the Lord Lieutenant or the Sheriff in the case of ‘riots and tumults’. Each troop would consist of a minimum of 50 men. If substitutes were provided then they had to be of good character, resident in the county, used to riding, and not likely to enlist in army or militia.<sup>100</sup> It was also understood that the Aylesbury and Newport Pagnell troops would support each other in the case of riot or disturbances, and members could attend exercises of the other.<sup>101</sup> Men could enlist with Tom Grenville at the George Inn in Aylesbury; William Drake at the Griffin at Amersham; William Praed at the Swan at Newport Pagnell; and with Sir William Young at the Windmill at Salthill. The committee intended to provide each yeoman with a green coat mounted with black velvet and gold buttons; a buff waistcoat; a helmet with bearskin crest and feather; goat skin saddle furniture; a sword and belt; a pistol and pair of holsters; and an ammunition pouch, and a belt. Men would find their own horses, saddles, bridles, boots, leather breeches, leather gloves, and a switch. Horses had to be a minimum of 14 hands, and geldings or mares.

A total of 72 men had expressed interest to join the yeomanry on 3 May 1794,<sup>102</sup> and troops were soon established at Amersham, Aylesbury, Buckingham,

---

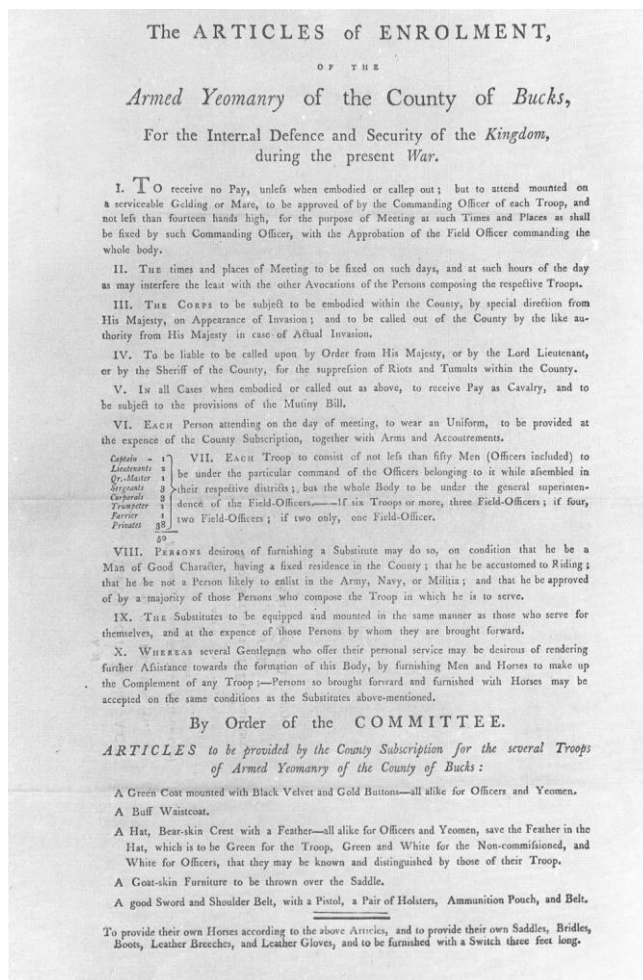
<sup>99</sup> BA, D/LE/D 1/49, Buckingham to Lee, 27 May 1794.

<sup>100</sup> BA, L/Y 1/3; L/P 5/3; T/A 3/1a.

<sup>101</sup> BA, T/A 3/3, Yeomanry Roll, Apl. 1795.

<sup>102</sup> BA, T/A 3/3.

Burnham, High Wycombe, and Newport Pagnell.<sup>103</sup> By August there were 216 men but the harvest was interfering with meetings.<sup>104</sup>



## *Articles of Enrolment for the Bucks Yeomanry, 3 May 1794* (Buckinghamshire Archives)

Officers were often elected in what has been characterised as ‘subscriber democracy’.<sup>105</sup> In Bucks, although Buckingham professed to allow individual

<sup>103</sup> TNA, HO 50/21, Buckingham to Dundas, 15 Feb. 1794; HO 50/330, Buckingham to Dundas, 3 and 24 May 1794; PRO 30/8/244, Note of 27 May 1794; BA, L/P 5/1; L/P 5/3; L/P 10; L/S 4; T/A 3/1.

<sup>104</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 283-87, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 31 Aug. 1794.

yeomanry troops to name their own officers, it is clear he generally decided on the officers.<sup>106</sup> They did subsequently draw lots for seniority, however, when belatedly gazetted in June 1795.<sup>107</sup> The Marquess ranked as senior captain followed by Sir William Young, William Praed of Tyringham, Sir John Dashwood, Bt. of West Wycombe Park, Tom Grenville, and Kender Mason of Beel House at Little Chalfont, a successful London and West Indies merchant. Lieutenants were Mansel Dawkin Mansel of Lathbury Hall; William Hicks of Bradenham Manor; the sheriff, Charles Clowes; William Pigott of Doddershall; and William Fremantle of Swanbourne.<sup>108</sup> The Sergeant Major was the Olney lace merchant, John Henry Talbot, who was later to command the Olney troop for many years.<sup>109</sup> In May 1798 Buckingham, Tom Grenville, William Praed and Lord Grenville were all promoted to major, Buckingham notifying the latter that he would now have the honour and amusement of ‘yeomanising’.<sup>110</sup>

Again, Buckingham remained the key figure in appointments. Kender Mason, for example, was to be the captain at Amersham since Charles Clarke was ‘not of calibre enough to be dissatisfied’.<sup>111</sup> He is not to be confused with Thomas Clarke, who commanded volunteers at Buckingham. Equally, Sir William Young had been told to be cautious in advancing Lord Grenville to major. It

---

<sup>105</sup> Gee, *British Volunteer Movement*, 218.

<sup>106</sup> Bodleian, D. D. F2 2/1/7, Buckingham to Dashwood-King, 14 May 1797.

<sup>107</sup> BA, L/P 10, Minutes, 16 Apl. 1795.

<sup>108</sup> Major General J. C. Swann, *The Citizen Soldiers of Buckinghamshire, 1795-1926* (Aylesbury: Hazell, Watson & Viney, 1930), 20.

<sup>109</sup> BA, L/Yd/4, Talbot to Gerrard, 6 May 1808.

<sup>110</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 217-18, Buckingham to Grenville, 27 May 1798.

<sup>111</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 6 May 1798.



*Mansel Dawkin Mansel, c. 1800*  
(AMOT)



*Officer of Bucks Yeomanry, c. 1803*  
(BMMT)

might upset Viscount Kirkwall of Cliveden but it had to be settled before the latter's grandfather, the Earl of Inchquin, interfered and put Kirkwall up to it.<sup>112</sup>

Promised subscriptions were not always forthcoming.<sup>113</sup> In the case of Lord Inchquin he declined to complete his subscription because he was not made a major.<sup>114</sup> In December 1798 the War Office declined an application for more funding on the grounds that allowances were offered for replacing clothing unfit for service, and not for the liquidation of debts.<sup>115</sup> In vain, Tom Grenville

---

<sup>112</sup> BL, Add Mss 48151, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 13 May 1798.

<sup>113</sup> BL, Add Mss 59291, Minutes of officer's meeting at Aylesbury, 20 Oct. 1798 (also BA, L/P 5/5).

<sup>114</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 15 Apl. 1798.

<sup>115</sup> BA, L/Y 13/31, Lord Grenville, Tom Grenville and Praed to Chaplin, 27 Oct. 1798; L/Y 13/38, Windham to Chaplin, 3 Dec. 1798.



appealed to Dundas, indicating the parliamentary promise of funding up to £9 per yeoman had led to a greater expansion of the force than could now be sustained.<sup>116</sup>

The Bucks yeomanry owed over £2,900 by October 1798 including £992.7s.3d to various hatters.<sup>117</sup> Fortunately, Buckingham and his family were generous. He spent £564.7s.6d in 1794 on the yeomanry, providing 80 pistols, 12 carbines, 43 holsters, 73 bridles and goatskins, eight swords, 42 dozen buttons and 27 uniforms. Another £1,170.7s.0d went on 440 helmets between 1794 and 1797.<sup>118</sup> Cloaks and overalls cost £683.12s.1d in 1797 and 1798.<sup>119</sup>

Buckingham pointed out that the discrepancy in equipment between the Buckingham Squadron and the Desborough Troop in 1801 was due to his own generosity towards the former. Sir John Dashwood-King, who inherited the Dashwood baronetcy and West Wycombe Park in 1793, and was MP for Wycombe from 1796 to 1831, maintained that the cloaks and swords of the Amersham Troop came from government funds and not Buckingham.<sup>120</sup> Weapons were supplied centrally from the Tower.<sup>121</sup> In the case of saddlecloths, six different tradesmen were used suggesting the beneficial largesse that could be distributed locally.<sup>122</sup>

---

<sup>116</sup> BA, L/Y 14/75, Tom Grenville to Dundas, 10 Dec. 1798.

<sup>117</sup> BA, L/P 10.

<sup>118</sup> BA, L/Y 7; John Kinross, *Fishguard Fiasco: An Account of the Last Invasion of Britain* (Tenby: H. G. Walters, 1974), 19-20.

<sup>119</sup> HHL, STG 2 (12), Box's executors to Buckingham.

<sup>120</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/2, Buckingham to Clayton, 4 Aug. 1801; Dashwood-King to Clayton, 4 Aug. 1801.

<sup>121</sup> BA, L/Y 7/24.

<sup>122</sup> BA, L/Y 7/12. There are extensive lists of equipment issued between 1794 and 1805 in L/Y 7/1-26. For the issue of helmets and two trumpets to the Olney Troop in 1808, see BA, L/Yd/2 and 3. The Olney Troop return for May 1808 is in BA, L/Yd/1

In 1798 Buckingham outfitted the yeomanry and volunteers at a guinea a man to a total cost of £1,058.6s.0d.<sup>123</sup> In 1802 he built a barracks for the militia in West Street, Buckingham that still stands. In 1803 Buckingham laid out £110 on yeomanry helmets and that same year gave a guinea to every volunteer passed efficient by the inspecting officer.<sup>124</sup> He also provided an annual dinner for the yeomanry, one dinner in 1810 seeing Buckingham providing 59 bottles of sherry, 102 bottles of port and considerable quantities of beer and punch for the 147 men attending. Two decanters had to be replaced as well as many broken glasses.<sup>125</sup> In February 1798 Buckingham also donated his fees and profits from the office of Teller of the Exchequer equivalent to about £10,000 annually for national defence.<sup>126</sup>

The Grenvilles dominated the yeomanry and volunteers, as they did the militia. After July 1803 when yeomanry and volunteers were both reorganised into three regiments - a 1<sup>st</sup> or Southern, 2<sup>nd</sup> or Mid, and 3<sup>rd</sup> or Northern Bucks Regiments - Lord Grenville commanded the Southern yeomanry from 1803 to 1806, and Thomas Grenville the Mid Bucks yeomanry from 1803 to 1813. Praed commanded the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment while command of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment passed to Sir William Clayton of Harleyford.<sup>127</sup> Buckingham was commandant of militia, yeomanry and volunteers while his son, Temple, was major in the yeomanry and commanded the militia from 1803 onwards. Buckingham's adjutant as Colonel Commandant was the Town Clerk of Buckingham, John Fellowes. It would be one of the few yeomanry regiments to have a continuous existence from 1794 (although not always on the official establishment), most

---

<sup>123</sup> E. M. Renn, 'British Civil and Military Preparations against Napoleon's Planned Invasion', Unpub. Ph.D., Florida State, 1974, 260.

<sup>124</sup> *Morning Chronicle*, 19 Aug. 1803.

<sup>125</sup> HHL, STG Military Box 5 (3-6).

<sup>126</sup> Wheeler and Broadley, *Napoleon and Invasion of England*, I, 117.

<sup>127</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Clayton to Grenville, 2 Mar. 1806.

others being the result of individual troops coming together during the nineteenth century.<sup>128</sup>

In accordance with the avowed intention of the articles of enrolment to ‘preserve domestic tranquillity’, yeomanry detachments attended the Aylesbury and Newport Pagnell markets in April 1795 to prevent grain riots.<sup>129</sup> One intemperate pamphlet in 1795 accused the yeomanry of being ‘the associated instruments’ of Buckingham’s ‘despot inhumanity’ and suggested men had been ‘dragooned’ into the regiment by its recruiting officers. The primary grievance, however, appeared to be irregularities in the militia ballot at Wootton Underwood, over which Buckingham had presided as ‘George Grenville’ and the pressing of a vagrant from Aylesbury into the navy. Both related presumably to the previous war since Buckingham had become Earl Temple in 1779. Since the pamphlet also alluded to Wotton Underwood being in the non-existent ‘Ashmore Hundreds’, it is doubtful whether there was any truth in the charges but it suggested the antipathy towards the landed and the yeomanry in some quarters.<sup>130</sup> The Marquess had arranged for the corporation and inhabitants of Buckingham to send a loyal address to the King in November 1795 and contemplated doing so from the yeomanry.<sup>131</sup>

It was the rumours of intended disturbances at Aylesbury market in March 1795 and at Newport Pagnell market in April 1795 that led to yeomen being deployed respectively under Fremantle and Praed. Farmers had been holding back grain

---

<sup>128</sup> Andrew Gilks, ‘A History of Britain’s Volunteer Cavalry, 1776-1908’, Unpub. PhD, Birmingham, 2005, 28.

<sup>129</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 4 Apl. 1795.

<sup>130</sup> *A Letter from a Yeoman of Buckinghamshire to the Marquis of Buckingham* (London: 1795) from *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*  
<http://galebet.galegroup.com/servlet/ECCO>.

<sup>131</sup> BL, Add Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 19 Nov. 1795.

for the past six weeks or selling it without coming to market. Language towards the yeomen was violent but no violence occurred.<sup>132</sup> In March 1796 the appearance of a sergeant and four men from the Newport and Buckingham squadron was sufficient to disperse a mob - summoned by a horn - trying to stop grain wagons (and rescue two prisoners) at Stony Stratford. The yeomen 'repeatedly charged the mob' and retrieved the wagon while taking prisoner the boy who blew the horn, and a woman who appeared to be the ringleader. The same day, 20 yeomen led by Mansel charged a crowd at Fenny Stratford and took seven prisoners although women made off with flour while the struggle was underway. Four prisoners - three women and the horn blower, who appeared 'an idiot selected for the purpose' - were then escorted to Aylesbury gaol by a sergeant and seven men.<sup>133</sup> The yeomanry also suppressed an anti-militia riot at Wing, of which more later.

Yeomen were summoned for possible further food riots in 1800 at Leckhamstead in May and at Burnham in September and October 1800. A total of 42 yeomen were embodied for 24 hours in the case of Leckhamstead whilst the Desborough Troop was called out at Burnham.<sup>134</sup> In the case of Burnham, Sir William Young found no sign of disturbance when riding into the town on 24 September with his son and his lieutenant, Robert Quarme. He was able to prove that bread prices there were not a penny a quarter loaf higher than at Maidenhead as rumoured. He then had handbills printed and special constables sworn in for Burnham's statute fair on 2 October with ten yeomen standing by in 'coloured clothes', presumably mufti. No trouble resulted although the price

---

<sup>132</sup> BA, L/P 10; Benson Freeman, 'History of Bucks Yeomanry, *Bucks Free Press*, 14 Nov. 1919.

<sup>133</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 25 Mar. 1796; BA, L/P 10.

<sup>134</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/3, Buckingham to Desborough Troop, 4 Oct. 1800; TNA, HO 50/56, Return of Buckingham Squadron, 5 May 1800.

of bread did increase by a penny that day.<sup>135</sup> Captain Robert Browne of the Royal Bucks made an agreement with a ‘mob’ at Aylesbury in September on the price of bread but was ordered to break it by Buckingham as against all ideas of property. The price rose again to its ‘proper’ level without apparent trouble.<sup>136</sup> Browne, an Irishman who acquired the freehold of the Prebendal - Wilkes’s old House - in Aylesbury in 1801 was a long-term client of the Marquess. He had come to Buckingham’s attention in Ireland in 1787 and became one of clerks to the sinecure office of Teller of the Exchequer. He was to succeed an earlier tenant of the Prebendal, John Edwards Fremantle, as lieutenant colonel of the Royal Bucks.<sup>137</sup>

There were actual disturbances over prices at Marlow and Stony Stratford, the latter involving ‘navigators’ on the Grand Junction Canal.<sup>138</sup> Much later, yeomen were also stood to in case of trouble that did not materialise at High Wycombe in May 1811.<sup>139</sup>

Bearing in mind the limitations of so many yeomen being involved in ‘cultivation’, Buckingham conceived that even in support of the magistracy, men could only be called out for perhaps two or three days. He suggested, therefore, that preparations should ensure the men carrying two days’ supply of bread and cold meat, a small corn bag with 10 lbs of corn, and a ‘necessary bag’, a small blanket under the saddle, and every fifth man carrying a bill hook

---

<sup>135</sup> BL, Add Mss 59291, Young to Grenville, 24 and 27 Sept. and 2 Oct. 1800.

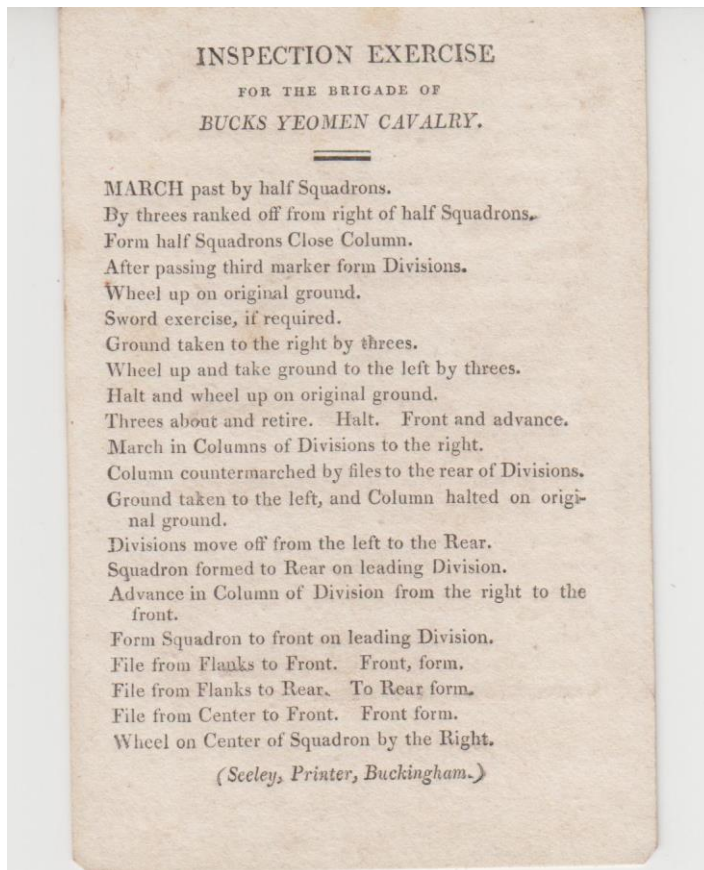
<sup>136</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 24 Sept 1800.

<sup>137</sup> Hugh Hanley, *The Prebendal, Aylesbury: A History* (Aylesbury, 1986), 46-47. See BA, D-X 978/4, 6, 10, 11, and 12 for Browne’s Bucks militia and local militia commissions.

<sup>138</sup> John Stevenson, ‘Food Riots in England, 1792-1818’ in Roland Quinault and John Stevenson (eds), *Popular Protest and Public Order: Six Studies in British History, 1790-1920* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1974), 33-73, at 36; Idem, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1870* (London: Longman, 1979), 97.

<sup>139</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/3, Buckingham to Clayton, 22 May 1811 and 2 June 1811.

to cut wood.<sup>140</sup> There were difficulties. William Fremantle feared in April 1800 that the Bucks Yeomanry would not put on a satisfactory appearance at a forthcoming review in Hertfordshire ‘as the very high price of hay and corn must have unhorsed many of them’.<sup>141</sup>



*Aide-mémoire of exercises for an inspection of the Bucks Yeomanry, c. 1803 (BMMT)*

Buckingham received authorisation to add small infantry corps to the yeomanry in February 1797 providing they were ‘respectable inhabitants... whose situation and occupation do not allow them to serve on horseback’. Buckingham stressed that these would ‘give effectual protection to property, and to the Magistrates, at the moment when the Yeomen and all other troops may be

<sup>140</sup> BL, Add Mss 34472, Note by Buckingham, 6 Apl. 1798.

<sup>141</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 53-55, Fremantle to Buckingham, 10 Apl. 1800.

withdrawn'.<sup>142</sup> There were some difficulties in finding volunteers in Amersham and High Wycombe but some came forward at Marlow.<sup>143</sup> They amounted by 1 June 1797 to 127 men at Aylesbury (25), Buckingham (25), Eton (21), and jointly at Newport Pagnell and Olney (56).<sup>144</sup> By September 1798 there were 937 men in eight companies in the north of the county alone distributed at Aylesbury (45), Buckingham (125), Fenny Stratford (100), Gayhurst (123), Hanslope (93), Newport Pagnell (123), Olney (169), and Tyringham (159).<sup>145</sup>

Buckingham was keen that 'these small corps, established for the protection of the Magistrates, and the local defence of the towns should always have a *resident* officer', preferably not one drawn from the yeomanry.<sup>146</sup> In June 1797 Buckingham was to transmit a further offer to government, this time from 503 engineers, inspectors, foremen, flag masters and working men employed on the construction of the Grand Junction Canal, who were prepared to act as pioneers in Bucks or adjacent counties in the event of invasion.<sup>147</sup> It predated the government decision to accept 'armed associations' in towns to add further to the volunteer movement, a wider scheme to accept such units being launched by Dundas in April 1798, of which more later. Men from the Royal Bucks were detached to help train the volunteers.<sup>148</sup> While the Bucks yeomanry had engaged for service within the county in the event of riots and throughout the kingdom in the case of invasion, the volunteers had engaged for service in their

---

<sup>142</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 22 Feb., 12 Apl. and 8 May 1797; BA, L/Y 13/18.

<sup>143</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 8 May 1797; Bodleian, F2 2/1/7, Buckingham to Dashwood-King, 14 May 1797.

<sup>144</sup> TNA, WO 17/1025; BL, Add Mss 59291, Grover to Lord Grenville, 12 Apl. 1797.

<sup>145</sup> BA, L/V 6/1.

<sup>146</sup> Bodleian, D. D. F2 2/1/7, Buckingham to Dashwood-King, 14 May 1797.

<sup>147</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 18 June 1797.

<sup>148</sup> BA, L/V 5/2; BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 7 Aug 1798.

own towns or ten miles distant in the event of riots and only within the county in the event of invasion.<sup>149</sup> Buckingham was to comment further on this in April 1803, suggesting they might now be prepared to serve in the London district.<sup>150</sup>

Overall, infantry volunteers were an urban phenomenon. They tended to embrace those of relatively low social status, which undermines the idea that the movement as a whole represented a party of order in embryo. Equally, many volunteers were men of some social status. The accepted definition of a ‘yeoman’ was a freeholder who could meet the qualifications as electors.<sup>151</sup> As a military force, the yeomanry was primarily rural and far more tilted towards the propertied. It was anticipated that only arms and accoutrements would be provided by government but, again, it was not a given that yeoman would be exclusively propertied. Grenville suggested that those who came forward for the yeomanry would not otherwise have been involved in military affairs.<sup>152</sup>

Figures available for Bucks troops between 1798 and 1804 show a preponderance of farmers and their sons, but also a substantial secondary intake of professional men and tradesmen. Surprisingly, there was also a steady number of skilled craftsmen although these, too, would not have willingly served in the militia.<sup>153</sup> One carpenter, who also kept a baker’s shop, was anxious to join the yeomanry with the clear intention of avoiding the ballot.<sup>154</sup> In August 1805 Buckingham described the yeomanry as being ‘mostly filled by

---

<sup>149</sup> BA, L/Y 5/2.

<sup>150</sup> BA, D/MH/G/H39, Buckingham to Hobart, 27 April 1803.

<sup>151</sup> George Hay, *The Yeomanry Cavalry and Military Identities in Rural Britain, 1815-1914* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 8.

<sup>152</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Grenville to Yorke, 25 Nov. 1803.

<sup>153</sup> BA, D/HV/15/25; L/Y 2/7 and 5/11; BL, Add Mss 59291.

<sup>154</sup> BL, Add Mss 59292, Clowes to Grenville, n. d. [1803].



our farmers, and by such of our tradesmen (such as butchers and bakers) who keep horses'. <sup>155</sup> One list of the 21 latest recruits for the Desborough Troop in June 1803 records six farmers, three professional men, eight tradesmen, and four craftsmen. <sup>156</sup>

Table 4.2 Yeomen in the Burnham and Stoke Hundreds, 10 June 1798

| Occupation         | Total      | Freeholders |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Gentry             | 14 (14.5%) | 9           |
| Farmers and Sons   | 17 (17.7%) | 9           |
| Professions        | 20 (20.8%) | 6           |
| Tradesmen          | 21 (21.8%) | 5           |
| Artisans/Craftsmen | 7 (7.2%)   | 2           |
| Servants           | 5 (5.2%)   | 1           |
| Labourers          | -          | -           |
| Unknown            | 12         | 1           |
| Total              | 96         | 33          |

Source: BL, Add Mss 59291

In the case of the Burnham and Stoke Hundreds, the yeomanry included the landlords of the Crown Inn at Slough, the Christopher at Eton, the Turks Head at Eton, the Crown at Windsor, and the Three Tuns at Salthill, as well as premises in Stoke Green. Among professionals were the secretaries of the London Hospital and St Vincent's Agency, a writing master from Eton College and a music master from the Chapel Royal. Grenville also had 40 attached infantry drawn from Eton, Slough and Windsor, this apparently resulting in a

---

<sup>155</sup> TNA, HO 50/126, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 25 Aug. 1805.

<sup>156</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/4, List, 20 June 1803.

suggestion that there was an ‘Eton Dismounted Troop of Yeomanry’ conveyed by wagons.<sup>157</sup>

Table 4.3 Yeomen of the Aylesbury Troop, 1800

| Occupation         | Total      |
|--------------------|------------|
| Gentry             | 8 (7.2%)   |
| Farmers            | 54 (49.0%) |
| Professions        | 5 (4.5%)   |
| Tradesmen          | 26 (23.6%) |
| Artisans/Craftsmen | 14 (12.7%) |
| Unknown            | 3          |
| Total              | 110        |

Source: BA, L/Y 5/11

Of 110 men serving with the Aylesbury Troop in 1800, there were substantially more farmers than at Burnham and Stoke, no doubt representing the greater significance of agriculture in the Vale.<sup>158</sup>

While now comprising two troops rather than one, the Aylesbury yeomen had not notably increased in strength by 28 November 1803 but the preponderance of the farming community remained evident. Of the 138 men, 78 provided their own horses. It is noticeable that ten of the tradesmen were innkeepers including the landlords of the George Inn and the White Hart.<sup>159</sup>

---

<sup>157</sup> Benson Freeman, ‘History of Bucks Yeomanry’, *Bucks Free Press*, 10 Oct. 1919.

<sup>158</sup> BA, L/Y 5/11.

<sup>159</sup> BA, L/Y 2/7. For lists of horses provided to the Aylesbury Troop (1804-08), see BA, L/Y 6/1-12. L/Y 39 is a late return of horses used by the Winslow Troop in 1812.

Table 4.4 Yeomen of the Aylesbury Troops (with attached Winslow section),  
November 1803

| Occupation            | Total      | Average Age |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Gentry                | 5 (3.6%)   | 35.6        |
| Farmers and Sons      | 66 (47.8%) | 26.9        |
| Professions           | 14 (10.1%) | 34.1        |
| Tradesmen             | 33 (23.9%) | 28.7        |
| Artisans/Craftsmen    | 16 (11.5%) | 27.8        |
| Servants              | 2 (1.4%)   | 26.0        |
| Other (Army Sergeant) | 1          | 50.0        |
| Unknown               | 1          | 19.0        |
| Total                 | 138        |             |

Source: BA, L/Y 2/7

The reliance upon farmers explains the frequent allusion to the unchanging nature of the agricultural year in yeomanry documentation. Yeomen could not easily exercise at seed time or harvest. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment usually mustered to train at Buckingham, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mid Bucks Regiment at Aylesbury and Wendover, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Southern Regiment at Amersham and High Wycombe.<sup>160</sup>

In September 1795, exercises were postponed due to a late harvest and, again, when wet weather delayed it in September 1797.<sup>161</sup> In April 1798 Tom Grenville indicated that a proposal to embody the yeomanry for anything from five up to 28 days would only work on ‘the season of the year at which it would be the least inconvenient to them to be so’.<sup>162</sup> Three months later, he calculated

<sup>160</sup> BL, Add Mss 59293, Mansel to Grenville, 3 Apl. 1814.

<sup>161</sup> BA, L/Y 13/3, Chaplin draft, 12 Sept. 1795; L/Y 13/11 Order by Russell, 25 Sept. 1797; L/Y 13/14, Order by Chaplin, 15 Sept. 1797.

<sup>162</sup> TNA, HO 50/41, Tom Grenville to Portland, 1 Apl. 1798.

that few officers or yeomen would attend if the corn harvest began earlier than anticipated.<sup>163</sup> In early August 1800, having exercised his men, Sir John Dashwood-King told them he would not summon them again until after the expected early harvest.<sup>164</sup>

Interestingly, Buckingham expected innkeepers to quarter the yeomen during their training as if they were regulars, as suggested by his direction that Dashwood-King's troop be billeted in Marlow and High Wycombe for ten days in April 1799. The Aylesbury Squadron had been billeted similarly for training in October 1798.<sup>165</sup> In 1803 Robert Brudenell of Hambleden, an officer in the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment, suggested that Sunday drills at High Wycombe be scrapped as some had expressed religious scruples.<sup>166</sup>

In 1807 the county fairs interfered with the inspecting officer's wish to hold the annual inspection of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment on a particular day in September. In 1808 the inspecting officer of the Desborough Squadron insisted on the annual inspection in August despite it being pointed out that it should be postponed until mid-September for 'while a blade of corn remains out, no farmer will attend'.<sup>167</sup> Again, the annual inspection of the 1<sup>st</sup> or Southern Regiment as a whole was put back from July to August 1812 due to the state of the wheat harvest. It was pointed out that other exercises in 1812, 1813 and

---

<sup>163</sup> BA, L/Y 14/48, Tom Grenville to Chaplin, 16 July 1798.

<sup>164</sup> *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 5 Aug. 1800.

<sup>165</sup> BA, L/Y 14/100, Hicks to Lord Grenville, Tom Grenville and Praed, 17 Apl. 1799; L/Y 16, Order to Justices and Constables, 22 Apl. 1799; L/Y 14/35, Box to Chaplin, 11 Oct. 1798.

<sup>166</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/4, Brudenell to Clayton, 6 Aug. 1803.

<sup>167</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/9 and 11, Brudenell to Clayton, 22 July 1808 and Clayton to Burgoyne, 31 Aug. 1807.

1814 clashed respectively with Ascot, Epsom, and High Wycombe market.<sup>168</sup> On the other hand, there were some shopkeepers, and those at Aylesbury could not attend yeomanry exercises during opening hours.<sup>169</sup>

Less than half of one troop attended any one exercise in 1798. By 1800 men were attending only three or four days out of ten.<sup>170</sup> Tom Grenville issued an admonishment in May in view of the infrequent attendances. There was the apparent belief on the part of some that ‘they had done enough in appearing three or four days out of the ten for which we were embodied... I have no doubt I shall find in future meetings the same zeal so usually engaged in the Bucks Yeomanry... in my squadron I had 60 absent - this is neither honourable, nor lawful, nor just...’<sup>171</sup> Careful records were kept of all attendances and absences on the part of the Aylesbury Troop, including drills, parades and field days, on pre-printed forms.<sup>172</sup> Rules adopted in December 1803 included 5s.0d fine for absence.<sup>173</sup>

Particular problems arose at High Wycombe when all three officers resigned in the spring of 1800 with the additional difficulty of the absence of Sir John

---

<sup>168</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/13, Drake to Clayton, 20 Apl. 1812; D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Clayton to Aubrey, 30 July 1812; Irby to Clayton, 15 Apl. 1813; Rolls to Clayton, 30 Sept. 1814.

<sup>169</sup> BA, L/Y 14/192, Gillaskin to Huey, 24 Sept. 1807.

<sup>170</sup> BA, L/Y 14/57 Berry to Chaplin, Oct. 1798; 14/33 Grenville to Chaplin, 13 May 1800.

<sup>171</sup> BA, L/Y 12/23, Order, 31 May 1800. L/Y 12/1-64 contains all squadron and troop orders between 1794 and 1813.

<sup>172</sup> BA, L/Y 3/1-147; L/Y 4/1-120. These returns range from 1797 to 1812. Additional absence lists for the Aylesbury Troop are at L/Y 5/26-30 covering 1805-07. Returns for the Aylesbury Troop (1799-1801), and the Aylesbury (1804-07) and Burnham (1798-99) Squadrons are at L/Y 5/3-13.

<sup>173</sup> TNA, HO 50/96, Rules and Regulations of the Brigade of Yeomanry Cavalry of the County of Buckingham, 24 Dec. 1803.

Dashwood-King.<sup>174</sup> Letters excusing absence were frequent. Mr Bond of Oving had a lung and chest complaint in May 1811, which precluded ‘violent exertion on horseback’. John Turner from Princes Risborough was down with fever in May 1812. Even Acton Chaplin, the Clerk of the Peace, was absent with lumbago in August 1812. There were also pre-printed forms to be completed by vets or farriers certifying the unfitness of horses.<sup>175</sup>

In May 1814 the Eton and Iver Troops saw no reason to attend an exercise at High Wycombe ‘as there is such a Happy Change in the Affairs’, the Desborough Squadron then resolving in July that attendances were no longer necessary at all unless it was specifically called out.<sup>176</sup> Clayton pleaded with his regiment not to dissolve as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess wanted to ensure numbers were kept up in case war was resumed. Clayton pointed out that assembling albeit without pay would enable men could keep up their tax and other exemptions.<sup>177</sup> Overall, the Bucks yeomanry had mustered 1,124 men in 21 troops in 1803: nine troops in the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment (450 men), six troops in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment (374 men), and six troops in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment (300 men). In 1806 it could still muster 1,126 men but numbers declined to 1,006 men in 1808 and to 822 men in 1812. In May 1815 the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment mustered 328 men, but 80 were absent.<sup>178</sup>

Some clergymen joined the yeomanry. Buckingham believed that they had an important role and would be required to lead any general mobilisation of the population should the militia and yeomanry be withdrawn from the county in the event of invasion. Some clergy felt this incompatible with their calling.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>174</sup> BA, L/Y 13/55, Buckingham to Dashwood-King, 30 June 1800.

<sup>175</sup> BA, L/Y 15.

<sup>176</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Harrup to Clayton, 2 May 1814; Resolution, 1 July 1814.

<sup>177</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Clayton Statement, 26 Sept. 1814.

<sup>178</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Field Return, 25 May 1815.

<sup>179</sup> TNA, HO 50/41, Buckingham, 22 Apl. 1798.

Buckingham actually proposed a ‘clerical corps’ but this was rejected by a meeting of the clergy of the Newport Hundreds chaired by the Rev. Archibald Cathcart, the Rector of Clifton Reynes, although they were prepared to act within their own parishes. The Bishop of Lincoln, George Pretymen (later Sir George Pretymen-Tomline, Bt.) objected even to this, but Buckingham was adamant that clergy had the same obligations as any others in terms of the posse comitatus.<sup>180</sup> The Bishop again objected to clergymen participating in any volunteer corps in 1803.<sup>181</sup> Nonetheless, the Rev. John Kipling from Shabbington, whose services had been initially declined in 1798, joined the yeomanry in 1804.<sup>182</sup>

While formed into three regiments in 1803 the Bucks yeomanry tended to continue to train as individual troops of perhaps 50-60 men, just as the three regiments of volunteers also formed in 1803 trained as individual companies of perhaps 80-90 men. But, as with later incarnations of the auxiliary forces in the nineteenth century, yeomanry and volunteers provided spectacle and entertainment and were prominent at local observance of national celebrations. The Newport Troop was prepared to meet Earl Temple on his way to Stowe for his wedding in 1796, despite having to ride upwards of 20 miles without expenses.<sup>183</sup> The Aylesbury Troop attended the celebration bonfires at Buckingham, Stowe and Wotton for Duncan’s naval victory over the Dutch at Camperdown in October 1797, and Nelson’s victory over the French at the Nile in August 1798. Beer was provided at Buckingham’s expense.<sup>184</sup> After

---

<sup>180</sup> BA, D/22/52, Dayrell to Brewster, 22 May 1798; TNA. HO 50/41, Cathcart to Buckingham, 18 Apl. 1798.

<sup>181</sup> BA, D86/31/41, Ridley to Grenfell, 1 Sept. 1803.

<sup>182</sup> BA, L/Y 14/26, Kipling to Chaplin, 16 Mar. 1798; HHL, STG 36 (33), Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 10 Mar. 1804.

<sup>183</sup> BA, D/U/9/53/28, Praed to Mansel, 3 May [1796].

<sup>184</sup> BA, L/Y 13/28 Grenville to Chaplin, 3 Oct. 1798.

exercising in Stoke Park in July 1798, Sir William Young's troop, 'with many ladies and gentlemen, partook of an elegant cold collation that was provided under the spreading branches of the oaks'.<sup>185</sup> In May 1799 the yeomanry resolved to meet the Royal Bucks on its return from Ireland. Buckingham felt this would inconvenience the yeomen at that time of year and suggested local troops simply meet the militia contingents returning to quarters in their immediate vicinity.<sup>186</sup>

Between 150 and 200 yeomen and volunteers attended a service of thanksgiving in St Mary's Aylesbury in July 1799 for the safe escape of Tom Grenville from the wreck off the Elbe of HMS *Proserpine* conveying him on a diplomatic mission to Prussia. On 8 August 1804 the grenadier company of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment of Volunteers commanded by William Lowndes received an embroidered silk Colour at Hall Barn, Beaconsfield from Miss Caroline Kingston acting for Mrs Lowndes of Chesham, who was ill. The embroidery by Miss Lott from London had cost £39.12s.11d.<sup>187</sup> Another silk Colour was presented to the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Northern) Regiment of Local Militia after 1808 although the circumstances of the gift are unknown.<sup>188</sup> There were additional entertainments for the yeomen alone as when the Aylesbury Troop was invited to dine with Robert Smith, the banker soon to be elevated to the peerage as 1<sup>st</sup> Lord Carrington, at Wendover in June 1796. They also met to celebrate the King's birthday in May 1797 at the expense of the officers.<sup>189</sup> In January 1800

---

<sup>185</sup> *Reading Mercury*, 16 July 1798.

<sup>186</sup> BA, L/V 5/5; Bodleian, D. D. F2 2/5, Chaplin to Dashwood-King, 6 May 1799.

<sup>187</sup> BA, D-LO/6/2/13/24/8; D-LO/9/8/6. At some stage laid up in the church in Chesham in honour of Lowndes, George Hepburn, and John Kingston, the Colour is in the care of the Bucks Military Museum Trust as BMMT 441.

<sup>188</sup> BMMT 440.

<sup>189</sup> BA, L/Y 13/6; L/Y 14/13.



the officers of the Aylesbury Troop subscribed for a venison dinner for themselves and a 'half-crown dinner' with drink for the yeomen.<sup>190</sup>



*Medal awarded a yeoman called Horne from the Olney Troop for skill at arms, November 1797 (BMMT)*

Presentation swords could be gifted to popular officers as in the case of Sir Philip Duncombe of Great Brickhill from the Fenny Stratford Troop in 1803 and to Kender Mason from the Amersham Troop that same year.<sup>191</sup> It worked both ways, Sir John Dashwood-King giving his entire troop a Christmas gift in 1799.<sup>192</sup> One yeoman named Horne from the Olney Troop received an elegant silver medal for his skill at arms in November 1797.<sup>193</sup> Rain prevented the

---

<sup>190</sup> BA, L/Y 14/140, Tom Grenville to Chaplin, 23 Jan. 1800.

<sup>191</sup> BMMT 189 and 233.

<sup>192</sup> Bodleian, D. D. F2/2/8.

<sup>193</sup> BMMT 502.

yeomanry's sword exercise at Great Brickhill in September 1798, but there was still a 'charming ball and most elegant supper' attended by 'nearly all the county'. A week later there was another 'great meeting' of the yeomanry at Berryfields but William Praed was compelled to give the yeomanry dinner at the Swan in Newport Pagnell as the tents erected for the purpose had blown down two days previously.<sup>194</sup> There were many field days as at Stoke Park in April and June 1799, and on Stoke Common in May 1800.<sup>195</sup>

In January 1800 Grenville presented two 'elegant prize swords' for the Stoke troop's sword and ring exercise, these being won by Thomas Buckland of Langley and Mr Stratton of Burnham.<sup>196</sup> In July 1802 those yeomen attending the brigade exercise in Aylesbury received a ticket to the value of 8s.0d that could be exchanged at any of 34 inns.<sup>197</sup> Again, in October 1803 a 'multitude' covered the ground at Stowe to watch a review of the Aylesbury, Buckingham and Winslow yeomen, with refreshments for the more important guests in a marquee.<sup>198</sup> In December 1805 the Wycombe and Marlow squadrons were praised for subscribing £72.15s.0d to the Patriotic Fund for the widows and orphans of the fallen at Trafalgar.<sup>199</sup>

The militia popularised band music in the provinces, bands being formed to provide music for drill but also to entertain officers and wider society. Usually, they were funded from the government clothing allowance supplemented by

---

<sup>194</sup> Anne Fremantle (ed.), *The Wynne Diaries, 1789-1820* 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935-40), III (1940), 2.

<sup>195</sup> *Oracle and Public Advertiser*, 9 and 30 Apl. 1799; *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 13 May 1800.

<sup>196</sup> *London Chronicle or Universal Evening Post*, 16 Jan. 1800.

<sup>197</sup> BA, L/Y 16, Voucher, 13 July 1802.

<sup>198</sup> Fremantle (ed.), *Wynne Diaries*, III, 94-95.

<sup>199</sup> *Morning Chronicle*, 20 Dec. 1805.

contributions from the officers, the 1786 militia legislation having permitted regiments to engage supernumerary drummers as musicians.<sup>200</sup> Two fashionable black musicians were included in Sir William Young's sketches of the regiment in 1793.<sup>201</sup> One of the officer's mess bills for entertainments in April that year was for 'Two Blacks eating'.<sup>202</sup> In January 1805 a publican at Wapping was fined £20 for 'seducing John Watson, a man of colour, in the band of the Buckinghamshire Militia from his duty in that regiment, and entering him on board a Vessel bound for New York, for which he received four guineas crimpage-money'.<sup>203</sup> The Royal Bucks band also played a part in the enlistment of Joseph Mayett, who has left one of a handful of early farm servants' memoirs to survive.<sup>204</sup>

Mayett, from Quainton, served in the Royal Bucks King's Own Militia from 1803 to 1815. Mayett enlisted in February 1803 at the age of 20 as a substitute for Thomas Bennett, a farmer from Whaddon.<sup>205</sup> He was influenced by the uniforms and music played by the regiment's band when attending church at Buckingham: 'The soldiers that attended there struck my attention more than the service ... all Serjants and Corporals and musick men... I was much delighted to see them and hear the musick this was Congenial with my Carnal nature and a great opening for Satan to draw me away from all thoughts about

---

<sup>200</sup> Trevor Herbert and Helen Barlow, *Music and the British Military in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 108-14.

<sup>201</sup> BL, Stowe 488.

<sup>202</sup> HHL, STG Military 2 (11), Mess Bill, 22 Apl. 1793.

<sup>203</sup> *Evening Mail*, 28 Jan. 1805.

<sup>204</sup> David Vincent, *Bread, Knowledge and Freedom: A Study of Nineteenth Century Working Class Autobiography* (London: Europa, 1981), 9.

<sup>205</sup> BA, L/M 1; Ian Beckett (ed.), *The Buckinghamshire Posse Comitatus, 1798* (Bucks Record Society, 1985), 207.

religion.’<sup>206</sup> Mayett had also fallen out with a young woman with whom he was involved at the Baptist meeting house on Waddesdon Hill. He had previously attempted to enlist in 1802 but had been turned down due to the Amiens treaty having just been signed. His mother tried to persuade him otherwise but he declined to reconsider. The role of military music in Mayett’s case might suggest that others were drawn into uniform from what has been characterised as a ‘pleasure culture of war’.<sup>207</sup>

The band of the Royal Bucks frequently attended occasions at Stowe, as in December 1804 and January 1810.<sup>208</sup> It had played also for the public at Bristol in June 1797 to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of the King.<sup>209</sup> A dozen bassoons and a dozen clarinets were purchased for the band in February 1804.<sup>210</sup> That year the officers paid regular subscriptions for band expenses as well as subscriptions to maintain a pack of hounds.<sup>211</sup> At Ottery there was a ‘Subscription Ball; in October 1806, each officer giving three guineas.’<sup>212</sup> In September 1807 Temple expressed his displeasure with the band’s failure to improve its playing.<sup>213</sup>

---

<sup>206</sup> Ann Kussmaul (ed.), *The Autobiography of Joseph Mayett of Quainton, 1783-1839* (Bucks Record Society, 1986), 22-24. The original is in BA, D/X 371.

<sup>207</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 307; Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994), 3-5.

<sup>208</sup> Fremantle (ed.), *Wynne Diaries*, III, 147, 323.

<sup>209</sup> M. J. Lomas, ‘Militia and Volunteer Wind Bands in Southern England in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries’, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 67 (1989), 154-66.

<sup>210</sup> HHL, STG Military 2 (11).

<sup>211</sup> HHL, STG 138 (3).

<sup>212</sup> HHL, STG 138 (6).

<sup>213</sup> HHL, ST 144 (35), Oder, 16 Sept. 1807.

Buckingham met King Louis XVIII at Stowe in 1808 in his yeomanry uniform.

<sup>214</sup> Louis, who resided at Hartwell House from 1809 to 1814, was accompanied to Stanmore on 20 April 1814 by the yeomanry en route for his restoration.

According to one story, a yeoman was robbed of a purse he was carrying with the money of several of his colleagues.<sup>215</sup> Edmund Waller, who had allowed the yeomanry to exercise on the Hall Barn estate at Beaconsfield, was annoyed that damage had been done to his fences and plantation by spectators at events.<sup>216</sup>

There was conscious portrayal of an image of respectable patriotism. In 1808 one squadron ordered 1,700 yards of silver braid for uniforms.<sup>217</sup> Such an image was not always emulated by popular cartoonists such as James Gillray, who regularly satirised military pretensions.<sup>218</sup> A story told by the father of John Kersley Fowler was of an Amersham solicitor on his way to yeomanry drill at Chorleywood Common. Passing a farmer, the young man flourished his sword, asking ‘Hallo! My good man, have you seen anything of the French about here?’ ‘Noa, he said, ‘ha’n’t; if I had I shouldn’t have seen you here.’<sup>219</sup>

There was an assumption that men were likely to be of equal status, one Bucks yeoman addressing his captain as ‘Yr. Comrade’.<sup>220</sup> Sir William Young, when serving in the Bucks Yeomanry, published his *Instructions for the Armed*

---

<sup>214</sup> John Beckett, *The Rise and Fall of Grenvilles: Dukes of Buckingham and Chandos, 1710-1921* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 79.

<sup>215</sup> Gibbs, *History of Aylesbury*, 433-34; Verney, *Bucks Biographies*, 202.

<sup>216</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/5, Waller to Clayton 2 Oct. 1806.

<sup>217</sup> BA, L/Y 14/194, Carter to Chaplin, 5 July 1808.

<sup>218</sup> Alexandra Franklin and Mark Philp, *Napoleon and the Invasion of Britain* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2003); Tom Clayton and Sheila O’Connell, *Bonaparte and the British: Prints and Propaganda in the Age of Napoleon* (London: British Museum, 2015).

<sup>219</sup> J. K. Fowler, *Recollections of Old Country Life* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1894), 29.

<sup>220</sup> BA, Lieutenancy, L/Y 14/221, Woodman to Russel, n. d.

*Yeomanry* in 1797 assuming that they were all gentlemen of intelligence.<sup>221</sup> A talented artist responsible for the series of coloured drawings of the Bucks Militia in 1793 already mentioned, Young was MP for St Mawes (1784-1806) and for Buckingham (1806-07), and a Governor of Tobago (1807-15).<sup>222</sup> Young was also the author of the stirring song, ‘The Armed Yeomen’.<sup>223</sup> Young ranked as Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Bucks from 1807.

The invasion fears as well as mounting casualties in Britain’s army in overseas expeditions led to new defence measures between 1793 and 1802. Men were desperately needed for the army. One revived traditional expedient was to recruit for rank. Buckingham used his influence to enable his wife’s half-brother’s illegitimate son, Sir George Nugent, to raise a new regiment (the 85<sup>th</sup> Foot or ‘Bucks Volunteers’) by beat of drum in the county between October 1793 and February 1794, finding at least 90 of the 520 recruited by the end of January.<sup>224</sup> Nugent, who was to be CinC in India from 1811-13 and rise to the rank of Field Marshal, was MP for Buckingham from 1790 to 1796, and for Aylesbury from 1806 to 1809. He resided at Westhorpe House, Little Marlow. Initial quarters at Aylesbury and Buckingham were extended to Winslow in December 1793, the regiment leaving the county in February 1794. Subsequently, a depot was established at Buckingham in July 1808 with additional accommodation found at Stony Stratford and Newport Pagnell, but

---

<sup>221</sup> Gee, *British Volunteer Movement*, 103; BA, L/Y 3/5.

<sup>222</sup> BL, Stowe 488; Percy Sumner, ‘The Uniforms of the Bucks Militia, 1793’, *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 18 (1939), 63-66.

<sup>223</sup> Betty Bennett, *British War Poetry in the Age of Romanticism, 1793-1815* (New York: Garland, 1987), 151-53.

<sup>224</sup> HMC, *Dropmore*, II, 489, 500-02, Buckingham to Grenville, 2 and 29 Jan. 1794; BL, Add Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 31 Jan. 1794; BA, D15/11(a), Diary of Robert Wheeler, 21 Feb. 1794; BL, Ass Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 31 Jan. 1794.

the regiment left the county never to return in September. The title of 'Bucks Volunteers' was dropped in 1827.<sup>225</sup>



SIR GEORGE NUGENT

*Field Marshal Sir George Nugent (1757-1849)*

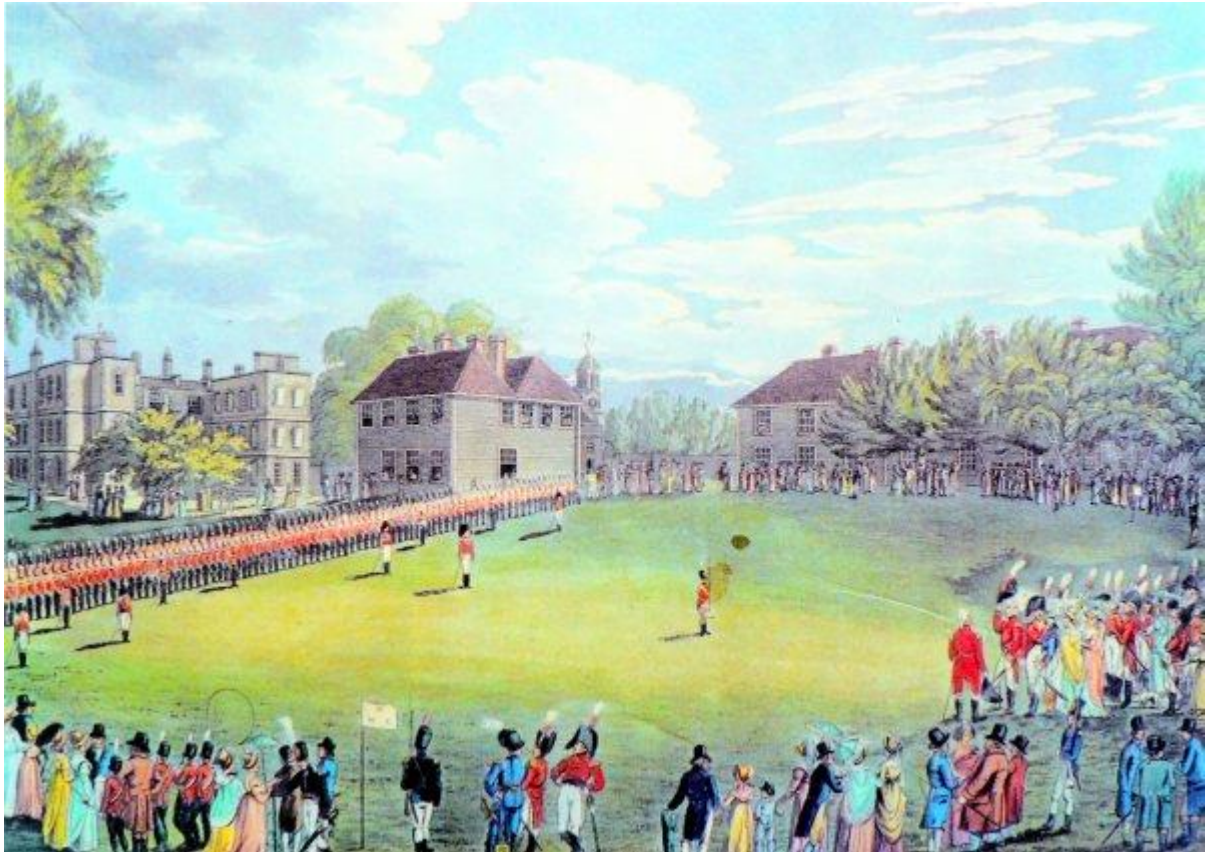
Bucks also provided the first sites for the Royal Military College. Following the disasters of the 1794 campaign in Flanders, John Gaspard le Marchant and the French exile, General François Jarry submitted similar plans for the training of young officers to the Duke of York. These saw fruit as the Junior and Senior Divisions of the Royal Military College. The latter was established in the Antelope Inn (formerly the Oak) next to the Red Lion in High Wycombe High Street in May 1799, and the former in Remnantz in West Street, Marlow in May 1802. As coadjutors, Le Marchant and Jarry both took up residence in High Wycombe, Le Marchant at a house in Church Street (later the Old Library) and Jarry in Wellesbourne House (later the Priory) on the junction of Priory Road

---

<sup>225</sup> C. R. B. Barrett, *The 85<sup>th</sup> King's Light Infantry by 'One of Them'* (London: Spottiswoode, 1913), 31-32, 47, 254.



and Castle Street. When the numbers of staff and students were increased at Marlow, the college also occupied Marlow Place and Alfred House in the High Street.



*Parade at the Royal Military College, Remnantz, Marlow, c. 1810 (AMOT)*

The staff at Wycombe were said to have greatly enhanced the theatrical entertainments in the town under the leadership of Le Marchant's wife, Mary. In February 1803, they sponsored an evening at the New Theatre in St Mary Street. In military terms, Wycombe graduates included Sir George Murray, Sir Benjamin D'Urban, and Sir William Napier, all of whom made their mark in the Peninsular War. The staff at Marlow included distinguished figures such as William Alexander, later first keeper of prints and drawings at the British Museum, the artist William Gilpin, and the mathematician John Lowry. Conditions at Marlow in particular were difficult for cadets and there was a minor mutiny in August 1804 that led to some being expelled. Jarry died in



1807 and was buried in All Saints, High Wycombe, whilst Le Marchant was killed leading the Heavy Brigade at Salamanca in July 1812. That year the Junior Division moved to Sandhurst in October. The Senior Division (later the Staff College) moved to Farnham in early 1813.<sup>226</sup>

One idea to enhance home defence was for a force of sharpshooters raised from gamekeepers, as originally proposed by Buckingham in 1794. Another, following Spain's entry into the war against Britain, was the raising of the Provisional Cavalry based on the pre-1757 obligation on property. One man and one horse would be levied for every ten horses used for riding or carriage drawing. The immediate impact was to swell the yeomanry as it was believed in Bucks and elsewhere that the legislation would be suspended if volunteers came forward equal to three fourths of a county quota. Only six regiments of provisional cavalry were embodied with the remainder absorbed into the yeomanry. This was the case in Bucks, whose quota was set at 186 men.<sup>227</sup>

A sum of two guineas was also levied against horse owners to provide for a five guinea bounty for any man on call out as well as equipment. A sum of 10s.6d would be returned to those charged at the end of the war if the provisional cavalry had not been called out. Those absent from more than 12 duties, however, would be liable to forfeit 5s.0d.<sup>228</sup> The Bucks Provisional Cavalry exercised with the yeomanry but remained separate from it, albeit that the men

---

<sup>226</sup> Ian F. W. Beckett, 'The Royal Military College at Marlow and High Wycombe', *The Marlow Historian* 5 (2008), 13-21.

<sup>227</sup> TNA, HO 50/26, Buckingham to Portland, 20 Nov. 1796; HO 50/40, Buckingham to Portland, 4 Mar. 1798; HO 50/330 Buckingham to Portland, 22 Feb. 1797 (also BA, L/Y 13/1); HO 50/43/8, Portland to Buckingham, 27 Nov. 1796; HO 43/8, Portland to Buckingham, 17 Nov. 1796; BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 27 Nov. 1796.

<sup>228</sup> BA, L/P 13, Meeting of Buckingham Sub-division, 16 Jan. 1797; L/Y 6/3.

were attached to specific yeomanry troops.<sup>229</sup> Buckingham suggested some yeomen objected to exercising with men of ‘inferior description’. Edward Horwood of Buckland resigned in November 1797 citing the ‘uncivil’ behaviour of the provisional cavalrymen and maintaining that their admission had broken the articles under which he had enlisted in the yeomanry.<sup>230</sup>

A muster list for the whole county has 171 provisional cavalrymen, of whom 39 were riding their own horses. Those providing most horses were Shem Baxter of Buckingham (five), William Praed (five), and Mansel Dawkin Mansel (16).

<sup>231</sup> In the case of the case of the Ashendon Hundreds, the assessment of the number of horses, mares and geldings was taken at Waddesdon on 23 January 1797. There are also lists of horses, mares and geldings for the Aylesbury Hundreds.<sup>232</sup> Appeals against inclusion held for the Aylesbury Hundreds on 17 December 1796 show that clergymen and constables were exempted. Appeals adjourned included those for a ‘poor butcher’ and a ‘poor blacksmith’ both from Bledlow, another ‘poor butcher’ and a ‘poor shoemaker’ from Princes Risborough, and a ‘poor cutler’ from Aston Clinton. A second meeting on 23 January 1797 allowed a number of appeals where horses were no longer being kept as well as for three men serving as substitutes in the militia and a surgeon in the 16<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>233</sup> By 1798 the force had disappeared.<sup>234</sup> It had been absorbed

---

<sup>229</sup> BA, L/Y 5/15, List of Provisional Cavalrymen exercising with Captain Grenville’s Troop, 27 Nov. 1797; L/Y 13/18, Buckingham to Portland, 22 Feb. 1798; L/Y 13/11-12, Drafts by Chaplin, Apl. 1797; L/Y 13/21, Resolutions, 14 Apl. 1798; L/Y 5/4, Minutes of Lieutenancy meeting, 6 Mar. 1797.

<sup>230</sup> BA, D54/13/8, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 25 Jan. 1797; Benson Freeman, ‘History of Bucks Yeomanry’, *Bucks Free Press*, 26 Dec. 1919.

<sup>231</sup> BA, L/Y 2/1.

<sup>232</sup> BA, L/Y 5/24; L/Y 5/25; L/Y 61/1; L/Y 6/2; L/Y 6/24.

<sup>233</sup> BA, L/P 11.

<sup>234</sup> BA, L/Y 13/21.

by the yeomanry, as at Marlow where 22 men agreed to enter the Wycombe troop after a meeting at the Coach and Horses.<sup>235</sup>

Further legislation in 1796 was enacted for the raising of a supplementary militia, county quotas being trebled in order to find an additional 60,000 men by ballot. For Bucks this meant an additional 662 men.<sup>236</sup> It should be explained that the new county quotas were calculated on the number of taxed houses as a more accurate index of total population than the old militia quota. In 1799 when the 1757 quotas were deemed to have lapsed, the new militia quota was calculated by the proportion a county provided when the number of men serving was added to the supplementary militia quota. Then, in 1802, the militia quota was based on lieutenancy returns of men of eligible age without any reference to the new national census returns of 1801. The 1802 quotas were not thereafter revised and those for the Army of Reserve in 1803 were also calculated on lieutenancy returns. The Local Militia quota in 1808 simply multiplied the 1802 militia quota by six.<sup>237</sup>

The supplementary militia was not embodied immediately but instead was to be trained for 20-day periods in contingents of one twentieth of total strength. It was hoped this would avoid undue opposition, and prevent disorder. Some counties offered to try and raise the new quotas voluntarily. Such offers were refused and a new wave of anti-militia riots affected ten counties. There were fears that men would be drafted overseas, and it was unclear what allowances might be available. Buckingham was concerned at further ballots, writing to Pitt in October 1796 that, 'He is a bolder man than I am who will undertake to carry

---

<sup>235</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 11 Mar. 1798; Bodleian, D. D. F2 2/2/1, Minutes of meeting at Marlow, 14 Mar. 1798.

<sup>236</sup> BA, L/P 1.

<sup>237</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 98-99.

it through.’<sup>238</sup> Buckingham also feared that a ‘second militia’ could lead to arming the disaffected whereas volunteers were more reliable.<sup>239</sup> Consequently, he offered to raise the entire quota by voluntary enlistment but this was deemed illegal.<sup>240</sup> He hoped, too, that connecting the yeomanry to the ballot in terms of offsetting the number required would keep matters quiet.<sup>241</sup> Thereafter, he did fill casual vacancies by voluntary means at his own expense.<sup>242</sup> Insurance clubs again appeared such as the ‘Berks, Bucks, Oxon and Hants Original Militia Society Office for Providing Substitutes for the New and Old Militia’.<sup>243</sup> There were also deficiencies in officers for the expanded militia, with commissions opened to regular subalterns on half pay and even an attempt to allow Catholics to obtain commissions.

As in 1769, Bucks saw an anti-militia riot at Wing, this time on 12 December 1796. The attempt to hold the Cottesloe Hundreds ballot was disrupted by a mob drawn largely from the villages of Hardwick and Whitchurch. Ordering out the Aylesbury and Buckingham troops, Buckingham characterised it as ‘a violent and outrageous attack on the Constables and Magistrates’.<sup>244</sup> Sergeant Kirby and five men from the Aylesbury Troop arrested four suspected ringleaders at Cheddington on 15 December but, surrounded, were forced to release them to another mob. On 17 December, therefore, 37 yeomen from the

---

<sup>238</sup> Emsley, *British Society*, 54.

<sup>239</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 11 Oct. 1796.

<sup>240</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 27 Nov. and 1 Dec. 1796; Add Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 6 Nov. 1796; HMC *Dropmore*, III, 143-44, Buckingham to Portland, 4 Nov. 1796; TNA, HO 50/25, Buckingham to Portland, 24 Oct. 1796; HO 50/26, Buckingham to Portland, 20 Nov. 1796.

<sup>241</sup> TNA, HO 50/26, Buckingham to Portland, 25 Nov. 1796.

<sup>242</sup> Western, *English Militia*, 263.

<sup>243</sup> *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 26 Nov. 1796.

<sup>244</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 14 Dec. 1796.

Buckingham troop and 39 from the Aylesbury troop went to Wing to apprehend the four men who had escaped.<sup>245</sup> This was accomplished successively despite the inclement weather and ‘the dreadful state’ of the roads. The yeomanry also attended the subsequent ballot, Buckingham gathering 16 yeomen from the Aylesbury troop, 16 from the Newport Pagnell Troop plus 16 militiamen on furlough. Praed, Fremantle and Mansel were all in attendance.<sup>246</sup>

After a notice of some kind was posted on the obelisk at the West Wycombe end of the turnpike to Oxford, trouble from the ‘lower orders of people’ was expected at High Wycombe as well but did not materialise. Men of the 16<sup>th</sup> Light Dragoons already at Wycombe and Marlow were warned to be ready as was a party of the 16<sup>th</sup> Foot en route to Aylesbury for recruiting purposes. A reward was offered for the author of the notice and other handbills that had appeared.<sup>247</sup>

As before, the expanded militia was largely reliant upon those least able to avoid service despite the fine for five years’ exemption being raised to £15, the term of service being for the duration of hostilities plus one month. It might be added that exemption on the grounds of physical infirmity remained variable since it rested on the decision of deputy lieutenants. They were not even bound necessarily to accept the rule that no one should be enlisted under less than 5’4”, although the minimum height was then lowered to 5’2” in 1796.<sup>248</sup>

---

<sup>245</sup> TNA, HO 50/26, Buckingham to Portland, 13, 17, and 18 Dec. 1796; HO 43/8, Portland to Buckingham, 8, 9, 13 and 26 Dec. 1796; BA, L/Y 13/21; Benson Freeman, ‘History of Bucks Yeomanry’, *Bucks Free Press*, 14 Nov. 1919.

<sup>246</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 22 Dec. 1796.

<sup>247</sup> TNA, HO 50/26, Hicks to Portland, 5 and 7 Dec. 1796; HO 43/8, Portland to Hicks, 8 and 9 Dec. 1796.

<sup>248</sup> The Hon. John Fortescue, *The County Lieutenancies and the Army, 1803-14* (London: Macmillan, 1909), 53; Western, *English Militia*, 247.

One list of the Supplementary Militia compiled seemingly between December 1798 and October 1799 has extraordinary detail on 130 men serving across the county with an average age of 22 - 15 actually were outside the permitted age range of men aged 18 to 45 - and an average height of 5/6". Generally, they were physically fit with mostly fair complexion, hazel or grey eyes, and dark hair. One had red hair and one is recorded as having yellow hair, presumably very blond. Some 95 were labourers (73%), 23 craftsmen (17.6%), four tradesmen (3%), five servants (3.8%), one a navigator, and one a bargeman. Only one man had no occupation recorded. All but 15 were substitutes and the overwhelmingly majority were unable to sign their names. A total of 24 of the substitutes came from other counties. Seven deserted including an Aylesbury cordwainer, David Lutman, originally sworn in in July 1798 and subsequently apprehended in March 1799. Two men proved to be deserters from the regular army, and another an apprentice who had absconded from his master and was duly returned. Quite why this list has so much more information than any others remains a mystery.<sup>249</sup>

In February 1797 only seven from 113 men serving in the militia for the Newport Hundreds were principals, and 68 of the 97 with known occupations were labourers.<sup>250</sup> Similarly, in September 1807 the Newport Hundreds had only nine principals serving alongside 51 substitutes, of whom 31 were labourers.<sup>251</sup> As during the American War, many substitutes were from outside the county, the price of such substitutes increasing substantially. In 1797 Medmenham paid a substitute nine guineas, but another cost £14.16s.6d in

---

<sup>249</sup> HHL, STG Military 1(7); Lois Schwoerer, 'The Grenville Militia List for Buckinghamshire, 1798-99', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68 (2005), 667-76.

<sup>250</sup> BA, L/Md/5/1.

<sup>251</sup> HHL, Stowe, STG Military 1 (7).

1799.<sup>252</sup> Grenville was to report in June 1803 that Bucks parishes were complaining ‘grievously [*sic*] of the desertions in the Militia’, necessitating yet more ballots. Buckingham himself complained in 1807 of the detrimental impact of insurance societies in the south of the county, especially the Burnham and Stoke Hundreds.<sup>253</sup>

An unexpected adjournment of militia proceedings in the Burnham Hundred in 1803 cost the hundred and the county dear as the price of substitutes had risen so quickly.<sup>254</sup> At Denham, three substitutes were found for 15 guineas and one for £24 in July and August 1803. Of a total of 18, 17 were labourers and the other a papermaker: twelve could not sign their own name.<sup>255</sup> The average price for substitutes was 35 guineas by early 1808.<sup>256</sup> In 1810 Buckingham suggested fines be levied on other counties not filling vacancies, but chose not to reveal that he had obtained substitutes from Leicestershire by offering 40 guineas.<sup>257</sup>

Following the precedent of the American War, weekly family allowances for militiamen from the parish rates were set at the equivalent of one day’s labour for the wife and lawful children under ten. From 1795 all militiamen whether volunteers, balloted, or substitutes were entitled to the allowances.<sup>258</sup>

Buckingham pointed out in January 1793 that the burden on parishes was heavy and he had rejected some recruits with large families, only to see many of them join other counties’ militia so that the cost was the same. Allowances, he

---

<sup>252</sup> Arthur Plaisted, *The Romance of a Chiltern Village* (Medmenham: Village Bookshop, 1958), 156-57.

<sup>253</sup> TNA, HO 50/162, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 23 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1807.

<sup>254</sup> BA, L/P 1, Minutes, 18 June 1803.

<sup>255</sup> BA, D/W 88/1-8.

<sup>256</sup> TNA, HO 50/184, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 21 Mar. 1808.

<sup>257</sup> Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies*, 238-39.

<sup>258</sup> Emsley, *British Society*, 39, 55.

maintained, should be restricted to children under ten and to a maximum of 5s.0d a week.<sup>259</sup> Parishes were keen to shift the burden if they could as in the case of one militia wife, Anne Dorset from Stoke Mandeville, who was removed to Thame in January 1795.<sup>260</sup>

By 1800 the upkeep of militiamen's families was costing the county over £3,500 annually. In effect, it was a tax on the rates borne by the wealthier inhabitants and widely seen as such.<sup>261</sup> Some indication of the amount being paid out by individual parishes can be gauged from Quarter Sessions records. A total of 17 parishes paid out £186.0s.8d for the Michaelmas Session of 1794, whilst 15 parishes paid out £244.2s.4d for the Michaelmas Session of 1800.<sup>262</sup> Aston Clinton paid out £161.3s.4d between 1793 and 1801, whilst Aylesbury paid out £80.13.2d for the same period. Many such payments went to the other counties from which substitutes had been found. Between 1805 and 1811, Coventry alone was paid £664.2s.1d by Bucks parishes for the dependants of substitutes serving in the Royal Bucks. Other payments went to 15 other counties, as well as London and Exeter. Between 1811 and 1814 payments went to 24 different counties and an additional 13 towns.<sup>263</sup>

Raising the supplementary militia did not solve the manpower problem amid increasing dangers. The exigencies of the situation, the army's weakness and the unpopularity of compulsion decreed that government had to accept more

---

<sup>259</sup> TNA, HO 50/19, Buckingham to Dundas, 13 Jan. 1793.

<sup>260</sup> BA, PR 196/16/1/5, Removal Order, 20 Jan. 1795.

<sup>261</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 103.

<sup>262</sup> BA, Q/FBm/40 and 67.

<sup>263</sup> BA, Q/FBm/1, 3 and 9. For payments made within some individual parishes, see BA, PR 13/17 (Beachampton, 1799), PR 44/17/1-50 (Chesham, 1798-1807), and PR 113/18/2 (Ickford, 1808-09).



volunteers.<sup>264</sup> The militia lobby was especially influential in the House of Lords and, in any case, many peers had direct access to King and government. They were intensely suspicious of perceived alterations in the balance of power between centre and locality.<sup>265</sup> Thus, lords lieutenant declined to countenance a plan to recruit 10,000 men for the army from the supplementary militia in January 1798, or to extract the grenadier and light companies from the regular militia in April. Buckingham especially declared the latter illegal and refused to countenance it, although there seemed some support among ordinary militia officers. Grenville thought some part of his brother's objection might be met by allowing the Bucks to form an additional separate light infantry battalion commanded by John Edwards Fremantle, who would be acceptable to the Duke of York as a former regular officer in the Guards.<sup>266</sup>

Lovel Badcock had resigned as lieutenant colonel from ill health in January 1794 to be succeeded by Henry Tompkins, at which time Fremantle was drafted in as major.<sup>267</sup> The Earl of Chesterfield then became temporary second lieutenant colonel in April 1794.<sup>268</sup> Tompkins died in November 1794 and Chesterfield also resigned so Benjamin Way succeeded to the command.<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>264</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 69-70.

<sup>265</sup> Kevin Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army: Recruitment, Society and Tradition, 1807-15* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 41-423.

<sup>266</sup> TNA, HO 50/30, Buckingham to Hope, 22 Mar. 1798; HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 179-81, Buckingham to Grenville, 29 Apl. 1798; Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 388-89, 390-93, Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 27 Apl. 1798; Grenville to Buckingham, 27 Apl. 1798 and 1 May 1798; BL Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 25 Mar. 1798.

<sup>267</sup> BA, D/FR 51/13/3.

<sup>268</sup> TNA, HO 50/21, Buckingham to Dundas, 30 Jan., 8 Mar. and 6 Apl. 1794; BA, D-SB/OJ/10/65, Browne to Bernard, 24 Jan. 1794.

<sup>269</sup> TNA, HO 50/22, Buckingham to Portland, 9 and 28 Nov. 1794.

Another former regular, William Pigott of Doddershall also came into the regiment as captain.<sup>270</sup>

With the outbreak of rebellion in Ireland in May 1798, following consultation with his officers, Buckingham suggested enabling the militia to serve there. The Irish Parliament had been pressured by Pitt in 1793 into passing a Catholic Relief Act that removed some of the previous prohibitions of the Penal Laws. It enabled Catholics to vote, sit on juries, hold minor posts in government service, and enter the junior commissioned ranks of the army. They remained barred from the Irish Parliament and from senior administrative posts. There was already a degree of violence in Ulster between Protestant ‘Peep-o-Day Boys’ and Catholic ‘Defenders’. Formed in Belfast in 1791 and inspired by the American and French revolutions, the Society of United Irishmen aimed to unite Protestants and Catholics in the cause of reform but increasingly took on a revolutionary tone that alienated many Protestants, not least when radicals began negotiating for French intervention. Much of the leadership was arrested in March 1798 but risings began in the south as intended albeit largely uncoordinated in May 1798 and in the north east in June: perhaps ten per cent of the estimated 280,000 United Irishmen came out. Atrocities ensued on both sides.

The rising in the north was over relatively quickly, the rebels including many radical Presbyterian defeated at Ballynahinch near Belfast on 12-13 June by none other than the then Major General George Nugent. The risings in Kildare, Carlow, Meath and Wexford were more serious but the defeat of the rebels at Vinegar Hill in Wexford on 21 June 1798 by Lieutenant General (later General First Viscount) Gerard Lake struck a significant blow to the rising in the south. Lake, who was to be CinC in India on various occasions between 1801 and

---

<sup>270</sup> BA, D-SB/OJ /10/69, Browne to Bernard, 28 Apl. 1794.

1807, lived at Aston Clinton House. He sat as MP for Aylesbury from 1790 to 1802 as a political opponent of the Grenvilles. A French force just 800 strong led by General Jean Humbert landed at Killala in Mayo on 23 August and won an early victory over Lake's force of largely Irish militia and Scottish fencibles at Castlebar on 27 August only to surrender to the CinC and Viceroy, Charles, Marquess of Cornwallis, after a brief action at Ballinamuck in Leitrim on 8 September 1798. A second French force was intercepted at sea in October with the capture of the leader of the United Irishmen (himself a Protestant), Wolfe Tone. It spelled the end of the rebellion.<sup>271</sup>



*General Gerard, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Lake (1744-1808), after George Place*

Buckingham had already offered to go to Ireland in January 1797 following the abortive French attempt to land there in the previous month.<sup>272</sup> As he told his brother in May, whilst he had 'no military ardour' and his time of life and health

---

<sup>271</sup> Ian Beckett, 'The Royal Bucks King's Own Militia and the Irish Rebellion, 1798', *Bugle & Sabre* 13 (2020), 6-11.

<sup>272</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 363-65, Grenville to Buckingham, 4 Jan. 1797.

precluded ‘any nonsense of that sort’, he would gladly go out.<sup>273</sup> Dundas was opposed to using militia, saying that it was the opposition of militia colonels enlisting the supplementary militia into the line that had robbed the country of offensive force.<sup>274</sup> Grenville, too, feared pressing potentially unwilling militiamen into service in Ireland.<sup>275</sup> Buckingham continued to press his offer on ministers.<sup>276</sup> With no regulars to spare, there was no alternative and enabling legislation was pushed through. The Royal Bucks was the first of 13 militia regiments totalling 14,000 men sent there. It was also the largest with just over 1,400 men.<sup>277</sup>

Buckingham had also already offered to take his regiment to the Channel Islands in 1793 to replace regulars not from ‘military ardour or vanity, but simply a wish to liberate a more useful regiment’.<sup>278</sup> Presumably after some persuasion, the regiment’s NCOs and privates duly petitioned the army’s CinC, the Duke of York, to be allowed to go to Ireland on 12 June 1798.<sup>279</sup>

In order to reach Liverpool for embarkation, the Royal Bucks, then at Chelmsford, was sent by wagon to Blisworth in Northamptonshire to be put on boats on the Grand Junction Canal. It was conveyed via the Oxford, Coventry and Trent & Mersey Canals to Runcorn, from which ‘hoys’ took them to Liverpool. Leaving Chelmsford on 20 June, the regiment reached Blisworth two days later. Eighteen canal boats were required rather than the fifteen anticipated

---

<sup>273</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 217-18, Buckingham to Grenville, 27 May 1798.

<sup>274</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 223-24, Dundas to Grenville, 30 May 1798.

<sup>275</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 395-98, Grenville to Buckingham, 1 June 1798.

<sup>276</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 227, 231-32, B235-26, Buckingham to Grenville, 3, 10 and 12 June 1798; PRONI, D.1606/1/198, Buckingham to Gosford, 14 June 1798.

<sup>277</sup> K. P. Ferguson, ‘The Army in Ireland from the Restoration to the Act of Union’, Unpub. PhD, Trinity, Dublin, 1981, 181.

<sup>278</sup> HMC, *Dropmore*, II, 423-24, Buckingham to Grenville, 13 Sept. 1793.

<sup>279</sup> *Evening Mail*, 13 June 1798.

since the guns and gunners also had to be transported. Buckingham travelled in the last boat, which was fitted with a small cabin for his use. The Royal Bucks were thus the first military unit ever to be conveyed by canal in Britain. Another 200 Bucks militiamen were conveyed to Liverpool by canal subsequently in September 1798, marching from Chelmsford to Nuneaton. The canal companies claimed additional sums for tolls, it transpiring that Buckingham had agreed to this en route. Canal transportation became commonplace thereafter, the Royal Bucks being moved partly on the Royal Military Canal en route from Eastbourne in June 1809.<sup>280</sup>

Not all men were willing to volunteer for Ireland, Buckingham instructing that ‘no indulgence of any kind or sort shall be shewn to those men who have chosen to disgrace themselves and their Regiment by refusing to join their Comrades in Ireland’. Those refusing were stripped of badges and regimental buttons and made to wear plain buttons. It was also made clear any committing offences would be treated with the utmost severity ‘to make those men feel what their Comrades are going through so honourably & creditably to themselves in Ireland’.<sup>281</sup> The number refusing amounted to 39 men but three officers were left to command them at Chelmsford.<sup>282</sup> According to Buckingham, the regiment was greeted in Ireland by assurances on the part of Dublin’s inhabitants that its arrival was worth twice its numbers.<sup>283</sup>

It was a trying period for Buckingham. He was angered when part of the regiment took the field but he was left in Dublin when Humbert landed to assist the rebels on 22 August 1798. He complained he had been disgraced and

---

<sup>280</sup> Hugh Compton and Antony Carr-Gomm, *The Military on English Waterways, 1798-1844* (Mold: Railway & Canal Historical Society, 1991), 14-17, 75, 82.

<sup>281</sup> HHL, ST 144 (24), Order, 4 Nov. 1798.

<sup>282</sup> HHL, ST 144 (25), Order, 16 Oct. 1798.

<sup>283</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 30 June 1798.

degraded and left behind to '*faire la guerre de pots de chambre*'.<sup>284</sup> Believing his humiliation engineered by Lord Hertford of the Warwickshire Militia, he came close to resigning his commission.<sup>285</sup> Buckingham later complained direct to the King.<sup>286</sup> Rather similarly, Buckingham's extreme sensitivity to any slights to his status resulted in a spat in 1801 with one district commander whom he believed was infringing on his authority as lord lieutenant when new arrangements were made to detach some of the county's hundreds into a separate district during anticipated food riots. He even threatened to resign.<sup>287</sup> A later even more extraordinary case came in 1809 when Buckingham threatened to resign the lieutenancy after a dispute with his own son, Temple, over whether militia recruits should be a minimum height of 5'2" or 5'4".<sup>288</sup>

Following his perceived slight at Cornwallis's hands in being left in Dublin, Buckingham became a vociferous critic of Cornwallis for his caution and also his leniency towards captured rebels. Interestingly, however, Buckingham also thought that those generals who had commanded prior to the arrival of Cornwallis had not controlled troops' behaviour towards the population sufficiently, and thereby stoked disaffection. Irish militiamen had also been allowed to commit outrages during the rebellion.<sup>289</sup> John Edwards Fremantle,

---

<sup>284</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 286-88, Buckingham to Grenville, 26 Aug. 1798.

<sup>285</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 4 Sept. 1798; HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 291-93, 296, Buckingham to Grenville, 30 and 31 Aug. 1798; BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 24 and 25 Aug. 1798.

<sup>286</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 352-53, Buckingham to Grenville, 26 Oct. 1798.

<sup>287</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 121-24, 133-35, 163-64, Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 28 and 31 Jan. 1801, and 2 Feb. 1801; Hobart to Buckingham, 1 July 1801; BA, D54/13/13-15, 17 and 19, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 25, 28 and 30 Jan., and 3 Apr. 1801.

<sup>288</sup> BL, Add Mss 41854, Temple to Buckingham, 18 Oct. 1809.

<sup>289</sup> Ivan Nelson, *The Irish Militia, 1793-1802* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 252.

who took the Royal Bucks detachment into the field, reported that his men had behaved well apart from a few cases of drunkenness. Just one duck was stolen, the offender being flogged at once to the astonishment of the accompanying fencibles and Irish militia and yeomanry. The Royal Bucks were present at the action at Ballinamuck, although their participation was confined to securing prisoners.<sup>290</sup>

By October 1798, Buckingham wanted his regiment brought home on the basis of first out, first back.<sup>291</sup> He feared the effect remaining in Ireland over winter would have on the militia's morale as sickness increased amid poor barrack conditions. It seemed unlikely they would be willing to stay beyond the spring, although he would try to hold them to duty. Remaining beyond the end of the rebellion was 'not the bargain which we made'.<sup>292</sup> The militiamen were 'heartily sick' of the duty in Dublin.<sup>293</sup> Buckingham believed his men influenced by the latitude given the Warwickshire Militia by Hertford in wishing to go home, and was incensed that Cornwallis blamed him for the 'disease' among his men of wanting to leave.<sup>294</sup> He was successful in urging them to stay until April 1799, the men apologising for insulting their Colours, their guns, and Buckingham.<sup>295</sup> There had been two murders of Bucks men and fever was also affecting the regiment. The enforcement of habeas corpus had robbed the men of legal protections and also made the inhabitants less wary.

---

<sup>290</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 296-97, 305-06, Fremantle to Buckingham, 29 Aug. and 8 Sept. 1798; BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 13, 14, 15 and 18 July 1798; Fremantle to Buckingham, 2 Sept. 1798.

<sup>291</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 343-44, Buckingham to Grenville, 15 Oct. 1798.

<sup>292</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 351-52, 368-70, 397, Buckingham to Grenville, 23 Oct. 10 and 26 Nov. 1798; BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 7 and 18 Aug. 1798.

<sup>293</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 8 Nov. 1798.

<sup>294</sup> HMC, *Dropmore*, IV, 410-11, 503, Buckingham to Grenville, 11 Dec. 1798.

<sup>295</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 412, Buckingham to Grenville, 12 Dec. 1798.

Thus, the men ‘cannot go into a whiskey shop where they are not told that “times and now changed [,] no more martial law now”, by every rebel in Dublin’. <sup>296</sup>

The rejection of a motion in the Irish Parliament proposing union with Britain in January 1799 was met by some disturbance but less than Buckingham had anticipated in deploying his patrols in Dublin. <sup>297</sup> Some allowances were lower than in Britain and the men were stopped 6½d a day towards the cost of transporting them to Ireland. The government agreed to pay a special allowance to families of an additional 8d a week for wives and children under 10 but most militiamen wanted to return to Britain as soon as possible. Routine guard duty in Dublin usually involved the Castle Guard, detachments for Kilmainham and Newgate Gaols, and a number of outposts. On 11 January 1799, for example, the Royal Bucks provided 198 officers and men out of the 579 required for Dublin Castle, 21 men for Kilmainham, and 137 officers and men for the ‘South Side’ outposts and 52 men for the ‘North Side’ outposts. <sup>298</sup>

Men were warned that it was ‘highly unsafe’ to walk the streets after nightfall after some were severely wounded in October 1798. Private Price paid with his life after having his skull fractured in an altercation in a house on Thomas Street on 2 November 1798. <sup>299</sup> Duty was felt sufficiently hard that it was decreed that no man should have less than two nights in bed ‘rendering it unnecessary that they should be exposed to greater fatigue’. <sup>300</sup> Other guards were maintained at barracks, the main magazine, and the bank. Leave for trusted men after evening parades was permitted but ‘the Constant Riots of the Lower Order of People in

---

<sup>296</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 16 and 22 Nov. 1798.

<sup>297</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 450-54, Buckingham to Grenville, 23 and 24 Jan. 1799.

<sup>298</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 11 Jan. 1799.

<sup>299</sup> HHL, ST 144 (25), Orders, 22 Oct. and 3 Nov. 1798.

<sup>300</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 14 Jan. 1799.



this Town on Sundays added to unpleasant Experience of the Quarrels between the Troops and Croppies [rebels] on Sunday Nights will prevent the Colonel from suffering any Man to pass out of barracks after Parades on Sundays'.<sup>301</sup> With the approach of St Patrick's Day, the men were told to be 'Careful in Avoiding Quarrels'.<sup>302</sup>

In March 1799 one officer fought a duel with an Irish MP who had called one 'certain young Nobleman' in the regiment a 'Fatted Calf' but without bloodshed on either side.<sup>303</sup> Buckingham was also alarmed to discover in February 1799 that some NCOs and men had 'inadvertently engaged themselves in a Society called Orange Men to which they have been bound by an Oath'. They must immediately withdraw.<sup>304</sup> Some men persisted in coming on guard drunk despite the night posts being 'repeatedly fired upon'.<sup>305</sup> Indeed, two men died of drink in March 1799 while others remained in hospital as victims of their 'Own Intemperance'.<sup>306</sup>

Replaced by the Cambridgeshire Militia, the Royal Bucks returned to England in April 1799, marching back to the county for a welcome dinner given by the Mayor and Corporation of Buckingham on 5 May.<sup>307</sup> Buckingham wanted to be stationed at Chelmsford again so he could stay at his house at Gosfield as well as having the regiment given at least a fortnight in the county. Both requests were initially refused and the regiment was ordered to Ashford, but Grenville's

---

<sup>301</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 21 Feb. 1799.

<sup>302</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 17 Mar. 1799.

<sup>303</sup> *Bell's Weekly Messenger*, 10 Mar. 1799.

<sup>304</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 10 Feb. 1799.

<sup>305</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 28 Feb. 1799.

<sup>306</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 22 Mar. 1799.

<sup>307</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Orders, 4 and 5 May 1799.

intervention brought a posting to Chelmsford after all.<sup>308</sup> There the men were released to assist local farmers with the harvest.<sup>309</sup>

When the government wanted to try and find 20,000 more men for the operations in the Low Countries, Buckingham again offered to lead his regiment to the Texel in September 1799. This was despite the Irish experience and despite his fears that the militia would not be willing to be involved in active operations.<sup>310</sup>

The use of the militia as a draft finding body was to become a recurring theme. In June 1799 the militia was reduced to 66,000 with the intention that a quarter of the new county quotas should be enlisted in the army. In July militia officers could obtain regular commissions if 60 men transferred. Militiamen who enlisted would not be required to serve outside Europe and would sign for a limited term rather than life. Buckingham pointed out that officers not wishing to transfer to the line would not encourage men to transfer to the army when reduction would result in their own redundancy.<sup>311</sup> He also pointed out that if the government was prepared to wait for another two or three months then discharged supernumeraries no longer with militia pay and no prospect of harvest wages, and other idlers would enlist.<sup>312</sup>

Notwithstanding the Texel offer, Buckingham expressed himself as against whole regiments volunteering, but believed parts of regiments might volunteer for limited engagements. He also believed a bounty necessary.<sup>313</sup> When the

---

<sup>308</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, IV, 496-98, 503, Buckingham to Grenville, 11, 13 and 23 Mar. 1799.

<sup>309</sup> HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 16 and 20 Aug. 1799.

<sup>310</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, II, 442-437, Grenville to Buckingham, 5 and 9 Sept. 1799; TNA, HO 50/32, Buckingham to Portland, 13 Sept. 1799.

<sup>311</sup> TNA, HO 50/32, Buckingham to HO, 25 July, 25 Aug, 11 Sept and 13 Sept. 1799.

<sup>312</sup> TNA, HO 50/32, Buckingham to Portland, 14 July 1799.

<sup>313</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, V, 363-64, 381-82, Buckingham to Grenville, 6 and 10 Sept. 1799.

militia was reduced in October, the government agreed to keep on surplus officers as supernumeraries.<sup>314</sup> A total of 693 men were sent into the line (including 285 to the 4<sup>th</sup> Foot, 26 to the Royal Artillery, 16 to the 16<sup>th</sup> Foot, and 232 to the 56<sup>th</sup> Foot) from the Royal Bucks on 24 July 1799. A further 169 men went on 24 November 1799.<sup>315</sup> Of these men, 74 were NCOs or drummers or former NCOs, 254 had originally volunteered for the militia, and just 48 had been principals. The remaining 486 were substitutes, 127 of them from out county. Of those enlisted in July, 63 came from the grenadier company and 107 from the light infantry company. For some months those sent to the 4<sup>th</sup> Foot, eventually numbering nine officers and 329 other ranks were put on a separate return.<sup>316</sup> John Mobley's *An Autobiography of a Licensed Hawker*, published in 1876, recounted his experiences after his father from Weston Turville had married an Irish girl while with the Royal Bucks. They had moved back to the village but 'the ladies of Weston Turville did not like this Irish importation', and Mobley's father enlisted in the 4<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>317</sup>

Buckingham also suggested that recruits for the militia be raised by beat of drum at government expense with the equivalent number induced to go into the army. He was prepared to offer seven guineas each if provided by government as a bounty for each recruit and thought he could raise 300 men annually. Grenville agreed but the idea was not taken up.<sup>318</sup> Over 26,000 militiamen

---

<sup>314</sup> Western, *English Militia*, 233-34.

<sup>315</sup> BA, T/A 2/5; *Oracle and Daily Advertiser*, 17 July and 19 Oct. 1799; TNA, HO 50/32, Buckingham to Portland, 25 Aug. and 9 and 10 Oct. 1799; HHL, ST 144 (26), Order, 14 July and 8 and 10 Oct. 1799; ST 144 (27), Order, 21 Oct. 1799.

<sup>316</sup> K. I. Cowper, *The King's Own: The Story of a Royal Regiment* 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1939), I, 303.

<sup>317</sup> *Buckingham Advertiser*, 20 May 1876.

<sup>318</sup> TNA, HO 50/32, Buckingham to HO, 25 and 29 Aug. 1799; HMC *Dropmore*, VI, 413,425. Western, *English Militia*, 234.

joined the army in 1799 going some way to make good casualties and regenerate the army itself, enabling an expeditionary force to be sent to the Low Countries. Sir Ralph Abercromby considered the militia recruits ‘a superior race of men, and a great acquisition’.<sup>319</sup> The campaign, however, proved disastrous and the process of recruitment was marked by considerable debauchery among those receiving the bounty on offer. Those who volunteered from the Royal Bucks were soon in action in the Low Countries, Buckingham happy that they had done well, albeit suffering many casualties including two officers - Chaplin and Browne - missing.<sup>320</sup> Militiamen generally suffered well over half the army’s losses.<sup>321</sup> In 1801 Buckingham also suggested small militia detachments might be used as marines with the fleet.<sup>322</sup>

Meanwhile, the supplementary militia had been progressively embodied between February and April 1798. An even more ambitious mobilisation scheme was suggested by the high sheriff of Dorset, William Clavell, who proposed using common law to raise the posse comitatus or civil power. It had last been called out in Kent in 1746. Utilising the posse required the listing of all able-bodied males between the ages of 15 and 60, as well as draught animals and vehicles. Clavell’s initiative was publicised by the Dorset MP, William Morton Pitt. It was considered but not followed in Lancashire and implemented in Northumberland in March 1798.<sup>323</sup>

---

<sup>319</sup> Piers Mackesy, *British Victory in Egypt, 1801* (London: Routledge, 1995), 30.

<sup>320</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, V, 472-73, Buckingham to Grenville, 15 Oct. 1799.

<sup>321</sup> Piers Mackesy, *Statesmen at War: The Strategy of Overthrow, 1798-99* (London: Longman, 1974), 274.

<sup>322</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 118-19, Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 27 Jan. 1801.

<sup>323</sup> Beckett (ed.), *Posse Comitatus*, xi.

Morton Pitt's pamphlet publicising the idea persuaded Buckingham to undertake the same survey. On 9 February 1798 he wrote to the high sheriff, John Penn of Stoke Park, informing him that he was summoning the magistrates and deputy lieutenants to Aylesbury on 16 February to consider the plan.

Bearing in mind Penn's 'constitutional zeal and loyalty', Buckingham had no doubt the sheriff would 'give your most serious consideration to this subject'.

<sup>324</sup> Buckingham reported 'great satisfaction' with the plan on 14 February. <sup>325</sup>

Penn duly laid down the precepts and warrants two days later. Instructions were issued to justices, mayors, bailiffs, chief and petty constables, tythingmen, and other peace offices to return all able-bodied men aged 15-60 not already serving in a military capacity but distinguishing clergymen and licensed teachers of separate congregations and Quakers as well as the infirm. Details were also



*John Penn in the uniform of the  
Bucks Yeomanry, c. 1809*

---

<sup>324</sup> Wheeler and Broadley, *Napoleon and Invasion of England*, I, 108-09.

<sup>325</sup> TNA, HO 50/313, Buckingham to Portland, 14 Feb. 1798.

required of wagons, carts, draught horses and wind and water mills. Returns were to be received by 5 March.<sup>326</sup>

| Names of persons              | Occupations   | Remarks |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Tho <sup>d</sup> . Bailey     | Mealman       | Quaker  |
| George Heelas                 | Schoolmasters |         |
| Sam <sup>l</sup> . Heelas     |               |         |
| Benj <sup>n</sup> . Gillett   |               |         |
| Joseph Hill                   |               |         |
| George Grover                 |               |         |
| Edward Tomkins                |               |         |
| Thomas Humphrey               |               |         |
| Rich <sup>d</sup> . Eggleston |               |         |
| Joseph Gomm                   |               |         |
| James Holmes                  |               |         |
| William Fowler                |               |         |
| James Gomm                    |               |         |
| George Reeves                 |               |         |
| Charles Foster                |               |         |
| Thomas Reynolds               |               |         |
| William Quinlan               |               |         |
| Edward Watts                  |               |         |
| W <sup>m</sup> . Butts        |               |         |
| Joseph Bunker                 |               |         |
| Edw <sup>d</sup> . Turner     |               |         |
| J <sup>n</sup> . Cyprethite   |               |         |
| James Russell                 |               |         |
| William Mayo                  |               |         |
| James Coles                   |               |         |
| Rowell Ruggins                |               |         |
| Joseph Webb                   |               |         |
| Thomas Adams                  |               |         |
| Dan <sup>l</sup> . Bunker     |               |         |
| Benj <sup>n</sup> . Bunker    |               |         |
| Joseph Webb                   |               |         |
| Henry Barrett                 |               |         |
| Joseph Hearn                  |               |         |
| James Catling                 |               |         |
| Sam <sup>l</sup> . Treacher   |               |         |
| John Broaden                  |               |         |
| Thos <sup>d</sup> . Webb      |               |         |
| W <sup>m</sup> . Webb         |               |         |
| Benj <sup>n</sup> . Webb      |               |         |
| James Webb                    |               |         |
| Edward Cuffrey                |               |         |
| James Bowden                  |               |         |
| James Bowden                  |               |         |

Entry for Chesham from the Posse Comitatus, 1798  
(Buckinghamshire Archives)

<sup>326</sup> TNA, HO 50/40 Buckingham to Portland, 4 Mar. 1798; BA, L/P 1 Entry for 16 Feb. 1798.  
The Bucks returns are to be found in BA, L/P 16; and BL, Stowe 805 and 806.

Penn approached clergymen to assist, the Rev. Dayrell reporting on 20 February that Bucks was the first inland county to undertake the survey and ‘shall in a few days be in possession of the number of men etc. shd these daring Marauders & Disturbers of the Peace & Order of all regular Governments attempt to make a Descent upon this Country’. <sup>327</sup> There was some need for corrections, but Buckingham submitted the return to the Duke of Portland on 11 March 1798. <sup>328</sup> There are variations in the two surviving copies of the Bucks posse and corrections - some yeomen and militiamen were included by error - showing between 22,272 and 23,547 men returned - about 45 per cent of the total male population. Of these 818 were not available by reason of disabilities or as Quakers, of whom there were 43. <sup>329</sup> Penn, who suffered from St Vitus’s Dance, became an officer in the Bucks yeomanry commanding the Eton Troop. Subsequently, he also joined the Portland volunteers in Dorset, where he had a residence at Pennsylvania Castle on the Isle of Portland, as it was ‘usual’ for a yeomanry officer to join the volunteers and he wanted to acquire additional military knowledge. <sup>330</sup> Penn was MP for Helston from 1802 to 1805.

Clavell’s scheme also resulted in the Defence of the Realm Act in April 1798. This permitted the raising of armed associations as well as the government being able to seek details of national resources in men, horses and livestock, vehicles, mills, boats and barges. Buckingham was not required to make a further return apart from boats and barges, but he felt this would be difficult

---

<sup>327</sup> BA, D22/51, Dayrell to Brewster, 20 Feb. 1798.

<sup>328</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 11 Mar. 1798.

<sup>329</sup> Beckett (ed.), *Posse Comitatus*, xv, xxi.

<sup>330</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Penn to Grenville, 16 Jan. 1804.

since waterways were not confined to the county alone. The lists were submitted nonetheless by 22 April.<sup>331</sup>

Volunteer offers flooded in, to the extent that the Secretary of War, Dundas, tried to encourage those only from ‘respectable householders’ and from towns with less than 1,000 inhabitants. Back in March 1797 the government had also rejected offers not emanating from ports, coastal towns or manufacturing towns with the exception of yeomanry. This suggests that volunteers were seen as a safeguard against disorder, and that was very much the stimulus of those units emerging in 1797 and 1798. In April 1798 Buckingham again stressed that proposals for volunteers emanating from Aylesbury, Buckingham and Newport Pagnell would be ‘persons of a better description, though unable to defray the expenses of their dress’.<sup>332</sup> A total of 625 volunteers were enrolled at and around Newport Pagnell by 1 May 1798, although they were prepared to go only ten miles from the town in the event of invasion. A further 39 volunteers were enrolled at Aylesbury and 119 at Buckingham by 14 May: the latter would be prepared to serve within one day’s march of the town in case of riots but anywhere in the county in case of invasion. An offer was also forthcoming from Marlow. The resolutions for forming the Loyal Aylesbury Volunteers did not state that the intention was to avoid the ballot but the intended ages of 17 to 55 betrayed it. In the case of the Aylesbury Hundreds, it was resolved ‘feeling most Sensibly the pressure of the Array Bill on these truly Loyal and deserving Hundreds’ to raise volunteers in each parish to stave off the act’s application.

---

<sup>331</sup> TNA, HO 50/41, Buckingham to Portland, 17 and 22 Apl. 1798.

<sup>332</sup> TNA, HO 50/41, Buckingham to Portland, 22 Apl. 1798.



There were 848 volunteers by June 1799, and 937 men were serving in eight companies by September 1798.<sup>333</sup> The yeomanry by now also comprised 770 men in 16 troops.<sup>334</sup> These were at Amersham, Aylesbury (two), Buckingham, Burnham (two), Eton, Fenny Stratford, Newport Pagnell (two), Olney, Stony Stratford, Taplow, and Winslow with two for the Desborough Hundred.

Table 4.5 Bucks Yeomanry and Volunteers, 1 December 1800

| Location                                  | Yeomen                                 | Volunteers |
|---|--|------------|
| Amersham                                  | 67 (1794)                              | 50 (1798)  |
| Aylesbury                                 | 102 (1794)                             | 78 (1798)  |
| Buckingham                                | 109 (1794)                             | 132 (1798) |
| Burnham                                   | 94 (1794)                              | 39 (1798)  |
| Desborough                                | 69 (1794)                              | -          |
| High Wycombe                              | 43 (1798)                              | -          |
| Newport Pagnell/Olney and Stony Stratford | 170 (1794 NP), (1797 Olney), (1798 SS) | 480 (1798) |
| Total                                     | 654                                    | 779        |

Source: TNA, HO 50/330; BA, L/Y 5/2.

Viscount Kirkwall proposed raising a volunteer corps from his tenants, having originally contemplated doing so in the previous year.<sup>335</sup> It is not clear if this was successful. Attempts to raise volunteers at Chesham in June 1798 certainly

<sup>333</sup> BL, Add Mss 41851, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 6 May 1798; TNA, HO 50/42, Buckingham to Portland, 1 and 2 May 1798; HO 51/105, Portland to Buckingham, 21 May and 1 and 2 June 1798; WO 13/4197; BA, L/V 3; L/V 6/1; HHL, STG Military 1(12).

<sup>334</sup> TNA, HO 50/45, Buckingham to Portland, 8 Mar. 1799; HO 50/330, Buckingham to Portland, 13 Apr. 1798; BA, L/P 17/2, Resolutions, Aug. 1798; Lieutenancy, L/Y 13/32, Grenville and Praed to Chaplin, 27 Oct. 1798; HHL, Stowe, STG Military 1(12).

<sup>335</sup> BL, Add Mss 59291, Kirkwall to Grenville, 8 Aug. 1798.

failed when the prospective commanding officer, a tanner named George Hepburn, withdrew in September. Other committee members had included an attorney, an apothecary, a lace dealer, a carrier, and a currier.<sup>336</sup>

At the same time it can be argued that the volunteers do fall into a pattern approximating to increasing national consciousness and, at local level, of growing civic culture. Traditional elites displayed some ambiguity towards a greater participation that might imply a reward for citizenship suggestive of greater democratisation. Few volunteer units were organised on a county basis, although this was certainly not the case in Bucks where, as noted previously, three regiments were organised. Elsewhere, lords lieutenant had only limited influence over local units and the terms of service were only loosely regulated centrally. Pay had been offered in 1794 for drill on two days a week at a rate of 1s.0d for a three-hour session but circulars in March 1797 and April 1798 provided pay for only one drill per week and a clothing allowance only for those willing to serve throughout a military district, Bucks coming into the South Inland District with Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire. Those receiving the two days' pay under the older legislation were then restricted to one day's pay a week in September 1798. If localism in terms of self-imposed restriction of service was increasingly rejected by volunteers conscious of the needs of national defence, exemption from the ballot was a powerful stimulus.<sup>337</sup> Effectively, volunteering was the only realistic means of mobilising the population by consent albeit that patriotism had a distinctly local feel. The numbers of volunteers doubled in the first three months of 1798 from 25,000 to 50,000, and doubled again in the following three months.<sup>338</sup>

---

<sup>336</sup> Clive Birch, *The Book of Chesham* (Buckingham: Barracuda, 1974), 120-21.

<sup>337</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 73-74.

<sup>338</sup> Franklin and Philp, *Napoleon and Invasion*, 13.

While corps and associations formed in 1797 and 1798 tended to be eminently respectable in social composition, some were of lower social status. There was concern at the unreliability of some in renewed food riots in 1800.<sup>339</sup> Labourers certainly offered themselves at Dinton and Stone in 1803. There were also labourers in the volunteers at Iver in October 1803. Grenville pointed out that the volunteers should not rely on labourers and servants when they should be available for the militia ballot.<sup>340</sup> The Sergeant Major of the Amersham Armed Association was the landlord of the Griffin Inn, Berry. Elizabeth Wynne was also amused by the appearance of 17 boys at Winslow in November 1803 ‘marching and going through the whole exercise of the volunteers, with sticks and paper caps’.<sup>341</sup>



*Drum of the Amersham Armed Association, c. 1803 (BMMT)*

<sup>339</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 84-86.

<sup>340</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Clowes and Ward to Charsley and Randall, 3 Oct. 1803; Grenville to Yorke, 25 Nov. 1803.

<sup>341</sup> Fremantle (ed.), *Wynne Diaries*, III, 96-97.

Pay, however small, was perhaps welcome to some but far more significant was exemption from the militia ballot. It was granted in 1794 to volunteers who could produce a certificate attesting attendance at drills in the six weeks prior to the hearing of appeals. Units formed in 1797 were not exempted. No volunteers enlisted after October 1796 were exempted from the supplementary militia ballot until 1799. In April 1798 volunteers were exempted from the ballot if they extended their service to the military district. Yeomanry were also exempted from the horse duty from 1795 onwards. Yeomanry and volunteers were exempt from the hair powder tax and from turnpike tolls when uniformed and on exercise. In October 1798 Thomas Berry of the Aylesbury Troop withdrew his horse from yeomanry service and was at once informed that his tax exemption was null and void: he also owed arrears on uniform and equipment.<sup>342</sup> In August 1803 Henry Chisholm complained to Grenville that he had been accused falsely of wearing hair powder without paying tax, requesting a certificate of his yeomanry service.<sup>343</sup>

William Pitt resigned as prime minister over the King's opposition to Catholic emancipation in March 1801 and was succeeded by Henry Addington. Peace preliminaries were signed in October 1801 and ratified at Amiens in March 1802. Up until the last moment, the Royal Bucks at Colchester was on full alert, some fears of an invasion attempt being entertained in July 1801.<sup>344</sup> Tom Grenville thought the risk unlikely but had his yeomanry meet in small groups

---

<sup>342</sup> BA, L/Y 13/42, Chaplin to Berry, n. d.; L/Y 14/57, Grenville to Berry, 16 Oct. 1798.

<sup>343</sup> BL, Add Mss 59292, Chisholm to Grenville, 18 Aug. 1803.

<sup>344</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 38, Buckingham to Grenville, 31 July 1801; BL, Add Mss 58877, Buckingham to Grenville, 31 July 1801; Add Mss 59291, Buckingham to Grenville, 27 July 1801.

for ‘an hour now and then as suits the shopkeepers, until we can meet after the harvest’. <sup>345</sup>

Predictably, the army was halved in size by the Addington administration and the militia and supplementary militia both disembodied. At least the government passed legislation in June 1802 to continue the volunteers and yeomanry, albeit without pay or allowances although they retained exemptions from the ballot and the horse duty. Relatively few volunteers actually continued their service and the militia establishment was cut to 40,000 in England and Wales in April 1802, reducing the Bucks quota to 599. Training was to be restricted to 21 days per annum, with only the youngest and fittest to be liable to further duty. It was part and parcel with militia legislation that also shortened militia training to 21 days, and divided the militia into classes so that the youngest and fittest could be called out quickly. Buckingham supported the legislation on the grounds that the measures would enable augmentation if necessary. <sup>346</sup>

In the event, the Amiens peace lasted but 14 months, with war renewed on 18 May 1803. Addington’s response to the new crisis was more pragmatic than usually suggested. <sup>347</sup>

---

<sup>345</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 42, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 10 Aug. 1801.

<sup>346</sup> Western, *English Militia*, 240.

<sup>347</sup> Charles Fedorak, ‘In Defence of Great Britain: Henry Addington, the Duke of York and Military Preparations against Invasion by Napoleonic France, 1803-04’, in Mark Philp (ed.), *Resisting Napoleon: The British Response to the Threat of Invasion, 1797-1815* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006), 91-110; Richard Glover, *Peninsular Preparation: The Reform of the British Army, 1795-1809* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963), 237, 254; Christopher Hall, ‘Addington at War: Unspectacular but not Unsuccessful’, *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 61 (1988), 306-15.

It had been clear that hostilities might well recur. The militia was re-embodied on 11 March 1803, with training immediately increased once more to 28 days. The supplementary militia was then also re-embodied on 28 May with further legislation to complete the establishment by fining counties until they met their quotas. It was the start of a period in which no less than 21 separate acts were passed by the end of 1803 to raise men either voluntarily or compulsorily for defence against the imminent threat of invasion. Whilst at its height between May 1803 and August 1805 when Napoleon's Army of England was encamped along the Channel coast, the threat did not fully diminish even after Nelson's naval victory at Trafalgar in October 1805.

A sweeping mobilisation of the population along the lines of the Defence of the Realm Act was revived by the Defence Act in June 1803, which required lords lieutenant to return the number of able-bodied men between 15 and 60, indicating those serving in existing units, those willing to serve, and those ineligible for service. Millers, bakers and owners of wagons and barges were also to be returned with details of vehicles, livestock, food and forage. It largely meant only the updating of the 1798 returns. Buckingham had already used the posse returns to update the militia returns in January 1802 and told the Secretary for War, Lord Hobart, that he would do the same now.<sup>348</sup>

The General Defence Act - sometimes referred to as the Levy en Masse Act in imitation of the French Republican general mobilisation measure of August 1793 - was then passed in July 1803. Males between 17 and 55 were now to be returned in four classes depending upon age, marital status, and the number of children under ten as well as more comprehensive details of households and

---

<sup>348</sup> BA, D/MH/G/H34 and 40, Buckingham to Hobart, 24 Jan. 1802 and 10 July 1803; L/P 16; L/V 6/7; L/P 3 and 5/9; Q/Unclassified Q/22/3a and 3b; D/CE/Add J/4, Minutes of Meeting of Magistracy and Lieutenancy, 14 July 1803; Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 313-14, Hobart to Buckingham, 12 July 1803.

other resources. It was assumed that the first three classes embracing single men aged 17-50, and married men aged 17-30 with two children or less under ten, would be trained for two hours on Sundays for a maximum of 20 days between March and December. In an emergency training could be extended and those trained added to existing units or forming new ones. However, the legislation would be suspended if volunteers came forward equal to three quarters of the first class - single men aged 17-30. As volunteers were forthcoming, volunteers were then limited to six times a county's militia quota. The government intention was to provide 20s.0d per man once every three years with 1s.0d being paid per man for each of the 20 days' training. Each training exercise must last a minimum of two hours.<sup>349</sup> Buckingham additionally made it known that a two guinea bounty would be paid if the corps were called out with an additional two guineas on demobilisation. He would also personally pay a guinea to all those who completed 20 days' training.<sup>350</sup>

Returns survive for the General Defence Act from Bledlow, Dinton, Great Missenden, Hartwell, North Marston, Princes Risborough, Temple Mills at Marlow, Wendover, and Wraysbury Mills.<sup>351</sup> Some occupations are identified. Thus, 28 volunteers at Dinton, 27 offering to train at Bledlow, 24 at Stone and five at Hartwell show 10 farmers or farmer's sons, one professional man, 15 tradesmen, 10 craftsmen, and 43 labourers with two whose occupation is unknown. While the proportion of labourers and servants remains high (54.7 per cent), it is noticeable how many others were prepared to come forward compared to the usual composition of the militia. The average age of the

---

<sup>349</sup> BA, D86/31/54, Hobart to Buckingham, 3 Aug. 1803; T/A 4/1; D/W 88/9, Hobart to Buckingham, 3 Aug. 1803.

<sup>350</sup> BA, D86/31/55, Buckingham proclamation, 4 Aug. 1803; D/CE/Add J/4, Minutes of Southern Division meeting, 19 Aug. 1803.

<sup>351</sup> BA, L/V 2/1, 2/4, 2/6, 2/7, 6/9; D86/31/18 and 19.

Bledlow volunteers was perhaps surprisingly low at 20.7 years. Unfortunately, no details are given for the 39 volunteers at North Marston, the 86 volunteers at Great Missenden and Wendover, or the 156 volunteers at Princes Risborough.

A total of 41 men came forward from Temple Mills, of whom 29 worked in the copper mills with the remainder 'farm' or 'garden' men, and 14 men from Wraysbury Mills. Both establishments were owned jointly by Owen Williams, the MP for Marlow from 1796 to 1832, and Pascoe Grenfell of Taplow House, the second member for Marlow from 1802 to 1826. The latter had succeeded Owen's father, Thomas Williams, in the seat. Draft regulations for the Aylesbury corps indicate 86 men formed in two companies, whilst men also came forward from Hambleden and Medmenham.<sup>352</sup> Of Grenfell's own household and estate servants, ten joined the volunteers with an average age of 29.5 years.<sup>353</sup> In the case of Hambleden, farmers objected to an additional 12 men beyond the quota being accepted.<sup>354</sup> A list of those exempt from the militia ballot at Hartwell in September 1806 shows six men serving as volunteers, of whom one was a carpenter, two servants, and three labourers. A dairyman and a miller were serving in the yeomanry.<sup>355</sup>

Buckingham had quickly ascertained that existing yeomanry and volunteers would be counted against the quota.<sup>356</sup> The deputy lieutenants and justices of the Aylesbury and Cottesloe Hundreds together met at Aylesbury on 8 September 1803 under the direction of Sir George Lee as 'Lieutenant' of the

---

<sup>352</sup> BA, L/V 1; D86/31/26, Brudenell to Grenfell, 18 Aug. 1803; D86/31/36, Scott to Cooke, 26 Aug. 1803.

<sup>353</sup> BA, D86/31/44.

<sup>354</sup> BA, D86/31/42, Ridley to Grenfell, 8 Sept. 1803.

<sup>355</sup> BA, D/W 88/10, List, 20 Sept. 1806.

<sup>356</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 315-16, 318-319, Hobart to Buckingham, 27 July and 1 Aug. 1803



Middle Division to form five companies from the 430 volunteers coming forward to meet their quotas.<sup>357</sup> Some 212 men from Buckingham Borough came forward, with another 200 from Maids Moreton, Radclive, Stowe and Water Stratford.<sup>358</sup>

There were some difficulties at Marlow. Pascoe Grenfell reported that the inhabitants as opposed to his employees, had not shown the ‘alacrity’ he had expected, largely due to the uncertainty over conditions of service and allowances. Buckingham indicated that men need only serve in the parish unless in the event of invasion, in which case they could join with the militia and be liable to serve anywhere in Great Britain.<sup>359</sup> Grenfell organised three successive meetings at Marlow concluding with one for Marlow, Little Marlow and Medmenham in the Vestry Room on 9 August with calls for preserving that ‘Constitution which is the Envy of the World, and under which this Empire has hitherto secured to itself, during a Period of Many Years, Blessings and Prosperity unknown to any other Nations upon Earth’.<sup>360</sup>

There appeared to be no anxieties about the possible extent of geographical service elsewhere in the south of the county, and Grenville received an offer from Slough to form a corps free of any government subsidy apart from arms and clothing. Grenville intended to get matters moving by appointing not just

---

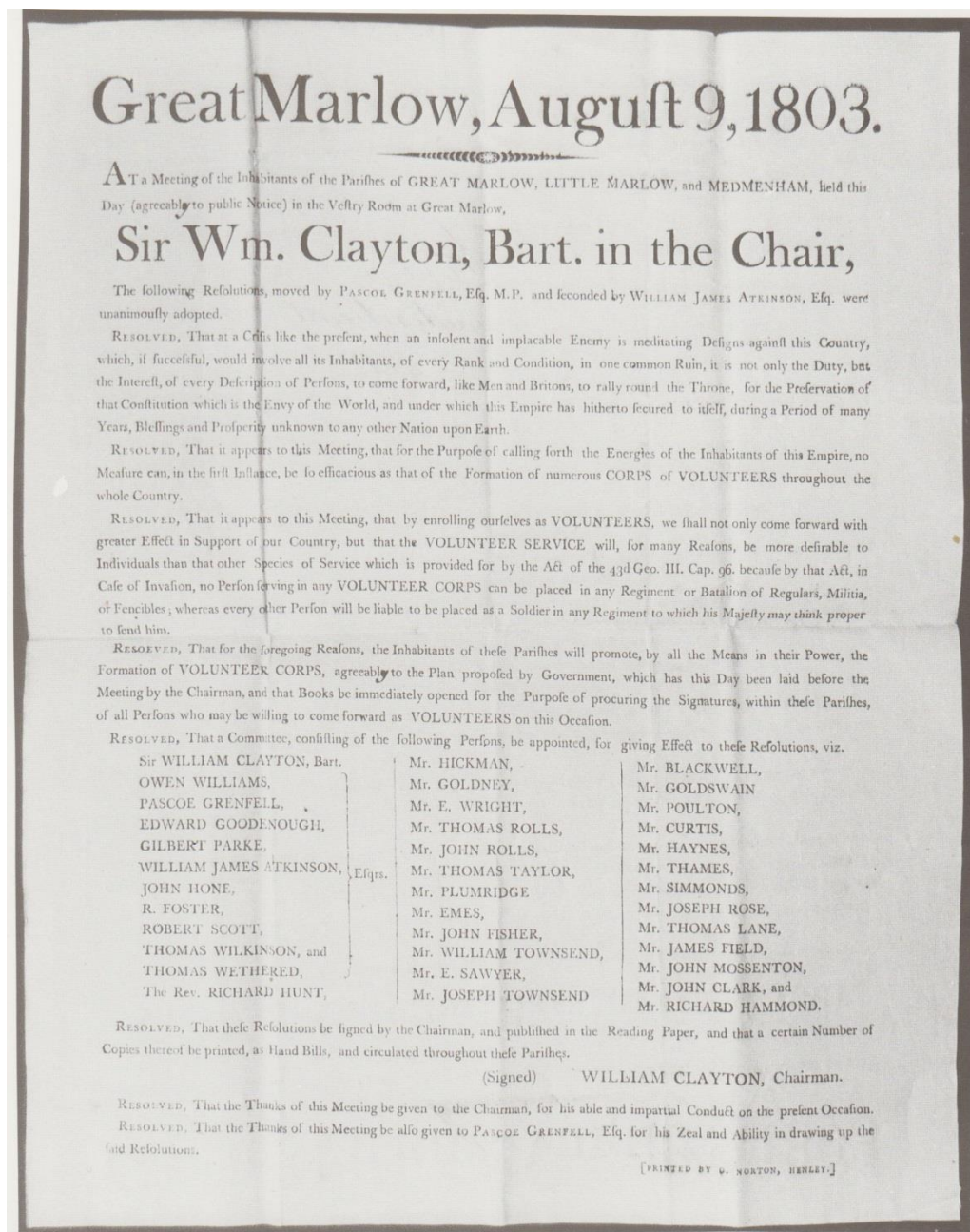
<sup>357</sup> BA, T/A 3/4(a).

<sup>358</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Buckingham to Pelham, 26 July 1803.

<sup>359</sup> BA, D86/31/20, Buckingham to Grenfell, 21 July 1803; D86/31/56, Note by Charsley and Randall on meeting of Southern Division, 6 Aug. 1803.

<sup>360</sup> BA, D86/31/17, Grenfell to Buckingham, 3 Aug. 1803; D86/31/57, Resolutions of Vestry Meeting, 9 Aug. 1803.

hundredal ‘inspectors’ but parish ‘superintendents’.<sup>361</sup> He was also receiving additional yeomanry recruits including an offer from Eton College to mount six



### *Resolutions at Marlow, 9 August 1803 (Buckinghamshire Archives)*

men, but Beaconsfield had few men not otherwise committed.<sup>362</sup> Parish superintendents were appointed generally. Thomas Scott of Aston Sandford

<sup>361</sup> BL, Add Mss 41852, Grenville to Tom Grenville, 2 Aug. 1803; HHL, STG 40 (18), Grenville to Buckingham, 28 July 1803.

declined the invitation as he was an undergraduate and Joseph Wells of Ellesborough because he was 84 and infirm.<sup>363</sup> James Oldham, the wealthy London ironmonger who had purchased and remodelled Missenden Abbey in 1787, was already acting in his City district, but put his tenants, servants, gamekeeper, and horses at the disposal of the Rev. Sir George Lee, who was acting for the subdivision.<sup>364</sup>

Buckingham levied 2s.6d on each parish for each of the 20 drills to pay for an adjutant and NCOs to train the men, as well as providing clothing and an additional 1s.0d per man per day for the men for a year.<sup>365</sup> Bierton, for example, was directed to call a vestry meeting to agree to its contribution of £13.<sup>366</sup> In the case of the three Chiltern Hundreds, Grenville found 114 men more than the quota but that meant finding more money, to which the inhabitants of Amersham objected. Consequently, he had to promise he would raise £285 from the Ashendon Hundreds, or 90 men would not have been forthcoming from Amersham: the additional men made up the shortfall from Ashendon. If Ashendon did not pay up then he would have to find it himself.<sup>367</sup>

As with the yeomanry, costs were not inconsiderable. Incidental expenses for the Amersham volunteers amounted to £111.4s.2½d between January 1804 and May 1806, mostly for cleaning arms. In May 1806, it was said that its funds were exhausted. John Marshall complained to Grenville that money had not

---

<sup>362</sup> BL, Add Mss 41852, Grenville to Tom Grenville, 10 Aug. 1803.

<sup>363</sup> BA, L/V 5/18; L/V 5/20; L/V 5/37.

<sup>364</sup> BA, L/V 5/22, Oldham to Lee, 29 July 1803.

<sup>365</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 9 Aug. 1803; BA, L/P 17/4, Plan for Aylesbury Division; L/P 17/6, Plan for Ashendon Division; D86/31/58, Plan for Southern Division, 19 Aug. 1803.

<sup>366</sup> BA, L/P 17/2.

<sup>367</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 324-26, Grenville to Buckingham, 6 Sept. 1803.

been forthcoming from the Ashendon hundreds as promised.<sup>368</sup> William Lowndes's expenditure for the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment in 1803 included £39.12.11d for a flag, £31.13.2½d for leather waist belts, £10.1s.0d for three swords, £98.1s.0d for hats and cockades, £20.12s.0d on silver plated epaulettes, £5.5s.9d for buttons, and £30.15s.2½d for white feathers and cockades for helmets, and drums.<sup>369</sup> The presentation of Colours such as that to the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment were important local occasions that enabled many including the ladies, who invariably performed such tasks, to participate in public acts in the wider cause.<sup>370</sup>

Within the context of the government's stipulations as to service, the new volunteer corps were able to set their own rules. Those of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Mid Bucks Regiment included a series of fines for non-attendance and disobedience for both officers and men. They were to be recoverable through magistrates in the case of default. Thus, each offence would cost an officer 20s.0d, and a man 5s.0d. Men were able to resign, however, on three weeks' notice.<sup>371</sup>

Overall, the 1803 returns indicate that of the 18,141 able bodied males in Bucks between the ages of 17 and 55, a total of 6,034 were willing to take up arms. In addition, 1,893 men were already in uniform, suggesting 44 per cent of the county's available manpower was prepared to fight. It placed Bucks thirteenth

---

<sup>368</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Incidental Expenses of Amersham Company; Marshall to Grenville, 9 May and 20 June 1806.

<sup>369</sup> BA, D/LO/6/2/13/24/1, 14, 31, 38 49, 62 and 75.

<sup>370</sup> Kevin Linch, "'A Citizen and not a Soldier': The British Volunteer Movement and the War against Napoleon", in Alan Forest, Karen Hageman, and Jane Rendall (eds), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1790-1820* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 205-21, at 213,

<sup>371</sup> BA, T/A 4/1, Rules and Regulations of the Middle Regiment of Volunteer Infantry of the County of Buckingham, 1803.

of the 38 English counties for which the information is available in terms of response.<sup>372</sup>

The liability to wider mobilisation lapsed until the introduction of the Training Act in July 1806, which proposed that all males between 16 and 40 should be liable to 24 days' annual training within five miles of their place of abode. A total of 200,000 men would be selected to undergo such training each year with remuneration of 1s.0d a day and defaulters liable to a fine. The Training Act reflected the dislike for the volunteers of William Windham, who became Secretary of State for War and Colonies in the Ministry of the 'Talents'. He clashed with his prime minister, Grenville, who, as a leading volunteer himself, was far more sympathetic.<sup>373</sup> Windham wanted a more uniform military system that placed the needs of the army first, conceiving that given the unpopularity of compulsion, wider military training, and reduction of militia and volunteers might induce more to enlist into the army.<sup>374</sup> Grenville suggested in January 1807 that the country would be divided into twelve districts with one county within a district trained each year under the Training Act. From the district containing Bucks, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire, it would be Bucks that would be selected for training first.<sup>375</sup> Grenville rejected any notion of a new supplementary militia.<sup>376</sup> Little had been achieved, however, by the time the 'Talents' collapsed in March 1807. The Training Act was forgotten but, curiously, the actual legislation remained on the statute book until 1875.

The burden on those at county, hundredal and parochial levels of all the additional defence measures on top of the administration of the militia and

---

<sup>372</sup> Colley, *Britons*, 378.

<sup>373</sup> Peter Jupp, *Lord Grenville, 1759-1834* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 368-69.

<sup>374</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 81-84.

<sup>375</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, IV, 114-16, Grenville to Buckingham, 14 Jan. 1807.

<sup>376</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, IV, 196-97, Grenville to Buckingham, June 1807.

supplementary militia was substantial. As Grenville noted in June 1803, militia vacancies as a result of desertion added to the burden: 'Our parishes complain grievously of the desertions in the militia and, I suspect, that many of the men have been Londoners, who have entered with false names, as has, I understand been done to an immense extent in Middlesex.'<sup>377</sup> The following month, Buckingham also pointed out that volunteers might not be forthcoming 'for in truth the draughts of various kinds have pressed so unusually heavy, that the lower classes are stated to me to be utterly disinclined to voluntary offers'.<sup>378</sup> One example of the potential burden is furnished by Hanslope. A ballot list for July 1812 shows that whilst 20 men with an average age of 31.3 years were eligible for the ballot, a further 20 with an average age of 35.2 years were exempt for a variety of reasons. These included physical unfitness and the number of dependents, thus concentrating the burden on a younger age group.<sup>379</sup> It might be noted, too, that the whole process of compiling and returning lists of eligible men, balloting, appealing, and finding substitutes had to be gone through each time there was a vacancy, as in the case of Little Hampden in November 1798 when William Summers deserted.<sup>380</sup>

Yet a further burden came with the attempt to find men for the army. Due to its unpopularity with militia commanding officers, direct militia recruitment into the army was prohibited by legislation in 1802. As a result, the so-called Army of Reserve, also known as the Additional Army of England, was authorised in June 1803. A total of 34,000 men in England and Wales were to be raised by ballot of eligible males aged 18-40. A principal serving in person would be liable to five years' service. Substitutes would be required to serve for five years

---

<sup>377</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 305-06, Grenville to Buckingham, 19 June 1803.

<sup>378</sup> BA, D/MH/G/H40, Buckingham to Hobart, 10 July 1803.

<sup>379</sup> BA, PR 97/3/3, List for 6 July 1812.

<sup>380</sup> BA, L/Pd 1, Chief Constable to Petty Constable, 19 Nov. 1798.

or the duration of hostilities. Exemption could also be achieved through a £20 fine whilst the ballot could be delayed if parishes found a number of men equal to two-thirds of its quota willing to serve as parochial substitutes. If parishes did not find their quota, a fine of £20 would be levied for every man deficient. An individual paying the £20 fine, however, would not be exempt from the militia and vice versa. The Army of Reserve was liable to serve anywhere in the United Kingdom. The clear intention was to encourage its members to enlist in the regular army, initially into second battalions serving at home from which they could be drafted into front line battalions.

The problem was that exemption from the Army of Reserve was extended beyond that normally available from the militia ballot to poor men with more than one child born in wedlock, all volunteers and yeomanry enlisted before June 1803, and all who had already served in the militia. The price of substitutes rose once more. In effect, substitution meant the militia starved the army of recruits and, in turn, volunteers starved the militia. In Bucks, where the Army of Reserve quota was set at 435 men, the price of substitutes soon exceeded 30 or 40 guineas in the High Wycombe area. Insurance clubs flourished anew.<sup>381</sup> Initially, it had been only £10 in the case of a Bierton labourer found to fill a vacancy at Stoke Mandeville.<sup>382</sup> In the Newport Hundreds every one of the 73 men balloted for the Army of Reserve at the Swan Inn at Newport Pagnell on 10 August 1803 was able to find a substitute. The substitutes included 35 men from other counties, ten former militiamen, eight former regular soldiers, a former marine, and a former Fencible. No less than 45 were labourers and 32 servants.

<sup>383</sup>

---

<sup>381</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Nash to Yorke, 26 Dec. 1803.

<sup>382</sup> BA, PR 196/18/4.

<sup>383</sup> BA, L/Md 5/2 and 5/3.

At Stoke Poges the vestry meeting opened a subscription for the Army of Reserve in August 1803, which raised £89.6s.0d. The largest number of subscribers - 45 men - contributed at the lowest rate of 10s.6d. Subsequent outgoings totalled £63.19s.6d through which the fund paid two £20 fines and found a substitute for £23.7s.0d. The remaining 12s.6d defrayed other expenses. Similar clubs appeared at Eton and Upton.<sup>384</sup> At High Wycombe the vestry resolved in September 1803 to take £100 from the poor rates to clothe 64 volunteers representing the borough quota, and an additional £50 for the 32 volunteers filling the parish quota.<sup>385</sup> In one case, Butler Stevens, a Bledlow labourer, was brought to court by John Gough, a Princes Risborough grocer. In August 1803 Gough had offered Stevens 22 guineas to be his substitute for the Army of Reserve with 5s.0d in advance plus 3s.0d worth of ribbons and all he could drink at the inn where they had met to agree the transaction. Stevens then refused to serve.<sup>386</sup> At Buckingham, a ballot was initially held to find 42 men for the subdivision, but one was exempt by reason of service in the yeomanry and six were found unfit to serve. Three then found substitutes. Occupations are not given for all those drawn but two were professional men, four craftsmen and 16 labourers. The age is given for 32 men, the average being 22.9 years, with the oldest a 40 year old weaver and a 40 year old labourer.<sup>387</sup>

The legislation was effectively suspended in May 1804 on the fall of the Addington ministry, Pitt's new government replacing it with the Permanent Additional Force Act in June 1804. This combined the Army of Reserve with the supplementary militia as a home defence force of men aged 18-45 enlisted for five years or for six months after the conclusion of hostilities for a bounty.

---

<sup>384</sup> BA, PR 198/3/2.

<sup>385</sup> Downs, 'High Wycombe Churchwardens and Overseers Accounts', 87.

<sup>386</sup> BA, L/V 6/4, Gough's statement, 22 Aug. 1803.

<sup>387</sup> BA, L/P 6, Buckingham Subdivision Meeting, 1803.



The real intention was once more to encourage men to enlist in the army. Parishes could now find men by any means short of compulsion, parochial officials receiving a guinea for every man found, albeit parishes still faced a £20 fine for each man deficient. Moreover, no man would be accepted who lived over 20 miles away in the same county or over ten miles across a county boundary. The legislation failed. By December 1804 there were 25 counties that had not yet furnished a single man and still 14 in this position in May 1806. A total of £1.8 million in fines was still outstanding.<sup>388</sup> In Bucks fines were levied on 24 parishes in the Burnham Hundred, seven in the Cottesloe Hundreds, one in the Desborough Hundred, and nine in the Stoke Hundred.<sup>389</sup>

Much of the expediency related to the status of the volunteers. Apart from those corps retained in 1802, more offers were invited in March 1803 with exemption from the militia in return for just five days' annual exercise. A clothing allowance of £2 for every volunteer and £60 for every yeomanry troop was also on offer. In June 1803 pay was offered for up to two days' training a week between Lady Day and Michaelmas, and for up to one day a week in winter to a maximum of 85 days' at per annum if corps were prepared to serve throughout a military district. These 'June allowances' did not actually result in many new units coming forward, although more were raised through the government's announcement in July 1803 that the General Defence Act would be suspended if sufficient volunteers came forward. In August new allowances were introduced for corps enrolled since June: a clothing allowance of £1 once every three years but only 1s.0d a day for 20 days' training if the corps would extend its services anywhere. The Billeting Act of August 1803 then muddled the waters further by setting down a minimum of 12 days' training for yeomanry and 24 days' training for volunteers as qualification for exemption from the army of reserve.

---

<sup>388</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 99.

<sup>389</sup> TNA, HO 50/126, Order by Quarter Sessions, 18 July 1805.

The War Office then tried to limit the number of volunteers, the resulting outcry leading to responsibility for the volunteers being passed to the Home Office. Supernumeraries were then allowed but without pay, allowances or exemptions. By February 1804 a total of 362 corps were serving under the 'June allowances', of which only 56 were available for service throughout Britain in any circumstances. A total of 1,165 corps were serving under the 'August allowances', of which only one was prepared to serve anywhere in Britain at any time. There were an additional 43 supernumerary corps.<sup>390</sup>



*Colour of the 1<sup>st</sup> or Southern Regiment of Bucks Volunteers, 1804 (BMMT)*

---

<sup>390</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 101; TNA HO 50/61, Grenville to Yorke, 19 Sept. 1803.

Fortunately, uniformity was then restored by the Volunteer Exemption Act in December 1803 setting the minimum training requirement for exemption from militia and army of reserve of 24 days' training per annum. The Volunteer Consolidation Act in June 1804 repealed all previous legislation. All volunteers and yeomanry were now restricted to 24 days' pay per annum. The minimum qualifying period for ballot exemption for volunteers was also set at 24 days, but at 12 days for yeomanry. In October 1813, regular cavalry pay was offered to all yeoman prepared to undertake 12 days' annual training. More disciplinary powers were vested in commanding officers but all could now resign on 14 days' notice. Buckingham's son, Temple reminded the Aylesbury troop in May 1803 that certificates of attendance were required to avoid the ballot.<sup>391</sup>

Unsurprisingly, there was much confusion with this plethora of legislation and conflicting terms of service. At Iver and Denham one volunteer company was so bewildered that the men refused to take the oath of allegiance for fear of being compelled to even wider obligations. They feared it was the same one taken by army recruits in enlistment. Grenville explained it was ignorance rather than disaffection, but they were disbanded in September 1803.<sup>392</sup> By October only 24 men had taken the oath when the quota for Iver was 43 and there were at least 90 fit and eligible men available. Those who had done so comprised a gentleman, a farmer, one tradesman, five craftsmen, three agricultural workers, five servants, and eight labourers.<sup>393</sup> There were also some problems with

---

<sup>391</sup> BA, L/Y 14/159, Temple to yeomen, 23 May 1803. Pay rolls for the Aylesbury Troop for 1797-1805 are to be found in BA, L/Y 8/1-13. An example of a certificate of efficiency justifying payments for the Ashridge Troop from 1809 is in BA, L/Y 5/37.

<sup>392</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Campbell to Lloyd, 19 Sept. 1803; Grenville to Lloyd, 19 Sept. 1803; Grenville to Yorke, 6 Oct. 1803; HO 51/74, Yorke to Grenville, n.d. 1803, and 12 Oct. 1803.

<sup>393</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Clowes and Ward to Charsley and Randall, 3 Oct. 1803.

uniformity. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Mid Bucks and 3<sup>rd</sup> Northern Regiments were clothed in green as in 'legion' with the yeomanry under the 'June allowances', but the 1<sup>st</sup> Southern Regiment as yet lacked the same uniforms. Grenville did not want jealousies developing 'among bodies of men who I am sorry to say are as yet by no means all of them impressed with that spirit of discipline and subordination which is the essential principle of all military institutions'.<sup>394</sup> In September 1804 an anonymous complaint was made of funds being embezzled in the Eton company, the suspicion being that a disgruntled private who had threatened to bayonet anyone accusing him was the culprit.<sup>395</sup>

Most of the yeomanry continued to exist including 11 out of 16 troops in Bucks, after Buckingham's appeal to the men to continue.<sup>396</sup> The original Bucks volunteer corps all seem to have been disbanded or ceased to exist at the Peace of Amiens.<sup>397</sup> Buckingham, indeed, originally conceived of only small volunteer bodies being revived and attached to the yeomanry as in 1797-98.<sup>398</sup> The appeal was also much as in 1798. The expansive resolutions of the inhabitants of Aylesbury under the chairmanship of Edward Dowling to raise a 'military association' on 4 August 1803 expressed that 'petty motives' should be placed aside while the 'Wolves of France are howling at the Doors of the English family', thus endangering the safety of the King, the chastity of womenfolk, and property whether 'a Palace, a House, a Cottage, or a Chest'. All

---

<sup>394</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Grenville to Yorke, 3 Oct. 1803.

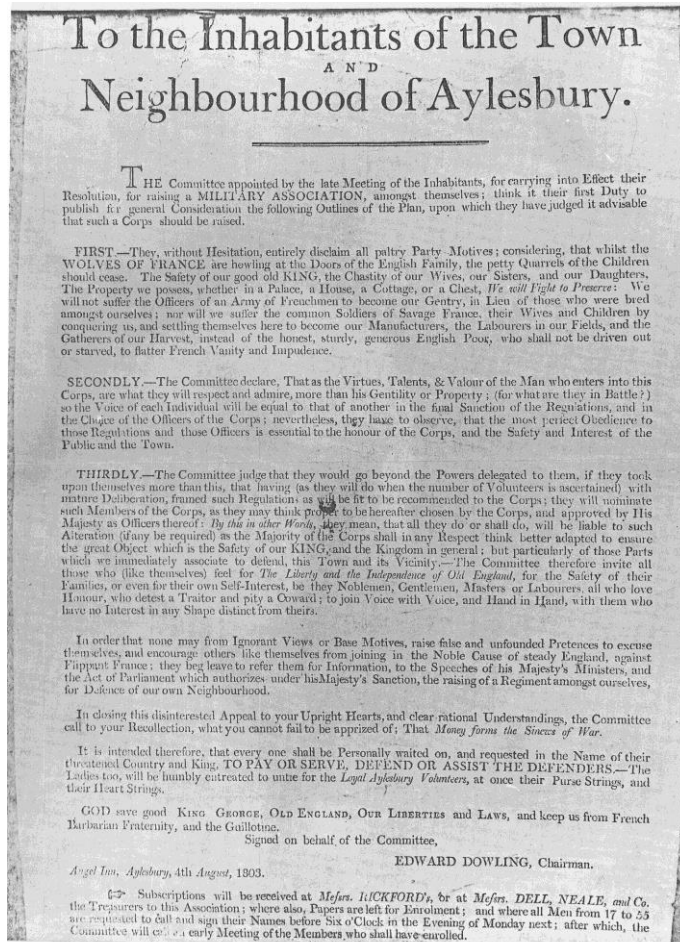
<sup>395</sup> TNA, HO 50/96, Forest to Lloyd, 26 Sept. 1804 and Lloyd to Buckingham, 27 Sept. 1804.

<sup>396</sup> Benson Freeman, 'History of the Buckinghamshire Yeomanry', *Bucks Free Press*, 10 Oct. 1919; BA, L/Y 16, Hobart circular, 19 Apl. 1802; Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 21 Apl. 1802; Hobart to Buckingham, 2 July 1802; Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 9 July 1802; Tom Grenville to the Aylesbury Squadron, 16 July 1802.

<sup>397</sup> Swann, *Citizen Soldiers*, 30; HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 45-48, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 2 and 4 Oct. 1801; BL, Add Mss 59291, Hobart circular, 2 July 1802.

<sup>398</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/4, Buckingham Circular, 14 July 1803.

would be equal in the choice of officers of the new Loyal Aylesbury Volunteers and all inhabitants including ladies should be prepared to pay or serve, or to defend or assist the town's defenders.<sup>399</sup>



## *Resolutions of the Loyal Aylesbury Volunteers, 4 August 1803* (Buckinghamshire Archives)

But Bucks fell short of finding men equal to three quarters of the first class specified in the General Defence Act. This was despite Buckingham offering a guinea from his own pocket to every man coming forward to meet the county

<sup>399</sup> BA, T/A 3/1c.

quota of 3,594 volunteers or yeomen who completed 20 days' training to qualify as efficient under the August allowances.<sup>400</sup>

Buckingham had not only promised to find the men by voluntary means but had also offered to clothe them at his own expense - estimated at £4,000-5000 - if the government provided the weapons and they were attached to the county militia. According to Tom Grenville, it promised to be 'a powerful inducement' to raise enough men to suspend the 'compulsory effects' of the legislation.<sup>401</sup> William Grenville also urged those reluctant to take the oath of allegiance for fear of being committed to wider service to do so. Men were still not forthcoming and Grenville required 'peccant parishes' to undergo the compulsory training required by the General Defence Act.<sup>402</sup> By November 1803 it was clear that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment would fall at least 100-150 men short of its intended establishment. Numbers would need to be made up from the north and middle of the county as it was not desirable to rely on labourers and servants who should be available for the militia ballot.<sup>403</sup>

As for the yeomanry, those at Buckingham had pistols but no carbines and those at Aylesbury just 12 carbines for each troop. The Marquess had issued new brown cloaks with red collars. Kender Mason at Amersham was being urged to try to recruit up to squadron strength.<sup>404</sup> Only seven from 137 were absent from one of Tom Grenville's yeomanry exercises at Buckingham in August and Temple and William Grenville's yeomen were all 'prosperous' in numbers. Moreover, at Buckingham some 50 yeomen agreed to drill from 4.00 to 6.00

---

<sup>400</sup> P. Haythornthwaite, 'The Volunteer Force, 1803-05', *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* 64 (1986), 193-204.

<sup>401</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 181-83, Tom Grenville to Lord Grenville, 31 July 1803.

<sup>402</sup> TNA, HO50/61, Buckingham to Yorke, 31 July, 9 Sept, and 6 Oct. 1803.

<sup>403</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Grenville to Yorke, 25 Nov. 1803.

<sup>404</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 181-83, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 31 July 1803.

a.m. each morning. In October, the Aylesbury squadron also came over to Stowe to exercise with that from Buckingham and Winslow. There was some criticism of some of the northern yeomanry at Stowe by an inspector, which Tom felt would not have been the case if he had seen the Aylesbury men first. The inspector also seemed to want the yeomen to act merely as skirmishers, but there were no such official instructions.<sup>405</sup>

William Grenville was sanguine as to the capability of the yeomanry to resist an enemy. He fretted at the incongruous appearance of the Southern Regiment when the Amersham Troop had 155 men and the other troops only the regulation 50. Kender Mason suggested forming a horse artillery troop to even out the numbers; it was thought guns would be issued by government. If not, then they would have to be purchased by the yeomen themselves for about £60 for a six-pounder, although he believed that two brass six-pounders no longer used by the militia were kept at the French School at Penn. The latter was the creation of Edmund Burke of Gregories at Beaconsfield, the former MP for Wendover, for the sons and nephews of executed French aristocrats, and to which Buckingham had presented Colours and the guns.<sup>406</sup>

Yeomanry costs were considerable; in January 1804, 95 sets of sabres with sword belts for the Desborough Squadron cost £85.10s.0d.<sup>407</sup> Captain William Hexter suggested to Grenville that an amendment to legislation was required to compel those resigning to reimburse the cost of uniforms since it was rare for

---

<sup>405</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, VII, 183-86, 188-89, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 2 and 9 Aug. 1803, and 7 Oct. 1803.

<sup>406</sup> BL, Add Mss 59292, Mason to Grenville, 28 Sept. and 2 Oct. 1803; Grenville to Mason, 6 Oct. 1803; Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 328-30, Grenville to Buckingham, 26 Sept. 1803; Beckett (ed.), *Posse Comitatus*, xviii.

<sup>407</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Return, 23 Jan. 1804.

them to fit new members.<sup>408</sup> Government allowances met the cost of swords and most of the cost of uniforms but only half that of carbines. Cornet Henry Chisholm of the Burnham Troop in 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment, who worked for the Exchequer Office, complained that even securing the allowance for new carbines required him to make eight journeys to the Ordnance at the Tower.<sup>409</sup> Grenville's 1807 accounts for the Burnham and Stoke Squadrons show an expenditure of £1,284.6s.7d, including £532.1s.0d to a tailor.<sup>410</sup> It did not help that the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment and other units were defrauded by a War Office agent called Charles Bessell, who absconded with allowances due them in 1810. Unhelpfully, the War Office told corps to seek their own remedies.<sup>411</sup>

Absences were frequent and, in any case, exercises diminished at the approach of winter both for yeomanry and volunteers.<sup>412</sup> Grenville's yeomanry regiment met only twice a week in the autumn of 1803, and the Desborough Squadron only met once a fortnight during the winter months.<sup>413</sup> Chisholm defined yeomanry effectiveness as four days' exercise in four months, eight in eight months, or twelve in twelve months.<sup>414</sup> On 23 January 1804 when the two Aylesbury troops paraded, of 86 men present only 45 had brought their full

---

<sup>408</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Hexter to Grenville, 12 Feb. 1804.

<sup>409</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Chisholm to Clayton, 7 Mar. 1806.

<sup>410</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Account. Accounts for the Aylesbury yeomanry from 1794-1812 are to be found in BA, L/Y 1-28 and L/Y 10-11.

<sup>411</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Chisholm to Clayton, 4 Apl. 1810; Clayton to Chisholm, 12 Sept. 1810; Temple to Clayton, 18 Dec. 1810.

<sup>412</sup> BA, D-SB/OM/ 1/9, Note on Pay List, 24 Feb. 1802.

<sup>413</sup> BL, Add Mss 41852, Grenville to Tom Grenville, 28 Sept. 1803; BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Brudenell to Grenville, 1 Jan. 1804.

<sup>414</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Clayton to Chisholm, 26 Jan. 1807 and Chisholm to Clayton, 27 Jan. 1807.



equipment: 19 had no nose bags, 10 had no waistcoat, seven did not bring their overalls, and others had no cloaks or blankets, or the wrong blankets.<sup>415</sup>

Finding officers was also not always easy. Buckingham had no objection to promoting efficient and 'respectable' quartermasters when numbers were short in the 1<sup>st</sup> Southern Regiment in 1808. The situation was made worse by the intended resignation of William Drake of Shardeloes from the Amersham squadron. Despite his tendency to take offence at perceived slights, Drake was 'most certainly a useful man', who was alone keeping the squadron going. Drake felt he was being personally blamed for the deficiencies in numbers at Amersham and Chesham.<sup>416</sup> In the event, Drake was persuaded to remain.

In 1803 Bucks had 1,126 yeomen and 2,454 volunteers, the yeomanry all serving under the June allowances and the volunteers under the August allowances.<sup>417</sup> The militia had stood at 657 men in 1803, the numbers rising to 715 militia, 1,800 yeomen and 3,400 volunteers by 1805.<sup>418</sup> As with the yeomanry, three volunteer regiments were organised, the 1<sup>st</sup> or Southern Regiment under Lieutenant Colonel F. S. Lloyd; the 2<sup>nd</sup> or Mid Bucks Regiment under Lieutenant General the Hon. Vere Poulett of Addington, son of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl Poulett; and the 3<sup>rd</sup> or Northern Regiment under Major Mansel Dawkin Mansel. One of Poulett's daughters was married to Buckingham's younger son, George Nugent-Grenville, later 2<sup>nd</sup> Baron Nugent. There was something of a misunderstanding in that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Viscount Hampden thought he had been given

---

<sup>415</sup> BA, T/A 3/8d.

<sup>416</sup> BA, D/CE/Add J/3, Buckingham to Clayton, 4 Oct. 1808; Clayton to Buckingham, 9 Dec. 1808; Add J/13, Drake to Clayton, 30 Oct. and 17 Nov. 1808; HHL, STG 26 (1), Drake to Buckingham, 18 Dec. 1808; Buckingham to Drake, 20 Dec. 1808.

<sup>417</sup> Swann, *Citizen Soldiers*, 167.

<sup>418</sup> Edouard Desbrierè, *Projets et Tentatives de Débarquement aux Iles Britanniques, 1793-1805* 4 vols. (Paris: Chapelot, 1900-02), II, 398; III, 267-68.

command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, when Buckingham had only intended that he be its major under Poulett.<sup>419</sup> Poulett was MP for Bridgwater from 1790-96, and from 1806-07.

Under defence plans prepared by the Duke of York in March 1804, the yeomanry and volunteers of the South Inland District - Bucks, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire - would be concentrated at Aylesbury. The Bucks yeomanry was given as 1,125 men and the volunteers at 2,356.<sup>420</sup> It was intended, however, that the Bucks yeomanry would serve in Essex or Suffolk in the event of an invasion.<sup>421</sup>

Volunteering was more self-serving after 1803 than previously but, whatever the motivation, overall numbers were large - perhaps 342,000 men by January 1804. They were not easily equipped, Grenville complaining in October 1803 that he had received no arms at all for the volunteers.<sup>422</sup> Only 209 muskets had been offered initially for 2,579 men, but this was then increased to 899.

Understandably, volunteers were not prepared to accept the pikes that were offered, although the officers in Bucks were prepared to take them rather than nothing.<sup>423</sup> Physical fitness could be an issue as in the case of John Page of Wendover, a volunteer, whose doctor certified in August 1803 that rheumatism and 'other weakness of habit' rendered him unable to attend military exercises.

<sup>424</sup>

---

<sup>419</sup> BA, D/LE G1/1, Buckingham to Lee, 25 Sept. 1803.

<sup>420</sup> Glover, *Britain at Bay*, 211-17.

<sup>421</sup> BL, Add Mss 34472, Buckingham to Tom Grenville, 8 Nov. 1803.

<sup>422</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Grenville to Yorke, 28 Oct. 1803.

<sup>423</sup> TNA, HO 50/61, Grenville to Hobart, 1 Sept. 1803; Grenville to Yorke, 28 Oct. 1803; Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and Army*, 89-90; Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 327-30, Grenville to Buckingham, 20 and 26 Sept. 1803.

<sup>424</sup> BA, L/V 6/3.

Some regulars doubted volunteer efficiency but the CinC, the Duke of York appointed inspecting field officers in September 1803, and instituted a brigade system in May 1804. In March 1804 all units were also given the opportunity to undertake between ten days and a month's permanent duty, with pay offered. As suggested earlier, Windham was hostile to the volunteers, who he believed to be costing too much. In reality, the annual cost of each volunteer was far less than a militiaman or a regular soldier. Thus, in 1807 each volunteer cost government £1.19s.4d compared to £26.9s.5d for each militiaman and £35.12s.0d for each regular: even at the height of the movement in 1805 a volunteer had cost only £3.1s.0d annually.<sup>425</sup> The suspension of the militia ballot for two years from July 1806 removed much of advantage of the exemption granted volunteers. Windham also withdrew inspecting field officers, abolished the June allowances for volunteers, restricted all to the August allowances, and also curtailed yeomanry allowances. His hope was to find more men for the army but, as with the Training Act, his measures failed. When there was talk of allowance cuts in 1810 Henry Chisholm wrote to Clayton that they had been cut 'by the very men once so loud in their praise of the volunteers; how sincere their praises were time has now discovered to us'.<sup>426</sup>

The fall of the 'Talents' was followed shortly by Britain being left without allies through the Treaty of Tilsit between Napoleon and Russia in July 1807. The new Secretary of state for War and the Colonies, Castlereagh wanted to increase the army but also instinctively rejected the notion of a mass levy entertained by Windham's Training Act. The 1802 legislation had prohibited enlisting militiamen directly into the line. Enabling legislation in April 1805 had then permitted the enlistment of four fifths of the number borne in excess of the original county quotas - effectively equalling four fifths of those added as

---

<sup>425</sup> Gee, *British Volunteer Movement*, 46-47.

<sup>426</sup> BA, D206/1 [BMMT 366 (1)], Chisholm to Clayton, 15 Jan. 1810.

supplementary militia - with the safeguard of allowing commanding officers to prevent the enlistment of selected men equal to half the original quota. Those enlisted from the Royal Bucks into the Royal Marines in May 1805 should have been removed at least six miles from the regiment's then station at Maidstone. Instead they were allowed back to spend their bounty money, thus unsettling the remainder of the regiment.<sup>427</sup>

Castlereagh now announced his intention to seek 28,000 militiamen for the army and to revive the ballot as many of those enlisted in 1803 were nearing the end of their term of service. In August 1807, therefore, legislation provided for the direct enlistment of militiamen in excess of three-fifths of establishment up to five-sixths of the allotted number. It also made provision for a ballot to make good up to three quarters of the original 1802 quota by way of compensating the militia interest through maintaining the level of patronage in terms of officer numbers at the same time as rendering future ballots less necessary. Fines for exemption were raised to £20 with counties, hundreds and parishes liable to a £60 fine for every man deficient. The ballot would be suspended once quotas were raised up until January 1810. A total of 27,505 militiamen entered the army, but the 26,085 men raised by ballot included only 3,129 principals, with what has been characterised as a 'wild traffic in substitutes'.<sup>428</sup> Bucks was one of those counties that met its quota, doing so in not much more than a fortnight.<sup>429</sup> This time 121 men were enlisted into the army in August and September 1807.<sup>430</sup> There was some drunkenness as men took their leave of comrades, as

---

<sup>427</sup> TNA, HO 50/126, Temple to Hawkesbury, 28 Apl., and 2 May 1805.

<sup>428</sup> Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and Army*, 195; Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 49-50, 78-79.

<sup>429</sup> TNA, HO 50/56, Buckingham to HO, 15 Sept. 1807

<sup>430</sup> HHL, ST 147.

well as some insolence to officers.<sup>431</sup> There was evidence, too, that bounty payments were subject to private arrangements between the balloted and their substitutes.<sup>432</sup>

Castlereagh's measures had been sufficiently advantageous to the army that the experiment was repeated in March 1809 despite his declaration that the militia draft two years earlier had been unique. There were complaints that the manpower added to the army in 1807 had been wasted, whilst Temple objected to annual drafts in the mere anticipation of emergencies. Those in excess of three-fifths of establishment were permitted to enlist with vacancies filled initially by volunteers recruited by beat of drum. They were given a bounty of up to 12 guineas, and only then would there be a ballot. Once again, the ballot would be suspended once the quota was filled, this time until January 1812. One drawback, however, was that the army did not pay the family allowances available to militiamen, all attempts to extend the principle to regulars failing. Another was that setting a quota against establishment without adjustment for actual numbers disadvantaged regiments that were below strength. The Royal Bucks quota of 289 men to be found in 1809 was above two-fifths of their 1805 establishment (252) but did not equal the excess over three-fifths of the 1809 establishment (302).<sup>433</sup> Again enlistment of the militia into the line was justified as military expediency. Militia colonels were all too conscious that those who had served longest in the militia were the more likely to enlist in the army and thus deprive them of their most experienced soldiers. The army thereby secured men of higher military quality as suggested by the number of

---

<sup>431</sup> HHL, ST 144 (35), Order, 26 Aug. 1807.

<sup>432</sup> TNA, HO 50/128, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 21 Mar. 1808.

<sup>433</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 47-48, 51-52, 73-81, 96-97, 115-16, 181-82 fn. 56.

Table 4.6 Militia Embodied Service 1803-16

|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Colchester                  | March 1803    |
| Harwich                     | July 1803     |
| Colchester                  | June 1804     |
| Cox Heath Camp              | August 1804   |
| Maidstone                   | December 1804 |
| Waltham Abbey/Chelmsford    | June 1805     |
| Colchester                  | December 1805 |
| Weeley Barracks             | January 1806  |
| Brentwood                   | March 1806    |
| Ottery                      | April 1806    |
| Exeter                      | March 1807    |
| Crediton                    | May 1807      |
| Exeter                      | May 1807      |
| Horsham Barracks            | October 1807  |
| Eastbourne Barracks         | February 1808 |
| Dover                       | June 1809     |
| Colchester                  | December 1811 |
| Woodbridge                  | January 1812  |
| Nottingham                  | February 1812 |
| Manchester/Stockport        | April 1812    |
| Newcastle                   | October 1812  |
| Athlone/Carrick             | June 1813     |
| Portsmouth                  | October 1814  |
| Fort Cumberland, Portsmouth | March 1815    |
| Buckingham                  | January 1816  |

Source: TNA, WO 17; HHL, ST 45, 136, 144 and 145.

celebrated post-war army memoirs by men who had first served in the militia.

434

Castlereagh's policy was continued by Palmerston, who was Secretary at War from 1809 to 1828. There was less overt opposition, not least due to parliamentary preoccupation with the scandal of the allegations of undue military patronage wielded by the Duke of York's mistress, Mrs Clarke.<sup>435</sup> In April 1811 the militia was reduced to its 1802 establishment with a fixed annual draft into the army not exceeding one-seventh of the quota. The ballot was suspended until July 1813 once vacancies were filled so that militia recruits found by voluntary means tended to be raw boys.<sup>436</sup> Provision was also made to enable British and Irish militia regiments to exchange on a voluntary basis for up to two years, with all new militiamen liable to service anywhere. Efforts were made in 1813 to encourage militiamen to serve in North America and Europe as well as allowing the raising of provisional battalions. This sidestepped the difficulty of militiamen not receiving separation allowances if they went into the line since they would receive them in provisional battalions.

437

There was greater willingness to serve as an entity with some regiments volunteering for the Peninsular War. The Royal Bucks did so in 1808.<sup>438</sup> As in the case of Ireland in 1798, not all were prepared to go. Those declining to do so were excluded from the annual celebration of the awarding of the royal title and

---

<sup>434</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 110-11.

<sup>435</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 53-55.

<sup>436</sup> TNA, HO 50/293, Distribution of Royal Bucks Recruiting Parties in Bucks, 17 July 1813.

<sup>437</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 115-16.

<sup>438</sup> Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and Army*, 221; Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 47;

Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, IV, 239-40, Grenville to Buckingham, 10 Aug. 1808;

TNA, HO 50/184, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 31 July 1808.

found ‘other duties’ as ‘unworthy of their Regiment’. <sup>439</sup> Temple volunteered the regiment again in November 1810. <sup>440</sup>

The regiment was again serving in Ireland when the call went out for the provisional battalion for Bordeaux. After earlier pointed suggestions from his brothers, Buckingham had withdrawn from active command due to ill health in October 1803. He died in February 1813. <sup>441</sup> Thus, Temple, now 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Buckingham, again raised the idea of taking his militia overseas in November 1813, initially to Holland. <sup>442</sup> The offer was accepted but with the imminent end of hostilities, the destination was changed to joining Wellington’s army, which had now advanced across the Pyrenees. <sup>443</sup>

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess, it should be said, was as conscious of his rank as his father and, by 1830, was said to be the most unpopular man in England. <sup>444</sup> He was certainly arrogant, egotistical and conceited and serially unfaithful. He fought a duel in 1816 with Admiral Sir Thomas Hardy, when it was alleged he had written scandalous letters to Lady Hardy, who was his cousin. He also fought a

---

<sup>439</sup> HHL, ST 144 (36), Order, 24 Sept. 1808.

<sup>440</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, IV, 472-73, Wellesley to Temple, 19 Nov. 1810.

<sup>441</sup> Buckingham, *Court and Cabinets*, III, 263-64, 274-75, 298, 31-13, Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 15 and 30 Mar. and 18 May 1803; Grenville to Buckingham, 29 June 1803; TNA, HO 50/61, Buckingham to Yorke, 27 Sept and 13 Oct. 1803; HMC *Dropmore*, VII, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 9 Oct. 1803; HHL, ST 144 (29), Order, 7, 15 and 16 Oct. 1803; STG 36 (26), Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 22 June 1803.

<sup>442</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, X, 360, 363-64 Tom Grenville to Grenville, N. D. and 26 Nov. 1813; Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, *Memoirs of the Court of England during the Regency, 1811-1820* 2 vols. (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1856), II, 214-15, Grenville to Buckingham, 26 Nov. 1813.

<sup>443</sup> HMC, *Dropmore*, X, 370-72, 381-82, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 24 Jan. and 1 Mar. 1814.

<sup>444</sup> Sack, *Grenvillites*, 171.



duel with the Duke of Bedford in 1822, the latter having implied the new dukedom of Buckingham and Chandos had been effectively bought politically through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess supporting the government with his now seven MPs and other adherents.<sup>445</sup> On neither occasion was blood spilled. The adherence of the Duke to the government marked the beginning of the end for the Grenvillite ‘third party’, the last rites coming in 1829, by which time he had alienated virtually all his political followers.<sup>446</sup>



*(Left) ‘View of a Temple near Buckingham’: Richard, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Buckingham, later 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Buckingham and Chandos (1776-1839) as caricatured when 4<sup>th</sup> Earl Temple by Denis Dighton, July 1811 (BMMT). (Right) As painted by George Romney*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess, now also lord lieutenant in succession to his father, was to lead a provisional battalion to join Wellington’s army, with Sir William Young

---

<sup>445</sup> Beckett, *Rise and Fall of the Grenvilles*, 100-01, 104-05, 108-09.

<sup>446</sup> Sack, *Grenvillites*, 196-217.

as lieutenant colonel but two regulars as majors.<sup>447</sup> All received a two guinea bounty for volunteering for Ireland, which ‘Set the regiment all to drinking’.<sup>448</sup> While a number of officers and men were prepared to extend their services to Europe, some chose not to do so, thus dividing the regiment into ‘those who will follow their officers and another of men who will not’.<sup>449</sup> The government had omitted to make it clear that those serving in Ireland would be paid in Irish currency, which was of less value than that in Britain, causing some suspicion.  
450

According to Mayett, since there was resistance to going except as a complete unit, it took 28 days to fill the number required ‘during which time we that did not volunteer was very Sharply disciplined [*sic*] for they Continually [*sic*] marched us about from place to place and made us do all the duty but we beared it all with patience for we knew it would be all over in a month’.<sup>451</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess offered a bounty from his own pocket to supplement that being offered by government.<sup>452</sup>

In all, three provisional battalions were formed in February 1814 and embarked for Bordeaux. They arrived on 23 April only to be withdrawn on 29 May as the French forces had evacuated the area. They were quartered at Margaux, Cantenac, Macau and Ludon-Médoc.<sup>453</sup> In the event, the Royal Bucks formed the bulk of one of these three battalions, contributing 415 of the 979 other ranks

---

<sup>447</sup> *Caledonian Mercury*, 22 Jan. 1814; HHL, STG 94 (10), Buckingham to Liverpool, 24 Nov. 1813.

<sup>448</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 50.

<sup>449</sup> HHL, ST 144 (39), Orders, 4 and 22 Dec. 1813.

<sup>450</sup> TNA, HO 50/ 101, Buckingham to HO, 9 July 1811

<sup>451</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 55.

<sup>452</sup> TNA, HO 50/330, Buckingham to Sidmouth, 26 Dec. 1813.

<sup>453</sup> HHL, STG Military 2 (12).

in the 1<sup>st</sup> Provisional Battalion under the command of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess; the number was then increased by a further 55 men from the Royal Bucks.<sup>454</sup> Since Napoleon abdicated on 6 April 1814 there was little to do, Tom Grenville advising his nephew to ‘buy what claret you want, and to return through Paris’.<sup>455</sup>

According to one prejudicial account, the militiamen were ‘constantly tipsy’, and the local inhabitants amazed by the sheer bulk of the commanding officers including Buckingham ‘whom they denominated, “Les boeufs-gras anglais”’.<sup>456</sup> Buckingham and his officers all received the fleur de Lys of the Legion of Honour from the restored French King. One was also secured for Sir William Clayton, although he had not accompanied the militia to Bordeaux.<sup>457</sup>

The army preferred direct enlistment into its own ranks with many militiamen hastily drafted during the ‘Hundred Days’ following Napoleon’s return from Elba. One regiment filled by militia drafts was the 3/14<sup>th</sup> Foot. It was suggested some militiamen fought at Waterloo in June 1815 still in militia uniforms. George Keppel, later 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Albemarle, certainly recalled that the 3/14<sup>th</sup> included 300 ‘Bucks lads fresh from the plough, whose rustic appearance procured for them the appellation of “the Peasants”’.<sup>458</sup> The 3/14<sup>th</sup> was disbanded in February 1816, its Colours sent to Claydon where they still hang. The ‘Sons of St Crispin’ - lodges of shoemakers and cordwainers that originated

---

<sup>454</sup> Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and Army*, 280; HHL, ST 144 (39), Orders, 22 Dec. 1813, and 10 Feb. 1814.

<sup>455</sup> Buckingham, *Memoirs of the Regency*, II, 60-61, Tom Grenville to Buckingham, 12 Apl. 1814.

<sup>456</sup> Rees Howell Gronow, *The Reminiscences and Recollections of Captain Gronow* 2 vols. (London: John Nimmo, 1900), II, 217-19.

<sup>457</sup> HMC *Dropmore*, X, 388-89, Tom Grenville to Grenville, 2 Aug. 1814; *Short History of Royal Bucks*, 5.

<sup>458</sup> Earl of Albemarle, *Fifty Years of My Life* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1877), 90.

in Scotland around 1817 - celebrated the service of former Royal Bucks men from High Wycombe at Waterloo in 1865.<sup>459</sup>

While filling the army's ranks was important, the militia also continued to fulfil its domestic role. As in the first phase of the war, there was much routine garrison duty. In December 1810 a young woman brought Major Wheatley of the Royal Bucks to court. She alleged that he had refused to pay out to her a promissory note for £900 after getting her pregnant, also reneging on the agreement to pay out in two months as well as settling £200 annually on her: the case went to arbitration.<sup>460</sup>

There were also policing duties, not least during the 'Luddite' disturbances in the Midlands and North in 1811 and 1812. With few regulars available, most of the 12,000 men deployed were from the militia. The Royal Bucks was stationed successively at Woodbridge, Nottingham, Manchester and Newcastle between January 1812 and April 1813. They were part of a 3,000-strong force deployed to Nottingham in early 1812.<sup>461</sup> The Royal Bucks artillery was especially useful in shows of force in May 1812 at Manchester and Stockport.<sup>462</sup> Seven companies were based at Manchester and the other three at Stockport but, as occasion demanded, detachments were also sent to Oldham, Bury, Bolton and Rochdale.<sup>463</sup> The regiment received an address from the inhabitants of Manchester and Salford in October 1812 in recognition of their excellent

---

<sup>459</sup> *South Bucks Free Press*, 20 Oct. 1865.

<sup>460</sup> *Derby Mercury*, 6 Dec. 1810.

<sup>461</sup> F. O. Darvell, *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England* 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 83.

<sup>462</sup> Kenneth Fox, *Making Life Possible: A Study of Military Aid to the Civil Power in Regency England* (Kington: Roundwood Press, 1982), 38.

<sup>463</sup> TNA, HO 40/1/1, Distribution of Troops, 9 May 1812; HO 40/1/2, Maier to OC Bury, 29 June 1812; Hankin to Acland, 30 June 1812.

conduct, and a sum of £35 to enable them to participate in festivities celebrating the victories in the Peninsula.<sup>464</sup>

There was no repetition of the indiscipline sometimes experienced in the 1790s as a result of use in aid of the civil power. Mayett, indeed, provides a glimpse of the militiaman's mentality, albeit that he was distanced from many of his colleagues through his literacy and strong Baptist faith. Led by a Methodist fifer and a Baptist from Chesham, the minority of practising nonconformists 'went by the name of the soapy set in the Regiment among the ungodly'.<sup>465</sup>

Mayett's world was defined by his reactions to arbitrary authority and injustice perpetuated by NCOs, by frequent illness including a serious eye infection that permanently affected his sight, small pox and 'white flux', and the overwhelming temptations of drink, gambling and womanising to which so many succumbed. On one occasion when he fell ill, the orderly supposedly caring for him - 'a man that would get drunk as often as he Could and with any persons money' - ran up a debt of £5 on Mayett's account which he was able to offset to some extent by volunteering for harvest work when at Coxheath Camp.<sup>466</sup>

Being literate, however, Mayett was entrusted with copying and had charge of the company stores giving him 'an opportunity to get a great deal of beer and having more liberty than I formerly had I sone [*sic*] became addicted to drinking'.<sup>467</sup> He became an officer's servant, borrowing books from the man's travelling library, as well as later as an orderly being well treated by one officer

---

<sup>464</sup> *Short History of Royal Bucks*, 5; TNA, WO 68/242.

<sup>465</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 38.

<sup>466</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 31-33.

<sup>467</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 45.

and his wife who would give him ‘as fivepenny or tenpenny’. <sup>468</sup> He also enjoyed a number of furloughs that enabled him to return home to Quainton. Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, being sent to ‘fire ball’ in Stockport on three occasions had little significance for Mayett compared to the arduous marching in wet weather that accompanied the deployment to the North. <sup>469</sup> Conditions were often difficult, the inhabitants of Bury St Edmunds collecting donations for 200 women and 117 children following the regiment with its baggage from Woodbridge to its new quarters at Nottingham as they were in ‘great distress’. Each woman received 1s.0d and each child 6d. <sup>470</sup>

One other possible duty in aid of the civil power had earlier involved both the 1<sup>st</sup> Marquess and Temple. According to Sarah, Lady Lyttelton, Temple discovered that a much anticipated illegal bare buckle fight between John Gully and Bob Gregson, the ‘Lancashire Giant’, would take place on Dunstable Common in May 1808. His father ‘got out his bench of magistrates, his posse comitatus, his constables, and his Dunstable Volunteers, all in battle array’ so that the ‘peasants thought the French had landed’. According to this account, the match was then switched to Hertfordshire. The two men had fought twice before in 1807, and did meet for the third time near Woburn in May 1808. There is no evidence any action was taken, and Buckingham had no jurisdiction over any ‘Dunstable Volunteers’; the story may well be purely apocryphal. <sup>471</sup>

Other than the later deployments against the Luddites, much of the regiment’s service after 1803 was just as it had been prior to the Peace of Amiens. While stationed at Cox Heath and Maidstone, small detachments manned warning

---

<sup>468</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 45, 48, 57.

<sup>469</sup> Kussmaul (ed.), *Mayett*, 53-54.

<sup>470</sup> *Ipswich Journal*, 15 Feb. 1812.

<sup>471</sup> Hon. Mrs Hugh Wyndham (ed.), *Correspondence of Sarah Spencer, Lady Lyttelton, 1787-1870* (London: John Murray, 1912), 10-11.

beacons on Barham Down and Boxley Hill between November 1804 and June 1805 for which a small additional fuel allowance was paid to those on duty.<sup>472</sup> Similar signal stations were manned between June and December 1805 while at Chelmsford. Escorts were provided from Exeter for French prisoners in May 1807.<sup>473</sup> At Dover in 1809, guards were mounted at the Castle, the Citadel, the Western Heights and other posts.<sup>474</sup>

One volunteer corps also saw duty in Mansfield but this was the exception for the volunteers had been largely replaced in June 1808 by a new Sedentary or Local Militia. Castlereagh had initially reversed Windham's hostility to the volunteers by bringing back inspecting officers in July 1807 and granting all corps the August allowances in the following month. Castlereagh, however, still wanted reform. So did William Grenville, who had suggested some form of permanent training for the population as a whole. Buckingham thought it folly to consider incorporating volunteers into an 'army militia'.<sup>475</sup>

Castlereagh saw the advantage of a new force drawing on those likely to be more amenable to enlistment in the army by offering terms of service similar to volunteers, local training conducive to employment, and exemption from the militia.<sup>476</sup> It also suggested a re-assertion of aristocratic control over 'bourgeois military power' within the wider volunteer movement that was 'localised, communal and self-governing'.<sup>477</sup> The latter had not applied to Bucks, where the Grenvilles had retained tight control through the lieutenancy.

---

<sup>472</sup> HHL, ST 138 (1).

<sup>473</sup> HHL, ST 138 (5).

<sup>474</sup> HHL, ST 144 (37).

<sup>475</sup> BL, Dropmore, Add Mss 58879, Buckingham to Grenville, 3 Mar. 1807.

<sup>476</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 88.

<sup>477</sup> Cookson, 'English Volunteer Movement', 878.

As finally enacted in June 1808, the new legislation envisaged a total of Local Militia and volunteers of just under 309,000 men, or six times the 1802 militia quota. Volunteers were encouraged to transfer to the local militia for a two guinea bounty and individuals could enlist on the same terms. A 'marching guinea' would also be paid for the first annual training of 28 days annually, the term of service being for four years. Thereafter 10s.6d would be paid annually for 'necessaries' with a guinea should the local militia be fully mobilised. Any deficiencies would be met by a ballot of those aged 18 to 30 with no substitutes allowed and heavy fines for defaulters. Limited exemption was given to those who had served in the militia or army of reserve previously, and local militiamen would be exempted from the militia ballot during their service and for two years beyond it totalling six years.

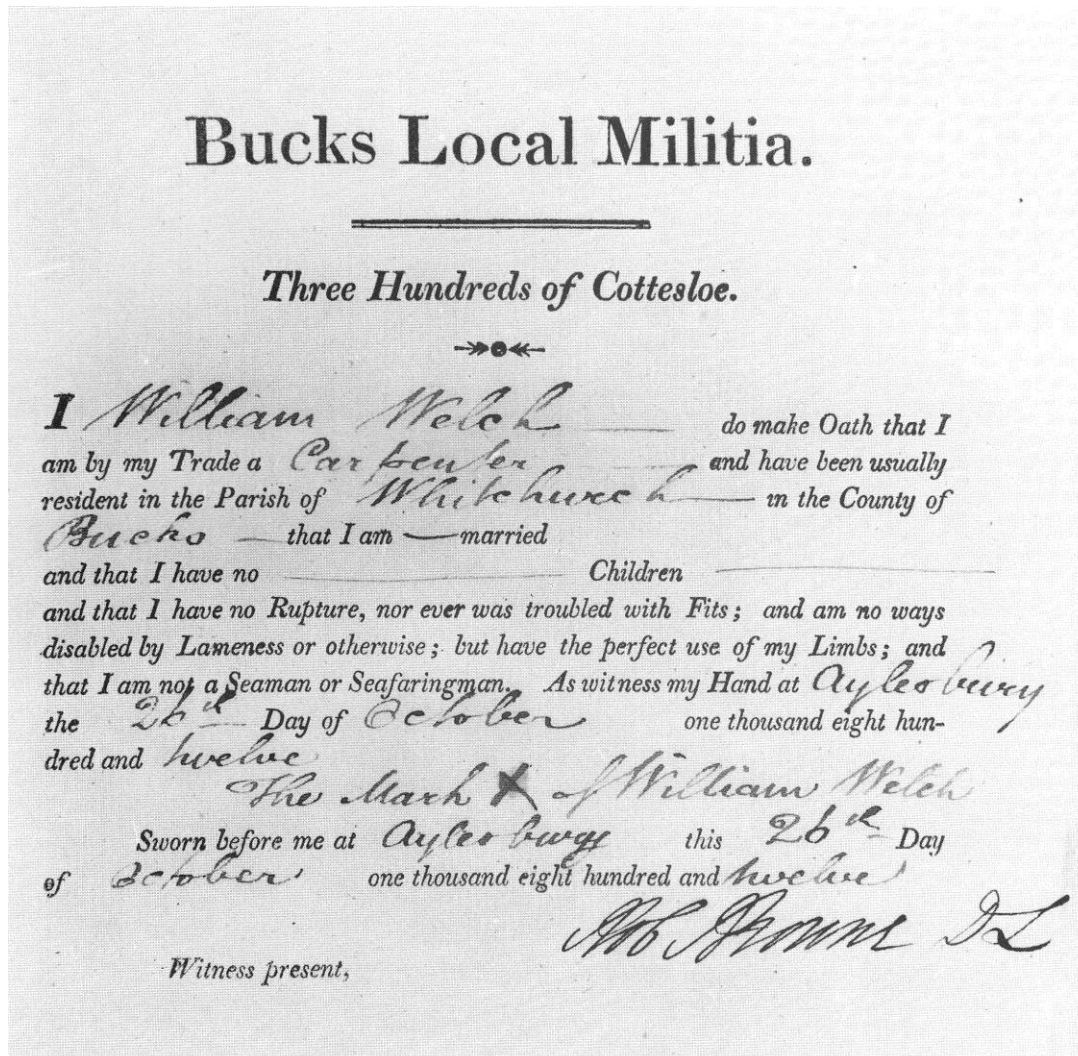
Service would normally be confined to an adjoining county but there was a liability to serve anywhere in the event of invasion or insurrection. Men would also be liable to be called out for up to 14 days to suppress riots but this would be counted as part of the 28 days' annual training. Local militiamen could enlist in the army at any time other than during the annual training. It was also possible for an officer to receive an ensigncy in the regulars where 50 men enlisted although only those from light companies could enter the light infantry regiments. The men themselves would receive an 11 guinea bounty for limited service, and 16 guineas for unlimited service.<sup>478</sup> In one case in August 1811 Buckingham was prepared to drop all charges against Sergeant Clarke of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment after he struck the adjutant provided Clarke enlisted for life in the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot. Evidently Clarke declined for, after being confined at High Wycombe, he was sent to Oxford for court martial in October. Further details

---

<sup>478</sup> BA, T/A 2/6, Circular, 13 May 1811.



have not survived.<sup>479</sup> Buckingham also allowed men of good character to sleep at home during the annual training provided they duly appeared for the morning drill at 0600 and the afternoon drill at 1400.<sup>480</sup>



*One of the declarations required of local militiamen for the Cottesloe Hundreds, 26 October 1812 (Buckinghamshire Archives)*

Many volunteer officers saw advantage in transfer since heavy financial burdens were falling on them even if pecuniary rewards were few in the local militia.

<sup>479</sup> BA, T/A 2/6, Buckingham to Strickland Freeman, 29 Aug. 1811; Strickland Freeman to Wyatt, 4 Sept. 1811; Wyatt to Strickland Freeman, 2 Oct. 1811.

<sup>480</sup> BA, T/A 2/6, Brigade Orders, May 1809.

Lords lieutenant took the opportunity to regulate appointments and Castlereagh certainly wanted to restrict commissions to the propertied, a total of around 1,300 separate volunteer corps becoming approximately 270 local militia units.<sup>481</sup> The quality of Local Militia officers in Bucks was generally good.<sup>482</sup> The three regiments would be commanded by Strickland Freeman of Fawley Court, the former militia officer William Grenville Pigott of Doddershall, and the Hon. Vere Poulett.<sup>483</sup> Poulett initially styled himself as Lt. Colonel Commanding, offending Buckingham by appointing a regimental quartermaster when Buckingham had already done so. Buckingham threatened to withhold all appointments in the regiment and Poulett backed down.<sup>484</sup>

The quartermaster actually appointed was George Thomas, who with the patronage of Buckingham penned and published *The Local Militia Paymaster or Military Friend* in 1812. Thomas had served in the Royal Navy before transferring to the King's American Regiment in North America in 1776. Retiring on half-pay in 1793, he was brought back on full pay once more in 1796, serving in the West Indies with the 22<sup>nd</sup> Foot and reaching the rank of captain. He had been quartermaster to the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Northern) Bucks Volunteers before transferring to the same position in the local militia. Although no money was involved, Thomas was suspected of irregularity in his pay returns in December 1812, in consciously forging the signature of one of the company commanders, Henry Andrews Uthwatt of Great Linford. In the event, Thomas was exonerated as it was actually Mansel who had signed the return in Uthwatt's name; the latter was laid up after a riding accident. Thomas had not

---

<sup>481</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 89.

<sup>482</sup> TNA, HO 50/211, Buckingham to Liverpool, 3 May 1809.

<sup>483</sup> TNA, HO 50/184, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 11 Sept. 1808; BA, D-CN/21/2/1, Buckingham to Bucks Volunteers, 12 Sept. 1808.

<sup>484</sup> TNA, HO 50/211, Buckingham to Liverpool, 26 Mar. 1809.

noticed in his hurry to submit it.<sup>485</sup> Thomas died in 1815, his widow requesting assistance in meeting the printing costs of his book.<sup>486</sup>



*Sir Thomas Tyringham Bernard (1792-1883), Bucks Local Militia, 1816  
(Nether Winchendon House)*

---

<sup>485</sup> HHL, STG 26 (13, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 23).

<sup>486</sup> BA, T/A 2/7; D-SB/OM1/10(a), Thomas to Bernard, 23 Dec. 1810; D/U 9/3/56, Thomas to Mansel, 27 Apl. 1815.

Thomas's oversight was not the only difficulty in the Local Militia as the adjutant of the 1<sup>st</sup> (Southern) Regiment, Grant, resigned in November 1812. It was found he was trying to negotiate his return to the 78<sup>th</sup> Foot and had rejoined it at Aberdeen while attempting to sell the adjutancy. Buckingham resolved that the next adjutant must be resident in the county as there had been too little supervision in 'the misconduct of our serjeants, & in the insubordination of the men'.<sup>487</sup>

If officers were willing to transfer, rank and file volunteers were often resistant. In Bucks, the quota for the local militia was set at 3,594 men, six times the 1802 militia quota.<sup>488</sup> By retaining the structure of the volunteer regiments, Buckingham hoped that no one would be compelled to travel more than 14 or 15 miles to any place of training. He also wanted an immediate ballot so that all statute fairs would have taken place before lists were completed, and that young men would be tempted by the two guinea bounty. Initial meetings were held between 19 and 25 October 1808 at the Crown at Amersham, the Red Lion at Ashendon, the Magistrates Chambers in Aylesbury, the Cobham Arms at Buckingham, the Red Lion at High Wycombe, the Swan at Newport Pagnell, the Crown at Slough, and the Cock Inn at Wing. Appeals were held between 7 and 12 November 1808. All the northern regiment and two-thirds of the mid and southern regiment transferred but this still amounted to only 894 men. After the permitted addition of 1,281 yeomen against the quota, a further 1,429 had to be found by voluntary means or ballot despite numerous appeals to volunteer loyalty by Buckingham. As with the yeomanry and the previous volunteer corps, three regiments were formed. Buckingham was not allowed to become commandant of the Local Militia as regulations prevented any lord lieutenant

---

<sup>487</sup> HHL, STG 26 (6, 7, 28 and 29).

<sup>488</sup> BA, D-CN 21/2/1, Minutes, 1 Oct. 1808 (also HHL, STG Military 7 (2)); L/P 2, Minutes, 1 Dec. 1808.

from acting as such for more than one body of militia and, of course, he commanded the regular militia.<sup>489</sup>

The local militia was to hold its annual training in May to accommodate farmers, some of whom were reluctant to employ local militiamen. Temple confirmed in 1809 that May would continue to be the training period. None was allowed in any case before April so as not to affect seedtime.<sup>490</sup> In April 1814 it was announced that, as usual, the training would be in May to suit the farmers ‘whose servants are mostly in’ the force. It was also necessary that year, however, to postpone training for a week by the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Northern) Regiment to avoid the election of the bailiff of Buckingham on 1 May, and the Buckingham fair five days later.<sup>491</sup>

A large sample of 4,878 local militiamen drawn from six counties including Bucks suggests the local militia drew roughly equally on artisans and retailers (51.1 per cent), and unskilled men and servants (43.8 per cent), although there were considerable variations from county to county.<sup>492</sup> A general meeting of the lieutenancy was held at the Cobham Arms at Buckingham on 14 January 1809 to ballot for those parishes that had fallen short of their quota.<sup>493</sup>

In the case of the Desborough Hundred, a meeting at West Wycombe in October 1811 chaired by Dashwood-King pointed out that filling 64 more vacancies in the Local Militia had ‘occasioned great and increasing complaint from several Parishes on account of the frequency and hardship of such

---

<sup>489</sup> BL, Add Mss 38360, Legal Opinion of Gibbs and Plumer, 14 Nov. 1808.

<sup>490</sup> TNA, 50/211, Temple to Liverpool, 6 Apl. 1809; Smith, ‘Loyalty and Opposition’, 336-37.

<sup>491</sup> BL, Add Mss 59293, Mansel to Grenville, 3 Apl. 1814.

<sup>492</sup> S. C. Smith, ‘Loyalty and Opposition in the Napoleonic Wars: The Impact of the Local Militia, 1807-15’, Unpub. DPhil, Oxford, 1984, 152-56.

<sup>493</sup> *Jackson’s Oxford Journal*, 7 Jan. 1809.

Ballots'. The actual Desborough quota was only 45, and they wanted the Burnham and Stoke Hundreds to take their share of the burden.<sup>494</sup>

In the Cottesloe Hundreds, a total of 349 men were exempt from the ballot in August 1812, the remaining 705 being liable for service in the filling of the quota of 256 men.<sup>495</sup> Another bounty of two guineas was offered to all those prepared to extend their services for a further four years.<sup>496</sup>

The August 1812 ballot lists for the Cottesloe Hundreds - as usual all processes were undertaken at the Cock Inn in Wing - reveal that 134 men were already serving in the Local Militia (one each for Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire), of whom five had volunteered to do so. Additionally, one was a principal and 36 serving as substitutes for the Royal Bucks King's Own Militia. A further five had just been drawn for the militia; and 34 were in the yeomanry. Two men had been discharged at the end of their initial term in the local militia, and two had paid fines to avoid service. Three men from Great Horwood were also listed as in the 'Winslow volunteers'. No others are so named even from Winslow so that it is difficult to assess whether such a unit still existed.<sup>497</sup> Those eligible had to declare that they had not entered any insurance scheme.<sup>498</sup>

The declaration oaths of the 217 men actually enrolled for the Cottesloe Hundreds in October, November and December 1812 show two farmers; four tradesmen; 36 craftsmen; 167 labourers (767.9 per cent), five servants; two other agricultural workers; and one man with no given occupation. A total of 80 men

---

<sup>494</sup> BA, L/P 2, Minutes, 17 Oct. 1811.

<sup>495</sup> BA, L/M 19/3; L/M 20/6, Miller to Tindal, 5 Oct. 1812.

<sup>496</sup> BA, L/M 20/8, Tindal to Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor, 16 Oct. 1812; L/M 21.

<sup>497</sup> BA, L/M 15.

<sup>498</sup> BA, L/M 9.

were married, 55 of them with children: only 44 signed their own names (20.2 per cent). The average age was 21.4 years.<sup>499</sup> Overall, the percentage of balloted men among those serving from the Cottesloe Hundreds was 32.5 per cent.<sup>500</sup>

The first 14 days' training for these new local militiamen was arranged in May 1813.<sup>501</sup> The Provost of Eton objected to one of his students being drawn by the Bucks deputy lieutenants. He was overruled - the student must pay a fine or serve four years - although redress for students was promised in any future legislation.<sup>502</sup>

Local militiamen often proved willing to enlist in the army or regular militia, 19 Bucks men enlisting in the militia in June 1809 in response to a circular offering an eight guinea bounty.<sup>503</sup> It was certainly something the army wished to encourage.<sup>504</sup> In December 1813 a list of vacancies in the Local Militia for the Cottesloe Hundreds showed that 35 men had entered the militia (of whom 34 went to the Royal Bucks), 28 the army (of whom 13 went to the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot), four the Royal Marines, and one the Royal Navy.<sup>505</sup> Some, however, chose to enlist as volunteers or substitutes for bounty in other counties' militias, which was illegal. In one case one Bucks local militiaman informed against himself so as to retain the bounty even at the risk of imprisonment.<sup>506</sup> In 1814 another 36 went

---

<sup>499</sup> BA, L/M 6; L/M 2.

<sup>500</sup> Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition', 149, 165.

<sup>501</sup> BA, L/M 20/17, Miller to Tindal, 23 Apl. 1814.

<sup>502</sup> Fortescue, *County Lieutenancies and Army*, 25; TNA, HO 50/257, Goodall to Ryder, 8 May 1811; HO 50/278, Goodall to Ryder, 14 Feb. 1812.

<sup>503</sup> TNA, HO 50/45, Buckingham to Liverpool, 27 June 1809; Buckingham to Ryder, 21 Dec. 1809.

<sup>504</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 71-72.

<sup>505</sup> BA, L/M 12.

<sup>506</sup> TNA, HO 50/180, Buckingham to Ryder, 3 June 1810.

to the Royal Bucks, and nine to the army. A further 16 entered the Royal Bucks in 1815, with five going to the army.<sup>507</sup>

Ballots continued as vacancies arose, and men continued to seek exemption. Between November 1812 and April 1813, 20 men paid £10 fines in the Cottesloe Hundreds. Nine were farmers or farmers' sons, one a professional, four tradesmen, one a craftsman, three servants, and two labourers.<sup>508</sup>

Around 2,600-4,000 local militiamen enlisted annually between 1809 and 1813. In addition, the British and Irish militia sent over 93,000 men to the line between 1807 and 1814. Around 101,000 from the British militia (excluding the Irish militia) enlisted in the army over the whole period between 1798 and 1813.<sup>509</sup> One list from 1807 shows 187 men from the Royal Bucks enlisting in the line on 23 August and 14 September 1807, of whom just one had originally been a volunteer and four principals, with two former NCOs and one a man transferred from the 1<sup>st</sup> Royal Lancashire Militia. The remainder were substitutes, 36 of them out county.<sup>510</sup> More Bucks militiamen went to the 2/14<sup>th</sup> Foot in January 1809 when it was reorganised at Aylesbury and Buckingham following its evacuation from Corunna.

County affiliation for regular regiments had been suggested in the 1750s. It was successful in recruiting for the 6<sup>th</sup> Foot in 1778 and the 45<sup>th</sup> Foot in 1779. The idea was therefore implemented in 1782. In part it was based on also Prussian methods. Many colonels, however, opposed the county affiliations and titles announced in May and August 1782 respectively. Nor could the cavalry and the Guards be easily accommodated within the scheme. Since regiments were

---

<sup>507</sup> BA, L/M 12.

<sup>508</sup> BA, L/M 11.

<sup>509</sup> Beckett, *Amateur Military Tradition*, 115; Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 110, 118; Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 61-63.

<sup>510</sup> BA, L/M 19/18.



allowed to recruit in any county from January 1783, the experiment did not survive beyond 1784<sup>511</sup>

In August 1782, the 16<sup>th</sup> Foot was affiliated to Bucks, having been raised in the county back in 1685. The 16<sup>th</sup> certainly sent one recruiting party to High Wycombe in early 1783. In May 1809, however, the 16<sup>th</sup> switched county affiliation with the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot as the Adjutant General and regimental colonel, Sir Harry Calvert, wished to be more closely associated with Bucks.<sup>512</sup> Ralph, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl Verney had died childless in 1791, the Claydon estate passing to his niece, Mary Verney, later Baroness Fermanagh. On her death in 1810, Claydon passed to her half-sister, Catherine Calvert. Sir Harry Calvert's son inherited the Claydon estate in 1827 and changed his name to Verney. Already in 1806 Buckingham had recognised that there was no longer any real link with either the 16<sup>th</sup> or the 85<sup>th</sup>, with the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot better known in the county.<sup>513</sup> Calvert ensured that the county link with the 14<sup>th</sup> was one of the more successful ones. The general absence of systematic links between militia and regular regiments remained a continuing problem affecting subsequent attempts to recruit militiamen into the line despite Calvert's best efforts to create something of a genuine territorial system.<sup>514</sup>

A sergeant from the Northamptonshire Militia posing as a member 3<sup>rd</sup> Northern Regiment of Bucks Volunteers tried to fraudulently enlist a number of Bucks

---

<sup>511</sup> John Pimlott, 'The Administration of the British Army, 1783-1793', Unpub. PhD, Leicester, 1975, 241-42; Alexander Burns, 'Cumberland, Conway, and Prussia: The British Army Reforms of 1782', paper presented to the online Society for Military History Annual Conference, 13 Nov. 2020.

<sup>512</sup> Captain H. O'Donnell, *Historical Records of the 14<sup>th</sup> Regiment* (Devonport: A. H. Swiss, 1893), 88.

<sup>513</sup> TNA, HO 50/151, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 23 Aug. 1806.

<sup>514</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 65, 79-81, 131-32.

men for the 14<sup>th</sup> in 1807, thereby obtaining the bounties. Rather than being transported, he was himself enlisted in the 14<sup>th</sup>.<sup>515</sup> Limited service was more attractive than lengthier, albeit bounties were lower.<sup>516</sup> In 1807, the Royal Bucks sent 224 men to the line in August followed by a further 187 in September. Of the 187 sent in September, 76 signed on for unlimited service and 111 for seven years' service, 103 in all going to the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>517</sup> There was much drunkenness, Temple resenting the appearance of Marine recruiters at his headquarters in the following year.<sup>518</sup> In 1809 a total of 237 men enlisted in the line from the Royal Bucks, 125 of them enlisting for unlimited service and 196 in all going to the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>519</sup> A total of 148 men were found as volunteers to fill the vacancies, with a further 88 men found by ballot. The occupations of 125 of those volunteering were recorded together with five of those balloted. One was a farmer, six tradesmen, 24 craftsmen, and 94 were labourers.<sup>520</sup>

In 1811, 170 men enlisted into the line, 65 of them to the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot, followed by 85 men in May 1812, of whom 44 went to the 14<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>521</sup> A nominal roll of the 709 men who passed through the Royal Bucks for the period from September 1812 to August 1815 shows 65 men transferred to the line, 60 of them on 2 April 1813, with one in 1812 and four on 6 April 1814. In that time, 15 men deserted of whom 10 returned. One man deserted twice and another three times. A total of 18 men died; and two were transported, one for life and

---

<sup>515</sup> TNA, HO 50/162, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 11 July 1807. TNA, HO 50/162, Buckingham to Hawkesbury, 11 July 1807.

<sup>516</sup> Linch, *Britain and Wellington's Army*, 91-92.

<sup>517</sup> TNA, HO 50/162, Temple to Hawkesbury, 19 Aug. and 15 Sept. 1807; HHL, ST 145.

<sup>518</sup> TNA, HO 50/184, 29 Mar. 1808.

<sup>519</sup> HHL, ST 145.

<sup>520</sup> BA, L/P 1, Minutes, 26 Aug. 1809.

<sup>521</sup> HHL, ST 145.

one for seven years. Two men had been recruited from the Local Militia.<sup>522</sup> Naturally enough, vacancies were again filled by ballot.

The concentration of the Local Militia ballot among those aged 18-30 made the burden appear greater than was actually the case. There were fears that the force might be compelled to go overseas, as well as confusion over the marching guinea. Former volunteers would also now be more tightly disciplined and liable to the lash while an uneasy juxtaposition of middle class officers and unskilled labourers potentially added to disciplinary problems. Buckingham had argued against the local militia being liable to flogging.<sup>523</sup> Commissioned tradesmen might find it difficult to deal with customers only temporarily in uniform. Consequently, there were serious disciplinary problems during the first annual training in many cases in 1809 and some repetition in 1810. One of the sergeants on the permanent staff of the 1<sup>st</sup> Regiment of Royal Bucks Local Militia was tried at Oxford in October 1811 for drunkenness, assaulting an officer and absence. He was reduced to the ranks and listed for unlimited foreign service although clemency was suggested and a retrial was ordered.<sup>524</sup> Generally, however, the local militia proved reliable during the Luddite disturbances and some regiments even volunteered for service overseas.<sup>525</sup>

As Buckingham formed two light companies in each local militia regiment consisting of young unmarried men or childless married men primarily to save money on family allowances, it may well be that this assisted in maintaining reliability.<sup>526</sup> He decided against forming grenadier companies since they

---

<sup>522</sup> BA, L/M 1.

<sup>523</sup> BL, Add Mss 38242, Buckingham to Castlereagh, 10 May 1808.

<sup>524</sup> Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition', 230.

<sup>525</sup> Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition', 266-84.

<sup>526</sup> TNA, HO 50/211, Buckingham to Liverpool, 30 May 1809; Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition', 262.

would have to travel long distances simply on account of being chosen for their height. This would not apply to the younger men in the light companies.<sup>527</sup>

It became clear in 1812 that many local militiamen would not necessarily continue their service once the initial term expired, even with reductions in annual training enacted for trained men to 15 days in 1809 and 14 days in 1811. Consequently, the Local Militia Consolidation Act in April 1812 lowered establishments and made provision for a parish bounty for those aged 18-30 with no more than two children who were prepared to sign on again. Militia exemption, however, was reduced to one year after the termination of service. In December 1813 more legislation enabled the local militia to be called out for up to 42 days' service out county, once more raising fears of overseas service. Few regiments were called out on this legislation in 1814; the Bucks were not among them. Provision to extend the legislation in 1815 reached the statute book just eleven days before Waterloo. About half the county's more productive labourers had served in the three battalions but they were younger men with fewer dependants. Therefore, they had not proved a significant charge on the rates in terms of family allowances.<sup>528</sup> Buckingham at least believed that they had proved effective soldiers and were all capable of serving either in the Royal Bucks or even the 2/14<sup>th</sup> Foot.<sup>529</sup>

Meanwhile existing volunteer corps had been effectively disbanded in March 1813 by the announcement that their arms were needed to be sent to Prussia to sustain the national uprising there against the French.

Waterloo, of course, ended any further necessity of maintaining most of the auxiliary forces with the exception of the yeomanry, which retained its value as

---

<sup>527</sup> TNA, HO 50/236, Buckingham to Ryder, 13 May 1810.

<sup>528</sup> Smith, 'Loyalty and Opposition', 333.

<sup>529</sup> TNA, HO50/211, Buckingham to Ryder, 21 Dec. 1809.

politically reliable constabulary. Local militia regiments not called out for training in 1813 were notified of the intention to do so in 1814. In the event, none were so called out and the permanent staff was paid off by April 1816. The local militia ballot was suspended in May 1816, and suspension renewed annually until 1836 when the local militia was abolished. The 1812 local militia legislation remained on the statute book until 1921. Militia training was also suspended in 1815 although the permanent staff was retained. With large scale disbandment of the armed forces, there was demobilisation and its concomitant problems. This did ease immediately the financial burden on counties and parishes represented by payment to militiamen's families. In the case of Bucks support to out-county substitutes doubled between 1800 and 1820.<sup>530</sup>

Oxfordshire, for example, had requested reimbursement from Burnham in March 1793 and from Bledlow in April 1793 for the families of men serving in the Oxfordshire Militia.<sup>531</sup>

In 1804 alone, the 400,000 men serving in over 4,600 volunteer and yeomanry corps represented 18 per cent of the male population of military age.<sup>532</sup> By 1809 between one in nine and one in ten of all able-bodied males in Britain and Ireland was serving in army, navy or militia. With the addition of the yeomanry, volunteer and local militia units raised for home defence, the proportion rose to perhaps one in six of the able-bodied male population. This represented a higher proportion of men under arms than in either France or Austria. Moreover, with the exception of the militia and the navy, it was one raised largely by voluntary means.<sup>533</sup> The armed forces had absorbed a fifth of the total increase in the

---

<sup>530</sup> A. D. Harvey, *English Literature and the Great War with France* (London: Bold Johnson, 1981), 5.

<sup>531</sup> Bodleian, MS Oxon Dioc pps c 175, 18 and 34.

<sup>532</sup> Gee, *British Volunteer Movement*, 2.

<sup>533</sup> Emsley, *British Society and French Wars*, 169.

United Kingdom's male population during the war years.<sup>534</sup> The mobilisation of militia, yeomanry and volunteers also meant that only a third of the regular army remained in Britain by 1801, and only a seventh by 1813.<sup>535</sup> Such a level of mobilisation would not be seen again for a century for in the aftermath of Waterloo there was no need for it. The experience, however, had not changed fundamental attitudes towards the army in Britain. Army reductions inevitably followed.

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars had reinforced a dislike of compulsion whilst the middling elements of society or those aspiring to that status had found volunteering more conducive. The yeomanry had established itself as a reliable representative of local privilege. In the future, the militia would be most threatened not only by hostility to the ballot, but also by the assumptions of soldiers and policy makers. They saw it as little more than an adjunct to the army should circumstances arise again requiring any degree of civilian participation in national defence.

---

<sup>534</sup> François Crouzet, 'The Impact of the French Wars on the British Economy', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), 189-210, at 195.

<sup>535</sup> Cookson, *British Armed Nation*, 65.

(Circular.)

SIR,

August 1, 1814.

I AM directed by Major General BURNE to transmit to the First Regiment of Bucks Yeomanry Cavalry the accompanying Copy of a Letter from His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief, communicating the Vote of Thanks of the two Houses of Parliament to the Regulars, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer Forces for the zeal and good conduct manifested by them during the course of the War; and I have great pleasure in transmitting the same.

I am, Sir,

your most obedient

and most humble Servant,

WILLIAM CLAYTON,

*Lt. Col. Comm. 1st Reg. B. Y. C.*

(Circular.)

SIR,

*Horse Guards, July, 1814.*

THE Lord Chancellor and the Speaker of the Honourable House of Commons having transmitted in letters to me the Resolutions of the Houses of Parliament, to give their Thanks to the Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and Men employed in the Army for the meritorious and eminent Services they have rendered to their King and Country during the course of the War, which you will please to communicate to the several descriptions of Troops under your Command.

The good Conduct, Courage, and Zeal of the Officers and Soldiers of His Majesty's Regular, Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer Forces, so uniformly exerted for the Glory and Honour of the Nation, afford me an opportunity of expressing the great satisfaction I feel in communicating through you, this Public Mark of Honour conferred upon.

I am, Sir,

Yours,

(Signed)

FREDERICK,  
*Commander in Chief.*

*To Major General Burne,  
or Officer Commanding  
the Inland District.*

*Following Napoleon's first abdication, transmitting the official thanks of Parliament to the army, militia, volunteers and yeomanry for their war services, 1 August 1814 (BMMT)*