

Buckinghamshire; A Military History

by

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Chapter Three: 1660-1792

The irony of the Civil Wars and Interregnum was that the triumph of the parliamentary cause should have resulted in the emergence of the kind of standing army careless of constitutional niceties against which parliament had ostensibly fought in the first place. The publication of a tract, *The Peaceable Militia or the Cause of the Late and Present War*, in August 1648, and of James Harrington's *The Commonwealth of Oceania* in 1656 were foretastes of the increasing popular identification of the militia with political liberties and the distaste for a standing army.¹

Within four months of Charles II's return to England in May 1660 the Commons was considering large scale disbandment of the army.² Without enabling legislation, any regular forces maintained by the Crown would be limited by financial constraints. Charles II's army was only 8,000 strong as late as 1684. Yet, the threat of republican conspiracies such as Thomas Venner's plot to seize London in January 1661 necessitated the availability of military force. Volunteer bodies had appeared in many counties amid the uncertainty in the last months of the protectorate. Only the reorganisation of the militia, however, could offer real security albeit that a militia would not be capable of meeting the new external threats that would emerge by the 1680s.

Three militia acts were passed between 1661 and 1663, but, in effect, they were an indemnification for the measures already enacted. The Privy Council had reissued the Marian statutes as a temporary expedient in December 1660.³ There was an acceptance, too, of the financial basis for militia assessment established during the interregnum. In theory parliament had surrendered

¹ Schwoerer, *No Standing Armies*, 55-56, 64-68.

² John Childs, *The Army of Charles II* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1976), 7-13.

³ BA, Verney Mss (microfilm), M11/17, Council to Bridgwater, 14 Dec. 1660.

command of the militia to the Crown through the royal prerogative, yielding what had been denied to Charles I. Yet, the new King was content to devolve power once more to lords lieutenant, who were restored in July 1660.

John Egerton, 2nd Earl of Bridgwater, the grandson of the former lord lieutenant, Lord Ellesmere, was appointed for Bucks, his father having been elevated to the earldom in 1617. Bridgwater had appointed his deputy lieutenants by September 1660: Sir Richard Temple, Sir Tony Tyrell and William Tyringham for the Buckingham and Newport Hundreds; Sir Ralph Verney and William Cheney of Drayton Beauchamp for the Ashendon and Cottesloe Hundreds; Sir Thomas Lee and Richard Ingoldsby for the Aylesbury Hundreds; and Sir John Borlase and Sir William Bowyer for the Chiltern Hundreds. Control was thus restored to the gentry, who were rather more committed to making the militia system work than had been the case prior to 1642. The Crown, however, had the right to veto deputies.⁴

Militia liability remained a charge on property but with a rating system now modelled on parliamentary wartime monthly assessments and the decimation tax. It was recognised that men of property would be unlikely to serve personally so hirelings and substitutes would now be permitted. Those with an annual income of £50 or over or an estate worth £600 per annum would be liable to provide foot soldiers. Those with over £500 per annum or land worth £6,000 would be liable to provide horse. Those worth less could be joined in groups to find horse or foot under the 1662 legislation, while the 1663 act enabled constables to raise the foot from parishes in the case of estates liable to find less than one man. The numbers raised would depend on the overall value of a county's property. The ratio of horse to foot would depend upon the distribution of property between large and small estates. Property owners liable

⁴ A. M. Coleby, *Central Government and the Localities: Hampshire, 1649-89* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 90.

to find men - 'finders' - would also contribute to the costs of the muster master, ammunition and other training expenses through a rate equal to a quarter of monthly assessment, known popularly as 'trophy money'. Finders also had to pay men under training at 1s.0d a day for foot and 2s.0d (2s.6d from 1663) for horse.



John Egerton, 2nd Earl of Bridgwater (1623-86), Lord Lieutenant, 1660-86

Regiments would be expected to muster for four days' annually and companies within regiments for two days up to four times annually: thus, 12 days' training per annum for each militiaman. If the militia was called out for longer periods

then finders were liable to find a month's pay in advance to be reimbursed by the Crown before another month's pay could be levied. Deputies were able to levy fines and even impose distraint or imprisonment on defaulters.⁵

Initially, the Crown was also authorised to raise up to £70,000, a sum equal to the county monthly quota based on the 1661 assessment, for each of three years in order to keep the militia in service during periods of threat. It was utilised from 1662 to 1664 when it lapsed. In the view of many, such a standing militia force negated the need for a standing army. Charles II would have preferred a select militia but the mood was against it. Trained bands were abolished under the 1663 legislation with the exception of those of the City of London, which continued to exist at least technically until 1794.

Following the earlier meeting of the Bucks militia commissioners in April 1660, the actual quotas were apportioned to find 801 foot and 158 horse for the county, [Table 3.1] the foot to be armed with pike, sword and belt or with musket, sword, belt and 'bandyliers'.⁶ The allotment appears to have been decided by deciding the total number required first and then apportioning a relatively uniform distribution among the hundreds, with estates then fitted to the numbers. In the case of the 16 horse apportioned to the Buckingham Hundreds, the total value of estates was calculated at £11,723 per annum with a simple division suggesting approximately £733 per horseman. The 25 estates liable were then grouped accordingly. A further five estates could not be fitted into the scheme so they were nominated to find foot instead. [Table 3.2] As for the foot, the 60 musketeers and 22 pikemen apportioned on a calculated value of £8,275 were then divided between parishes.

⁵ J. R. Western, *The English Militia in the Eighteenth Century: The Story of a Political Issue, 1660-1802* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), 16.

⁶ HHL STG Military Box 1 (2); BL, Stowe MS 441, f. 4.

It was decided by the Bucks committee in April 1660 that those with an income of as little as £15 would be required to contribute to finding the foot.⁷ The existence of several copies of the divisions for horse and foot with differing apportionments - one for the Buckingham Hundreds is for 71 foot and 34 horse - indicates a high degree of initial adjustment. There were several combinations suggested for the Buckingham and Ashendon Hundreds affecting three different militia companies.⁸

Table 3.1 Militia Quotas, September 1660

Hundreds	Horse	Foot
Ashendon	24	123
Aylesbury	24	123
Buckingham	16	82
Chiltern	40	200
Cottesloe	24	123
Newport	30	150
Total	158	801

Source: BL, Stowe MS 441, f. 4; BA, L/Md 1/8

Only small amounts were actually charged individuals and the net had been spread much wider in terms of those liable to pay. The Hillesden account book, for example, shows that Mrs Elizabeth Denton paid only £1.4s.8d, representing the third of one horseman between May 1661 and September 1662 with the trustees of Edmund Denton paying the remaining two thirds.⁹ There was no statutory obligation to declare actual income and the militia assessments were

⁷ HHL, STT Military 1 (34), (35).

⁸ BL, Stowe MS 44, f. 8, 22, 28-32, 60; HHL, STT Military 1 (36), (39).

⁹ 'Hillesden Account Book, 1661-67', *Records of Bucks* 11 (1920-26), 135-44, 186-198, 244-52, at 252.

only approximate calculations on the part of assessors. The exceptionally rounded figures for horse assessments for the Buckingham Hundreds suggest as much. [Table 3.2]

Table 3.2 Militia Assessments for Buckingham Hundreds, 1660

Name	Estate	Annual Estate Value	Number of Horse or Foot to find
George Purefoy Esq Roger Price	Shalstone Westbury	£400 £400	One horseman
Sir Richard Temple, Bt Edmund Dayrell, Gent	Stowe Stowe	£1,134 £200	Two horsemen
Sir Toby Tyrell, Bt Sir Edmund Pye, Bt	Thornton Leckhamstead	£1,050 £411	Two horsemen
Viscount Baltinglass Simon Bennett Esq	Thornborough Beachampton	£400 £700	Two horsemen
Mrs Elizabeth Denton Executors of Edmund Denton	Hillesden Hillesden	£300 £600	One horseman
Sir Richard	Bourton	£600	One horseman

Minshull			
Francis Ingoldsby and The Lady his Mother	Lenborough	£900	Two horsemen
Lord Norman and the Countess of Suffolk	Twyford	£1,600	Two horsemen
Richard Greenvill Thomas Risley Esq Maximilian Board, Gent	Foscott Chetwode Caversfield	£200 £200 £300	One horseman
Edward Baggott Esq Colonel William Smith	Buckingham Radclive	£360 £400	One horseman
Robert Dormer Esq Mrs Busby, Widow, and her children	Edgcott Addington/Marsh Gibbon	£300 £550	One horseman
Peter Dayrell Peter Dayrell, gent Sir Thomas Dayrell William Pollard, Gent	Lillingstone Dayrell Lillingstone Dayrell Leckhamstead	£100 £200 £200 £300	One horseman

Francis Dodsworth and Mr Hayes	Lenborough	£200	To find Foot
Dr Bates	Maids Moreton	£200	
Mr Thomas Edgerley	Water Stratford	£250	
Mr James Challenor and Thomas Challenor	Steeple Claydon	£450	

Source: BL, Stowe MS 441, f. 5.

Inevitably, there were disputes. In the Buckingham Hundreds, further enquiry was made into the Badwell estate at Foscott.¹⁰ Sir Ralph Verney received several complaints from the Ashendon Hundreds. Lady Stanhope believed that her husband's service and death while in the Boarstall garrison should have been taken into account in her assessment. Thomas Cobb wished to be relieved of the burden of finding foot and Mr Fonkinson tried to claim exemption as a non-resident. Verney listed 41 individuals in default on 31 January 1661: between them, they should have found 37 musketeers and nine pikemen.¹¹ Verney faced equal complaints in 1663 and 1664.¹²

Initially, presumably to tide matters over until the assessments were made, money was made available to Bridgwater for the Bucks militia by the Crown

¹⁰ BL, Stowe Mss 441, f.5.

¹¹ BA, Verney, M11/17, Stanhope to Verney, 24 Jan. 1661; Cobb to Verney, 30 Jan. 1661; Fonkinson to Verney, 31 Jan. 1661.

¹² BA, Verney, M11/19.

from sums raised originally from those who had refused to serve against Sir George Booth's rebellion in 1659.¹³

Edmund Stafford, son of the former royalist officer, was short of 36 men in January 1661. He had only 14 pikes and 56 muskets for his nominal strength of 28 pikemen and 84 musketeers in a company drawn from the Ashendon and Cottesloe Hundreds. He was concerned that 'the Collours, lading Staffs, Partizans, Halberts, Musketts and Drums should be ready, that he maye be in an equipage to march, trayne and exercise his Company, according to the modern discipline of warr'.¹⁴ Temple and Tyringham were able to muster the company of the Buckingham Hundreds at the Cock Inn, Buckingham on 2 November 1661.¹⁵ Progress elsewhere was slow. Stafford found so many deficiencies when mustering his company at Grendon Underwood in January 1661 that he ordered another muster at Winslow. The clergyman at Waddesdon had since died, necessitating the reallocation of his quota. Some men had been sworn in, but others not. A number of deputy lieutenants were also absent in London.¹⁶

Given the initial exemption of militia officers from militia assessments, officers were more readily forthcoming, including another former royalist, William Abell of East Claydon.¹⁷ The delay in establishing the militia saw the appearance of a body of mounted volunteers at Aylesbury in January 1661. The former commander of the Hillesden garrison, Sir William Smyth, was one and

¹³ *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic of the Reign of Charles II, 1660-85* 28 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman & Roberts, 1860-1947), *CSPD 1660-61*, 402.

¹⁴ BA, Verney, M11/17, Stafford to Verney, 18 Jan. 1661.

¹⁵ BL, Stowe MS 441, f. 10, 15.

¹⁶ BA, Verney, M11/17, Stafford to Verney, 31 Jan. 1661; Verney to Stafford, 1 Feb. 1661; Verney to Risley, 1 Feb. 1661.

¹⁷ Verney, *Memoirs of Verney Family*, IV, 5.

there is a list of 19 men who took the oath of allegiance to serve as volunteers on 6 February 1661.¹⁸

Whilst smaller estates often bore a proportionally greater charge than larger estates, there was far fewer inequalities than previously. All estates were charged whether men were resident or not and no one was charged for both horse and foot. The problem was that given that the strength of the militia depended upon the distribution of property, it would be unequally spread over the country as a whole.

Inevitably, assessments were still being contested well into the 1670s and 1680s. William Walker of Hambledon complained in April 1677 that he was being over charged, resulting in William Hight being assessed with him so that now they funded half a foot soldier between them. There were frequent defaulters. Mr Abraham of Wingrave was fined 20s.0d and John Grange of Ivinghoe fined 10s.0d for defaulting respectively on horse and foot in May 1677. Even Sir Ralph Verney and Sir Richard Temple found themselves fined 4s.0d for sending in 'bad' horses that same month. Due to the deaths of contributors at Weston Turville, the parish itself was directed in March 1678 to find 'two good and sufficient men of your Parish to be Souldiers and that you provide them with two good Musketts, Swords, belts & Collars of bandileers that may be fit so to be approved by the muster master'. Great Horwood was similarly charged with finding an additional soldier in May 1680 while Richard Blunt of Winslow was ordered in April 1681 to provide two drums for Edmund Stafford's company, which had had none for the last 20 years.¹⁹ In May 1698, three inhabitants at Ludgershall - Thomas Mason, William North and Andrew

¹⁸ BA, Verney, M11/17, Herbert to Verney, 12 Jan. 1661; Smyth to Verney, 30 Jan. 1661; list of volunteers, 6 Feb. 1661; L/Md 1/8.

¹⁹ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 8525, Order Book, 1682-1715.

Spire - were all subjected to distraint of goods after refusing to pay the rate assessed on them.²⁰

Republican elements remained suspect. The militia was also used against dissenters under legislation enacted between 1662 and 1665 although it depended upon the lord lieutenant. In the case of Bucks, as a zealous Anglican, Bridgwater took an authoritarian line in response to the instructions received from the Council. In April 1661 Richard Ingoldsby reported through Sir Toby Tyrell that 'dangerous words' had been uttered by former associates of Richard Cromwell. As a result, all deputies were recalled from London to secure the county.²¹ Both the Baptist preacher from Winslow, Benjamin Keach, and the Quaker, Isaac Pennington of Chalfont St Peter, were imprisoned in Aylesbury Gaol. While not a signatory of the King's death warrant, Pennington's father had died in the Tower in 1661 while imprisoned for his association with the regicides. Samuel Clarke, the Nonconformist rector of Doddershall, was seized by three men from Lord Brackley's militia troop in 1685 and, together with John Hampden's former chaplain, confined in the Red Lion in Aylesbury.²²

Since the Crown applied special sums to maintain a standing guard of a twentieth of the militia for 14 days at a time from 1663 to 1666, smaller counties had to adopt a rotation system to meet the obligation.²³ In the case of Bucks, it was decided on 28 August 1663 to establish a standing guard system. Captain the Hon. James Herbert of Kingsey began 'his motion with the Hors Guards' on 16 September. Half of Herbert's troop started seven days' duty at

²⁰ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9464, Order to Chief Constable of Ashendon, 9 May 1698 HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9464, Order to Chief Constable of Ashendon, 9 May 1698.

²¹ BA, Verney, M11/17, Charles II to Bridgwater, 19 Dec. 1660 and 8 Jan. 1661; *CSPD* 1660-61, 570.

²² Verney, *Memoirs of Verney Family*, IV, 351-52.

²³ Western, *English Militia*, 15, 26.

Wing, being relieved by the second half on 23 September. The rota was then continued by the troops of Sir Henry Andrewes at Buckingham and Sir John Borlase at Beaconsfield and so on through the foot companies until the rota began anew in March 1664. This 'second turne' lasted until September 1664 and the guard continued until July 1666. Each half troop and half company completed six separate seven-day tours of duty: at any one time 40 foot or 30 horse had been immediately available at locations varying from Newport Pagnell to Colnbrook.²⁴

Generally, political opposition was successfully curtailed. The London Trained Bands were on permanent duty between October 1678 and December 1681.²⁵ Only 14 individuals in Bucks were required to take the oath of allegiance during the Exclusion Crisis in 1678 when there was an attempt to exclude James, Duke of York from the succession.²⁶ In July 1683, however, at the time of the Rye House Plot, the militia was ordered to arrest Simon Mayne, son of the Dinton regicide. Arms seized from a number of suspects in the summer of 1684 were also retained for use by the county's militia. Those arms being retained by contributors were also ordered to be held centrally for the militia. Such seizures were fairly common as, for example, during Monmouth's rebellion against James II in 1685, in the wake of an assassination plot against William III in 1696, and again in February 1709 in anticipation of a possible Jacobite landing in Scotland.²⁷ After the assassination plot, the Bucks deputies and militia

²⁴ BA, L/Md 1/8.

²⁵ David Allen, 'The Role of the London Trained Bands in the Exclusion Crisis, 1678-81', *English Historical Review* 87 (1971), 287-303.

²⁶ John Miller, *Popery and Politics in England, 1660-88* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 167.

²⁷ *CSPD 1683*, 86, 116; *CSPD 1684-85*, 33, 85; Eland, *Papers from Iron Chest*, 99-101; Christopher Scott, *The Maligned Militia: The West Country Militia of the Monmouth Rebellion* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 182.

[illegible]

²⁸ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9568.

The militia was less successful in face of the invasion threat in the Second Anglo-Dutch War (1665-67). There was a brief threat of invasion after the Dutch defeat of the Royal Navy at the 'Four Day Battle' in June 1666. Subsequently, the Dutch did considerable damage to the navy's ships anchored in the Medway off Chatham in June 1667, although they were beaten off from Landguard Fort at Harwich in July. Changes were required to make the militia more flexible during extended periods of threat. In May 1665 Bridgwater warned his deputies that the lieutenancy could not function 'except there be at proper times and places meetings of the Deputy Lieutenants that so both the captains and other officers and the persons who either beare or finde arms may have their severall complaints reasonably considered and justly relieved'.²⁹ In reality, the deputies had already instituted regular meetings at Aylesbury on the Wednesday before the commencement of the Easter and Michaelmas sessions and had also been touring the county systematically. The rotation of the standing guard was still in operation and in June and July 1666 it was simply increased from seven to 14 days and from half to full troop strength.³⁰

Bridgwater was instructed to seize arms and horses from suspects in February 1667 and he took the precaution of writing to his deputies on 22 February to put the militia in hand. A second communication to Bridgwater on 1 April ordered the militia to readiness and company training was undertaken in April and May.

³¹ Verney, who had been absent in London during the training, was much angered by the 'insolence' of the Dutch. He asked his son Edmund to get his arms and horses ready to send in at an hour's notice but also to ensure that the Verney tenants at Claydon were not unnecessarily alarmed by 'apprehension of

²⁹ BA, Verney, M11/20, Bridgwater to deputies, May 1665.

³⁰ BA, L/Md 1/8.

³¹ BA, Verney, M11/21, Charles II to Bridgwater, 16 Feb. 1667; Bridgwater to Verney, 4 Apl. 1667.

warre'.³² The Bucks militia was ordered out 'at the Dutch attempt upon Chatham', serving periods ranging from five to thirteen days at Aylesbury, Colnbrook and Newport Pagnell between 15 and 27 June 1667.³³

Briefly, the Crown established a select militia of three regiments of horse, a regiment of foot and 17 independent troops in July 1666 but it was dismissed in September. It was tried again briefly in 1667 but the experiment was not continued. Indeed, the Crown's diversion of funds meant for the militia to other purposes such as the fortification of Plymouth destroyed co-operation with the counties and frustrated reform. In May 1665 Bridgwater had been asked to send the balance and arrears of the militia money to the Tower or a similar safe repository. Many counties regarded this with suspicion and in January 1666 Bridgwater was asked why he had not sent it to Windsor Castle as he had promised.³⁴

Once the Dutch threat had receded, the militia went through a period of atrophy with little apparent activity at the very time that it was being increasingly employed rhetorically to counter pressures for a larger standing army. The 'Country Party', which was to develop into the Whigs, routinely demanded militia reorganisation but a bill to replace the army totally with the militia failed in 1678. In part, debate reflected wider political factionalism with some lords lieutenant replaced in 1675-76 although Bridgwater continued in office until his death in 1686, being succeeded by his son, John Egerton, 3rd Earl of Bridgwater.

In Bucks at least the militia did not decline as much as is often suggested with the usual training in the 1670s. In May 1675, the Chief Constable of the

³² BA, Verney, M11/21, Verney to Bridgwater, 10 Apl. 1667; Verney to Edmund Verney, 12 June 1667.

³³ BA, L/Md 1/8.

³⁴ *CSPD 1664-65*, 395, 409; *CSPD 1665-66*, 209.

Ashendon Hundreds was ordered to muster the men of William Serjeant's company at the Ship Inn, Grendon Underwood with finders to provide two days' pay for the men, 6d for the muster master - Joseph Rawson, who also acted as clerk to the lieutenancy and regimental quartermaster - and powder for each musketeer.³⁵ In 1677, the Bucks militia mustered only at company and troop level and for just two days that year, with only one company usually training at any one time.³⁶ In 1683, however, musters were held at Aylesbury, Beaconsfield, Chesham, Grendon Underwood, Ivinghoe and Newport Pagnell. In 1684 the musters were held at Amersham, Beaconsfield, Burnham, Chesham, High Wycombe, Ivinghoe, Newport Pagnell and Winslow.

Detailed muster rolls for 1673 and 1684 show little change in terms of numerical composition since 1660. [Table 3.3]

³⁵ BA, L/Md 1/8; Eland, *Papers from Iron Chest*, 95-96.

³⁶ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 8527.

Table 3.3 Militia Quotas, 1673 and 1684

Hundred	1673 Horse	1673 Foot	1684 Horse	1684 Foot
Ashendon	34	118	32	119
Aylesbury	20	126	18	130
Buckingham	18	89	18	89
Burnham	16	88	14	83
Cottesloe	31	129	27	129
Desborough	19	68	16	70
Newport	33	157	35	162
Stoke	13	57	14	61
Total	184	832 (525 musketeers and 307 pikemen)	174	843

Source: BA, L/Md 1/8; TNA, E101/67/15 (2).

The composition remained three mounted troops and ten foot companies. Additionally, the 1673 muster gives the names not only of all officers but also all of the individual finders for horse and foot, and the names of those serving on behalf of the finders. Charles Dormer, 2nd Earl of Carnarvon from Ascott found the greatest number of horse - seven - with the Earl of Lindsey, primarily a Lincolnshire landowner but with property at Quarrendon, finding five.

Increasingly, the militia and the lieutenancy fell afoul of political turmoil. The lieutenancy had been partly purged in Bucks at the time of the Exclusion Crisis with Sir Richard Ingoldsby of Waldrige (Dinton) and Richard Winwood of Ditton being 'put out' as deputies in April 1680, to be replaced by Sir Thomas Lee of Hartwell and Sir Dennis Hampson of Taplow. Thomas Wharton, son of

the former Lord Lieutenant, was dismissed from the magistracy.³⁷ These were minor occurrences compared to the experience of James II's reign.

The militia of the western counties had mixed fortunes during the Monmouth rebellion in June 1685, although militia elsewhere did rather better in maintaining order and releasing regular troops for the field army.³⁸ A quorum of deputies was ordered to be constantly available in February 1685 and the militia as a whole put on immediate readiness on 16 June. On 20 June Sir Dennis Hampson's troop was ordered to march from Aylesbury to Colnbrook and then to be divided, half to examine all 'stragglers' on the London to Maidenhead road, and half to guard Marlow bridge, again detaining stragglers. All foot was readied to march if necessary on 24 June. Generally, the Bucks militia was in reasonable shape for there had been frequent musters and a regular circuit of divisional meetings from April to July each year since 1677.³⁹

In July Ingoldsby and other former opponents of the Crown were arrested. Following the Battle of Sedgemoor on 6 July, the militia was again directed to look out for fugitives.⁴⁰ Witt Scorsby of Hampson's troop at Marlow was 'to be vigilant in sending parties on all Roads especially towards Barkshire [*sic*] & that he seize all straggling and suspicious persons'. Meanwhile, Sir Henry

³⁷ *CSPD 1679-80*, 438; John Carswell, *The Old Cause: Three Biographical Studies in Whiggism* (London: Cresset Press, 1954), 56.

³⁸ John Miller, 'The Militia and the Army in the Reign of James II', *Historical Review* 16 (1973), 659-79. See, however, the revisionist assessment of the militia's performance in Scott, *Maligned Militia*, 265-78.

³⁹ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 8525, Order Book, 1685-1715.

⁴⁰ *CSPD 1684-85*, 308; *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic of the Reign of James II, 1685-89* 3 vols. (London: HMSO, 1960-72), *CSPD 1684-85*, 308; *CSPD 1685*, 834, 1115; BA, Verney, M11/40, Bridgwater to deputies, 2 July 1685.

Andrewes's troop was quartered at Buckingham and Newport Pagnell to watch the roads. All were dismissed on 20 July.⁴¹ The cost of even this comparatively limited duty was sufficient for a weekly tax to be deemed necessary by the county's militia treasurer to replenish his funds. Lord Sunderland requested that Bridgewater estimate the cost of keeping the militia out for a year.⁴²

A militia reform bill failed but, in any case, James turned to expanding the army from 8,000 or so in 1685 to 34,000 by 1688. Charles II had already utilised some cavalry for internal security duties. In December 1665, detachments of the Royal Horse Guards were stationed at Aylesbury, Colnbrook and High Wycombe. Colnbrook, indeed, was a significant military station through both reigns.⁴³ Equally, given the continuing significance of Watling Street as a route, Stony Stratford would see troops on the march on frequent occasions throughout the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth. The constable's book for Stony Stratford, for example, shows expenses for the movement of the 10th Foot through the town in 1769, the King's Dragoons in 1770, and the Horse Guards in 1771.⁴⁴ Aylesbury, High Wycombe and many of the villages in the south of the county also saw a periodic military presence when regiments were being prepared for London inspections.⁴⁵

Very few men had come forward, however, when there was an attempt to recruit for the army in Aylesbury in March 1678, Edmund Verney writing that only 'Gaolbirds, thieves and rogues' would enlist.⁴⁶ In January 1679 troops had

⁴¹ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 8525, Order Book.

⁴² *CSPD 1685*, 1368.

⁴³ Childs, *Army of Charles II*, 85-87.

⁴⁴ Markham, *Milton Keynes*, I, 280.

⁴⁵ J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-95* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 33.

⁴⁶ BA, Verney Mss, M11/31, Edmund to Ralph Verney, 25 Mar. 1678.

been disbanded in the county under the Disbanding Act forced on Charles by Parliament. Lord Gerrard's Regiment of Horse had been disbanded in Aylesbury and Lord Latimer's troop from the Duke of York's Regiment disbanded by the deputy lieutenants at Buckingham. Latimer was roundly abused by his men and Edmund Verney evinced some sympathy for men being turned out in winter weather without pay.⁴⁷ Some sold off their equipment and others turned to robbery.⁴⁸

With billeting again prevalent, the Disbanding Act re-iterated its illegality as established by the Petition of Right in 1628 with the exception of inns and alehouses. A survey in 1686 revealed that 136 out of 181 parishes and hamlets in Bucks could provide 1,210 beds and 1,936 stable places. Whereas villages such as Cublington and Stone could provide neither beds nor stabling, Aylesbury could provide 101 beds and Buckingham stabling for 177 horses.⁴⁹

The new 13th Foot was raised by the Earl of Huntingdon with headquarters at Buckingham in June 1685, its first duty guarding captured Monmouth rebels at Buckingham and Aylesbury before moving to the large military concentration on Hounslow Heath in August. The regiment was again stationed in the county in May 1688 when en route from Chester to Hounslow with companies quartered at Colnbrook, Slough, and Eton.⁵⁰ Another regiment later associated with the county, the 16th Foot was raised in Uxbridge and Reading in October

⁴⁷ BA, Verney, M11/32, Edmund to Ralph Verney, 9, 16 and 20 Jan. 1679; *CSPD 1679-80*, 4, 27, 29.

⁴⁸ Verney, *Memoirs of Verney Family*, IV, 239.

⁴⁹ John Childs, *The Army, James II and the Glorious Revolution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 9, 85-86; TNA, WO 30/48, f. 19-24.

⁵⁰ Major General Sir Henry Everett, *The History of the Somerset Light Infantry* (London: Methuen & Co., 1934), 4, 13.

1685 but was stationed at Stony Stratford, to where it returned from 1688 to 1689. Under the short-lived territorial scheme of August 1782, the 16th Foot became the Buckinghamshire Regiment but only until 1809 and, in any case, the scheme meant little.⁵¹

The Aylesbury parish registers also testify to the continual presence of troops with, for example, the burial of a soldier who died at the ‘Crowne’ in January 1686. One was hanged for an unspecified offence in March. Yet another was murdered in September 1687, whilst Thomas Clay of the 13th Foot died in the town in May 1688.⁵² The Earl of Shrewsbury’s Regiment of Horse (later the 5th Dragoon Guards) was quartered at Aylesbury, Buckingham, Wendover and Winslow for the winter of 1686-87.⁵³ There were troops at Aylesbury, Buckingham, High Wycombe, Marlow, Wendover and Winslow throughout the winter of 1688-89. Colnbrook innkeepers even removed their inn signs in October 1688 in an attempt to ward off unwelcome guests.⁵⁴

Irish troops were especially resented for their perceived lack of discipline. Edmund Verney recorded in October 1688 that as some marched through East Claydon, ‘they quarrelled amongst themselves about going over a stile in Newfield. One of them was knocked down and his skull much broken and he now lies insensible at Thomas Miller’s. Tis thought he will die very shortly if he is not dead already.’⁵⁵

⁵¹ Richard Cannon, *Historical Records of the Sixteenth, or the Bedfordshire Regiment of Foot* (London: Parker, Furnivall, & Parker, 1848), 2, 28.

⁵² Gibbs, *History of Aylesbury*, 350.

⁵³ Mark Shearwood, *The Perfection of Military Discipline: the Plug Bayonet and the English Army, 1660-1705* (Warwick: Helion, 2020), 147.

⁵⁴ Childs, *Army of James II*, 16-17, 88.

⁵⁵ BA, Verney, M11/43, Edmund to Ralph Verney, 29 Oct. 1688.

Several county militias were directed not to muster until further notice. In Bucks, one Catholic army officer was created a deputy lieutenant and another appointed to the bench.⁵⁶ In all three Catholics and 21 dissenters were introduced to the bench while five other Catholics and only nine Anglicans remained. The only prominent Catholics not appointed comprised a minor and a lunatic. Sir Edward Longville was a Catholic Sheriff for 1687. From the sixteen deputies serving in March 1685 only two - Sir Richard Anderson of Pendley and Sir Dennis Hampson of Taplow - survived by February 1688 as James purged the lieutenancy.

The 3rd Earl of Bridgwater was one of 16 lords lieutenant dismissed by James II in 1687 for refusing to appoint Catholics and dissenters as justices and militia officers. His replacement was the notorious Lord Chancellor, Lord Jeffreys, who had purchased the Bulstrode estate at Hedgerley and other land at Fulmer from Sir Roger Hill of Denham Place. Yet even Jeffreys failed to provide the government with an adequate reply to the demand in October 1687 to canvas the attitudes of deputies and justices if elected to a new parliament.

Corporations were also purged, the mayor of Buckingham being replaced three times despite the town being granted two additional fairs and a new weekly cattle market in the attempt to secure its loyalty.⁵⁷

Support for the Crown eroded and even the army was not immune to conspiracy. When William of Orange then landed at Torbay on 5 November 1688, the damage done the militia could not be rectified even if it had not largely deserted the King. Sir Ralph Verney warned his son, John, to avoid militia service in October 1688 while his grandson, Edmund, made known his

⁵⁶ Childs, *Army of James II*, 209, 211.

⁵⁷ Miller, *Popery*, 219-20; *CSPD 1686-87*, 1198; *CSPD 1687-88*, 787; J. R. Western, *Monarchy and Revolution: The English State in the 1680s* (London: Blandford Press, 1972), 211, 224; Stater, *Noble Government*, 155.

intention to refuse any militia commission. When Sir Henry Andrewes had his house at Newport Pagnell broken into, Ralph urged Edmund to 'be careful to secure your plate and other things of value as well as you can'.⁵⁸ Thomas Wharton had gathered even more weapons at Upper Winchendon than had been seized from his father five years previously. Two days after William of Orange landed, Wharton was seen riding through Oxford with 60 horsemen 'supposed by some to be Buckinghamshire gentlemen to go into the West'.⁵⁹

On 25 November Sir Ralph Verney reported to John Verney that there was an expectation that the militia horse would be sent out of the county. He had been roused from his bed at 2 a.m. to send men, arms and horses to Stony Stratford, the militia being 'gone with thos forces as is to march against the Prince'.⁶⁰ Lady Gardner similarly reported on 29 November that the Bucks militia had moved out.⁶¹ However, on the previous day, Lords Manchester and Northampton had appeared at Northampton 'where Captain Atkins and Captain Chapman 'joynd them with the militia of Buckinghamshire'. Atkins and Chapman, who commanded the company in the Newport Hundreds, had 'pretended too an order' from Jeffreys but had defected. As Chapman's party only brought the force at Northampton up to about 300 men, it would appear only his company was involved.⁶²

James fled his kingdom on 23 December 1688, leaving what remained of his army around Uxbridge. As before, Irish regiments proved ill-disciplined. Many

⁵⁸ Verney, *Memoirs of Verney Family*, IV, 442; BA, Verney, M11/43, Edmund to Ralph, 9 Nov. 1688; Ralph to Edmund, 7 Nov. 1688.

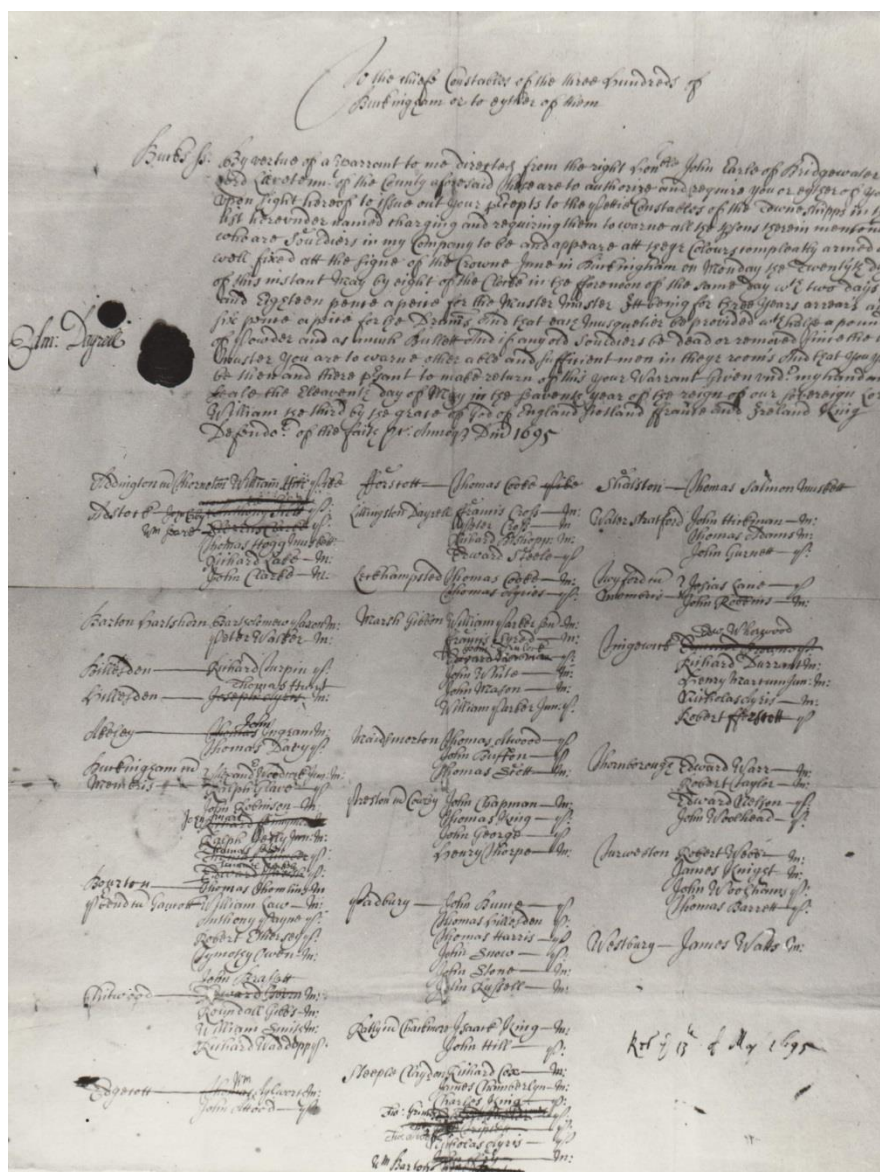
⁵⁹ Trevellayn Jones, *Saw Pit Wharton*, 258-59; Carswell, *Old Cause*, 68-69.

⁶⁰ BA, Verney, M11/43, Ralph Verney to John, 25 Nov. 1688.

⁶¹ BA, Verney, M11/43, Lady Gardner to Ralph Verney, 29 Nov. 1688.

⁶² BL, Hatton Mss, Add Mss 29563, f. 342-43, Jones to Hatton, 28 Nov. 1688.

inhabitants at Wendover fled when they believed the Irish might be approaching as two or three peasants had been killed nearby and houses plundered.⁶³



Summons issued by the Chief Constable for the Buckingham Hundreds directing Petty Constables to assemble Edmund Dayrell's Militia Company for training at the Crown Inn, Buckingham on 20 May 1695 (Buckinghamshire Archives)

William's accession drew England into continental war against France and, in turn, heightened the possibility of French and/or Jacobite invasion. Soldiers

⁶³ Childs, *Army of James II*, 194; Miller, *Popery*, 260.

remained unpopular although their victories were welcomed. The church bells at Clifton Reynes were rung for William's victory over James at the Battle of the Boyne in July 1690, the taking of Limerick in November 1691, and the naval victory at La Hogue in May 1692, which frustrated a French and Jacobite invasion attempt. The same occurred in Queen Anne's reign with bells rung for the taking of the Spanish treasure fleet at Vigo in October 1702, the taking of Gibraltar in 1705, and Marlborough's victories at Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706) and Oudenarde (1708). The bells were also rung at Quainton.⁶⁴

Continuous campaigning led to demands on the county for billeting, conveyance of military baggage and attempted recruitment. By 1712 it was said that the 'middle and trading sort of people' in Bucks were desperate for peace.

⁶⁵

Innkeepers' claims for reimbursement for billeting were regularly discussed at Quarter Sessions. In 1690-91, captains of horse were required to pay 2s.0d a night for 'diet, small beer and straw' while common dragoons had to pay 9d for 'dyett' and private soldiers 4d. At Midsummer 1693 John Wyatt of Ivinghoe complained of irregular quartering by the constables. At Easter 1696 Thomas Woodward, an Aylesbury petty constable, was arraigned for billeting 14 soldiers at the King's Head and Queen's Head and a further nine at the Saracen's Head without allocating any to his own inn, or that of Thomas Hill. In April 1705 William Lee, a carpenter, and Robert Todd, a yeoman, denied billeting militiamen on dwellings despite not being constables.⁶⁶ In 1697 billeting was eased in the sense that, although innkeepers were still obliged to

⁶⁴ William Bradbrook, 'Clifton Reynes Parish Account Book', *Records of Bucks* 11 (1919-26), 91-202 at 97-98; George Eland, 'Churchwardens' Accounts of Quainton', *Records of Bucks* 12 (1927-33), 29-46, at 45-46.

⁶⁵ HMC, *Portland* V, 203, Bromley to Harley, 12 July 1712.

⁶⁶ W. Le Hardy (ed.), *Calendar to the Bucks Sessions Records 1678-1733* 8 vols. (1933-), I (1933), 380-81, 470; II (1936), 91, 94; IV (1951), 227.

quarter soldiers, they could pay them to find their own food and thus keep them out of public rooms.⁶⁷

Troops also impressed wagons albeit through the justices. They were liable to reimburse owners at 6d per mile with no wagon to be impressed for longer than a day. After 1689, quartermasters were obliged to meet a statutory scale that would then be made up by the constables: only draught horses could now be requisitioned. Troops, however, tended to take saddle horses, to take wagons for longer than a day, and to use them to convey troops rather than baggage. There was understandable reluctance to let horses and wagons be taken. At the Easter session in 1707, William Redding of Saunderton was fined 6s.8d for refusing to carry military baggage from High Wycombe to Aylesbury. George Grove from High Wycombe had a presentment against him for a similar offence at Epiphany 1711-12 and was duly indicted at Midsummer 1712.⁶⁸

Warrants were frequently issued at sessions. At Midsummer 1712, the Addington and Tingewick constables were reimbursed for wagons requisitioned to carry the baggage of Lord Rivers's Regiment from the Swan at Buckingham to Aylesbury. In October 1714 William Carter of Shalstone was directed to send horses and wagons to the Crown at Buckingham to take the baggage of a troop of Stafford's Dragoons to Daventry. In all 129 separate reimbursements were made for military conveyance between 1715 and 1718. As late as October 1723, 16 northern parishes had to assist the passage of Lord Londonderry's Regiment of Horse through the county.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ John Childs, *The British Army of William III, 1689-1702* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 89-98.

⁶⁸ *Calendar*, III (1939), 75, 82, 295.

⁶⁹ *Calendar*, IV, 16, 107, 144, 152, 159, 173, 193, 205; V (1958), 5, 182.

There were some attempts at impressment for military service under temporary legislation between 1704 and 1712, something revived in 1745-46, 1755-57, and 1778-79. Justices could impress criminals and debtors from 1704 onwards but then the able-bodied unemployed 'that have no vote in Parliament' from 1704-05. Thus, in January 1704 the constables were ordered to 'clear all such vagrants and inhabitants having no visible money for their maintenance as they should find within their respective precincts' and to bring them before justices at Wendover. Sir John Busby asked his neighbours for the names of likely recruits and then ordered them detained but 'some of them were run away before ye warrant came to ye constables'.⁷⁰ Diligent searching brought in 21 men from the Newport Hundreds.⁷¹

Six men were pressed from Newport Pagnell bridewell in 1699 but this remained isolated until Midsummer 1704 when Edward Bell, an insolvent debtor, and four others were sent to Sir Richard Temple's Regiment. A total of 48 men were impressed into army or marines between 1704 and 1706. The practice was resumed in 1708 when 29 men were impressed but only three more cases took place thereafter.⁷² In April 1708 constables in the Buckingham Hundreds reported they could get no recruits 'unless they take servants from ye Plow-fayle or such Day-Labourers that are employed in Husbandry'.⁷³

There were attempts to evade such impressment. A surgeon, Noah Pitcher, was paid £4.19s.0d in 1706 for treating a vagrant, Gerrard Wilding, who had tried to disable himself for military service by cutting his own tendons.⁷⁴ In the following year George Smith of Grendon Underwood was indicted for

⁷⁰ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9489, Busby to Bridgwater, 30 Jan. 1704.

⁷¹ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9496, Deputies to Bridgwater, 12 and 28 Feb. 1704.

⁷² *Calendar*, II, 291, 432-33, 436-37, 448-49; III, xii, 31-32, 37, 39-40, 73-74, 124-25.

⁷³ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9517, Bate to Bridgwater, 5 Apl. 1708.

⁷⁴ *Calendar*, III, 50.

harbouring deserters. In 1709 one man from Soulbury and two from Swanbourne were indicted for trying to disrupt the work of recruiting commissioners.⁷⁵ John Verney, now Viscount Fermanagh, wrote to his son, Ralph, in February 1707, 'If men are as scarce in other counties as they be in this, the officers will find it very difficult to get their number of men.'⁷⁶ At least one regiment - that of Sir John Wittewronge of Stantonbury - was raised in the county in 1709 and allocated to the Irish establishment, but it was disbanded in 1712.

The impact of war was felt in other ways. Veterans still had to be provided for under the 1597 legislation. Clifton Reynes provided such relief for passing soldiers and seamen in 1694, 1696 and 1697.⁷⁷ Edmund Serch, who had become 'burst' from serving four years at Tangier, received an award of £1 in April 1686 and then an annual pension of 40s.0d was granted in July.⁷⁸ Received from the Portuguese as part of the wedding dowry of Charles II's Queen, Catherine of Braganza in 1661, Tangier was held against the Moors with increasing difficulty until abandoned in 1684.

Edward Billington of Cublington, pressed into Courthope's Regiment and wounded at the siege of Namur, was granted an annual pension of £2 in 1699. The potential settling of former soldiers under 1698-99 legislation was viewed with much misgiving at Chesham in 1700 with a complaint against 'divers Scoch soldiers lately disbanded' who had arrived to trade in the market. It was feared they might become a charge on the parish.⁷⁹ Burial registers at

⁷⁵ *Calendar*, III, 50, 80, 165-66.

⁷⁶ Margaret Verney (ed.), *Verney Letters of the Eighteenth Century* 2 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, 1930), I, 175.

⁷⁷ Bradbrook, 'Clifton Reynes', 101.

⁷⁸ *Calendar*, I, 202, 205.

⁷⁹ *Calendar*, II, 247-48.

Aylesbury continued to record the steady passage of troops: an officer in 1707, a soldier in 1708, a drowned soldier in 1709, a 'blackamore' musician from Lord Peterborough's Regiment in 1713, a soldier murdered by a colleague in 1716, and three men from Wade's Regiment between 1726 and 1728.⁸⁰

Not unnaturally given the experience of James's reign, as well as the subsequent continental wars resulting from William's foreign policy, the debate on the standing army reached new heights, especially between 1697 and 1700.

Familiar arguments were advanced by opponents of the army such as John Trenchard, Andrew Fletcher and John Toland, albeit that they recognised the inefficiency of the existing militia.⁸¹ An attempt to remodel the militia as a corollary to army reductions failed in 1698 since this, too, would have required increased expenditure and there was no real interest in fashioning an efficient militia.⁸²

The period from 1688 to 1714 also saw the increasing politicisation of the lieutenancy. Jeffreys having been committed to the Tower, Bridgwater was restored to the lieutenancy in March 1689. When Bridgwater died in 1701, he was succeeded by Thomas Wharton, now 5th Lord Wharton. When Queen Anne succeeded William in 1702, as a leading Whig, Wharton was promptly dismissed and replaced by a Tory, William Cheyne, 2nd Viscount Newhaven. Cheyne had actually fought a duel with Wharton during the Bucks Quarter Sessions in July 1699 and was Wharton's leading county opponent. In 1698 he had used his role as a deputy lieutenant to 'treat' all the freeholders serving in

⁸⁰ Gibbs, *History of Aylesbury*, 355-56.

⁸¹ Schwoerer, *No Standing Armies*, 174-87.

⁸² Childs, *British Army of William III*, 197; Manning, *Apprenticeship in Arms*, 313.

the militia training with barrels of beer as part of his successful campaign to secure election for the county.⁸³

The 'musical chairs' continued with the Whigs replacing Newhaven in January 1703 with Scrope Egerton, 4th Earl of Bridgwater. When the Tories regained office in 1711, Newhaven returned to the lieutenancy. Bridgwater, later elevated to a dukedom, was reinstated on the accession of George I in 1714. When lords lieutenant changed, so did deputies. The lists spanning the period from March 1701 to March 1703 show only four men retaining their positions throughout - Sir Peter Tyrell, Thomas Pigott, Stephen Waller and Richard Beke.⁸⁴ These four were presumably acceptable to all factions. Another indication of flexibility was an approach to Sir Ralph Verney in 1689 requesting his support for the appointment of a son of a former prominent supporter of James II as muster master for the county.⁸⁵

Through the political turmoil, there were still emergencies requiring the militia. In June 1690 the Bucks militia was called out for over a month following the French success against the British and Dutch fleet off Beachy Head.⁸⁶ In May 1692 some counties were mobilised when the French threatened to land James II back on English soil only for their fleet to be destroyed at La Hogue. A French and Jacobite force was unable to land in Scotland in 1708, and there were Spanish invasion threats in 1718-19 and 1726-27. In 1715 and 1745, of

⁸³ John Broad, 'Sir John Verney and Buckinghamshire Elections, 1696-1715', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 56 (1983), 195-204, at 197.

⁸⁴ *Calendars of State Papers, Domestic of the Reign of William and Mary* 11 vols. (London: HMSO, 1895-1937, CSPD 1700-02, 250, 519; *Calendars of State Papers, Domestic of the Reign of Anne, 1702-14* 2 vols. (London: HMSO, 1916-24), CSPD 1702-03, 390; CSPD 1703-04, 277.

⁸⁵ Verney, *Memoirs of Verney Family*, IV, 448.

⁸⁶ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9537, Council to Bridgwater, 23 July 1690.

course, there were serious Jacobite risings in Scotland. The militia was largely impotent because, although comprehensive reforms were advocated, the actual legislation left much to be desired. In 1690 an act enabled the Crown if required to call out the militia for a year without reimbursing the first month's pay. This was authorised again in 1715, but the legislation lapsed in 1720. It was renewed for seven years in 1722 and renewed again for a year in 1734. It lapsed once more so that, after 1735, the militia could not be mustered again until the Crown reimbursed pay advanced by the finders in the past.⁸⁷

In 1690, the summoning of the Bucks militia for its month's service resulted in the militia treasurer, John Eddowes, reporting to the Michaelmas session that his funds were completely expended. No means could be found to pay the men so it was agreed that the treasurer of the county stock should contribute £126 to discharge the militia treasurer from his debt.⁸⁸ The Bucks militia was at least nominally active despite the problems. A commission was issued by Bridgwater to William Noake in Sir Dennis Hampson's horse troop in 1690.⁸⁹ Edmund Dayrell's company was mustered at the Crown in Buckingham in May 1695.⁹⁰

Horses were seized from papists and recusants in March 1695 when invasion was again feared. It was said that a number of horses were claimed to be the property of Sir Anthony Chester in order to try and ward off confiscation.⁹¹ Several suspects were said to be 'poor and inconsiderable' while Sir John Fortescue was 'lunatick'. It transpired that Robert Throckmorton of Weston Underwood, whose parole was accepted, had fewer horses than expected whilst no arms or horses were found at the Minshull residence at Bourton. Those arms

⁸⁷ Western, *English Militia*, 52-74.

⁸⁸ *Calendar.*, I, 355-56.

⁸⁹ National Army Museum (hereafter NAM), 1988-06-59.

⁹⁰ BA, Dayrell, D22/11.

⁹¹ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9414, Duncombe to Bridgwater, 3 Mar. 1695.

seized were held at Newport Pagnell while any horses over the specified value of £5 were sold.⁹² John Gadsdon, a miller with a ‘very ill Caractor’ and ‘a very dangerous person and was very busy in the Popish Plott’ was arrested on a tip off but, overall, there were few suspicious persons in the county.⁹³

In 1697, a county wide muster indicated that all arms had been good two years previously, with 30 officers and 820 men in the foot under Lieutenant Colonel Roger Chapman, the 1688 defector to William, and 12 officers and 177 men in three mounted troops under Sir Dennis Hampson.⁹⁴ Musters were held in 1698, those from the Aylesbury Hundreds ordered to appear at the house of William Haley, ‘known by the sign of the Saracens-head in Amersham’.⁹⁵

Arms searches of papists were again implemented in 1704, 1707, 1708, and 1715.⁹⁶ In 1715 oaths of allegiance were also administered, the deputies in the Desborough Hundred listing four reputed papists and a Protestant non-juror whilst administering the oaths of 432 principal inhabitants in two sessions.⁹⁷

Bucks, however, was no more prepared to meet the Jacobite challenge in 1715 than any other county. On 8 November 1715 Bridgwater relayed instructions to the deputies to administer the oath of allegiance and seize arms, ammunition

⁹² HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9416, Throckmorton to Bridgwater, 6 Mar. 1695; 9418, Deputies to Bridgwater, 7 Mar. 1695; 9421, Duncombe to Bridgwater, 12 Mar. 1695; 9428, Deputies to Bridgwater, 28 Mar. 1695; 9547, Council to Bridgwater, 14 Mar. 1695

⁹³ HHL, Ellesmere, EL, 9427, Hampden to Bridgwater, 24 Mar. 1695; 9438, List of Papists or reputed Papists’; 9439, ‘The Names if Such Persons Coun: Bucks as may be regarded disaffected to the Government’.

⁹⁴ Hay, *Epitomised History of the Militia*, 115.

⁹⁵ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9561, Order, 20 Apl. 1698.

⁹⁶ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 9490; 9491; 9496; 9504; 9508, 9509; 9510; 9513; 9515; 9516; 10084; 10085; 10086; 10088; 10089; 10091; 10093; HMC, *Manuscripts of the House of Lords*, 8 vols. (London: HMSO, 1966), 108.

⁹⁷ HHL, Ellesmere, EL 10094; Deputies to Bridgwater, 17 Jan. 1715.

and gunpowder from all papists and suspected papists.⁹⁸ Fermanagh wrote to his son, Ralph, on 4 December that the Michaelmas sessions would be used to administer oaths. Unfortunately, Fermanagh's militia horse had died from stone, the disease being prevalent in Bucks at the time.⁹⁹

Fermanagh's son-in-law, Sir Thomas Cave of Leicestershire, had no great regard for the efforts in Bucks, writing that his men were ready but 'I judge yours will require more time, and perhaps some of the young officers may by mistake dress for an opera, and so make a farce of a jackboot. I verily believe my troop will eat up three of the Bucks officers at once.' Cave penned a similar indictment to Ralph Verney, his brother-in-law, suggesting the Bucks militia may have been out 'but the whole County I hear are Cowards, for ye men are unwilling to go, whereas I have two or three ready for every horse, and could have a troop in a week's time for ye service of his Majesty'.¹⁰⁰ The crisis was marked by Dutch troops hurrying from Berkhamsted through Winslow to Towcester, Fermanagh recording that 'they would not keep the Road but cut or pulled up the Hedge at Sand Hill to go over the pasture'.¹⁰¹

There is little evidence of militia activity after 1715. Sir Thomas Lee of Hartwell was commissioned as colonel in that year and some arms were disposed of at High Wycombe in April 1716.¹⁰² A warrant was sent to Bridgwater to raise the militia on 23 November 1727.¹⁰³ There are then just

⁹⁸ BA, Verney, M11/55, Bridgwater to deputies, 8 Nov. 1715.

⁹⁹ BA, Verney, M11/55, Fermanagh to Verney, 29 Nov. and 4 Dec. 1715.

¹⁰⁰ BA, Verney, M11/55, Cave to Fermanagh, 12 Nov. 1715; Cave to Verney, 3 Dec. 1715.

¹⁰¹ Margaret Verney, *Verney Letters of the Eighteenth Century* 2 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, 1930), II, 25-27.

¹⁰² BA, D/LE A5/4; W. A. Newall (ed.), *The Borough of High Wycombe Second Ledger Book, 1684-1770* (High Wycombe Historical Society, 1965), 88.

¹⁰³ BA, D-X 472/1.

three short miscellaneous accounts for clothing prepared by the quartermaster, George Smith, between 1729 and 1732.¹⁰⁴ Certainly, all activity had ceased by 1735 if not before. Unsurprisingly, therefore, the voluminous correspondence of the Purefoy family of Shalstone between 1735 and 1753 contains not a single reference to the lieutenancy or the militia.¹⁰⁵

When the Jacobites advanced southwards to Derby in May 1745, parliament had been prorogued and could not meet again until George II's return from Hanover. When orders came through to assist with the recruitment of regulars, Ralph Verney, now 1st Earl Verney, found few justices available to help: 'As I am told there was some officers who wanted a number of men to be raised in the County, and they were so angry that there was no justices to do their Business, the writ up to the War Office from Aylesbury.'¹⁰⁶ It was far easier to raise ad-hoc bodies of volunteers. Some regiments were also raised by the nobility for temporary service with the army. A bill was hastily put through all parliamentary stages in a single day in November 1745 to indemnify those lords lieutenant who had called out the militia illegally. Volunteer associations were equally of doubtful legality.

No such units were formed in Bucks despite the general air of panic although loyal addresses were forwarded to the King from High Wycombe on 27 September and from Marlow in November.¹⁰⁷ At Aylesbury on 22 November according to the parish register, the inhabitants were 'sadly surprised through fear of an immediate visit by ye Hland Rebels from whom Good Lord deliver

¹⁰⁴ HHL, STG Military 1 (5).

¹⁰⁵ G. Eland (ed.), *The Purefoy Letters, 1735-53* 2 vols. (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1931; Leslie Mitchell (ed.), *The Purefoy Letters, 1735-53* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1973).

¹⁰⁶ Verney (ed.), *Verney Letters of Eighteenth Century*, II, 196.

¹⁰⁷ *London Gazette*, 1 Oct. 1745 and 12 Nov. 1745.

us'.¹⁰⁸ One informant reported that the 'papist' Robert Throgmorton of Weston Underwood had concealed weapons in his estate's ha-ha and was training men in his yard.¹⁰⁹ At Chesham, the streets were reportedly barricaded with carts, wagons and beer barrels.¹¹⁰ A contributory problem was that the wider population had been progressively disarmed under the Game Laws of 1671. Earl Verney's son informed his father on 8 December 1745 that the county 'was greatly alarm'd on Friday with the Rebels. They thought they had been coming here. Several Families removed and vast numbers pack'd up their Valuables and some sent them away.'¹¹¹

The Duke of Bridgwater had been succeeded as Lord Lieutenant by Richard Temple, Viscount Cobham in 1728. A successful career soldier, Temple had retired to Stowe in 1711 and begun the transformation of house and gardens. He was elevated to the peerage in 1714. Cobham had broken from his alliance with Robert Walpole in 1733 and this had some bearing in his replacement as lord lieutenant in 1738 by Charles Spencer, 3rd Duke of Marlborough, who had acquired former Wharton lands around Upper Winchendon, Waddesdon and Long Crendon. Marlborough, however, did nothing. In 1745 Cobham 'frightened the people very much' by packing up his plate and sending it to Oxford. Richard Grenville of Wotton Underwood, Cobham's brother-in-law, promptly sent it back to Stowe only to set out for London himself 'not caring to stay'. The Lowndes family from Winslow also packed away their plate and moved to Wotton as being 'a more private place'. At one point it was feared that the Young Pretender had reached Northampton when, in reality, it was the army

¹⁰⁸ Gibbs, *History of Aylesbury*, 359.

¹⁰⁹ TNA, SP 36/74/2/27, Hardwick to Newcastle, 22 Nov. 1745.

¹¹⁰ G. J. Smith, *A Chat About Chesham* (Chesham: Smith Brothers, 1903), 32.

¹¹¹ Verney, *Eighteenth Century*, II, 200-01; BA, Verney, M11/59, Fermanagh to Verney, 8 Dec. 1745.

of the Duke of Cumberland moving north. Cumberland's progress was delayed by a Jacobite sympathiser locking up Lathbury Bridge while the Ouse was in flood.¹¹²

The failures of 1745 resulted in new agitation for militia reform, a movement that reached a climax with the national shame felt at the loss of Minorca in June 1756 at the start of the Seven Years War. The French attack on Minorca had been intended as a diversion for an invasion attempt on Britain. Such a threat tended to concentrate minds. There was less political mileage now in stressing the dangers of a standing army. There was advantage in attacking the Crown's patronage over the army and emphasising the cheapness of the militia compared to expanding the army. There was also an argument that reforming the militia would release more regulars for service abroad and reduce the need to import German mercenaries, as had happened in 1745.

While the debate surrounding the militia was often more political than military, it has been suggested that advocates of reform sought to integrate the landed more into armed service in support of the Hanoverian dynasty and into an emerging sense of national unity in response to the undoubted Catholicism of Britain's French and Spanish enemies. In many ways, too, reform strengthened the reach of the state.¹¹³ Similarly, it has been argued that the militia debate was 'fundamentally gendered' as part of the response to a wider cultural crisis,

¹¹² Verney, *Eighteenth Century*, II, 200-01; BA, Verney, M11/59, Fermanagh to Verney, 8 Dec. 1745.

¹¹³ Eliga Gould, 'To Strengthen the King's Hands: Dynasty, Legitimacy, Militia Reform, and Ideas of National Unity in England, 1745-60', *Historical Journal* 34 (1991), 329-48; idem, "'What is the Country?'" Patriotism and the Language of Popularity during the English Militia reforms of 1757' in Gerald Maclean, Donna Landry and Joseph Ward (eds), *The Country and the City Revisited: England and the Politics of Culture, 1550-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 119-33.

national regeneration being the aim after the early defeats of the Seven Years' War, although there was potentially a radical political aspect to this that did not necessarily suggest integration.¹¹⁴

Reform bills still failed in 1746, 1752, and 1753 but the outbreak of war in 1756 saw only 30,000 regulars available at home and mercenaries were again hired. George Townshend's new bill was defeated in the Lords but the accession of William Pitt the Elder to office hastened matters despite Pitt's temporary ejection from office. Militia reform had been a feature of opposition politics and was pressed by opponents of the Newcastle administration as in Bucks by Richard Grenville-Temple, the 2nd Earl Temple.¹¹⁵ Cobham had no children and his sister, married to Richard Grenville, inherited title and estates. As her eldest son, Temple adopted Grenville-Temple as his surname and duly inherited the earldom in 1752. He succeeded to the lieutenancy when Marlborough died in 1758. If the seventeenth century had been marked by the dominance of the gentry, the eighteenth saw the resumption of aristocratic power, albeit as in the case of the Grenville-Temples through the growth of gentry estates.

The militia bill finally passed in May 1757. Clarifying legislation was required in June 1758, and a further act in March 1762 to extend the provisions for seven years. The 'new' militia only became permanent through another militia act in April 1769 but the whole basis of militia service was fundamentally changed by Townshend's creation of a balloted force. This thrust the burden of obligation firmly down the social scale: it had become a manpower tax. The act that finally emerged envisaged a ballot of able-bodied males between the ages of 18 and 50 (45 from 1762) to produce a force of 32,000 men serving a three year term and being trained for 20 days annually between May and October. In 1762 this

¹¹⁴ Matthew McCormack, *Embodying the Militia in Georgian England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 14-19, 22-28, 177-79.

¹¹⁵ Western, *English Militia*, 124, 133.

became a continuous 28 day period of annual training. In wartime the militia could be permanently embodied.



Richard Grenville-Temple, 2nd Earl Temple (1711-79), Lord Lieutenant, 1759-63 after William Hoare (National Portrait Gallery)

Exemptions were allowed, including for deputy lieutenants, parish officials administering the scheme, apprentices, clergy (including dissenting teachers and preachers), medical men, articulated clerks, seafaring men, and (until 1796) peers and non-resident university members. As lord lieutenant, Temple was approached by one Bucks attorney, Anthony Bull, claiming exemption on the grounds of his profession. Temple had to seek advice. In 1762 he was also

surprised to find his own servants had been omitted from the militia list, believing they should be included.¹¹⁶ Exemption was also extended to those who ‘laboured under infirmities’ although the precise definition remained imprecise and a matter for local interpretation. Evidence from other counties suggests there was some attempt to maximise physical attributes, especially height.¹¹⁷ In addition, substitution was allowed and exemption for one year by a £10 fine (until 1782).

Recognition of the burden now falling on the poorest led to anti-militia riots in 13 counties in August and September 1757. Some farmers encouraged the opposition of their farm servants and labourers since the upkeep of a militiaman’s family would now fall on the parish, especially in the event of wartime embodiment. Moreover, the initial legislation did not mention pay, which was to be left for separate legislation, and this also aroused suspicion. Some men also feared that the militia would be sent overseas. Some suggested it equated to the sin of ‘numbering the people’.¹¹⁸ The disturbances were not long lasting and concessions were made in the 1758 legislation. Deputies and parish officials now lost their exemption while volunteers were to be accepted to spare parishes from the ballot.

¹¹⁶ William Smith (ed.), *The Grenville Papers* 4 vols. (London: John Murray, 1852-53), I, 328-29, 470.

¹¹⁷ McCormack, *Embodying Militia*, 85-90.

¹¹⁸ Ian Beckett, *The Amateur Military Tradition, 1558-1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), 63-64; John Stevenson, *Popular Disturbances in England, 1700-1870* (London: Longman, 1979), 35-38; David Neave, ‘Anti-Militia Riots in Lincolnshire, 1757 and 1796’, *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology* 11 (1976), 21-27.

In April 1766, the Rev. William Cole of Bletchley sent his servant, Tom, to witness the drawing of a parish substitute.¹¹⁹ Allowances for militiamen's families would now be paid from local rates. In January 1762, the county treasurer paid out £589 to compensate overseers of the poor for sums disbursed for the maintenance of families.¹²⁰ The Michaelmas session of 1762 showed a total of £350.3s.2d being paid out by 67 different parishes.¹²¹ In all over £2,000 in compensation was disbursed between 1764 and 1788.¹²² George, 1st Marquess of Buckingham was to write in January 1793 that the allowances paid militiamen's families had been the farmers' greatest burden during the War of American Independence (1775-83).¹²³ Further concession in 1762 saw exemption for all those with three or more children under the age of ten born in wedlock. There were still some anti-militia disturbances when the force was made permanent in 1769. From 1786 to 1796, and again after 1806, all with children under ten were exempted.

The 1758 legislation laid down a firm timetable for the establishment of the militia since some counties had suspended proceedings in view of the opposition to the ballot. Barely half the proposed establishment had been raised by 1759 but a renewed invasion threat speeded compliance in all by war's end in 1763. Bucks raised its militia in 1759. Nonetheless, gentry opponents managed successfully to restrict family allowances only to those serving in person. Substitutes and volunteers were denied allowances until 1778.

¹¹⁹ Francis Stokes (ed.), *The Bletchley Diary of the Rev. William Cole, 1765-67* (London: Constable, 1931), 44.

¹²⁰ BA, Q/FBm/13 and 14.

¹²¹ BA, Q/FBm/11.

¹²² Julian Cornwell, 'The County Treasurers, 1678-1889', *Records of Bucks* 16 (1953-64), 179-92.

¹²³ TNA, HO 50/19, Buckingham to Dundas, 13 Jan. 1793.]

For the new militia, each county was required to submit an annual return to the Privy Council of those eligible to serve. The quota would be set so that each county contributed the same proportion of its able-bodied manpower although the county quotas fixed in 1757 were then left unchanged until 1799. [Table 3.4.] This was despite variations in the numbers Bucks returned as eligible: 10,707 in 1762, 10,838 in 1776, 9,622 in 1782, and 10,152 in 1785.¹²⁴

Table 3.4 Bucks Militia Quota 1759-62

Hundreds	1759 Quota	1762 Quota
Ashendon	55	55
Aylesbury	82	84
Buckingham	52	49
Burnham	79	79
Cottesloe	72	69
Desborough	71	76
Newport	100	98
Stoke	49	50
Total	560	560

Source: HHL, STG Military 1 (7)

A general lieutenancy meeting would direct chief constables to produce hundredal lists with the assistance of parish constables, and fix a proportional hundredal quota. Subdivision meetings in hundreds would hear appeals and, having notified the results to a further general lieutenancy meeting, apportion parochial quotas and organise the ballot. General and subdivision meetings were the military equivalent of quarter and petty sessions.¹²⁵ After the ballot, the lists being displayed on church doors, those drawn would have the further

¹²⁴ BA, L/P 1.

¹²⁵ Western, *English Militia*, 247.

opportunity to claim exemption and deficiencies would be made up. Clerks were permitted from 1758 but the process was cumbersome and expensive and involved a virtual annual census.

It was within the means of many to avoid service through the fine or finding a substitute, the latter exempting an individual for the full three year term (two for those aged over 35). In some cases parishes could (from 1758) find volunteers for a bounty. Poorer men (from 1762) could claim up to £5 from the parish to try and hire a substitute, something that would depend on how valued the individual was within the parish. There were also militia insurance clubs which, in theory (from 1762), could only operate within individual parishes.

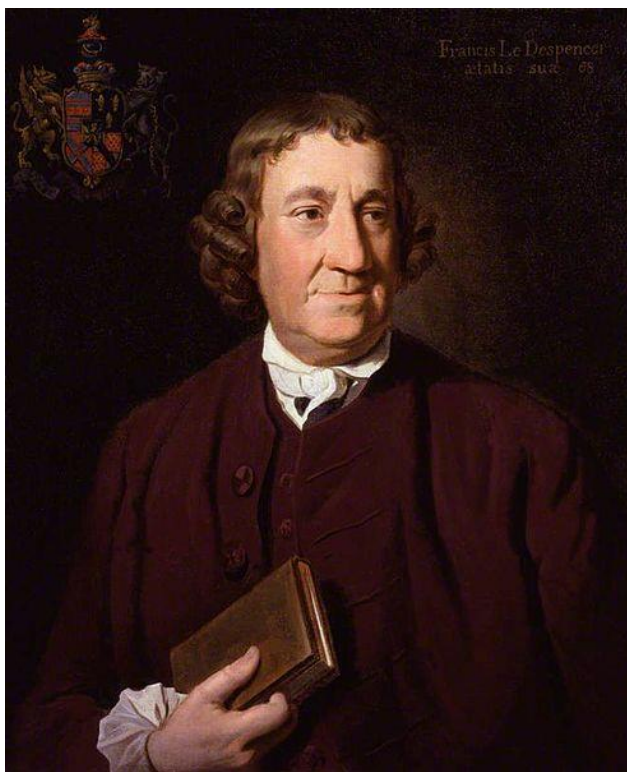
Commercial enterprises flouted the prohibition and it was discontinued anyway in 1786 with a plethora of such clubs then resulting. An insurance club operated at High Wycombe from June 1762 based on a 6s.0d policy to indemnify individuals for three years. Arranged originally as a result of a vestry meeting, the initial fund had 54 subscribers. It was agreed that the fund would be subsidised from the poor rate if necessary. A similar scheme was attempted in 1769 but did not come to fruition. It was revived in 1776 with 48 subscribers, the premium then increasing to 8s.0d in 1778. The price of wartime substitutes having risen, an additional £17.11s.6d was raised from subscribers in 1782.¹²⁶ George Box, who managed the county's militia business, pleaded with Ralph, 2nd Earl Verney in August 1782 to help him after Box's 16 year old son had forged a certificate for providing substitutes during his father's absence.¹²⁷

Finding the means to avoid service was still beyond many and there was an anti-militia riot at Wing in June 1769 coinciding with the permanency afforded the

¹²⁶ R. S. Downs, 'The Parish Church of High Wycombe: Extracts from High Wycombe Churchwardens and Overseers Accounts', *Records of Bucks* 8 (1903), 55-87, at 78-79, 84.

¹²⁷ Verney (ed.), *Verney Letters of Eighteenth Century*, II, 295.

force by the new legislation. A mob of over 300 prevented the ballot from taking place for the Cottesloe Hundreds. The Riot Act was read by Charles Lowndes, who attended with his son, William. The mob would not disperse and the constables were either unwilling or unable to apprehend the offenders. The Lord Lieutenant, Lord Le Despencer was told he could apply for troops if necessary.¹²⁸ In the event, they were not required. Despite some opposition, the ballot had gone ahead without disturbance back in 1759 at the Red Lion in High Wycombe, the Cock at Wing, the Griffin at Amersham, the Crown at Colnbrook, the Cock at Stony Stratford, the Crown at Chilton, and the Cobham Arms at Buckingham.¹²⁹



Francis Dashwood, Lord Le Despencer (1708-81), Lord Lieutenant, 1763-81 by Nathaniel Dance-Holland

¹²⁸ *Calendar of Home Office Papers of the Reign of George III, 1760-75* 4 vols. (HMSO: London, 1878-99), II, 1230.

¹²⁹ BA, L/P 1.

It was agreed at the general lieutenancy meeting on 1 September 1759 that a regiment of ten companies would be formed under the command of Sir Francis Dashwood. Dashwood had purchased a former Dormer property at West Wycombe in 1698. Dashwood had advocated militia reform as early as 1745, envisaging a structure in which Bucks would find 2,368 men in four regiments.

¹³⁰ He is best remembered for his connection with the ‘brotherhood’ of Medmenham, the myths of the ‘Hell Fire Club’ surrounding it owing much to his subordinate, John Wilkes. ¹³¹ Dashwood was elevated to the peerage as Lord Le Despencer in 1762, and became lord lieutenant in 1763 when Temple was dismissed from the office.

In an extraordinary and elaborate ceremony, watched by a large crowd of ‘country people’, Despencer had the heart of one member of his circle, the poet Paul Whitehead, buried in an urn in the mausoleum at West Wycombe to the sound of the drums, fifes, horns and flutes of the Bucks militia on 16 August 1775. Despencer acted as chief mourner and was accompanied by nine Bucks militia officers, with mourning arm bands, and a full company. Six grenadiers acted as escort to the bier conveying the urn. The contemporary press suggested Whitehead, who had died the year before, was a Bucks militia officer but there seems no evidence of this. The militia fired three volleys while ‘minute guns’ were fired in West Wycombe Park. Strangely, the event was referred to as a curiosity periodically by the Bucks press in the late nineteenth century, on each occasion as if previously unremarked. The West Wycombe curate presided over the ceremony, but the *Bucks Herald* would later characterise it as a ‘semi-comic

¹³⁰ Bodleian, Dashwood, D. D., B8 1/3.

¹³¹ Betty Kemp, *Sir Francis Dashwood: An Eighteenth Century Independent* (London: Macmillan, 1967), 188-92.

funeral', which captures the quasi-religious mockery of the Medmenham circle.

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Dashwood's second in command in 1759 was William Drake of Shardeloes, Amersham, but it was the notorious Wilkes who succeeded Dashwood as colonel in 1762 when the latter resigned to become Chancellor of the Exchequer. The radical MP for Aylesbury, Wilkes had married an Aylesbury heiress ten years his senior in 1747 and had become a trustee of the Foundling Hospital, a governor of the grammar school, a magistrate, and a contributor to most of the town's charities. Wilkes served as Sheriff in 1754 and was then elected for Aylesbury in 1757. After his re-election in 1761 cost him five guineas for each of 300 electors, he ordered the gates of his Aylesbury residence, Prebendal House, locked so they could no longer enjoy his gardens. Despite Wilkes's reputation, Dashwood named him as his preferred successor 'as a man of good sense, parts and civil deportment, who has shown resolution and industry in putting this salutary measure into execution'.¹³³ George Carter was Dashwood's first major and his captains, besides Wilkes, were Charles Chester, Sambrooke Freeman, George Grenville, Matthew Knapp, Charles Lowndes, and William Lowndes.

Given that, once embodied, the militia was likely to serve out county, it was not necessarily easy to find these officers. The property qualifications initially set of land worth £50 annually for ensigns up to land worth £400 or an inheritance worth £800 for colonels, were often reduced and ignored. Religious tests were also applied to ensure officers were Anglicans until 1796. Property

¹³² *Northampton Mercury*, 28 Aug. 1775; *Oxford Journal*, 26 Aug. 1775; *Buckingham Advertiser*, 19 Mar. 1887; *Bucks Herald*, 14 Jan. 1893; *South Bucks Standard*, 21 July 1907.

¹³³ BL, Add Mss 30867, f. 178, Dashwood's Address to the Bucks Regiment, n. d. [1762].

qualifications were halved for subalterns in 1769 - an ensign now required only an estate of £20 or personal effects of £500 - but there was also a high turnover as younger officers began to use the militia as a route to a regular commission without purchase. In turn, unemployed regulars entered the militia but they were often those too old or poor to have achieved high rank, or those who had retired to manage an estate with little time to devote to the militia.

B U C K S.

Field Return of *Lt Col. Drake's*
Company of Militia this 28th Day of *April* 1760

	Captains.	Lieuts.	Ensigns.	Serjeants.	Corporals.	Drummers	Privates.
Attending in the Field	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
On Duty	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Absent by Leave	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Absent without Leave	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Sick or in Hospital	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Dead	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Inlifted	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Not sworn in	1	1	1	2	3	2	50
Total Effectives	1	1	1	3	3	2	56
Wanted to compleat	1	1	1	3	3	2	56
Total Establishment	1	1	1	3	3	2	57.

W. Drake

Field Return of Lieutenant Colonel William Drake's Militia Company, 28 April 1760 (Buckinghamshire Archives)

It has been suggested, therefore, that many militia officers were of less elevated social position.¹³⁴ This is certainly not apparent in Bucks in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Sir Anthony Chester, for example, was appointed lieutenant colonel of the foot in 1667 and, as already related, Sir Thomas Lee became colonel in 1715.¹³⁵ There is something in this, however, so far as the new militia is concerned. In trying to persuade Sir John Russell of Chequers to offer his services, Dashwood suggested that numerous gentry had offered themselves in March 1759. Lady Russell was doubtful if ‘wearing spruce regimentals, being called on but once a year, and being drawn into many jolly meetings’ would appeal to many such as her brother, John Revett.¹³⁶ Charles Chester, George Grenville and the Lowndes’ were from well-established county families but Dashwood and Freeman of Fawley Court had made money from commerce, as had the Knapp family from Little Linford. Carter, son of a Welsh judge, had purchased Chilton in 1739 while Wilkes was very much on the make although he qualified from land at Aylesbury and Great Brickhill.¹³⁷

The same was true of the Bucks militia when embodied in the American War of Independence, junior officers possessing only smaller states, a number recently acquired, while some qualified by virtue of non-landed property. The colonel, Coulson Skottowe, had inherited Bury Hill House at Chesham in 1750 from his grandfather and former sheriff, John Ware. His major was the Hon. Thomas Hampden, but the lieutenant colonel, Lovel Badcock, was of recent wealth, his father having purchased land at Bledlow in 1749. Only one of six captains -

¹³⁴ Stephen Conway, *War, State, and Society in Mid-Eighteenth Century Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 78-79, 140.

¹³⁵ BA, D/C/3/27; D/LE A5/4.

¹³⁶ HMC, *Franklin-Russell-Astley of Chequers Court* (London: HMSO, 1900), 413-14.

¹³⁷ BA, Q/ROm 1.

Edmund Waller - was from a well-established family. John Osborn's family had purchased land at Turville only in 1753 although Osborn had become sheriff in 1759: he had joined the regiment in 1775. Henry Tompkins, who had joined the regiment in May 1759, was an Aylesbury lawyer with a small estate at Weston Turville since 1764. In 1776 he turned down the chance to be promoted to major because he fell short of the land qualification, telling Despencer, 'Besides a man that cannot afford to keep either a horse or servant will cut a most despicable appearance in the field as Major'.¹³⁸ Despencer had nominated Skottowe and Tompkins respectively as lieutenant colonel and major at the same time. Both had been 16 years with the regiment.¹³⁹ Tompkins had acquired sufficient land to take the promotion by 1781.

Those below the rank of captain mostly qualified by the 1769 concession allowing qualification by personal estate rather than land, a fact advertised by the regiment in May 1769 in the hope of finding new officers before the general lieutenancy meeting scheduled for the Red Lion in High Wycombe.¹⁴⁰ The new officers included Matthias Hensburgh of Hambledon from the minor squirearchy and two land tax commissioners, the 'lowest common denominator of county life' while the rest were 'nonentities'.¹⁴¹

The proportion of men balloted actually serving in person - 'principals' - was likely to be small as few would serve unless compelled to do so by individual circumstances or lack of means. Most principals and substitutes in agricultural

¹³⁸ Bodleian, Dashwood, B8 1/11, Tompkins to Despencer, 15 Feb. 1776.

¹³⁹ BA, T/A 3/126 [BMMT 110/1], Despenser to 'My Lord', 14 Feb. 1776.

¹⁴⁰ *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 16 May 176 and 29 July 1769.

¹⁴¹ Paul Langford, *Public Life and the Propertied Englishman, 1689-1798* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 298-99. Officers in 1781 with dates of commission are listed in *London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 26 July 1781.

counties were young, illiterate manual workers. In Bucks lists survive for seven of the eight hundreds between July and September 1759. That for Burnham is missing and those for Aylesbury and Stoke are incomplete.¹⁴² In all, they list 135 men drawn for the Ashendon, Buckingham and Newport Hundreds, of whom 81 found substitutes with four volunteers, these returns being the most detailed. They also list 71 men drawn for the Desborough Hundred, including one man drawn who found a substitute; 20 substitutes for the Aylesbury Hundreds; and 109 men enrolled for the Cottesloe and Stoke Hundreds, including six principals and 50 substitutes. Together this amounts to 471 men, of whom occupations are given for 439.

Analysis of those drawn who found substitutes shows that 93 per cent of all farmers drawn avoided service, as did 86 per cent of tradesmen, 74 per cent of artisans and craftsmen, and even 58 per cent of labourers and 41 per cent of farm servants. Of 50 principals who served, 54 per cent were farm servants and 30 per cent labourers while of the 111 substitutes with known occupations, 43 per cent were labourers and 23 per cent farm servants. Out of 238 men with known occupations known to have served in 1759 (from a quota of 560), 107 were labourers (45 per cent), 66 farm servants (28 per cent), 41 artisans or craftsmen (17 per cent), 23 tradesmen (10 per cent), with a solitary farmer.¹⁴³

The reliance upon manual workers did not change. Of those drawn for the Aylesbury Hundreds in January 1788 - five farmers, two professional men (schoolmaster and surgeon), ten tradesmen, 12 craftsmen, one husbandman, 29 labourers and 20 servants - all found substitutes except three servants, two labourers and a carpenter.¹⁴⁴ Significantly, William Cowper, who moved to

¹⁴² Bodleian, Dashwood, D. D., B8 2/19a, 2/20, 2/21, 2/22, 2/23a, 2/25; F2 3/1.

¹⁴³ Ian Beckett, 'Buckinghamshire Militia Lists for 1759: A Social Analysis', *Records of Bucks* 20 (1977), 461-69.

¹⁴⁴ BA, L/Md 1/1.

Olney in 1768 and to Weston Underwood in 1786, lamented the plight of a ploughman drawn in the ballot in *The Task* (1785). Militia service transforms the ploughman's physique and confidence but also teaches him to swear, gamble, drink, womanise and 'to be a pest where he was useful once'.¹⁴⁵ Reputedly, an 83 year old from Olney called Hadland who died in 1831, had been Cowper's militia substitute.¹⁴⁶

In February 1781 when the East Middlesex Militia was billeted at Olney and Newport Pagnell, Cowper witnessed a disturbance started by the regiment's officers at the Bull Inn 'whose avowed purpose in doing it was to mortify a Town which they understood was inhabited by Methodists. They roar'd and sung and danced, sometimes in the house, sometimes in the street.' The regiment remained for some days, undertaking as exercise some mock battles at Emberton Marsh that saw some 'fighting' in the streets of Olney.¹⁴⁷

In April 1782 Cowper noted part of Lord Harrington's 85th Foot was also quartered in Olney, performing a band concert and a 'gentle and elegant symphony' on Market Hill. The regiment was disbanded in 1783 and is not to be confused with the new 85th Foot raised in Bucks ten years later. Another group passing through Olney in March 1783, for whom Cowper expressed sympathy, was one of the small parties of former mutineers from the 77th Highlanders being marched back from Portsmouth to Scotland to be disbanded. With the war in America effectively over, they had been ordered to India when they had expected a promised discharge, prompting mutiny.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁵ William Cowper, *The Task: A Poem in Six Books* (London: J. Johnston, 1785), 169-70.

¹⁴⁶ Margaret Verney, *Bucks Biographies* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), 229.

¹⁴⁷ James King and Charles Ryskamp (eds), *The Letters and Prose Writings of William Cowper* 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979-81), I, 451, 457-58.

¹⁴⁸ J. G. Frazer (ed.), *The Letters of William Cowper* 2 vols. (London: Macmillan & Co, 1912), I, 198-99; Rev. J. S. Grimshawe (ed.), *The Works of William Cowper: His Life, Letters*

In peacetime even the annual 28 days' militia training was not guaranteed to produce efficient soldiers. Wartime embodiment was a different matter. During the Seven Years War, some militia regiments were embodied as early as June 1759 and, in all, 43 counties were so embodied by war's end. All these were then embodied again in March 1778 once the French entered the American War of Independence on the American side together with 17 counties that had only raised their militias for the first time since 1763. On embodiment, militiamen received full army pay and allowances and were liable to serve anywhere required. Many spent time at the large wartime training camps in southern England such as Warley and Coxheath, a source of much public interest.¹⁴⁹ There were smaller camps at Datchet in 1740 and at Amersham in 1757.¹⁵⁰ Many men, however, were allowed home in winter months and it was not unusual for men to be released on furlough at harvest time. Some men worked for themselves in their spare time and others were employed by the government on public works. Guarding prisoners of war was another frequent duty.

So far as wartime service is concerned, the Bucks militia was formally established on 31 October 1759, the date of the first issue of weapons.¹⁵¹ It was then embodied on 14 May 1760, the regiment moving to Winchester in March 1762, where it remained for nine months before disembodiment in November 1762.¹⁵² While still in the county, one detachment was sent to escort 189 French prisoners from Abingdon to Andover in August 1760, and another to

and Poems (London; William Tegg & Co., 1849), 128-29; John Prebble, *Mutiny: Highland Regiments in Revolt, 1743-1804* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), 211-59.

¹⁴⁹ McCormack, *Embodying Militia*, 64-68.

¹⁵⁰ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 330.

¹⁵¹ Western, *English Militia*, 447.

¹⁵² TNA, WO 5/93, Townshend to Dashwood, 11 Mar. 1762; WO 5/94, Townshend to Wilkes, 30 Nov. 1762.

take 59 prisoners from Faringdon to Whitechurch in Hampshire.¹⁵³ At one point a move was scheduled to Kent in April 1761, but this was cancelled.¹⁵⁴ While still in the county in March 1761, Private Thomas Payne, a 23 year old originally from Warwickshire and presumably a substitute, deserted.¹⁵⁵

At Winchester, the main duty was guarding French prisoners of war: six militia regiments and the 34th Foot were all quartered there. In May 1762 a total of 24 Frenchmen tried to escape from the King's House Prison through a drain while the Bucks militia was on guard. The vigilance of the guards resulted in only four escaping while two were wounded in the attempt. Wilkes rewarded one sentry with three weeks' leave, to which Dashwood added a guinea. The failure does not seem to have deterred the prisoners for, a few days later, it was reported to Dashwood that two holes had been found in the 'airing ground'.¹⁵⁶

Wilkes briefly commanded the camp as a whole but was soon superseded by a regular who was a leading supporter of Lord Bute's administration, to which Wilkes was opposed.¹⁵⁷ Time was spent on 'entertainment' in which Wilkes was prominent. The historian of ancient Rome, Edward Gibbon, serving at Winchester with the Hampshire Militia, recorded a debauched day on 23 September 1762. Wilkes showed 'inexhaustible spirits, infinite wit and humour, and a great deal of knowledge; but a thorough profligate in principle as in

¹⁵³ TNA, WO 5/91, Order, 27 August 1760.

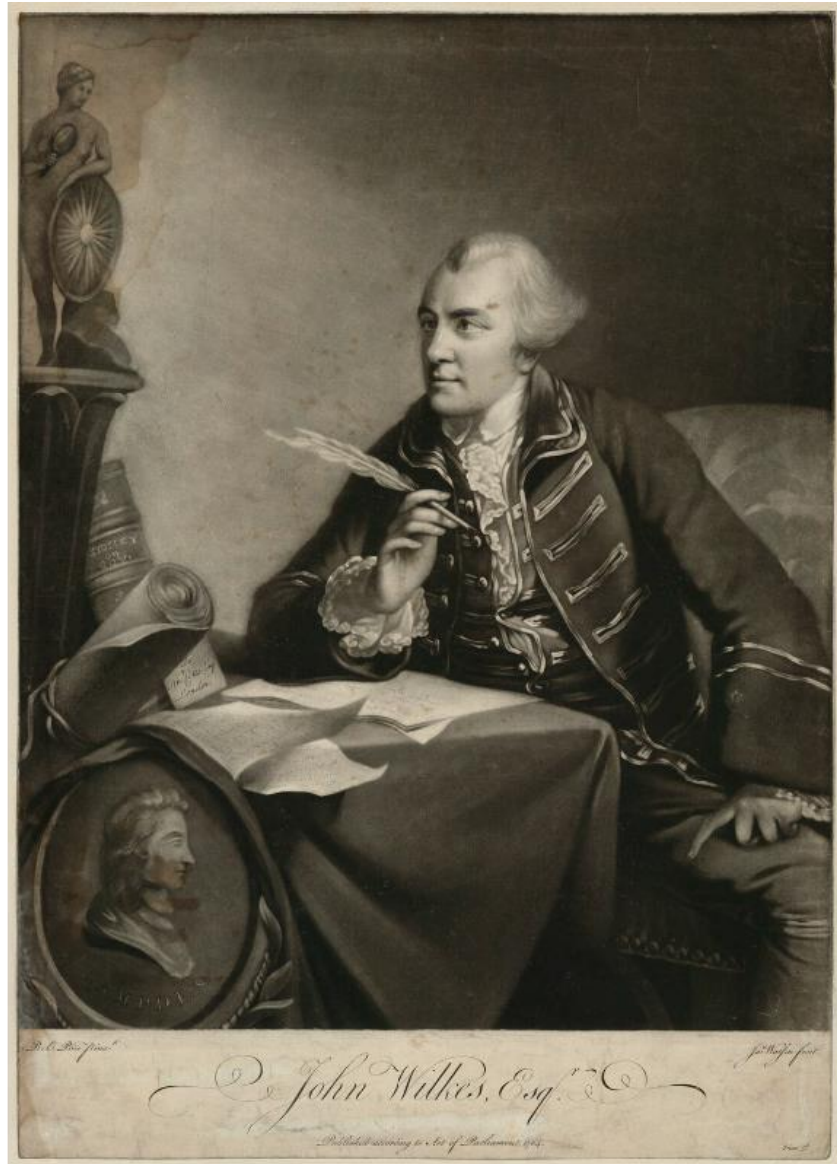
¹⁵⁴ TNA, WO 5/93, Townshend to Dashwood, 14 Apr. 1761.

¹⁵⁵ *London Evening Post*, 17 Mar. 1761.

¹⁵⁶ BL, Egerton MS 2136, Wilkes to Dashwood, 23 May 1762; Freeman to Dashwood, 27 May 1762.

¹⁵⁷ E. H. Weatherly (ed.), *The Correspondence of John Wilkes and Charles Churchill* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954), 28-29.

practice; his character is infamous, his life stained with every vice, and his conversation bawdy'.¹⁵⁸



John Wilkes (1725-97) in 1764, after Robert Pine (National Portrait Gallery)

After Wilkes finally retired to bed, some of the Hampshire officers ‘broke into his room, and made him drink a bottle of claret in bed’. Somewhat typically, when the militia was disembodied in December 1762, Wilkes treated his entire

¹⁵⁸ D. M. Low (ed.), *Gibbon's Journal to January 28th, 1763* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1929), 145-46.

regiment to a 'farewell drink' at Reading that lasted three days.¹⁵⁹ In March 1761 he had told his agent in Aylesbury that he would give any Aylesbury militiamen a furlough so they could vote for him in the forthcoming election consequent upon the death of King George II.¹⁶⁰ Little else remains of Wilkes's activities in the Bucks Militia except a vague reference to an accidental death in his company in 1761, and some discussion with Temple of various regimental appointments in June 1762.¹⁶¹

Despite his character, Wilkes was clearly a conscientious officer and he was very happy with the regiment, telling Temple that it had practised all the prescribed exercises and 'the front rank beats almost any front rank in the whole Militia'.¹⁶² But Wilkes was becoming ever more notorious. In May 1762 Wilkes issued warrants against two servants of Lord Tankerville and one of Lord Beaulieu, who he considered should be added to those eligible for ballot. His fellow deputies, Sir William Bowyer and a Mr Mason, refused to endorse the move from 'prudential motives'.¹⁶³ In October, Temple warned Wilkes to temper his conduct for his sake, 'that of the corps, and of the Militia in general, that the political differences of opinion which will possibly exist betwixt you and your associates, may in no manner whatever clash with the public service; but that you will show by your temper, discretion, reserve and sobriety of character, how much you are an officer, and how well you know the proprieties

¹⁵⁹ Weatherly (ed.), *Correspondence of Wilkes*, 38-39.

¹⁶⁰ Alan Dell (ed.), *John Wilkes: The Aylesbury Years (1747-63) - His Collected Letters to his Agent, John Dell* (Aylesbury: Bucks Archaeological Society Papers 17, 2008), 33.

¹⁶¹ BL, Add Mss 30867, Wilkes to Dashwood, 9 Jan. 1761; Guildhall Mss 14, 273/1, Wilkes to Temple, 26 June 1762.

¹⁶² Charles Chevenix Trench, *Portrait of a Patriot: A Biography of John Wilkes* (Edinburgh: Blackwood & Sons, 1962), 76.

¹⁶³ BL, Egerton MS 2136, Wilkes to Dashwood, 23 May 1762.

of situation'.¹⁶⁴ Wilkes had begun publishing *The North Briton* in June, and had fought a duel with Lord Talbot just a few weeks before.

Wilkes was arrested after the appearance of the 45th edition of *The North Briton*, which attacked a speech from the throne, implying the King was complicit in deceiving the public on peace terms. On 4 May 1763 the lord lieutenant, Temple, was directed by the government headed by his own brother, George Grenville, to dismiss Wilkes from his militia command. Temple, who had been Wilkes's financial backer and patron, conveyed the decision to Wilkes reluctantly. Replying from the Tower, where he was now lodged, Wilkes reminded Temple that 'I was amongst the foremost who offered their service to their country at this crisis' but he was happy 'in these days of peace to leave so excellent a corps in that perfect harmony, which has from the beginning subsisted'.¹⁶⁵

On 7 May 1763 Temple was dismissed as lord lieutenant and replaced by Despencer. The dismissal of Wilkes was justified by allegations of corruption over militia accounts as Wilkes wrote to Temple in June 1763, 'My character has been most wickedly and maliciously attacked on account of my conduct as Colonel of the Bucks Militia, and particularly in respect to the clothing of the regiment.'¹⁶⁶ It was alleged that other officers had resigned but this was refuted by one who remained anonymous, stating 'For my own part, and I speak the sentiments of some of my brother officers, I cannot see any reason, because our Colonel has offered a gross insult to the person of his Sovereign, and our late Lord Lieutenant is weak enough to support him in it.'¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ Smith (ed.), *Grenville Papers*, I, 477-78.

¹⁶⁵ Guildhall Library, 3332/1, *English Liberty: A Collection of Interesting Tracts* (London, 1769), 85-86.

¹⁶⁶ Guildhall Library, MS. 14,173/2, Wilkes to Temple, 30 Jun. 1763.

¹⁶⁷ *Gazetteer and London Daily Advertiser*, 17 May 1763.

Wilkes enclosed copies of his accounts for Temple and indicated that he had sent copies to Despencer and to all former officers. There may well be some substance in the charges for a letter in Despencer's papers dating from January 1763 indicates that Wilkes had refused to pay a tailor his dues for three months. Another letter dating from October 1763 from the clerk of lieutenancy to Wilkes demands he submit his accounts of the sums of money received from the hundreds to provide substitutes for men balloted, and accounts of the sums paid out by Wilkes for this purpose. Wilkes replied simply that all papers had been forwarded to the adjutant. In 1770 Wilkes reputedly paid off militia 'debts' with a legacy. Certainly the allegations of corruption surfaced again in 1771.¹⁶⁸

The Seven Years War had not proved a serious test given British naval victories but the American War posed greater difficulties. A bill was introduced in 1776 to enable the militia to be embodied to replace regulars needed for the colonies but, although passed, it was never enacted. Defeat at Saratoga in October 1777 brought offers from noblemen and towns to raise new regular regiments. French entry to the war in February 1778, when only 25,000 regulars remained in Britain, then inspired new efforts. Having embodied the militia, including those counties that not been called out in the Seven Years' War, the government passed new legislation in September to allow volunteers to be attached to the militia. Ironically, an opposition previously wedded to militia now supported voluntary augmentation as it feared extension of government patronage through the militia.

¹⁶⁸ Bodleian, Dashwood, D.D. B8 1/9, Allnutt to Dashwood, 21 Jan. 1763; BL, Add Mss 30867, Wilkes to Ashwell, 1 Oct. 1763; Horace Bleackley, *The Life of John Wilkes* (London: John Lane, 1917), 248, 264.

When Spain also entered the war in April 1779, the government bill to double the size of the militia provoked opposition. The only clause to survive passage through the Lords was a Commons amendment to allow the addition of volunteer companies. There were fears of renewed anti-militia riots and harvest labour shortages. The emasculated legislation was meant to last only for 18 months, but it was extended to December 1782. Few such volunteer companies were added to the militia, however, and entirely independent volunteer corps - some mounted - serving under localised terms were far more attractive and more plentiful.

Such volunteer corps - invariably well above the social level found in the ranks of the militia - did not endure long as the intended Franco-Spanish invasion fleet was turned back by bad weather and other delays. There is no evidence to suggest, as sometimes maintained, that a mounted volunteer corps was formed in Aylesbury in December 1779.¹⁶⁹ It would appear that a volunteer company was added to the militia since it was assembled at Aylesbury in June 1779, which may account for the later story.¹⁷⁰

Nonetheless, Earl Shelburne, who came into office in July 1782, had already sponsored legislation in May to encourage and legalise volunteer corps in towns and coastal areas. The recent precedent of the highly politicised Irish Volunteers did not appeal to those who feared disorder, something reinforced by the experience of the Gordon riots in London in June 1780. Only 16 counties expressed any degree of support for Shelburne and only 20 boroughs submitted plans. Those corps that emerged mostly disbanded when the war ended in November 1782 but the legislation had set a precedent for the future.

¹⁶⁹ Verney, *Bucks Biographies*, 228; Robert Gibbs, *Local Occurrences* 4 vols. (Privately printed: Aylesbury, 1878-82), II, 189.

¹⁷⁰ TNA, WO 5/96, Jenkinson to OC, 24 June 1779.

Despencer had died in 1781 and was replaced briefly by Philip Stanhope, 5th Earl of Chesterfield, whose family had acquired the former Dormer estate at Wing by female descent. Chesterfield himself resided at Eythrope. Just before his death, Despencer had decided to appoint George Nugent-Temple-Grenville, 3rd Earl Temple and later 1st Marquess of Buckingham, as commanding officer of the militia. He was a better officer than Chesterfield, who was otherwise a political ally of Despencer.¹⁷¹ Temple had requested any commission in the militia ‘to which you will do me the honour to appoint me’.¹⁷² The Rockingham-Shelburne administration replaced Chesterfield with Temple in 1782.

Notwithstanding Shelburne’s sponsorship of Temple, and Shelburne’s county connections through his family estate at High Wycombe, the new lord lieutenant rejected the Shelburne plan. Temple argued that little security would result and, presumably in the light of the experience with the highly politicised volunteer movement in Ireland, felt volunteers might prove dangerous.¹⁷³ Elevated to 1st Marquess of Buckingham in 1784, Buckingham would dominate the county’s military affairs until his death in 1813. A song supporting his brother’s county election campaign in 1784 linked the militia with the lace trade and agriculture as significant county interests.¹⁷⁴

The Bucks militia itself was embodied once more on 26 March 1778. Its weapons had been in use for 13 years and would still be unchanged three years

¹⁷¹ Western, *English Militia*, 337.

¹⁷² Bodleian, Dashwood, D. D., B8 1/22, Temple to Despencer, 23 Mar. 1778.

¹⁷³ TNA, WO 42/205, Temple to Shelburne, 12 May 1782; BL, Add Mss 59293, Shelburne circular and replies.

¹⁷⁴ Richard Davis, *Political Change and Continuity, 1760-1885: A Buckinghamshire Study* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1972), 15.

later.¹⁷⁵ Once embodied, militiamen were only required to serve for three years. The length of the embodiment, therefore, required persuading men to remain, perhaps for a bounty, or starting new recruitment.¹⁷⁶ In May 1782 those willing to re-engage were offered 14 days' furlough so they could attend subdivision meetings at home and 'make their Own Bargain', presumably as substitutes.¹⁷⁷ Militiamen who served their full term could set up in trade in any corporate town other than Oxford and Cambridge, Buckingham reporting in November 1796 that his men had been keen to get certificates allowing them to do this back in 1783.¹⁷⁸

Accommodation in quarters was in public houses and other licensed premises, often resulting in friction as the burden on publicans increased substantially. One survey of the county and that part of Bedfordshire around Dunstable, Toddington, Ampthill and Woburn compiled for the Secretary at War in 1756 shows a total of 538 inns and public houses capable of providing 1,654 beds and stabling for 3,153 horses.¹⁷⁹

Summer training camps were again arranged such as those at Coxheath, which accommodated up to 17,000 men in 1778, and Warley, which accommodated 11,000. Camps were generally healthier than quarters since they were more regulated in terms of hygiene. They resulted in men being more disciplined and better trained than in quarters. They also heightened the sense of the militia

¹⁷⁵ Western, *English Militia*, 342.

¹⁷⁶ Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 27-28.

¹⁷⁷ HHL, ST 144 (11), Order, 13 May 1782.

¹⁷⁸ HMC, *Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue at Dropmore* (hereafter *Dropmore*) 10 vols. (London: HMSO, 1894-1927), II, 327, Buckingham to Grenville, 8 Nov. 1796.

¹⁷⁹ Tony Hayter (ed.), *An Eighteenth Century Secretary at War: The Papers of William, Viscount Barrington* (London: Bodley Head for Army Records Society, 1988), 224-25.

being an embodiment of nation given the mixing of county contingents. The undoubted provincialism of the militia was not incompatible with national loyalties, albeit that mobilisation strengthened localism.¹⁸⁰ Even the drill books commonly utilised by the militia emphasised the patriotic and manly virtues expected of the force.¹⁸¹



Bucks Militiaman, c. 1780 (National Army Museum)

There was often a great deal of spare time and men could follow a trade. In 1778 the Bucks officers objected to men being employed as labourers on

¹⁸⁰ Conway, *British Isles and American War*, 171-72, 195-96.

¹⁸¹ McCormack, *Embodying Militia*, 102-05.

government projects at Portsmouth.¹⁸² Bucks militiamen and their wives were reminded when at Lewes in June 1781 that they could not erect ‘suttlings’ booths to dispense liquor.¹⁸³ As in the camps established for the Seven Years’ War, there was considerable public interest, drawing crowds. As before, the camps featured in varied outputs on stage and in print. Yet, the war was politically divisive with some opponents of the government arguing that embodying the militia and its continued embodiment once the threat of invasion receded was inappropriate. The militia’s role in the Gordon Riots in London in June 1780 when objection to granting civil rights to Catholics got out of hand increased such criticism.¹⁸⁴

Apart from periods at the camps at Coxheath and Waterdown, the Bucks militia spent its time at Portsmouth, Chipping Norton, various locations in Sussex and Kent, and Winchester, as well as back in the county. Duties were again mostly guarding prisoners as in March 1780 when detachments took over the guarding of 1,000 French prisoners being conveyed from Portsmouth to Shrewsbury for that part of the route between Woodstock and Stratford-on-Avon.¹⁸⁵ In March 1781 a detachment provided escort between Hailsham and Croydon for a seized consignment of tea.¹⁸⁶ In June 1780, however, the regiment was brought back from Waterdown with five companies to protect the Deptford dockyard and the other five to guard Woolwich dockyard during the Gordon Riots. One detachment of a sergeant and 12 men was placed in the Victualling Store at

¹⁸² Western, *English Militia*, 400.

¹⁸³ HHL, ST 144 (9), Order, 3 June 1781.

¹⁸⁴ Conway, *British Isles and American War*, 157-58.

¹⁸⁵ TNA, WO 5/97, Lewis to OC, 3 Mar. 1780.

¹⁸⁶ TNA, WO 5/98, Order, 16 Mar. 1781.

Deptford. Another detachment of an officer and 32 other ranks also guarded Lord Chesterfield's house on Blackheath against 'any outrages of the mob'.¹⁸⁷

The courts martial records show a degree of indiscipline and of petty theft during embodiment. Absence from camp was a feature of the periods at Portsmouth and Southsea Common. Private John Turner, for example, was absent from roll call in July 1778, and was found drinking with women in the Dolphin at Portsmouth: he received 200 lashes. Another absentee, Private John Watson, was apprehended at Hounslow in August 1778. Watson claimed he had been pressed on board a Royal Navy ship but had escaped: he got 350 lashes.¹⁸⁸ In July 1781 James Alnutt was found in bed with his wife in Princes Risborough after overstaying his leave pass by three weeks.¹⁸⁹

At Cox Heath, there were complaints of 'frequent shouting & hallowing in the streets, to the great Indecency & annoyance of the camp' as well as 'mad dogs' running loose.¹⁹⁰ Rather similarly, at Waterdown, there was too much gambling which, for any soldier, 'is a very unsoldierlike practice and must distress their comrades which frequently puts him upon schemes for recruiting [*sic*] his losses that are not always honest or justifiable and at last brings him to the halberts or perhaps the gallows'.¹⁹¹ At Woolwich, too many men were strolling in the streets after the evening beating of the retreat. Three men with the 'itch' were observed too far from camp than justified for 'the sake of air'.¹⁹² Counterfeit

¹⁸⁷ TNA, Amherst Mss, WO 34/103, Order, 8 June 1780, and Hampden to Amherst, 11 June 1780; HHL, ST 144 (8), Orders, 9, 10 and 13 June 1780.

¹⁸⁸ BA, T/A 2/1, Courts Martial Book, 1778-82.

¹⁸⁹ BA, T/A 2/1.

¹⁹⁰ HHL, ST 144 (2), Order, 30 Aug. 1779; ST 144 (4), Order, 17 Oct and 26 Oct. 1779.

¹⁹¹ HHL, ST 144 (5), Order, 26 June 1780.

¹⁹² HHL, ST 144 (5), Orders, 28 and 29 June 1780.

money was being circulated at Portsmouth in October 1781 just before the regiment's return to the county. Temple assumed this was from ignorance but

Table 3.5 Embodied Service of Bucks Militia, 1778-82

Location	Date
Aylesbury	March 1778
Portsmouth/Southsea	May 1778
High Wycombe/Amersham	November 1778
Cox Heath	June 1779
Chipping Norton/Woodstock	December 1779
Waterdown	May 1780
Deptford/Woolwich	June 1780
Sussex	October 1780
Kent	December 1780
Sussex	March 1781
Portsmouth/Southsea	May 1781
Buckingham	October 1781
Portsmouth/Southsea	June 1782
Winchester	November 1782
Amersham/Chesham	July 1783

Sources: TNA, WO 5/95-99; HHL, ST 144

warned that if it recurred then ‘he will be reduced to the melancholy necessity of giving up the offenders to be tryed [*sic*] for there [*sic*] lives’. ¹⁹³ Temple also requested the withdrawal of any militiamen from Newport Pagnell in 1782 to avoid potential trouble during a horse fair. ¹⁹⁴

In terms of theft, Private Benjamin Bristow got 100 lashes for ‘marauding’ in September 1778, having been caught in a field with a sack of potatoes while Private Joseph Shaw received 400 lashes split over two sessions in August 1779 for being drunk, taking ‘a poor woman’s ballads’, knocking down another civilian, tripping up a sergeant, and showing ‘audacious behaviour’ to an officer. ¹⁹⁵ In December 1782 Privates Higgins and Martin got 100 lashes apiece for stealing turnips. ¹⁹⁶ At Cox Heath, there were complaints that the men were taking wood from a field behind the camp and damaging the corn crops. In August 1779 men were forbidden from shooting or otherwise hunting hares, partridge, pheasant, pigeons, fowl or poultry. ¹⁹⁷ At Tunbridge Wells in December 1780, while making a hasty exit from one property, three men dropped a camp kettle bag with five fowl in it: a reward was offered for information. ¹⁹⁸

At South Sea Common in June 1781, hedges were destroyed and a warning was issued that since it was suspected stolen wood had been carried into the married quarters. The discovery of any hut partly made of it would result in women being dismissed from the camp. ¹⁹⁹ On the way back to the county for winter

¹⁹³ HHL, ST 144 (10), Order, 8 Oct. 1781.

¹⁹⁴ Western, *English Militia*, 380.

¹⁹⁵ BA, T/A 2/1.

¹⁹⁶ BA, T/A 2/2, Courts Martial Book, 1782-97.

¹⁹⁷ HHL, ST 144 (1), Order, 20 June 1779; ST 144 (2), Order, 30 Aug. 1779.

¹⁹⁸ HHL, ST 144 (6), Order 14 Dec. 1780.

¹⁹⁹ HHL, ST 144 (9), Order, 15 June 1781.

quarters in November 1781, ducks and fowl were stolen from Buckingham Mill, and illegal snares were also being set.²⁰⁰

Amid the demobilisation and desire for retrenchment, militia consolidation legislation in June 1786 made substitutes liable to serve for the duration of any war for which the militia was embodied, thus avoiding any problem when terms of service expired. Service was also extended from three to five years although this meant that fewer men would be required annually. Training was also to apply to only two thirds of each regiment annually. Nonetheless, annual training continued, Buckingham thanking his men for their ‘orderly and in general Peaceable Behaviour’ in 1788.²⁰¹

Not perhaps surprisingly, however, when Britain found itself at war once more in January 1793, many deficiencies had to be remedied. Moreover, this time the war would last for the best part of 22 years with only two short intervals. Military participation would reach levels that would not be seen again for a century.

²⁰⁰ HHL, ST 144 (11), Orders, 30 Nov. 1781, and 13 Feb. 1782.

²⁰¹ BA, OM 1/1, Buckingham Order, 16 Oct. 1788.