

**THE SPIRIT OF THE CORPS:
THE BRITISH ARMY AND THE PRE-NATIONAL PAN-
EUROPEAN MILITARY WORLD AND THE ORIGINS OF
AMERICAN MARTIAL CULTURE, 1754-1783**

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"The Spirit of the Corps: The British Army and the Pre-national Pan-European Military World and the Origins of American Martial Culture, 1754-1783," argues that during the eighteenth-century there was a transnational martial culture of European soldiers, analogous to the maritime world of sailors and the sea, and attempts to identify the key elements of this martial culture, as reflected in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and to briefly describe its transmission to the army of the United States. "The Spirit of the Corps" describes a pan-European military world had its origins in the wars of religion that engulfed Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries, and was a long established institution by the eighteenth-century. "The Spirit of the Corps" suggests that honor provided the justification and *raison d'etre* for the pan-European military world, and could be found embodied in the officer's gentlemanly sense of honor, and the *esprit de corps* of the rank and file. "The Spirit of the Corps" goes on to describe other important elements of the pan-European martial culture which included: weak military discipline and a relative loose control over soldiers which resulted in the soldier's life being viewed as one of relative freedom; the operation of an implicit contract between followers and leaders; a military community that included non-combatants, women, and children; a process of martial enculturation; a sense of military style that extended into drill and uniforms; and a sense of *esprit de corps* which loomed especially large during an era when nationalism and ideology were relatively minor factors. "The Spirit of the Corps" concludes by arguing that the Continental Line of the American Revolution was imbued with the culture of the British Army, and the pan-European military world; in its turn, this pan-European martial culture was transmitted to the regular army of the United States where its presence could be seen clearly as late as 1940, and in some ways, can still be detected today.

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PREFACE

This dissertation had its beginnings in the need to select a topic for a research seminar led by Dr. Marcus Rediker in the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh. When I joined Dr. Rediker's seminar I had recently been working part-time at the Darlington Library, a special collection of the University of Pittsburgh Library devoted to the early history of western Pennsylvania, and had become aware of the existence of the Bouquet Papers: the collected papers of Brigadier General Henry Bouquet, a Swiss soldier of fortune, who took a commission in the British Army during the Seven Years' War, and had served for much of that period in Pennsylvania. So when forced to select a research topic, and intrigued by the notion of a Swiss soldier serving in Western Pennsylvania during the Seven Years' War, I proposed to look at the ethnicity of mid-eighteenth-century armies; Dr. Rediker accepted this topic but recommended expanding it to look at the culture that these multinational armies implied: this dissertation is the result of accepting that suggestion.

The Bouquet Papers reminded me of a common feature of mid-eighteenth-century armies: that most had large numbers of foreign soldiers in their ranks. As I became more aware of the presence of foreign soldiers in the ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and indeed in all mid-eighteenth-century European armies, one question began to preoccupy me: how did the disparate manpower that made up the rank and file of these armies become a cohesive military whole, how was this "motley crew" turned into a functioning army? This question was especially pressing because many of the factors which are believed to be important in the raising and operation of modern armies would seem to have been largely inoperable in the multinational armies of the mid-eighteenth-century military world: most obviously nationalism or patriotism, and ideology; in any case these "isms" are seen largely as phenomena of the post 1789 era.

Historians, when they addressed these questions, generally cited four factors to explain the existence and functioning of mid-eighteenth-century armies: *esprit de corps* - unit pride; primary group loyalty - the bonds that grow between groups of four to eight men; mercenary motives - the desire for rewards; and coercion - the use of force to raise soldiers, keep them in the ranks, and make them fight. The difference amongst historians generally lay in the degree of importance that they attached to these factors. While I do not disagree with the notion that all these motives were important, I came to feel that as explanations they were inadequate and incomplete. The more "negative" motivations: coercion and reward, certainly existed, but it seemed to me that their power was generally overstated by historian. I agree that the more "positive motivations" - *esprit de corps* and primary group loyalty were as important in explaining the cohesion of mid-eighteenth-century armies as most historians believe; but I came to feel that they acted rather differently than they did in modern armies, and these differences had not always been sufficiently appreciated by military historians. In short these factors needed to be examined in their historical context.

My answer to this question of how the motley crew of a mid-eighteenth-century operated was to postulate the existence of a distinctively military culture, a military way of life analogous to the maritime world of sailors and the sea, and one that was often transnational in character. This conceptualization was the result of a series of conversations I had had with Dr. Roger Manning, now Professor *Emeritus* of History at Cleveland State University. Dr. Manning had been examining the re-militarization of the aristocracy of seventeenth-century Britain, and in the process he used the phrase "martial culture" to describe the military values that the British aristocracy was re-embracing at this time. With Dr. Manning's formulation in mind, I coined the phrases "pan-European martial culture" to describe the trans-European military culture I was postulating, and "pan-European military world" to describe the *milieu* in which this culture operated.

When I presented this idea to my dissertation committee there was agreement on their part that what I had developed was not a dissertation, but a life's work: so, in an attempt to reduce my proposal to a project of manageable proportions, it was agreed that I would attempt to describe this pre-national pan-European martial culture as it existed in the British Army in North America during the Seven Years' War, and discuss its transmission to the Continental Army of the American Revolution. The original intent was to give roughly equal attention to the British

Army and the Continental Line; but the pressure of time reduced the scope of the project even further, and, in the end, this dissertation attempts to describe and analyze the pre-national, pan-European martial culture of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army and briefly considers its transmission and survival in the Continental Line, and the subsequent regular army of the United States.

It should be clearly understood that in talking about a "pan-European martial culture" I am not proposing to execute a sharp culturo-linguistic turn. In this dissertation "culture" is used in a rather simple and old fashion manner: when talking about a pan-European martial culture, I am talking about a shared way of life. This shared way of life embraced a wide range of commonalities including, but certainly not limited to, values, both those explicit acknowledged, and those implicitly understood. It is these shared ideals of a common military way of life that this dissertation attempts to examine: specifically as they were to be found in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

When pressed to describe the elements of this "pan-European martial culture" to be found in the British Army in North America during the mid-eighteenth-century after much thought and refinement, I arrived at the following: the pre-national, pan-European martial culture was cosmopolitan and international in nature, and by the mid-eighteenth-century it was an institution several centuries old. Its *raison d'etre* was found in the requirement for gentlemen to display and validate their courage and honor: this need justified serving in an army, whether that of your own nation or another, and it ensured that even those who were not gentlemen (obviously most of those who served in the ranks were not) could be seen as participating in an occupation that was acceptable and honorable. Contrary to popular belief, the pre-national, pan-European martial culture was a world of armies with shaky discipline and poor control over their soldiers, officers commanded mostly by the consent of their men, and the willingness of all to fulfill their part of an unspoken contract. Moreover, and in contrast to modern military life, life in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was often seen as a life of freedom. This military life involved joining a community which included non-combatant men, women and children as well as soldiers; becoming a part of this military community was less a matter of undergoing military training than participating in a process of slow enculturation that led to accepting the identity of "soldier." British soldiers were also enculturated to follow a military sense of style that included the wearing of a uniform, standards of drill, and, perhaps most importantly, embracing attitudes

that saw military life as a world of precision, grace and control. *Espirit de corps*, or in less refined language, unit pride, was in some ways the culminating value of the mid-eighteenth-century for several different reasons; most significantly, it provided an arena for the collective honor of the rank and file to be displayed. Moreover, *esprit de corps* was vitally important rhetorically because the use of the metaphors of the workplace and of team sports had not yet become common: it therefore provided the most compelling argument available to explain how and why the regiment should work together.

An explanation and analysis of these ideas makes up the heart of this dissertation: Chapter one is an introduction which lays out the thesis of this work. Chapter two traces the background of the pre-national, pan-European military world, and attempts to place it in the context of early-modern Europe. Chapter three discusses the centrality of military honor to the pan-European military world, and attempts to relate military honor to the larger category of gentlemanly honor. Chapter four examines the issue of discipline and the contractual nature of eighteenth-century military life. Chapter five looks at the life of the rank and file with emphasis on the relative freedom of the life of a soldier, and on the role of the military community, which included women and children and other non-combatants, in enculturating the soldier. Chapter six examines the unique sense of style that permeated military life and considers what messages military style might have sent. Chapter seven analyzes *esprit de corps* and attempts to explain what it loomed so large in mid-eighteenth-century military life. Chapter eight concludes this dissertation by briefly examining why and how the Continental Army of the American Revolution recreated the pan-European martial culture, and discusses its survival in the regular army of the United States.

Obviously this dissertation is only a preliminary examination of these topics, and much more work remains to be done. It is my hope that this dissertation will serve to indicate areas of mid-eighteenth-century military history that need more investigation, if that occurs my fondest wishes for a labor which extended over many years will have been fulfilled

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No work of scholarship is ever completed without incurring numerous debts of gratitude, and my work is certainly no exception. For many years, the Department of History of the University of Pittsburgh found Teaching Fellowships for me, and the Department of the History of Art and Architecture of the University of Pittsburgh supplied a Research Fellowship with light duties that allowed me to complete this dissertation. The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Daughters of the American Colonists generously granted me with a Scholarship that helped defray some of the expenses of research. In the course of completing research for this project, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission granted me a Scholarship in Residence at the Bushy Run Battlefield, and the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan, a Price Visiting Research Fellowship. The David Library of the American Revolution supplied a Scholarship in Residence that proved particularly useful. I thank all these institutions for their aid.

I also owe gratitude to numerous individuals. I must begin by expressing my thanks to Dr. Roger Manning, now Professor *Emeritus*, Department of History, Cleveland State University. I owe him the deepest thanks not only for his work on my dissertation, but for all his years of encouragement and support. I believe that it is literally true to say that without his assistance I would not be where I am today. I must also express my appreciation to the other members of my dissertation committee, beginning with Dr. Van Beck Hall, Associate Professor in the Department of History, University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Hall not only acted as my advisor at the University of Pittsburgh but was also supervisor of this dissertation. Dr. Hall proved to be the graduate student's dream advisor, his prompt and thoughtful comments on chapters were extraordinarily helpful and improved this dissertation in ways too numerous to count; he took a student with perhaps more than his fair share of difficulties through the process of producing a dissertation. My thanks also go to Drs. Peter Karsten and Marcus Rediker, Professors in the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh who provided support and insightful

comments. Working with my graduate committee was both a pleasant and a rewarding experience and I wish to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of them.

Like all those who have undergone the process of producing a dissertation I have many other debts of thanks that are too numerous to mention: but I wish to offer particular thanks to Dr. Joellen Popma of the University of Pittsburgh Counseling Center; Ms. Meg McSweeney currently Director of the David Library of the American Revolution; and Dr. Bruce Venarde, Assistant Professor in the Department of History of the University of Pittsburgh. I also owe thanks to several of my fellow graduate students of the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh who are now, alas, scattering to the winds.

I must also extend special thanks to my circle of friends who on far too many occasions to count extended support, and friendship, and displayed either genuine interest, or successfully simulated it, when I droned on at inordinate length about my work. Finally my deepest gratitude goes to my mother who, over the course of the *longue duree*, supported her son in his scholarly quest.

TERMINOLOGY

Some of the terminology used by the mid-eighteenth-century British Army is unfamiliar today, and some familiar terms had somewhat different meanings. What follows is a very brief explanation of the organization, structure and jargon of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Since organization, structure, and, in many cases, terminology, was standardized across the European military world, much of what follows applies to the armies on the continent as well.

Arms of Service: The mid-eighteenth-century British Army had three and a half major arms of service and one minor one. The major arms were: the infantry, often referred to as the foot; the cavalry, often termed the horse; and the artillery, sometimes known as the guns. The "half" arm was the dragoons, and the minor arm was the engineers.

"**Infantry**," or the "**Foot**," came in several sub-varieties: "**Grenadiers**" were elite infantrymen, who had originally thrown grenades, though by the mid-eighteenth-century grenades had largely fallen out of use, except at sieges. Each regiment had a company of grenadiers who were supposed to be especially tall, strong, courageous and experienced soldiers. These men were customarily designated to undertake important missions, or to lead attacks. The British Army did not, at this time, field complete regiments of grenadiers. "**Fusiliers**" had originally been infantrymen armed with flintlock muskets when most infantrymen were still armed with matchlocks, so that they could work safely around artillery, which always had a lot of loose black powder around, and where burning matches were a distinct safety hazard. By the mid-eighteenth-century all infantry was armed with flintlock muskets, but the title Fusilier [sometimes spelled Fuzileers] survived, though it now indicated nothing more than a slightly more socially prestigious regiment. A rather new innovation were "**Light Infantry**," also sometimes termed "**Jaegers**," [sometimes spelled Yaegers or Yaggers] or occasionally

"**Picquets.**" These were soldiers, who were supposed to be especially active and athletic, who were trained to man outposts and act as skirmishers and marksmen. While they were not yet on the official establishment, most regiments designated one of their companies as light infantry. Some entire regiments of light infantry were raised during wartime in the mid-eighteenth-century, but none survived to win a permanent place in the British Army at this time.

Cavalry, or the **Horse**, was divided into heavy, medium, and light, this referring both to the size of the horse, and the size of the men that rode them. In the British Cavalry, the heavy cavalry had customarily been simply termed "**Regiments of Horse**," but in the mid-eighteenth-century, as an economy measure (since dragoons were paid less) they were being re-designated as regiments of "**Dragoon Guards.**" Traditionally "**Dragoons**" had been seen as separate arm of service, being regarded as infantrymen given horses so they could move more quickly: since however cavalry was seen as the more prestigious service, dragoons had, by the mid-eighteenth-century, successfully turned themselves into medium cavalry. Some regiments of light cavalry, termed "**Light Dragoons**" began appearing in the mid-eighteenth-century; they performed duties similar to those of their light infantry counterparts.

The "**Artillery**," or the "**Guns**," and the "**Engineers**" were only slightly separate services in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, as they both fell under the authority of the Master-General of the Ordnance. While artillery was a full-fledged arm of service, the engineers had only recently won the status of an arm separate from the artillery. At this time the engineers consisted of commissioned officers only, there were no enlisted men, and in numbers though perhaps not in importance, were only a relatively minor arm of service. The term "**Sappers**" was applied to men who under the supervision of engineer officers, dug trenches at sieges.

Rank: There was no mid-eighteenth-century phrase exactly equivalent to today's "enlisted men." The closest equivalent would be the phrase "**Rank and File.**" Strictly speaking, the rank and file consisted of the privates and corporals of a regiment only, the men who actually stood in ranks. Sergeants and musicians who did not stand in the ranks were technically not part of the rank and file, but as a practical matter the term was often used to refer to all those who were not commissioned. (In this work the terms "rank and file," "enlisted men," and the modern

Britishism, the "other ranks" have, for the sake of variety, been used synonymously.) In the mid-eighteenth-century the soldiers of the lowest rank, privates, were often termed "private soldiers," "private men," "common soldiers," or "common men." Corporals and sergeants were considered "**Non-Commissioned Officers**," and in one of the very few examples of the use of acronyms in the eighteenth-century were sometimes referred to as "**NCO's**."

The enlisted ranks in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, from lowest to highest were:

Private, (infantry) (and often given as "**Private Sentinel**" ["Sentinel" was sometimes spelled "Centinel"]) or "**Private Man**") **Trooper**, (cavalry) **Dragoon** (dragoons, falling out of use) **Matross** (artillery).

Lance Corporal, was not an established rank, but the term appear to have been in use informally to designate an experienced and responsible soldier in the infantry and cavalry: the term "**Chosen Man**" might also have been used. The rank of "**Gunner**" in the artillery was a rough equivalent and indicated a trained and skilled artillery-man. The term "**Bombardier**," or the older "**Fireworker**" seems to have been used to indicate a gunner who had been trained to work with howitzers or mortars.

Corporal (Note that traditionally horse did not have sergeants, so that until the regiments of horse were converted to Dragoon Guards the rank of "**Corporal of Horse**" was equivalent to sergeant.)

Sergeant [Often spelled Serjeant in the mid-eighteenth-century.]

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth-century century, Regiments of Horse had used the term "**Quartermaster**" for the position that was equivalent to that of the senior sergeant in a company of infantry. The person holding this position had, however, the status of a commissioned officer.

The rank of "**Sergeant Major**" had no formal existence, but numerous references to them can be found. A reasonable inference would be that this was a title given to the senior sergeant in a regiment.

The commissioned ranks in the mid-eighteenth-century from lowest to highest were:

Ensign, (infantry) **Cornet**, (cavalry) **Guidon**, (dragoons, almost completely obsolete and only rarely encountered) **2nd Lieutenant** (artillery, engineers, and possibly in some fusilier regiments)

Lieutenant

Captain-Lieutenant

Captain

Major

Lieutenant Colonel

Colonel

Brigadier General (The British rank of Brigadier, as the most senior field officer, did not exist until World War I.)

Major General

Lieutenant General (It is worth noting that lieutenant generals were entitled to be addressed as: "Your Excellency.")

Captain General (The rank of Field Marshal did not exist in Britain at this time, the rank of Captain General was equivalent to a field marshalcy.)

Officers of the rank of Ensign/Cornet/Guidon/2nd Lieutenant, Lieutenant, or Captain are collectively referred to as "**Company Officers.**" Ensigns/Cornets/Guidons/2nd Lieutenants, and Lieutenants, but not Captains are known as "**Subalterns.**" Majors, Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels are collectively referred to as "**Field Officers.**" The various grades of General are collectively referred to as "**General Officers.**"

The Colonel of a Regiment was, in effect, the regiment's proprietor. He performed a numerous administrative functions, had a variety of pre-requisites relating to the supply of clothing, weapons and other items to the regiment, and disposed of considerable patronage. It was customary, in the British Army, for the Colonel of a Regiment, to hold a higher rank in the army, i. e., he was usually a general as well as a colonel. Therefore in most cases the regiment was actually commanded by a lieutenant colonel. If the for some reason or another the Colonel

of the Regiment was actually commanding the regiment, he might be referred to as a "**Colonel Commandant.**"

It was also customary, until the last part of the eighteenth-century for the three field officers in a regiment, the colonel, lieutenant colonel and major, to also notionally command a company or troop, and be designated its "captain." The actual command of the company or troop was vested in a "**Captain-Lieutenant,**" who was considered to be a senior lieutenant rather than a captain, and paid as such.

Organization: Infantry and Cavalry were organized into "**Regiments**" that were commanded by a Colonel, assisted by a Lieutenant Colonel and a Major. The regiments in turn were organized into a varying number of "**Companies**" (infantry) or "**Troops**" (cavalry) commanded by a Captain assisted by a Lieutenant, and an Ensign or Cornet.

By the mid-eighteenth -century the number of companies in an infantry regiment had stabilized (except in the regiments of Guards and the 1st Foot, the Royal Scots which had more) at ten companies. One company was designated a "**Grenadier**" company, one was usually, and unofficially, designated a "**Light Infantry**" company. These two companies were supposed to be made up of picked men and were considered to be elite companies, and were selected for tasks that were considered to be either especially difficult or especially honorable. Since these two companies' positions, when the regiment was formed in line, were on each flank, they were often referred to as "**Flank Companies.**" The other eight companies were known as "**Centre Companies,**" "**Battalion Companies,**" or (since they wore hats while the flank companies wore caps) as "**Hatmen.**" Most infantry regiments also maintained a small detachment of soldiers who were skilled craftsmen and carried tools: these men were designated "**Pioneers,**" or since they carried axes, they were also often referred to as "**Axemen**" or "**Hatchetmen.**" These men performed small construction projects, or helped build roads and dig trenches.

Cavalry regiments, by the mid-eighteenth-century (with the exception of the Guards and the 1st, or Royal Dragoons, which had more) had stabilized at a strength of six troops. Dragoon regiments also had one troop that were designated as "**Horse Grenadiers,**" and, like their dismounted counterparts were considered an elite.

The strength of the troops and companies fluctuated: during peacetime, a troop of cavalry might have as few as thirty men, in wartime it doubled to about sixty. A company of

infantry might, in peacetime, shrink to about forty men, in wartime it grew to about one-hundred. This meant that a cavalry regiment might have a peacetime strength of as few as two-hundred, and a wartime strength of around five-hundred, and an infantry regiment a peacetime strength of as low as three-hundred and fifty and a wartime strength of as many as thousand. It should be noted that wartime strength was generally only achieved at the start of the war. After that regiments usually lost strength, and rarely regained it.

Artillery was organized into a "**Royal Regiment of Artillery**" and subdivided into companies of approximately one-hundred men. This was a purely theoretical arrangement however, as the artillery was never sent into the field as a regiment, nor normally even by company; as a practical matter, artillery was sent to the field in detachments of however many were needed to man the guns. Note that at this time a "battery" was not an artillery unit, it was a physical location. If more than one cannon was positioned at any one point, that place was termed a "**Battery**," so, unlike modern usage, the term "battery" indicated a geographic location of cannon, not a specific number of cannon.

Organization for Battle: In battle, infantry regiments and companies reorganized themselves into "**Battalions**" and "**Platoons**." (Except for the regiments of Guards and the 1st Foot, British regiments usually only had enough men to form one battalion, and so in casual usage the terms regiment and battalion were often used interchangeably. This casual usage was not common on the continent where most European regiments commonly formed two or more battalions.) The number of platoon a battalion formed was normally eighteen. (It is worth noting that the number of platoon a battalion formed bore no proportional relationship to the number of companies the regiment possessed, to put this another way the tactical organization of a regiment bore no relationship to its administrative organization.) For maneuvering purposes, platoons were then grouped by twos into "**Divisions**" and fours into "**Grand Divisions**." (The "division" as we understand the term today, as a large formation of all arms, did not exist at this time.) The senior field officer present commanded the battalion, and the officers were parceled out equally to the platoons.

Cavalry regiments grouped their troops together by twos and threes to form "**Squadrons**." Either a field officer or the senior captain commanded the Squadron.

Traditionally an army was counted by the number of battalions of infantry and squadrons of cavalry it formed, and by the number of guns it possessed. It is important to note that battalions and squadrons are not units of the same size. A battalion, at full strength would number about one thousand men; a squadron would number one-hundred and twenty to two-hundred men.

Drill: When soldiers were in formation they were placed in ranks and files. A "**Rank**" is a line of soldiers standing side by side, a "**File**" is soldiers standing one behind another. In the mid-eighteenth-century the British Army normally formed either six or three ranks deep, to convert from one to the other they "**Doubled**" or "**Un-doubled**" the files to change the number of ranks.

The standard battle formation was the "**Line**," in which the various sub-units of an organization are placed side by side. For example, when formed in line, an infantry battalion would have its platoons placed side by side. (This meant, in effect, that a British battalion organized itself for battle by forming a long line that was three ranks deep.) A "**Line of Battle**" was several battalions formed in line placed side by side. This line was useful in battle but was unhandy to maneuver, so to for maneuvering purposes the line was reformed into a "**Column**" in which the sub-units were placed one behind the other.

For marching along narrow paths where normal columns were too wide, the battalion line made a right or left face, which formed the battalion into a long column three or six men wide. Since the battalion had changed from a formation that had long ranks and shallow files to one that had short ranks and deep files, this procedure was termed "**Filing**" or "**Defiling**."

Converting a line to a column and vice-versa was one of the principle tasks of mid-eighteenth-century drill. Eighteenth and nineteenth century armies "**Formed**" line parallel to a column, and when they wished to form a column parallel to the line they "**Broke**" the line into a column. When they wished to again form a line parallel to the column, they "**Reformed**" line. When a line formed a column perpendicular to the line the line "**Ployed**" into column. When a column formed a line perpendicular to the column it "**Deployed**" into line. Of these terms only "deploy" has survived in modern military usage in something close to its original meaning.

To train to perform these complicated excised the British Army "**Drilled**." The British Army split its drill into five elements of increasing complexity, the "**Manual Exercise**," the "**Platoon Exercise**," the "**Evolution**," the "**Firings**," and the "**Maneuvers**." The manual

exercise (the manual of arms) taught the soldier how to load and fire his weapon. The platoon exercise taught the soldier to perform these movements in coordination with other soldiers and trained the platoon (the basic firing unit of the battalion) to fire together, the evolutions taught basic marching skills. The firings, as the name suggests, were the various procedures the battalion used to give fire, and the maneuvers were the movements of several units of soldiers marching together.

Higher Organization: The infantry and cavalry of the British Army came under the authority of the "**Commander-in-Chief of the Army.**" The artillery and engineers came under the authority of the "**Master-General of the Ordnance**" who also usually sat in the cabinet. The mid-eighteenth-century British Army was a "regimental" army, meaning that the regiments generally dealt directly with the commander-in-chief of the army or his staff, on administrative matters. There were no permanently organized formations above the level of regiment. In peacetime a regiment might be assigned to a "**Garrison**" or "**Fortress.**" When an army was sent in to the field a general officer was appointed as its "**Commander-in-Chief.**" Within an army, a battalion or squadron was "brigaded" (the verb form was in common use at this time) with anywhere from one to eight other battalions or squadrons to form a "**Brigade,**" which was placed under the command of a Brigadier or Major General. (In the mid-eighteenth-century however, "brigade" could be used for any sort of ad-hoc grouping of military units - when used in this sense it is the equivalent of the modern "task force." It should also be noted that infantry and cavalry were almost never brigaded together.) An army would develop an "**Order of Battle**" that would specify to which "**Wing**" of the "**Line**" a brigade would be assigned. In fact, an army would typically be formed into two or three lines, so a brigade might be assigned to the "left wing of the first line" or the "right wing of the second line," or something of that nature. Each wing or center of a line would be put under the command of a major general or lieutenant general.

Staff Officers: Each regiment was assigned two staff officers, an "**Adjutant,**" who was responsible for the daily routine of the regiment and its administration, and a "**Quartermaster,**" who was responsible for its rations and quarters. In fact, during the eighteenth-century the adjutant was assuming a steadily increasing number of duties, and was becoming responsible

for the regiment's training and discipline as well. At this time staff positions were not appointments, officers were actually commissioned as staff officers, the adjutant for example ranked as the most senior of the lieutenants in the regiment. An officer (or sometimes a civilian) would receive an appointment as a regimental "**Paymaster**," who assisted in disbursing money.

In addition to these officers each regiment maintained an "**Agent**" in London, almost always a civilian, who looked after the regiment's affairs with both government departments and civilian contractors. "**Sutlers**" were civilian merchants who were licensed to follow a regiment and sell goods, usually provision, liquor, and tobacco. As a practical matter they were often persons who had some sort of a connection to the regiments, for instance sergeants' wives often acted as sutlers.

A "**Brigade Major**" who ranked as the most senior of the captains, was appointed to each brigade, and "**Fortress Majors**" and "**Garrison Majors**" were also appointed where appropriate. These officers performed the same range of duties as did regimental adjutants, and might, in extreme cases, have adjutants appointed to assist them.

The Commander in Chief of the Army was assisted by an "**Adjutant-General**" and a "**Quartermaster-General**" who performed the duties equivalent to those of the regimental staff officers for the entire British Army. For armies in the field, "**Deputy-**", "**Assistant-**", or "**Deputy Assistant-**", "**Adjutant-**" and "**Quartermaster-Generals**" would be appointed as appropriate depending upon the size of the army. At various times other officers would be appointed to more specialized positions; for instance there was at times a "**Barracks-Master-General**" to supervise the construction of barracks.

"**Commissaries**" were civilians, usually responsible to the Treasury, given commissions to look after various matters; the most common were "Commissaries of Provisions" to purchase food when an army was in the field, and "Commissaries of Muster," to examine regiments to ensure that all the soldiers who were receiving pay actually existed. There were also senior "**Commissaries-General**," such as the "Commissary-General of Muster," or the "Commissary-General of Provisions."

General officers took on one or more junior officers as "**Aides-de-Camp**," who functioned as their personal assistants. (In the other common eighteenth-century usage of an acronym, these officers were sometimes referred to as "**ADC's**.") The relationship between generals and their ADC's was often very close, and ADC's were commonly referred to as being

part of the general's "family." Commanders-in-Chief, and sometimes other generals as well, had "**Secretaries**" who might be either military or civilian, to help them with their administrative duties. These secretaries were often persons of very great importance and influence.

Reviews: The Commander-in-Chief of the British Army appointed "**Inspectors**," usually general officers to "**Review**" a regiment. This usually happened yearly, and it meant that the Inspector would visit the regiment to examine the state of its training discipline, and equipment.

Guard Duty: The ritual of guard duty was very important in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Soldiers "**Mounted**" guard, and when so doing were referred to as "**Sentinels**." Though the usage was loose, the term "**Guard**" usually referred to sentries posted inside a camp or fortress, and intended primarily for ceremonial or security duty. "**Picquets**" [sometimes spelled pickets] were soldiers posted to guard against the enemy, if mounted they were termed "**Vedettes**." [Sometimes spelled Vedets.] (It should be noted that miscellaneous grouping of men, for just about any purpose, might sometimes be termed a piquet. In this sense the term is equivalent to "**Detachment**," or "**Detail**" which had the same meaning of a group of soldiers assigned to a particular purpose.) Each day sentinels were informed of the "**Parole**" used to challenge strangers approaching at night, and the "**Countersign**," which was the response. "**Rounds**" and "**Grand Rounds**" were periodically sent out to inspect the sentinels, picquets and vedettes.

Soldiers who were assigned to a specific position were said to be "**Posted**," and the positions they held were termed: "**Posts**." "**Outposts**" were several soldiers posted at some distance from a camp to keep watch for, and "**Patrols**" might be sent out to check on their well being or to look for the enemy. The "*Petite* [often spelled "**Petty**"]*Guerre*" that was fought over the posts, along with other small war actions such as raids, ambushed or attacks on supply columns, [which were often termed "**Convoys**"] was sometimes said to be an affair of "**Parties**," or "**Partisan**" warfare.

Uniforms: The infantry and the heavy and medium cavalry of the British Army wore red coats, and generally red breeches as well. (In fact, the color of the coats for the rank and file was

actually a brick red that tended to fade to almost a red-brown. Sergeants' coats were closer to true red in collar, and officers' coats were scarlet.) The coat was lined, and this lining showed at the collar, lapels, cuffs, and the turn backs of the skirts of the coat. Generally the coat was lined in a color other than red, and this color, termed the "**Facing**" color, helped distinguish the regiments from one another. (Since there were more regiments than colors available however there was inevitably duplication, with more than one regiment sharing facing colors.) Regiments designated "Royal" always used blue as their facing color. The Artillery and Engineers normally wore blue coats and breeches and used red as a facing color. The newly formed light dragoon regiments began to use colors other than red for their coats, green and light blue were popular choices. Buttons were either pewter or brass. Each regiment also had distinctive "**Lace**," a woven decorative tape whose colors and pattern were distinctive to the regiment, which was sewn onto the coat around the collar, cuffs, turnbacks, and buttonholes. This coat was known as the soldier's "**Regimental**," this term was used in contrast to the soldier's "**Small Cloths**" which were his shirt, stockings and other items of this nature. In addition the soldier had a "**Waistcoat**," which was in fact a sleeved waist length jacket, which was worn either under the regimental, or in place of it. Most infantry, and heavy and medium cavalry, wore a "**Hat**," generally tri-corned in shape [often termed "**Cocked**"] and laced. Grenadiers wore a "**Cap**" shaped rather like a bishop's miter, made from either bear-skin, cloth or enameled metal. Light Infantry and Light Dragoons wore a cap shaped rather like a jockey's cap made from either felt or leather.

Officers wore gold or silver buttons, and gold or silver lace depending on whether their regiment wore pewter or brass buttons. Officers wore "**Sashes**" [sometimes termed "scarfs"] of red silk either around their waists or slung over their shoulder. Infantry officers also wore "**Gorgetts**," [sometimes termed "Collars"] decorative half moons of either silver or brass, on the front of their throats. Sergeants wore coats that were made of better cloth than that of the rank and file, and usually were decorated with either silver or gold lace depending on whether their regiment wore pewter or brass buttons. They also wore sashes of red wool.

Weapons: Infantry were armed with "**Firelocks**," these were flintlock, muzzle-loading, muskets of about .75 caliber. A "**Bayonet**," a triangular pike head, could be "**Fixed**" [attached] to the muzzle to allow the firelock to double as a spear. The firelock used a "**Flint**" [sometimes

called a "Gunstone"] to strike a spark that ignited a charge of black powder to fire a round "**Ball**." [Sometimes termed a "bullet."] The ball and powder came in a paper tube called a "**Cartridge**." The infantryman carried his ammunition in a "**Cartridge box**" a leather box which hung on his right hip from a strap slung over his left shoulder, the strap was termed a "**Baldric**." [Sometimes spelled "Baldrick" and sometimes termed a "cross-belt."] In addition infantrymen and artillery men also carried a short sword with a curved blade called a "**Hangar**." [Sometimes spelled "hanger."] The bayonet and hangar, if carried, hung from a waist belt. [It was becoming increasingly common however, particularly in North America for infantrymen not to carry their hangars in the field, substituting a small "Hatchet" or "Tomahawk."]. Taken together, a soldier's hangar, bayonet, waist belt, baldric and cartridge box were termed his "**Accoutrements**."

Infantry officers were armed with "**Spontoons**" [sometimes spelled "Espontoons," occasionally termed a "Partisan," "Leading Staff," or "Half-Pike"] and a straight bladed sword. Infantry sergeants were armed with a "**Halberd**" a combined axe-head and spear on a six-foot staff, and either a sword or a hangar.

Officers, sergeants, and enlisted men of cavalry and dragoons were all armed with a "**Sword**" [sometimes termed a "Broadsword"] a heavy, double-edged, straight bladed weapon. Curved "**Sabers**" [often spelled "Sabres"] heavy, single-edged, curved bladed weapons, were just coming into uses in the light dragoons. Cavalry officers, sergeants, and enlisted men also carried a pair of "**Pistols**" in holsters that hung from the pommels of their saddles. Cavalry rank and file also carried "**Carbines**," short barreled muskets, which hung from straps slung over their right shoulders.

Artillery men crewed "**Cannons**" which were either: "**Guns**," [often used as a generic term to describe all types of artillery] which fired on a flat trajectory; "**Howitzers**," which fired at an angle of around forty-five degrees; or "**Mortars**," (generally used only at sieges) which fired at angles of over forty-five degrees.

Cannon fired either solid round "**Shot**," or "**Canister**," an anti-personnel round [also known as "case," or by the old-fashioned term of "hail shot] which consisted of large number of small bullets in a container which broke apart on firing, and created an effect rather like that of a giant shotgun. Howitzers fired either canister or "**Shell**," a hollow ball stuffed with gunpowder that was detonated by a "**Fuse**," [often spelled "Fuze"] which was ignited when the weapon fired. Mortars generally fired only shells.

The size of a gun or howitzer was generally given in term of the weight of the shot or shell it fired: i.e., a nine-pound gun or a fifteen pound howitzer. Mortars were classified by the diameter of their bore, i.e., a fifteen-inch mortar.

The barrels of guns and howitzers were mounted on and moved about on gun "**Carriages**," that had two wheels and a "**Trail**" that rested on the ground when the cannon fired. When the cannon was to be moved the trail was lifted up and placed upon a "**Limber**" to which the horses that provided the motive power were hitched. Mortars were mounted on "**Beds**" that normally did not have wheels; the mortars and beds were usually transported separately.

**For my Mother:
Sandra N. Hendrix**

and to the memory of my father:

**Phil S. Hendrix
1928-1995**

1.0 INTRODUCTION: THE WARS

"I was born in war; I have no home, no country, no friends;
war is all my wealth and now whither will I go."¹

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Today the public face of the British Army is to be found mounting guard in front of Buckingham Place. This face wears a red coat below his neck and a bearskin cap above it. On a typical day this red-coated figure can be seen surrounded by tourists admiring his colorful uniform. Those who are there at the right time, if they are able to elbow aside enough of the camera-clicking horde, will be able to see the carefully choreographed military ballet of the Changing of the Guard. The more knowledgeable onlookers might be aware that this spectacle harks back to the days when the British Army went into battle with its soldiers dressed in colorful coats, packed tightly together in rectangular blocks, and used a meticulous drill to load and fire their weapons. They might even take a moment or two to marvel at the stupidity of soldiers who fought standing upright, while arranged in straight lines and dressed in red. If they think about it at all, are likely to attribute this seeming insanity to the proverbial muddle-headedness of the British Army.

This historical evaluation is at least half-correct. On the one hand, the suppositions about the antiquity of the drill and uniform are quite right: drill was developed in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century to allow groups of soldiers to load and fire their muskets in unison, and the British Army adopted the red coat early in the eighteenth-century. On the other hand, as military historians have expended much paper and ink explaining, the tactics

¹ Quoted in Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives*, Boston, South End Press, 1983, 4, hereafter: Enloe, *Khaki*.

represented by the sentry's drill were not irrational, they were both appropriate and necessary for the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century battlefields, and stayed valid well into the nineteenth-century. The same military historians however must also admit that the British Army's fabled irrationality cannot be dismissed completely out of hand, as it is also true that red coats and linear tactics lingered long after their utility had passed; indeed, as the guard at Buckingham Palace demonstrates, they have not yet vanished completely even today. This longevity suggests that the red coat and drill represent something buried deep in collective psyche of the British Army.

Moreover the madness must be contagious because colorful uniforms and precise drill are to be found in armies' world-wide. Indeed, around the globe today, there are two reliable identifying marks of the soldier: one is the wearing of a uniform, a uniform that on ceremonial occasions will usually be more decorative than practical; the other is marching in formation and in step, procedures that today are also more decorative than practical. The universality of these customs suggests that there is some sort of common source for these picturesque military habits, one that, in some strange fashion, all the world's armies share.

Fortunately the British Army, which has been described as an institution where it is "a tradition to preserve tradition" displays its connection with its military roots with exceptional clarity, and is therefore a good starting point for a journey to the world's common military past.² The anachronistic figure of the red-coated sentry guarding the residence of the British monarch points the way back to the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century: it is in the conflicts of this period that the common source for many of the world's shared military customs can be found. This was the age of "the wars," the struggles in early modern Europe that were the crucible of the modern nation-state. During this era, lasting from roughly 1480-1789, the states of modern Europe was created, putting in place an international system that, to a considerable degree, still exists to this day. "The wars" were both a principal cause and a principal effect of this state building, so it is perhaps not surprising that "the wars," also proved to be the mold in which the shape of the modern army was formed as well.

Paradoxically however, "the wars" which created states, and ultimately birthed the modern nation-state were themselves transnational, not national, in nature. During this period "the wars" were something of a separate world, and European soldiers "followed the drum,"

moving about Europe and serving in whatever army would hire them, whether in the army of the nation of their birth, or in that of another. As a result, European soldiers generated a unique way of life, a culture: a pre-national, pan-European martial culture common to the occupation of a soldier. This martial way of life created a template for what a soldier, and an army, should be; a template that in many way, is still followed to this day.

This pre-national martial culture filled a need, it provided the motivation and the justification for serving as a soldier; this motivation and justification was critically important in an era before nationalism, patriotism and ideas of citizenship tied the idea of serving as a soldier to the patriotic ideal of serving the nation of your birth. Moreover, in an era before strong bureaucracies, and multi-volumed regulations, the pre-national pan-European martial culture also provided guidance - a series of customary practices that prescribed the way that an army should look, function, and fight.

By the mid-eighteenth-century this martial culture was several centuries old, and change was on the way. Nonetheless, the British Army of this period was a part of this pre-national pan-European martial culture, and this martial culture explains many of the more curious features of the army which fought for Britain in the Seven Years' War, and the war of the American Revolution. In particular some of its more ornamental aspects: the regular appearance of foreigners in its ranks; the concern of its officers with their "honour" and reputation; their emphasis on personal, rather than institutional, relationships with the army, whilst, at the same time, maintaining an impersonal relationship with the men they commanded; the relative autonomy of the other ranks, while their women and children were intensely involved in military life; the preoccupation, by both officers, and the rank and file, with uniforms and drill; the shared *esprit de corps*, all these things become more explicable if they are seen as manifestations of a martial culture, a military way of life which was pre-national and common to most European armies.

Perhaps at its heart, the pan-European martial culture was a question of identity: in the largely pre-national Europe of the sixteenth-, seventeenth-and even the mid-eighteenth century, (though again it must be said that by the mid-eighteenth-century it is possible to see the beginnings of change) it seems likely that the occupational identity of "soldier" was at least as important as the national identity of "British." Soldiering, it appeared, was seen as a unique and

² Byron Farwell, *Mr. Kipling's Army: At the Queen's Men*, New York, W. W. Norton & Company, 1981, 32

special occupation, and one that transcended the boundaries of European states. A shared identity of "soldier" offered a powerful common bond, and the power of this common bond would help make possible the multinational armies of early modern Europe.

1.2 THE MID-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH ARMY AND THE PAN-EUROPEAN MILITARY WORLD

The British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century did not exist in a vacuum, it was part of a larger, pan-European, military world. This transnational European military world of the mid-eighteenth-century, of which the British Army was a part, was more than just a set of similar drill manuals and tactics, though these were certainly shared amongst European armies. "The wars," as they were sometimes termed, were, by the mid-eighteenth-century, an international institution that was several centuries old, which was superimposed upon the growing national divisions of Europe. This European military world was not separate from the larger eighteenth-century world, it resided in the midst of it, but it possessed its own customs, traditions, and values, ways of thinking and behaving, that made it a distinctive and unique way of life.

The existence of this pre-national pan-European military world is shown clearly by one often observed, but seldom discussed, attribute of the mid-eighteenth-century European military world: the fact that the armies of most European nations were multinational institutions. This was true of the British Army as well, though perhaps to lesser extent than that of most continental European armies. Most European armies had a significant minority of foreign soldiers, and in a few cases, foreign soldiers made up the majority of an army. The obvious corollary to the existence of multinational early-modern armies was the exceptional mobility displayed by the military men who made up those armies. Soldiers moved about, with relative freedom, from army to army. The multinational and mobile nature of the mid-eighteenth-century European military world contrasts sharply with the twenty-first century military world: today armies are national institutions, patriotism is assumed to be one of the principle motives for service, and transferring from the army of one nation to that of another is quite uncommon. None of these modern assumptions about armies held entirely true for the armies of the mid-eighteenth century and most are quite wide of the mark. Partially as a result of its multinational character, the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century, as well as most other European armies of the period, were very differently, in many important ways, from the armies of today.

1.2.1 MULTINATIONAL ARMIES

"An Irish man that was with the French[.]"³

That the armies of the mid-eighteenth-century European states were all multinational to varying, but usually significant degree cannot be questioned. In the late eighteenth-century French Army, for example, twenty-three of the one-hundred and nine line infantry regiments were designated foreign.⁴ The army of the Hapsburg Empire, the Army of Maria Theresa in this period, provides some of the best examples of the international martial culture. Generally, one-third of its soldiers were recruited from beyond its borders.⁵ This is perhaps unsurprising, because the Hapsburg Empire, the last fluorescence of the Holy Roman Empire was remarkably polyglot and geographically widespread. Christopher Duffy illustrates this point in his excellent work, *The Army of Maria Theresa: During the Seven Years War, (1756-1763)* one hundred and seventy-seven soldiers received the Knights Cross of the Military Order of Maria Theresa, the Empire's highest award for gallantry: of these, seventy-two had German names, twenty-two had Irish or Scottish names, twenty Italian names, eighteen had Slavonic names, eleven had Magyar names, eleven Flemish or Scandinavian names and two Spanish names.⁶ Many of these officers were subjects of the Empire or children of immigrants, but many were not. The Frenchmen, Jean-Baptiste de Gribeauval, who remade the French artillery in the 1770's, was "borrowed" by Maria Theresa during the Seven Years War and rose to the rank of Lieutenant-General in the Austrian service.⁷

The Prussian Army, arguably the best, and certainly the most emulated, army of the mid-eighteenth century, also, at the same time, had a large, and possibly the largest, admixture of foreign troops in its ranks. The example of the Prussian Army is very important, both in regards

³ To ? from Benj^m Roberts, Ensign 46th Regiment, 7 August 1759, Gage Papers, American Series, 3, hereafter: *Gage Papers*.

⁴ Samuel F. Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries, Revolutionary War and Citizen Soldiers in the Late Eighteenth Century, in *War & Society*, Volume 2, Number 2, September, 1984, 41, hereafter, Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries."

⁵ Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries," 41.

⁶ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Maria Theresa: The Armed Forces of Imperial Austria, 1740-1780*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1977, 25, hereafter: Duffy, *Maria Theresa*. It is worth noting, since the topic of this work is the pan-European martial culture, that Christopher Duffy dedicated his book: "To the memory of James Duffy, first Lieutenant in the Regiment of Marschall, killed at Meissen, 21 September 1759."

⁷ Duffy, *Maria Theresa*, 116.

to the multinational character of mid-eighteenth-century European armies, as well as in many other matters, because, after Frederick the Great's spectacular victories in the mid-eighteenth-century, the Prussian Army was widely admired and copied. A huge proportion of Frederick the Great's soldiers were foreigners. Most probably came from the other German states but a significant proportion were French and Italian.⁸ Of 132,000 men in Frederick the Great's Army in 1757, the majority, 82,000, were foreigners.⁹ This admittedly was an unusually high proportion and was the result of a deliberate attempt on Frederick's part to ease the burden on his own subjects.¹⁰ In 1751, 50,000 out of 133,000 Prussian soldiers were native born, 70,000 out of 160,000 were native born in 1768 and at the time of Frederick the Great's death in 1786, only 80,000 out of a total of 190,000 were native born.¹¹ These numbers are a remarkable testimony to the power of the pan-European martial culture.¹² Moreover, Christopher Duffy has calculated that about one-sixth (fifty-four out of three hundred and seventeen) of Frederick the Great's generals between 1740 and 1763 were foreigners. Some of these generals were Austrian, even though this period covers the Wars of the Austrian Succession, the Silesian Wars, and the Seven Years War, which were principally wars of Prussia against Austria! Prussians could also, of course, to be found in the service of Austria.¹³

One incident shows both how widespread, and complex, this martial culture could be. After the Saxons' capitulation to the Prussians at Pirna on October 17, 1757, most of the Saxon Army was absorbed by the Prussians. This in fact proved to be a mistake, as Frederick the Great tried to leave the Saxons in their original battalions. There the Saxons proved to be unreliable, and deserted wholesale, or surrendered.¹⁴ Some elements of the former Saxon army however were quite happy to join with the Prussians. Frederick Karl, Margrave of Brandenburg-Schwedt and *Chef* (Colonel-Proprietor) of the Prussian Infantry Regiment Number 19, acquired all the Irish serving in the Saxon Army. It was noted that: "To begin with they were most unwilling to serve among the Prussians, but now the decent treatment they receive from the Margrave has

⁸ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1974, 35-37, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

⁹ Edward G. Williams, "The Prevosts of the Royal Americans," in *The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 1, (January 1973) 13, hereafter: Williams, "Prevosts."

¹⁰ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 55.

¹¹ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 55.

¹² Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 35-37.

¹³ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 30.

¹⁴ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 169.

won them over so completely that they would be in despair if they were ordered to any other regiment[.]” So we have Irish soldiers moving from the Saxon to the Prussian Army. One wonders where they finally ended their military odyssey?

Examples of the international military culture could be multiplied indefinitely. In the latter part of the seventeenth- and the earlier part of the eighteenth-century the Prussian Army, as well as the British, benefited from an influx of Huguenot officers, who, fleeing French persecution, had religious and political reasons to seek service in Protestant armies.¹⁵ Both the French and Spanish Kings kept whole regiments of Irish; the French Kings kept Scottish regiments as well. Swiss Regiments were to be found throughout Europe, and his Swiss Guards delivered the last shots fired in defense of Louis XVI of France.

The British army was perhaps the most insular army in Europe at this time. Yet it too was exposed to the European phenomena of multinational armies. Even the most ordinary regiments of the British Army were touched by the pan-European martial culture. Sylvia Frey has estimated that during the middle and later part of the eighteenth-century, foreign-born troops made up only two-percent of the troopers in the cavalry regiments, but were slightly more than ten-percent of most regiments of British Infantry.¹⁶ (The low proportion of foreigners in the cavalry regiments can probably be explained by the fact that cavalry was regarded as an elite. Cavalrymen were seen as being social superior to infantrymen, they also received higher pay. As a result it was usually much easier to recruit for cavalry regiments than for the infantry, and there would thus be less need to recruit foreigners.) Looking more specifically at the ethnicity of the British Army in North America during the Seven Years War, Stephen Brumwell likewise arrived at a figure of approximately ten-percent of all foot soldiers being foreign, though he shows the foreigners more specifically concentrated in a few regiments.¹⁷ During the mid-

¹⁵ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 30, J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1981, 105, hereafter: Houlding, *Fit for Service*.

¹⁶ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, 11, hereafter Frey, *British Soldier*.

¹⁷ Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002, Appendix, Table 5, "Ethnic Composition of rank and file and non-commissioned officers of British Army units in North America, summer, 1757," 318, hereafter: Brumwell, *Redcoats*. Brumwell, gives totals of 4.5% foreigners enlisted in Europe and 5.5% foreigners enlisted in America, for a total of 10% foreigners in the ranks; but most of these soldiers were serving in the four battalions of the Royal American Regiment which, as will be discussed in greater detail later, had been specifically created to enlist Swiss and German soldiers. Brumwell also included a category of "Native of America" which amounted to 5.5% of the total. Nearly all battalions had some foreigners however, and the only battalions which were even close to being ethnically "pure" were the 42nd and the 1st Highland Battalion, that is, battalions recruited exclusively from Highland Scots.

eighteenth-century many British Regiments kept recruiting parties on the Rhine.¹⁸ This does not even take into account the regiments of Germans the British hired to help them fight their wars in the latter eighteenth- and early nineteenth-centuries. Besides those officially designated as foreign: it should be noted that by the mid-eighteenth-century, the British Army included large numbers of Irish, and of Scottish Highlanders, who, though technically subjects of the Crown, were not necessarily very happy with that status, and whose cultures, moreover, were often quite foreign to that of the English.¹⁹

1.2.2 The "State Commissioned" Army

If mid-eighteenth-century European armies were often multinational in character, a true "motley crew" of different backgrounds, nationalities, and cultures, this leads immediately to a question: Why *were* these mid-eighteenth-century European armies so multinational in character? We are confronted with a puzzle: surely dynastic armies (and obviously most mid-eighteenth-century European armies were serving the dynastic monarchs of Europe) should have been made up of the monarch's own subjects, men who would therefore be fighting for their own king and country? The logic seems straightforward: the subjects of a monarch are the potential soldiers most likely to be loyal to that monarch, and they are geographically the most available as well. Why should a French King go all the way to Germany to recruit German soldiers whose loyalty to him might be questionable, instead of recruiting French soldiers who, one would think, would be both more loyal and more proximate as well?

What this all amounts too is: if we make the not unreasonable assumption that the British regiments stationed in the British Isles were somewhat more likely to enlist foreigners from Europe than British regiments stationed in North America, and British regiments serving on the continent of Europe were much more likely to enlist foreigners, and that both these categories would enlist very few "Natives of America," then, a rough average of 10% of British infantry being foreign seems quite likely.

¹⁸ Frey, *British Soldier*, 11.

¹⁹ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, 318, gives a figure of 27.5% of the British Army in North America in 1757 being Scots, and 27.5% being Irish. While it can be assumed that many of these soldiers would be relatively assimilated to English culture before enlisting, equally many, particularly Highland and Island Scots, and Irish from the far south and west of Ireland, would not. It should also be noted that figures on the ethnicity of mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers are likely to err on the side of understating their "foreignness:" since there were at least some theoretical barriers to enlisting foreigners and Catholics, there would be some motives for misstate the ethnicity of foreigners as English, and none, as far as this writer is aware, for misstating the ethnicity of English as foreign.

In fact most European monarchs did recruit their armies largely from their own subjects. Yet, as was previously discussed however, nearly all European armies had a significant foreign presence, some a large foreign presence, and in at least one case, the Prussian, the majority of its troops in peacetime were foreign.²⁰ Why was this? The answer to this question is that the question itself hides not one, but two assumptions: it assumes a twenty-first century, not an eighteenth-century model of how loyalty should be determined, and it also assumes a twenty-first-century, not an eighteenth-century, model of what an army should be.

By the mid-eighteenth-century, possession of a standing army had become one of the defining features of the European state - it was an essential element of their claim to sovereignty. While European states had armies however, they did not have, at this time, national armies. What they had were armies in the employment of states. This is a crucial distinction. Dr. John Lynn, who has created a descriptive model explaining the structure and evolution of European armies across time, has termed the type of army common from about the mid-seventeenth-century in Europe on through the beginning of the nineteenth-century, the "state commissioned army."²¹ The "state commissioned army" was formed, just as its name suggested, by European rulers commissioning various people to raise troops, typically, but not invariably, in regiment size lots. Usually, at least some of these troops were kept in long term employment, thus giving the European state its standing army. Gradually, and possibly unintentionally, the state increased its control over its regiments, generally by taking on more of the administrative burdens involved, and eventually the regiment would be seen more as the state's, than as its colonel's. By the mid-eighteenth-century this process had been under way for about a century in the British Army, and it was clear that the regiments were now the King's, and were no longer the property of their colonels.

(It should be said however that, while there was no longer any question of the British government's control over its army, nonetheless the colonels of its various regiments still retained considerable influence: this influence is demonstrated by the fact that, as late as the mid-eighteenth-century, regiments were usually identified by the name of their colonel, rather than by its designated number, which were, in fact, only assigned in 1751.²² For instance, when

²⁰ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 55-56.

²¹ Please see Appendix I for a more detailed description of John Lynn's model of European army types.

²² J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, xx, hereafter: Houlding, *Service*

Edward Cornwallis wrote to Horatio Gates' father, Robert Gates, to inform him that: "Your son, Horatio Gates who came as a volunteer with me has in a short time been appointed Cap:^t Lieu:^t" he went on to identify the commission as being in "Warburtons Reg:[.]"²³)

The essential point here was that those who were commissioned to raise the regiments generally had few or no restrictions placed as to where they could recruit; moreover, the troops they raised were not necessarily being raised on the understanding that they would be fighting for their own king and country. As a practical matter, there was a spectrum of multi-nationalism, some armies were more nationalistic in character, others more multinational in character. The British Army of the mid-eighteenth century was probably nearer the national end of the range, though it was by no means completely national. At the other end of the spectrum, the Austrian Army presented the example of an army that was quite multinational in composition. In either case however, the multinational nature of these armies, whether large or small was not a novelty. The pan-European military world's multinational armies were not new in the mid-eighteenth-century. They had been around for several centuries because they had adequately served the needs of both European monarchs who needed armies, and those who made it their occupation to serve with those armies.

²³ *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, Microfilm Edition, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, James Gregory, Thomas Dunning, eds, Sanford, North Carolina, Microfilm Corporation of America, 1979, 18 March, 1749/50, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Edward Cornwallis to Robert Gates, hereafter *Gates Papers*.

1.3 THE PROBLEM: HOW DID THEY WORK?

The multinational "state commissioned" armies of mid-eighteenth-century Europe force us to confront one immediate and obvious question. How did they work? What allowed European armies to bring together this disparate mass of manpower, form them into cohesive military organizations, and keep them together through the hardships of campaigning and the terrors of battle? Again, we are faced with a contrast with the armies of today, which are made up of the citizens of one nation-state, who, it is assumed, are held together by shared feelings of patriotism and nationalism. These emotions could certainly not have provided the necessary glue for the British Army, or indeed for any other army, of the mid-eighteenth-century. Or to phrase the question another way, what did members of the pan-European military world fight for? For many it certainly was neither patriotism nor nationalism, for many members of the pre-national, pan-European military world were not fighting for their own king and country. Many were fighting for a nation or sovereign other than their own, and in some instances they were even fighting against their own king and country. In any case, most historians do not see a strong sense of nationalism or patriotism present in the mid-eighteenth century, this is held to be a characteristic of post-revolutionary America or Europe.

Historians have often attempted to explain the cohesion of mid-eighteenth-century armies by citing coercion. In this school of thought, the soldiers were held to their duty by fear of the lash. In another school of thought, mid-eighteenth-century armies are seen as mercenary in the strictest sense of the word; (historians sometimes go so far as to regard soldiers as some of the first wage laborers) the soldiers are pictured as fighting solely for their pay and other material rewards.²⁴ Both of these explanations seem problematical. It can be very hard to coerce an army into battle. A point will often be reached when the fear of the coercion behind will be less than the fear of the enemy in front.²⁵ In fact it was quite possible, and quite common, for soldiers to break and run from the enemy, frequently in regiments size lots, and occasionally as

²⁴ See for example Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army*, New York, New York University Press, 1996, hereafter Neimeyer *America Goes to War*.

²⁵ Frey, *British Soldier*, 129.

whole armies; this fact, in and of itself, would seem to show the limits of coercion. Nonetheless, on most occasions most soldiers stood and fought. Likewise, a soldier could not spend his pay if he were dead, yet again, on most occasions, most soldiers advanced, sometimes into near certain death.

Coercion and reward were certainly important in the functioning of eighteenth-century European armies, but it seems reasonable to suggest that when they were most needed, during battle, they were least likely to be effective. Something more than coercion and reward must have been operating within eighteenth-century European Armies. Seeking stronger, and more "positive," motivations, many historians have invoked two concepts: first, *Espirit de Corps*; (and in doing so, they have also inspired the title of this work: "The Spirit of the Corps.") second, "primary group loyalty," and have offered these as explanations for the loyalty and cohesion displayed by eighteenth-century armies.

Espirit de Corps, or unit pride, and "primary group loyalty," the bonds that are formed between men in small groups of four to eight, have become, in fact, the default explanations for the cohesion and fighting ability of just about any army in history. The reason for this is understandable. Nearly anyone with any military service has experienced these processes first hand, and can testify to their strength and importance. As a result, for veterans, and for most military historians as well, it seem almost intuitively obvious that these two emotions most have been in operation in European armies in the mid-eighteenth century, or indeed in any army in any time and place. Therefore, so this logic goes, in the absence of any clear-cut ideology, or strong sense of nationalism or patriotism, *esprit de corps* and primary group loyalty must have provided the principle "positive" motivation for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and for other European armies of that period.

If *esprit de corps* and primary group loyalty were at work in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army however, and it does seem indisputable that they were operating in some fashion: they seemed to have operated largely in spite of, rather than because of, anything that the leadership of the British Army did to encourage their working. As will be discussed in more detail later, the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century did remarkably little to help either of those processes along. Moreover, both "*Espirit de Corps*" and "primary group loyalty" are just phrases. In and of themselves the words explain nothing: they cry out to be placed in historical context, and their operation described with some precision. So, what made up the spirit of the

multinational corps that were so commonplace in the mid-eighteenth-century? How were regiments of British Infantry that usually had a strong minority of foreigners in their ranks, turn into coherent fighting forces? What bound men of different birth and backgrounds together into disciplined fighting forces? In short, how did the British Army of mid-eighteenth-century work?

1.4 THE PRE-NATIONAL PAN-EUROPEAN MARTIAL CULTURE

The beginnings of an answer to those question can be given by examining the workings of a unique way of life, one analogous to the maritime world of the sailor and the sea, but a way of life that embraced soldiers instead: a pre-national, pan-European martial culture, a culture with its own values and beliefs, a specifically martial culture that existed, to a varying degree, in armies throughout Europe. The British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century was a member, in good standing, of this pre-national, Pan-European military world. The existence of a pre-national, pan-European martial culture did not mean that eighteenth-century European armies had no national identity. It did mean, however, that, in the same way that there were more similarities than differences to be found amongst European ships of different nationalities in the mid-eighteenth-century; there were likewise more similarities than differences to be found among European armies of different nationalities in the mid-eighteenth-century. Differences did exist of course: in the same way that a British ship would be distinctively British and different from a French ship that would be distinctively French, the British Army was distinctively British, and different from a French Army that was distinctively French. (Likewise the Prussian Army would be distinctively Prussian and the Austrian Army distinctively Austrian and so on.) To reiterate however, it is likely that the similarities were in many respects, greater than the differences. Moreover, the existence of the pre-national, pan-European military world also meant that, in the same way that there was a freemasonry amongst European seaman, and a sense that this shared occupation sometimes, perhaps often, trumped nationality: there would also be a freemasonry amongst European soldiers, and a similar sense that their shared occupation sometimes, perhaps often, trumped nationality. The existence of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture also meant that in the same way that many sailors felt able to sign on with (or were crimped into) ships of a nation other than that of their birth: many soldiers likewise felt free to enlist in (or were coerced into) armies other than that of the nation of their birth. The net result of all these similarities and the freemasonry the mid-eighteenth-century soldiers ensured that all European armies of this period were participants in this pre-national, pan-European military world to some degree or another.

It asserting that this pan-European military world amounted to a "martial culture, "culture" in this sense is meant to be understood in a relatively straightforward, and possibly somewhat old-fashioned manner as: "[t]he distinctive patterns of thought, action and value that characterize the members of a society or social group."²⁶ Put more simply the pan-European martial culture should be seen as a way of life, and as a special identity, common to the soldiers and armies of eighteenth-century Europe. It was this martial way of life that made the multinational armies of early-modern Europe possible; the values and beliefs of this martial culture provided the rules according to which European armies operated.

1.4.1 The Elements of the Pre-National Pan-European Martial Culture

What were the key components of this martial culture?²⁷ First and most important was its cosmopolitan and international nature. The British Army of the mid-eighteenth century, although it was distinctly and uniquely British, nonetheless functioned within a way of life that was understood and shared by soldiers throughout Western Europe, the pre-national pan-European, martial culture. That is to say the culture, or in less high-fallutin terms, the atmosphere, of an army was quite similar in many respects whether it was the British, French, Prussian or Austrian Army, or indeed any western European army. The martial culture was, in one sense, inescapable: if one were to stay in the European military world, one participated, to some degree, in the martial culture. Moreover, the British Army, or any other army of the mid-eighteenth-century, functioned with a significant number of foreigners within its ranks. This foreign contingent, in turn, meant that the British Army, or any other mid-eighteenth-century army had to have been motivated, at least in part, by influences that were more personal than patriotism or loyalty to one's sovereign

Honor and material reward were the twin carrots that made the mid-eighteenth-century military world go round, for both officers and other ranks: but they operated quite differently for what were two quite different groups. The belief in soldierly honor, and its concomitant

²⁶ Robert H. Winthrop, *Dictionary of Concepts in Cultural Anthropology*, New York, Greenwood Press, 1991, 50.

²⁷ The concept of "Martial Culture" was developed by Dr. Roger Manning, Professor *Emeritus* of the Department of History at Cleveland State University, and I am indebted to him for his discussion of his idea with me.

military virtues, loyalty, bravery, and serving faithfully, had great currency among both officers and other ranks. This sense of honor provided the ideology for soldiering, a necessary *raison d'être* in an age prior to strong nationalistic sentiments, and was vitally important for men who in many cases were not serving their native country or defending their own homes. For some, officers in particular, the psychic return of living according to these standards of honor might have been the principal reason for serving - others were forced to take a more pragmatic view of their military service, and were equally eager for material reward. In practice, there was not as great a difference between the two motives as might be thought, since an officer's reputation, which can be thought of as his fellow officers' evaluation of his honor, would, to a large degree, have governed an officer's chance for material reward as well. Enlisted soldiers also responded to the appeal of military honor, though for them it was more likely to be expressed in *esprit de corps*, the collective honor of their regiment, and they certainly responded to the desire for material reward as well; this desire, which was probably no greater than that of their officers, was, however, likely to be expressed, and satisfied, in a somewhat more straightforward manner.

Personal relationships, again particularly, but not exclusively, for officers, were all important, connection and patronage were the accepted route to promotion and reward. The mid-eighteenth-century British Army (and, for that matter, the pan-European military world) was, in most ways, a pre-bureaucratic organization. It operated less by rule and regulation than by customary practice. Precedent was all-important, the letter of the law somewhat less so. One tradition (and one that perhaps was becoming more important as the eighteenth-century progressed) was that officers, outside of the drill-square or battlefield, had little or nothing to do with the troops they led. This seeming absence of leadership was consistent with most other officer-other ranks relationships in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army which were also limited to non-existent, and this absence seems to have been exactly what the enlisted men wanted.

Martial culture had a range and ubiquity in the lives of those who followed the drums that was probably unmatched by any other equivalent cultural organization except that of a ship at sea or a monastery: but, at the same time, by twenty-first century standards its control was weak, and its discipline was often uncertain. Punishment and coercion were always important, but their application was often haphazard, and their effects were inconsistent. To a surprising degree, officers commanded by the consent of their soldiers; an army operated largely because of the

willingness of the common soldier to discharge what they felt to be their obligations. In short, the other ranks had a strong (though narrow) sense of both their duties as soldiers as well as their rights as soldiers, and they acted to enforce both parts of their "contract."

Soldiers' lives, on the drill-square, were closely directed by a regulating authority; when off the drill-square, soldiers' time was usually their own. Contrary to the modern understanding of an army as a place where soldiers are tightly controlled, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army seems to have been a place where the enlisted soldiers were largely left alone. Other ranks were granted a great deal of autonomy, enlisted men were expected to behave in accordance with certain accepted standards for a soldier, but provided they behaved in a "soldier-like manner," and displayed regimental *esprit de corps*, they were generally left to their own devices. Indeed, this might well have been one of the principle attractions of army life in the mid-eighteenth-century.

The martial culture also embrace families. Those who followed the wars included a large number of women and children, as well as other nominal non-combatants, who were as much a part of the army as an enlisted soldier. The evidence suggests that most members of the pan-European military world whether soldiers, non-combatants, women, or children considered themselves part of the martial culture and accepted its values. Since the military world included women and children, many members of the martial culture would have been literally born and raised in it. Moreover, as a result of the presence of women and children, the atmosphere of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army would often have been literally family-like, and this family atmosphere was probably an important component in the enculturation and motivation of the soldier.

For both officers and other ranks, their sense of military honor was made visible by their wearing of a uniform, and by their carrying a sword, the traditional sign of a warrior. The uniform and sword was also the costume of a man who lived according to the gentlemanly code of honor. Even common soldiers shared some vestige of the status of a gentleman when they wore their uniforms. Common clothing also emphasized group membership, and it strengthened commonalties among the group. It also reinforced the sense of order, regularity, and authority in their lives. Moreover, the uniform was identified with the monarch, and implied in some small measure at least, a connection with royalty. The uniform also demonstrated a distinctly military

sense of style that was important to the pan-European martial culture, and which extended beyond the uniform itself, into drill and battlefield behavior.

The soldiers' membership in the European military world was signified by their participation in the ritual of drill. Drill had a definite tactical purpose in the eighteenth-century, but by definition drill also involved large numbers of people doing the same thing at the same time. This generated physiological and psychological process that enhanced group cohesion. Not coincidentally, drill also reinforced the control of the army's regulating authority. Soldiers were also involved in other military ceremonies and rituals that emphasized their membership in a unique martial culture. Although by modern standards eighteenth-century armies were ill-disciplined, un-uniform, and small, for the typical eighteenth-century soldier, or camp follower, the army with its lock step routine, its uniformity, and its large masses of people must have been somewhat awe-inspiring.

Contrary to common belief, it was not only officers who had honor, the other ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, maintained a sense of military honor as well; their military honor however came in a collective form, as opposed to the individualistic code of honor of the officer. The rank and file were strongly vested in the collective honor of the regiment. It is noticeable that British officers did not seem to have felt that they needed to make any special efforts to build this *esprit de corps*, they simply assuming its existence, and their soldiers agreed with this assumption.

The mid-eighteenth-century British Army can often seem puzzling. By twenty-first century standards it was a surprisingly amorphous institution, and not the least of the surprise is how very little of its functioning was institutionalized. When trying to understand what to modern eyes seem to be an inchoate and un-cohesive mass, it is nearly always more useful to look at tradition and culture, than rule and regulation, explanations are more likely to be found in customary practice, than written instruction. It is also helpful to keep one more fact in mind.

The British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century was a very successful one. It, along with its sister service, the Royal Navy, won what was the first actual world war in history, the Seven Year's War, (enshrined in British memory as the Great War for Empire, and often termed the French and Indian War in America) and, in doing so, conquered a world empire for Great Britain. This strongly argues that, puzzling as it might be to modern eyes, the mid-eighteenth-

century British Army was doing many things very well indeed. The martial culture of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army seems to have been a very successful one.

1.5 CONCLUSION

"Every lover's a soldier and cupid has his camps."
(Ovid, *Amores* I, ix, Line 1)

One of the oldest tales about military life is the story of the women who loved a soldier, not wisely, but too well, and was left holding a baby as the army marched away. Soldiers are traditionally virile, and the British Army that served in North America in the mid-eighteenth-century was particularly potent, so much so that, when it finally marched away, it left behind not only individual offspring, but a collective one as well: the Continental Army of the American Revolution was its rebellious son; its grandchild was the regular army of the United States of America.

Obviously this father-son relationship was Oedipal in its nature, and, in the end, the son's rebellion against his father succeeded. The violence of the struggle however, helped to hide the parentage, and obscure the familial relationship that the contestants shared, and it disguised the inheritance the child, in the end, received from its forefathers. Most parents eventually discover that their children have moved away from them, both geographically and otherwise, and declared their independence. In the end, the parents' greatest legacy is the values they transmit, occasionally unknowingly, sometimes deliberately, to their children who will one day find, often to their surprise, that they carry these ideas with them, long after they and their parents have gone their separate ways. This was as true of the British Army in North America as of any other parents, and, probably without fully realizing their role, the soldiers of the British Army provided a heritage for their descendents. So, what was the inheritance of the American Army, and how did it resemble its British progenitor?

To know the child, know the parents: an understanding of the values, the ideas, the ceremonies, in short, the culture of the British Army is key to understanding the martial culture of the United States. To fully understand the development of the American Army, it is vital to understand the military tradition from which it sprang. That military tradition had its roots in Europe, today, one branch of that tree is to be found in America, the trunk in between, the

medium of transmission, was the British Army. To understand the military culture of America, it is essential to look at the military culture of the British Army, which in its turn, was based upon the martial culture of the pre-national, pan-European military world.

The key elements of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture were central to the culture of the British Army, they were also to be the cultural inheritance of the regular army of the United States: this martial culture was international; it offered an ideology of soldierly honor; it operated more within a network of personal relationships, than within a hierarchy of bureaucracy; it regulated its soldiers with a system of discipline that was surprisingly weak and with the much stronger ideal of a contract; it offered the promise of personal autonomy for its enlisted soldiers and included their families within the military world; it created a military world that was often preoccupied with a military sense of style which extended to drill, and uniforms; and it bound its members together with the concept of *esprit de corps*. Most importantly, all of these separate elements worked together and reinforced one another to achieve an effect greater than the sum of its parts. While these elements will be separated for purposes of analysis, it must always be remembered that members of the martial culture experienced them not separately but together. These elements were also the legacy left by the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century to its offspring, the Continental Line, and, eventually, to the regular Army of the United States of America.

The very success of the pan-European martial culture would help to bring about its downfall. Britain's second Hundred Year's War, the series of wars that Britain fought with France from 1689-1815, was fought largely with old-style European martial-culture armies. It has been convincingly argued that these wars were an important step in building a sense of British nationalism;²⁸ and, inevitably this growth of nationalism would help begin the destruction of the pan-European military sensibility that made the old multinational armies possible. The great democratic revolutions that closed the eighteenth-century would also help undercut the foundation of the pan-European military world. They would do so by redefining soldiering: soldiering would change from being simply a special occupation, to being a duty of citizenship or nationalism or patriotism. Change of this sort is gradual however, the beginning of these changes predate the American and French Revolutions (and the motives for change would often be as much a matter of military efficiency as political ideology) and the changes would not

be completely until the beginning of the twentieth-century. Indeed both the Continental Line, and Napoleon's *Grande Armee* seem much more like armies of the old pan-European military world than new armies of patriotic citizen-soldiers serving their nations.

From its beginning, the regular Army of the United States was recognizably part of the European military tradition. The Continental Army, it is true, was disbanded at the end of the American Revolution. Nonetheless, on close examination, the connection is clear: and, as was so often the case, in the pan-European military world, precedent ruled; and, when the new United States of America needed an army, the reformed regular Army of the United States was modeled on the Continental Line, and through it the British Army and the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. As late as 1940 the regular army of the United States, in its culture, its way of life, its shared ideas and values, still had a great deal in common with an European military culture which was brought to America by the British Army two centuries earlier. The bastard child that the British Army left behind in North America would have a very long life.

²⁸ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992, 1-4.

2.0 GONE FOR A SOLDIER: THE BACKGROUND TO THE PAN-EUROPEAN MILITARY WORLD

"Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been to sea . . . The profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverences those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness."
(James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

"I told him frankly that I was a young gentleman in difficulties; that I had killed an officer in a duel, and was anxious to get out of the country. But I need not have troubled myself with any explanations; King George was too much in want of men then to heed from whence they came, and a fellow of my inches, the sergeant said, was always welcome."²⁹ So began the military career of that picaresque Irish rogue, Barry Lyndon. Barry Lyndon, the creation of Victorian novelist William Makepeace Thackeray, joined the British Army during the Seven Years' War, (1756-1763) and then eventually deserted his Britannic Majesty, only to be forced into the Prussian Army of Frederick the Great. Thackeray wrote *Barry Lyndon* in 1844, a century after the adventures he described: yet, even if Barry Lyndon's exploits were a bit more colorful than most, Thackeray nonetheless memorably described the experiences of many men who had "gone for a soldier," with the mid-eighteenth-century British Army in the pre-national pan-European military world.³⁰

²⁹ William Makepeace Thackeray, *The Luck of Barry Lyndon: A Romance of the Last Century*, Edgar F. Harden, ed., Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1999, 45.

³⁰ Barry Lyndon was first published in 1844 in serial form as "The Luck of Barry Lyndon." Thackeray then revised the serial into a novel, *The Memoirs of Barry Lyndon, Esq.*, which was published in 1856. In 1975 Stanley Kubrick directed an interesting cinematic version of Thackeray's novel.

Like Barry Lyndon, the pre-national, pan-European military world was a world of men (and some women) leaving home and going elsewhere. It is probably true that the majority of European soldiers who "followed the drum," served in the army of their nation of birth: but even if that were the case, service in any army was almost certain to take the soldier "over the hills and far away." Anyone who spent any time as soldier, like Barry Lyndon, would not only have seen new and different places, he would, in effect, have lived for a time in what was almost another nation: "the wars," a place with custom, traditions, and ways of life, all its own. The customs and traditions of "the wars," the pre-national, pan-European martial culture, were what allowed European armies, including Great Britain's to operate.

During the Seven Years' War, Great Britain, as was usually the case during its so-called Second Hundred Year's War, the series of wars waged by Britain against France from 1688-1815 was part of a coalition, in this case allied with Prussia against France, Austria, and Russia. This alliance of the continent of Europe was, however, only one portion of Great Britain's military commitments. Britain was mustering what was, for a small island nation, an unprecedented military effort. In what became known in Britain as "The Great War for Empire," the first true world war in history, Britain was fighting across the globe: Barry Lyndon would fight with the British Army in Europe, but, in the mid-eighteenth-century, the British Army and navy was in action in locations that stretched from Germany, to North America, to Cuba, to the Philippines, to India; the British were truly fighting across the world.

The armies' Britain raised were recruited primarily from English, Irish, like Barry Lyndon, and Scots; (peoples who, it should be noted, were not only foreign to one-another, but quite often hostile as well) but they usually also included some Germans, Swiss, and a healthy portion of assorted others. Britain also regularly hired German regiments; and, moreover, when it went into the field in Germany during the Seven Years' War, it was as part of an army lead by a Prussian General, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. In most of its wars with France, though Britain often formed and funded the coalitions with which it fought, in terms of man-power at least, Britain was usually the junior partner: therefore when a British Army took to the field, it almost always fought as part of a coalition army. The Seven Years' War was no different in this respect than any other war with France. Indeed, it might not be going too far to say that, even in North America, Britain only achieved success when it dealt with its colonies as if they were partners in a coalition.

That these multinational, coalition, armies with which Britain went to war not only functioned, but were often quite successful, was due to the fact that they were largely organized, trained, led, and usually operated according to customary practices. These were the customary practices of "the wars," practices that, by the mid-seventeenth-century were hallowed traditions several centuries old; these were customs which long-standing usage had given practically the force of law. When Barry Lyndon joined the British Army, and later transferred himself, (so to speak) to the Prussian Army, he became a member of a pre-national pan-European military world; a world that had been in existence for some time, a world that had been created in the religious wars of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century.

2.2 BRITAIN AND THE PRE-MODERN PAN-EUROPEAN MARTIAL CULTURE

The Wars of Religion that set much of Europe ablaze from the early part of the fifteen-hundreds on through 1648 were ground zero for Britain's, indeed for Europe's, experience of the pan-European martial culture. This century and a half of warfare that culminated in what is generally believed to be the most destructive war that troubled Europe before the twentieth-century, (the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648) acted to create a pan-European military world, a military way of life common throughout Europe.

Most of the essential elements of the pre-national pan-European martial culture that would shape the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century were created or refined during this time: multinational armies, an ideology of soldierly honor, an emphasis on personal relationships, an autonomous soldiery, loose but harsh discipline, and the inclusion of woman and children in this military world, all date to this era. The precedent which the religious wars created was so strong that, even after they ended, for at least another century and a half, European armies would continue to operate within the patterns set during this formative period.

2.2.1 European Armies of the Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Centuries

By the mid-eighteenth-century, multinational European armies, including Britain's, were institutions that were already several centuries old. They had flourished during the two centuries that lie between roughly 1500 and 1700 C. E. These centuries are often cited as turning points in the development of Europe, the centuries in which the modern European states were formed. The creation of strong European states was probably not unconnected to another phenomena that many historians believe that they have also discerned operating during those centuries, that of a "military revolution." This "military revolution" was a series of qualitative and quantitative changes in the manner in which European wars were conducted, taken together these changes amount to a revolution in the way warfare was conducted and in the impact that it had.

While the exact elements of the military revolution are the subject of intense scholarly debate, most would agree that key elements of this military revolution include the following: the adoption of gunpowder, along with firearms and cast bronze artillery, the creations of infantry based armies using drill to train their soldiers in the use of the new gunpowder weapons, and the evolution of these armies into standing armies in the sole service of the ruler of the state. More debatably, many scholars believe that this period also saw an increase in the number and frequency of wars, the decisiveness of warfare, and a disproportionate increase in the size of armies as well. Finally, it is important to note, many scholars believe that it was this "military revolution" which gave European states the ability to spread their influence across the globe; a globe that, to a large degree, they had come to dominate by the late nineteenth-century. Whether or not the argument about global dominance is valid, and it does seem broadly convincing, there is widespread agreement that the changes of the "military revolution" were closely linked to the formation of the European state themselves in the early modern era, giving them the ability to define and defend their borders, and to crush internal opposition;³¹ this argument is often summarized in the well known formulation that: "War made the State and the State made War."

When trying to describe the actual mechanisms of this "military revolution" it seems plausible to suggest that the military revolution itself was closely related to the movement of military men around Europe, and the circulation of techniques and technology which this movement caused; this in turn led to the formation of multinational armies and the development of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. Be this as it may, late medieval armies were already somewhat multinational in character, and, by the early sixteenth century, if not before, European armies began to exhibit a distinctly multinational nature. Examples of the multinational character of early modern European armies can be multiplied almost indefinitely. The armies of Henry VIII of England, for instance, had a strong Germanic element.³² The onset of the age of European Wars of Religion (roughly the century and a half between 1520-1660) seemed to have accelerated the development of multinational armies. The French wars of the

³¹ While there is widespread agreement regarding the existence of a "Military Revolution," historians still have great fun debating what it consisted of, and when and where it occurred. Geoffrey Parker's "The Military Revolution, 1550-1660 - A Myth," in *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, Clifford J. Rogers ed., Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1995, 37-54, is a good introduction to the concept of the "Military Revolution." The other essays in that collection also offer valuable perspective on the debate.

sixteenth-century, for example, were fought, to a considerable degree, with German and other foreign troops. According to one source, the French Army, with which Francis I campaigned in Italy in 1542, contained, out of a total of around 70,000 soldiers, some 43,000 Swiss and German pikemen, 4-5,00 Italians either arguebusiers or men-at-arms, 2,000 Clevelander [German] horse, and Basque and Albanian light troops, amongst others.³³

The Eighty Years War (1566-1648) however, the revolt of those who would become Protestants in what would eventually become the Dutch Republic, against the rule of Catholic Spain, probably represented the crucial phase in the development of multinational armies. The Dutch needed all the help they could get, whether it was that of their co-religionists, or otherwise, and as a result soldiers from around Europe came to the Low Countries. (The "Low Countries" comprised what is today, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and northern France.) As the Dutch Wars also saw the development of crucial new military organization methods and techniques, the Netherlands became the "School for War" of Europe, functioning almost as a giant post-graduate course for the instruction of European soldiers.

The importance of the Dutch Wars, as a means of spreading military culture, was well understood in the eighteenth-century. In speaking of the origin of the manual of arms one writer declared:

The Spaniards were most probably the inventors of it, as they were the first who made use of muskets, and their infantry was at that time the best in Europe. Even the French, who are ready, upon the lightest grounds, to put in their claim for the honour of all useful inventions and improvement, acquiesce in this: and owe that they learned the use of the musket from the Spaniards; and they never had any regular discipline, or exercise, till they took it from the Dutch; whose army in Flanders was at that time the great school, where all who had a desire to attain military knowledge, went to learn it under Prince Maurice of Nassau, who is frequently stiled, by the military writers of his time, the reviver of the discipline of the ancients; and whose continual wars with the Spaniards had enabled to improve upon, and surpass his masters.³⁴

³²Gilbert John Millar, *Tudor Mercenaries and Auxiliaries, 1485-1547*, Charlottesville, Virginia, University of Virginia Press, 1980, 44-45, hereafter, Millar, *Tudor Mercenaries*.

³³ Millar, *Tudor Mercenaries*, 68-69

³⁴ *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, London, J. Shuckburgh, 1759, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, xvii, hereafter: *Norfolk Militia*.

The Dutch Revolt neatly segued into the Thirty Years War in Germany, which again mobilized huge numbers of men, and pulled in soldiers from around Europe. The importance of this period was clearly recognized by the generations that followed. At least one mid-eighteenth-century writer believed that the two great military figures of this era: Maurice of Nassau, along with Gustavus Adolphus, the King of Sweden, and one of the leaders of the Protestant cause in the Thirty Years War, were to be seen as the founders of modern warfare: "The revival of military science may be dated from the days of the Nassaus and Gustavus Adolphus, who in their arms and tactique, blending the Grecian, and Roman systems, formed armies eminent in discipline, and renowned for the great actions they achieved."³⁵ In their turn, the Dutch Wars and the Thirty Years War would be followed by the English Civil War, which took on something of the nature of a religious conflict itself, albeit one largely fought between different flavors of Protestants. While the market for soldiers there was perhaps not quite so good as in the preceding conflicts, it too offered employment for numerous wandering soldiers of fortune, and so acted to bring the military revolution home to England.

It might be thought that the Wars of Religion would offer an unlikely backdrop to the development of a pan-European military world. Since wars of religion are, by definition, wars of (at least usually) passionate belief, we might reasonably expect that it would put limits on the employment of soldiers: to be specific, we would expect to find Protestant soldiers fighting for Protestant causes, and Catholic soldiers for Catholic causes. To a degree, this was true. Certainly sixteenth and seventeenth-century armies were sometimes primarily of one faith, as they were sometimes of primarily one nationality. The operative words here however, are "sometimes" and "primarily."

In fact, the demands of military employment often brought soldiers into the armies of other faiths.³⁶ For example, Protestant Scottish soldiers were found on both sides during the 30 Years War. Gustavus Adolphus, the champion of Protestantism, had substantial numbers of Scottish soldiers, many of whom were Highlanders, and some quite possibly still Catholic, in his

³⁵ David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry. Illustrated By Maneuvres of the Prussian Troops, and by an Outline of the British Campaign in Germany, during the War of 1757. Together with an Appendix, containing a practical abstract of the Whole.*, London, T. Cadell, 1788, 1, hereafter, *Dundas Military Movements*.

³⁶ Fritz Redlich, *The German Military Enterpriser and his Work Force: A Study in European Economic and Social History*, two volumes, Wiesbaden, Franz Steiner Verlag GMBH, 1964, 166-168, hereafter: Redlich, *Enterpriser*, Vol. I or Redlach, *Enterpriser*, Volume II.

Army; while, at about the same time, Albrecht von Wallenstein, (1583-1634) the quintessential military enterpriser and mercenary, in the service of the (Catholic) Empire, was finally murdered for suspected treachery, by a junta of colonels lead by two Scotsmen, Walter Leslie and John Gordon.³⁷ Indeed it might even have been preferable for Catholic powers to hire Protestant soldiers: Fritz Redlich offered the intriguing suggestion that during the Thirty Years War the most successful military enterprisers were usually Protestant: he attributes this success to the actions of an early form of the Protestant Work Ethic.³⁸

In sum, it seems plausible to suggest, that any limitations on the movement of military men, and military culture, across the religious line was counterbalanced by passions aroused by the Wars of Religion. This helped to bring in foreign volunteers (and on occasion generate alliances with foreign nations) to support their respective causes, and so increased the exposure of the new military methods and martial culture. Beyond this, the simple fact is that the age of the Wars of Religion generated enough violence, so that military men, even if they hewed solely to either the Protestant or Catholic side, had more than enough opportunities to travel around Europe, learning, and spreading, military culture as they went.

2.2.2 The Dutch Connection

It seems clear that, for Britain, the first, and perhaps most important, exposure to the pan-European military world came about as a result of the Wars of Religion and their sympathy with, and frequent alliances with, their fellow Protestants in the Low Countries. The Dutch connection, however, stayed alive long after the Wars of Religion had burned themselves out. Britain maintained an involvement with the Low Countries that, surviving a series of wars between England and the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth-century, would last well into the eighteenth.

The connection began with the Dutch Revolt against their Spanish masters, which generated the so-called Eighty Years War. Formal English intervention began in 1585, and

³⁷ "WALLENSTEIN, Albrecht Eusebius Wnzel von, Duke of Freidland and Mecklenburg," in John Keegan and Andrew Wheatcraft, *Who's Who in Military History: From 1453 to the Present Day*, New York, Wiliam Morrow and Company Inc., 1976, 337-340, hereafter: *Military Who's Who*.

would continue over about the next forty-five years. Beyond this, a great many Britons would serve with the Dutch Army as individuals. It has been argued that this large-scale involvement with the Dutch Wars remilitarize the British aristocracy, and so spread martial culture in a British Isles that would be fortunate enough, until the 1630's, to escape large-scale warfare.³⁹ The connection was, after an interval of warfare against the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth-century, strongly reinforced by the ascension of William of Orange to the throne of Great Britain in 1689. William of Orange made it his life's work to stop the expansion of Louis XIV's France; and even after his death, the ties between English and Dutch were strengthened during the War of the Spanish Succession, when John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough led a combined British and Dutch Army (with a liberal mixture of assorted other nationalities as well) to what are still regarded as some of the most glorious military victories in British history.⁴⁰ In sum, the period from about 1570 to 1720 saw intensive British involvement with warfare in the Low Countries, mostly allied with, and occasionally hostile to, the Dutch.

The transfer of military knowledge from the Low Countries to Britain can be seen easily enough, simply by looking at the military manuals published in Britain in the early and mid-seventeenth-century. For instance, in one of the more widely circulated manuals of the period, *The Soldiers Accidence*, the author, Gervase Markham, promised that he had not put anything into his work but: "those wants which I found in my selfe when I first betooke me to the Warres."⁴¹ Henry Hexham, "Quartermaster to the Regiment of the Honorable Colonell Goring," wrote a work entitled: *The Principles of the Art Militarie Practiced in the Warres of the United Netherlands*. His second volume promised its reader that it was "Consisting of the Severall Formes of Battell, represented by the illustrious Maurice, Prince of Orange, of famous Memorie."⁴² It is clear that, to the British, military knowledge came from the Netherlands, and it

³⁸ Redlich, *Enterpriser*, Vol. I, 166-168, 192-193, and *passim*.

³⁹ Roger Manning, *Swordsmen: The Martial Culture in the Three Kingdoms*, oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, 1-6. Dr. Manning is the originator of the concept of "martial culture," and I am greatly indebted to him, for allowing me to make use of his thinking and research on this topic, as well as for the gift of a copy of his book in proofs.

⁴⁰ David Chandler, Christopher L. Scott, James Falkner ed., *Blenheim Preparations: The English Army on the march to the Danube, Collected Essays*, Staplehurst, Kent, Spellmount Limited, 2004, 37-71, hereafter: Chandler, *Blenheim*.

⁴¹ Gervase Markham, *The Soulldier's Accidence*, London, John Bellamie, 1635, unpaginated, "To the Reader."

⁴² Henry Hexham, *The Principles of the Art Militarie Practiiced in the Warres of the United Netherlands*, London, Matthew Symmons, 1637, and *The Second Part of of the Principles of the Art Militarie Practiced in the Warres of the United Provinces*, London, Robert Younge, 1638, and *The Third Part of the Principles of the Art Militarie practiced in the warres of the United Provinces*, Hague, Francis vander Spruyt, 1640.

was books like these that instructed the officers who led the various British armies which fought one another in the wars that plagued the three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland in the mid-seventeenth-century.

Nonetheless, it was, for the most part, the Britons who had actually served in the Low Countries, (and those who had gone further afield to Germany during the Thirty Year's War) who provided the cadre around which the armies of the English Civil War formed.⁴³ In turn, while the latter years of the Commonwealth, and the reign of Charles II saw periodic wars with the Dutch Republic, the Dutch connection was renewed by personal connections, after the Glorious Revolution of 1688 when William of Orange assumed the British throne. William of Orange brought with him several distinguished European soldiers, and they helped bring the latest European military practices to England.

The most famous of these soldiers was Marshal Schomberg. Friedrich, Graf von Schomberg, (1615-90.) was a soldier whose career would seem to exemplify the seventeenth-century pan-European military world. Schomberg was a German soldier of fortune who fought for the French in the Thirty Years' War. He entered Portuguese service and reorganized the Portuguese Army. Subsequently he reentered the service of France, and in 1676 he actually held Masstricht against William of Orange. He left the French service after the repeal of the Edict of Nantes, and in 1688 took command of William of Orange's army in Ireland, where he was killed at the Battle of the Boyne.⁴⁴ Schomberg was only one of many soldiers that William assembled in his attempt to limit the expansion of France's sun king. Those soldiers who came to England with William of Orange brought the most up-to-date military methods to a country that had been something of a military backwater to that point.⁴⁵

Schomberg's relatively brief association with the British Army moreover, also signifies how, with the ascension of William and Mary to the throne of England Britain was drawn into what has been termed "The Second Hundred Years' War." The War of the League of Augsburg, which in England is often known as the Nine Years' War, 1688-1697, (and in America goes by the name of King William's War) was the first of a series of wars which Britain would fight against France over the next one-hundred and twenty seven years: a marathon of warfare which

⁴³ Stuart Reid, *All the King's Armies: A Military History of the English Civil War, 1642-1651*, Staplehurst, Kent, UK, Spellmount Limited, 1998, 2-4, hereafter: Reid *King's Armies*.

⁴⁴ SCHOMBERG, Frederich, Graf von, in *Military Who's Who*, 294.

⁴⁵ Chandler, *Blenheim*, xxiv-xxvii, 38-53.

finally ended on June 18th 1815, at Waterloo. These wars, though each was begun and waged for different reasons, collectively decided the one of the most pressing international issues of that era, whether or not France would dominate Europe. The answer would prove to be no, and one of the principle cause of that negative was the continual opposition of Britain. Over the course of this century of warfare, Britain would be forced, quite against the inclination of a nation that abhorred standing armies, to maintain ever-larger armies, and to ensure that they were kept up-to-date with the latest European practice.

In terms of Britain's access to European military culture however, what was significant was that, at the end of the seventeenth- and the beginning of the eighteenth-centuries, Britain was again allied with the Dutch, and engaged in a war on the continent of Europe. Once again, in the first part of the eighteenth-century, as in the first part of the seventeenth-, the most up-to-date European military practices were to be found in the Low Countries. It was still the case, as it was a century earlier that the Dutch Army was a pan-European institution, held together by good military practice, as Humphrey Bland noted:

We have a common Notion, that this *Sang Froid* or Obedient Quality in the *Dutch*, is owing chiefly to Nature, by their having a greater Proportion of Phlegm in their Constitution than the *English*, by which their Minds are not so soon agitated as ours. But I look upon this way of Reasoning to be rather a plausible Excuse for our Neglect, in not bringing our Men to the same Perfection of Discipline, than the Production of any natural Cause in the Dutch. But, allowing that Nature does contribute something toward it, yet is evident, Art has the greater Share, since their Troops are generally compos'd of different Nations.⁴⁶

In the 1720's, when penning the first of the many editions of his drill book, a manual which would be the most popular of all guides available to the British officer:⁴⁷ Humphrey Bland wrote to praise the Dutch Army, and to acknowledge the debt which the British Army owed them:

However, I am not going to introduce new Customs here, but only set down the Practice abroad, and where they differ from

⁴⁶Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline, in which is Laid down and Explained The Duty of the Officers and Soldiers, Thro the several Branches of the Service*, 2nd Edition, London, Printed for Sam. Buckley, 1727, 147, hereafter: Bland, *Treatise*.

⁴⁷J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, 182-183, hereafter: Houlding, *Service*.

the *Dutch* from whom we have taken the greater Part of our discipline, by having been in a long Alliance with them: and tho' it must be own'd that we could not have follow'd a more perfect System of Discipline than this, both in Camp and Garrison;⁴⁸

Bland was not speaking in the abstract, and he had more than camp and garrison in mind: by the early eighteenth-century, and under the leadership of Marlborough, the British Army was starting to get a reputation, and one part of that reputation was for having the deadliest musket fire in Europe.

Much of the secret of the British success was to be found in their adoption of "Platoon Firing." While most other European nations, including France, Britain principal opponent during those years, were using different methods of volley firing: that is, one rank in a line several ranks deep firing all together, or sometimes the entire unit letting fly as one, the British were using a different system. A British battalion was drawn up in a line, three ranks deep, and the line was subdivided into eighteen "Platoons."⁴⁹ Each platoon was then designated to be a part of one of three "firings." These firings were so arranged, that the platoons that composed them were spread evenly across the battalion's front. During battle, one firing at a time would "gave fire," while another firing was loading and the third was ready to fire. This ensured that there was always a reserve of loaded muskets available, and it allowed the officers and non-commissioned officer to more closely supervise the soldiers who were firing, and generally better control their troops. Moreover, since within each platoon, all three ranks fired at once, their fire was more concentrated, and it was easier for everyone to load and fire together, than for one rank to be loading and the other ranks firing. There was general agreement that platoon firing was far superior to other systems of firing, and that it was a major factor in the success British battalions were having in firefights in the early eighteenth-century. The point of all this detail was that platoon firing was generally thought, both at the time and since, to have been developed by the Dutch, and the British seem to have learned it from them.⁵⁰

Nor were these soldiers, who obtained such expertise in platoon firing, only English. The phrase "Britons" has been used because it must be emphasized that while many of the subjects of

⁴⁸ Bland, *Treatise*, 179.

⁴⁹ In the eighteenth century "Platoon" referred solely to a firing unit, unlike modern usage where a platoon is a permanent subdivision of a company.

⁵⁰ David Chandler, *The Art of War in the Age of Marlborough*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1976, 114-121. The word "platoon" itself is generally thought to be of Dutch origin

the English king who served abroad in the wars of the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century were English, many, perhaps more, were Scots. The long-term connection between England, Scotland and the Dutch Republic, the multinational make-up of early modern European armies, and the manner in which soldiers moved around Europe are all neatly summarized by the existence of an interesting institution, the "Scotch Brigade." The "Scotch Brigade was, as its name implies, a brigade of Scottish soldiers, but it was in the service of the Dutch Republic. It existed for two a little over two centuries, from the 1570's to the 1794. It was, theoretically, kept at a strength of around 1,500 men. In 1794, it refused to accept Dutch uniforms (and more generally an attempt to assimilate it into a now nationalistic Dutch army) and returned to Scotland, where, after a brief time, it joined the British line, as the 94th Foot, known as the Scotch Brigade. In this the Scotch Brigade followed the precedent set by another British regiment, the 3rd Foot [the Buffs] who had also began as a British regiment in the Dutch service in the 1570's, but who rejoined the reforming British Army in 1665.

What makes the example of the Scotch Brigade so striking is that, in the mid-eighteenth-century at least, it seems to have served as a "farm team" for British officers. It was not uncommon for the British army to commission officers who had previously served in the Scotch Brigade, when they had need of them, typically when the British Army was undergoing a rapid wartime expansion.⁵¹ It seems to have been understood that Scotch Brigade officers had at least some claim on commissions in the British Army, when commissions became available.

For example, the 2nd Highland Battalion, raised in 1757, eventually to be known as the Fraser Highlanders, (78th Regiment of Foot) had a significant number of officers who had previously served in the Scotch Brigade. John Clephane, who was major and second in command, had retired from the Scotch Brigade. Captain Hugh Cameron, and Captain John Nairne, had previously served in the Scotch Brigade, as had Captain Simon Fraser who took a commission in the Royal American Regiment, and later exchanged into the Fraser Highlanders. (It should be noted that Scotch Brigade officers were not only granted commission in Scottish regiments, on at least some occasions they were commissioned into English regiments as well.⁵²) Also worthy of note was that the Fraser Highlanders also had at least two officers who had

⁵¹ Internet, "The Scotch Brigade."

⁵² Houlding, *Service*, 105, f.n.

previously served with the French Army.⁵³ What is striking about this list, which is probably incomplete even for this one regiment, is that the British Army did not simply get officers, they got experienced officers, captains and majors, men who could be expected to know their business.

2.2.3 The German Connection

By the mid-eighteenth-century however, the Dutch Connection began to lose some of its potency. For the latter part of the eighteenth- and the beginning of the nineteenth-century the principle military connection between Britain and the continent would lead through Germany. There are probably several different reasons for this, with the change of dynasties on the British throne, from the Houses of Stuart, and of Orange, to the House of Hanover, being perhaps the most important. With the British monarch now also the ruler of a German state, Britain obviously would be forced to play, at least to some degree, a role in German international affairs.

Beyond this dynastic imperative, the tremendous victories of Prussia in the wars of the mid-eighteenth-century meant that most armies, not least among them the British, were eager to adopt the new Prussian methods: Statements such as: "We also in England, about 1757, had a new manual exercise introduced among the troops; which is now generally followed, and called Prussian[,]" would become a commonplace not only in the British Army, but in armies throughout Europe⁵⁴ Furthermore, Britain would be an ally of Prussia's during the Seven Year's War, and would send an army to Germany that would operate under the command of one of Frederick the Great's generals, Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick.⁵⁵ Taken together this would engender a definite Prussianization of the British Army in the third quarter of the eighteenth-century. Prussian drill books would be translated into English, and British soldiers would learn Prussian drill.⁵⁶ David Dundas, who wrote the drill manual that the British army would follow

⁵³ Internet, Clan Fraser Society: Officers of the Old 78th Regiment of Foot, (Fraser Highlanders) by Marie Fraser, Genealogy/Newsletter Editor, Clan Fraser Society of Canada

⁵⁴ *Norfolk Militia*, xxvii.

⁵⁵ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1974, 186, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

⁵⁶ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 210.

throughout the wars with revolutionary France, and with Napoleon, regularly visited Prussia to witness the Prussian Army reviews, and was strongly influenced by what he saw.⁵⁷

Moreover, as wars became bigger, and as Britain became richer, it would become increasingly common for Britain to hire German troops, to supplement their own forces. This meant that during the second half of the eighteenth and the first quarter of the nineteenth-century, the British Army was almost continuously operating with German troops. All of these factors acted to make the British Army aware of German military practices. Finally, the later eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century saw an European wide renewal of interest in "light infantry:" that is, in troops trained both to skirmish before a line of battle, as well as to operate with some degree of independence in the "*petty guerre*," the so-called "small war" of outposts, escorts, raids and ambushes which accompanied the movement of large armies. This renewed interest also acted to direct the attention of the British Army towards Germany, as German soldiers were acknowledged experts in this field, and was believed to supply expert light infantry and riflemen. It was quite common for German game-keepers, or the sons of German game-keepers to be hired as marksmen, these soldiers were commonly referred to as *jaegers*. So strong was this identification that British light infantry would often be described as "*jaegers*" as well

The importance of the German connection to the development of the British light infantry arm can be shown by the fact that, at the end of the eighteenth-century, as the British Army attempted to build-up its light infantry arm, it used a German soldier, Baron Francis de Rottenburg, as its resident expert; and the two books that he wrote on that subject served as the manuals for the training of its light infantry and riflemen. Francis de Rottenburg was another interesting example of the pre-national, pan-European military world. Born in Danzig, he joined the French Army in 1782. After the Revolution, he left the French service, and travelling first to Naples, moved on to fight with Kosciuszko in the Polish rebellion of 1794. After this he joined a German battalion in the British Service, Hompesch's *Jaeger* battalion and served in America. He was promoted lieutenant colonel, and took command of the 5th Battalion of the Royal American Regiment, which he trained as a unit of green-coated riflemen, the first entire battalion

⁵⁷ David Gates, *The British Light Infantry Arm, c; 1790-1815: its creation, training and operational role*, London, B. T. Batsford Ltd., 1987, 30-31, hereafter: Gates, *British Light Infantry*.

armed with rifles in the British Army. He eventually became one of the British Army's acknowledged leaders of rifle and light infantry troops, and rose to the rank of major general.⁵⁸

It is also worth noting, that the Duke of York, the British Army's commander-in-chief, from 1795 to (with a brief interruption) the end of the Napoleonic Wars, who founded the British Army's staff college, imported a French general, Francois Jarry, to be its head. Francois Jarry had previously headed the Prussian Army's military school in Berlin. His career makes clear that, as late as the beginning of the nineteenth-century, the British Army still found it necessary to import military experts to supply skills that they could not supply from their own army; moreover, this importation seemed to have been regarded as neither exceptionally unusual, nor outrageously inappropriate.⁵⁹

The mid-eighteenth-century pre-national pan-European military world was often a world of people and ideas in motion, and this mobility served the needs of both the individual soldiers who moved about in it, and the armies who made use of their services. In the seventeenth and early eighteenth-centuries, the British Army benefited in particular from the movements of individuals and groups back and forth across the English Channel between England and the Low Countries, and, during the mid-eighteenth- and on into the nineteenth-century on the movement between Britain and Germany. It is clear that this process helped bring the pre-national pan-European marital culture to the British Army. It also seems clear, that, while books were becoming increasingly important as means of transmitting knowledge, it was the movement of people that was crucial in connecting the British Army to the pan European military world. So who were these people who made up these armies, and what brought them to an army that was often a long way from their home?

⁵⁸ Gates, *British Light Infantry*, 95.

⁵⁹ Gates, *British Light Infantry*, 43.

2.3 “THE WARS” AS A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS

The multinational pan-European military world was a venerable institution by the mid-eighteenth-century. As we have seen, the armies of Europe placed few or no sorts of limits on where its members might have been recruited, and had little or no concern with what their motivations might have been for joining. Nonetheless, while this lack of limits is a necessary precondition for multinational armies, it is not in and of itself, a sufficient explanation for their existence. It does not explain why European monarchs would want to have foreigners in their ranks, or at least not have cared if there were; equally, it does not explain why foreigners would want to serve in armies of nations other than their own? To address these questions it is necessary to look more closely at the issue of motives: the motives of the dynastic kings who welcomed foreign subjects into their armies, and the motives of those who “went away to the wars,” and joined the armies of kings.

Historians of immigration, as they struggle to describe the movements of peoples around the globe, often divide their analysis into consideration of “pull” and “push” factors: “Pull” factors are the attractions, the things that encourage immigrants to come to a particular destination. “Push” factors are those that encourages leaving home and going elsewhere, they are the factors which lead to emigration. It is particularly appropriate to use the conventions of the history of immigration in analyzing the European military world since contemporary observers often spoke of “the wars” as if (unless one happened to be raging in the immediate neighborhood, in which case the language used would be much more immediate) they were another, and distant, country.

2.3.1 The Pull

In the fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth-century, and sometimes even on into the eighteenth-century, one of the most elementary of the many pull factors in operation was the need of

European monarchs for skilled and trained soldiers. Military expertise was not spread evenly around the nations of Europe; instead expertise often resided in particular places and with particular groups. In the fifteenth and sixteenth-centuries, skilled infantrymen came from Switzerland (the famous Swiss pikemen of the latter middle ages) and, in the form of the *Landesknechts* from Germany. *Pas d'argent pas de Suisse*, (No silver [money] no Swiss[soldiers]) was an old proverb in Europe, and it indicates how strongly soldiering was identified with the Swiss, as well as their motive for acting as such. Cavalry was often hired from Germany as well, the so-called *Reiters*, mounted and armed with pistols. In this early modern military world, military enterprisers acted as general contractors for the monarchs of Europe and pulled together "off-the-shelf armies" from these and other specialist components, to make an army of the required size and composition for whoever was doing the hiring.⁶⁰

As was mentioned above, the revolt of the Low Countries against the rule of Spain, the so called "Eighty Years War," proved to be the crucible in which a new style of army, organized around a standing army of infantry, would be created. As the Low Countries became the "school for war," of Europe, new methods of drill, tactics, and army administration were all developed in the Low Countries. The various armies that fought there usually took those methods back home with them, and the same process would be replicated during the other wars that convulsed Europe in what would prove to be a remarkably violent couple of centuries.

Of equal importance however was the fact that large numbers of soldiers from throughout Europe served in the "Dutch Wars" as individuals, and so studied in the school for war and learned these new methods. When they left the Netherlands and moved elsewhere, their individual movements helped spread the new methods around Europe. Indeed, in the days before military schools, and advanced techniques of training, certainly the best, and often the only, way to bring new military skills to your army was to hire men who had learned these skills elsewhere.

To give some examples of this, during the English Civil War, there were two common methods of deploying infantry: in the "Dutch manner," and in "Swedish Brigades." What is important here is the language. The "Dutch manner" was the method of deployment developed in the low country, and learned by the Englishmen who had served there, while the "Swedish Brigades," were named after their supposed development by Gustavus Adolphus' army, and were learned by Englishmen who served in the Thirty Years War in Germany. In fact, the

⁶⁰ For a discussion of the "off-the-shelf army" please see Appendix I.

correlation of name and conceptual origin were probably not exact; but even if the techniques came from elsewhere, this terminological distinction neatly illustrates the role of the pan-European military world in spreading military techniques around Europe, and it is certainly true that the newly formed and ill-trained armies of the English Civil War needed all the help they could get from soldiers who had served in the wars on the continent.⁶¹ More generally, it is thanks to the Dutch Wars, and the dissemination of military method that they engendered, that, even today, there tends to be a world wide uniformity in the basics of military rank and organization. This was even more noticeable in the eighteenth-century, where, as David Dundas stated: "The general divisions of modern European armies, are almost universally the same - into companies, battalions, regiments, brigades, divisions, wings, lines."⁶² Nor did the movement of people with military knowledge end in the seventeenth century.

While the need for foreign military expertise was probably less urgent in the mid-eighteenth-century, it had by no means died away. In the wake of Frederick the Great's spectacular victories in the Silesian Wars and the Seven Years War, European Armies were gripped with what has been described as Prussomania.⁶³ As a result of this fascination with the methods of the Prussian Army, soldiers with knowledge of "Prussian drill," that is knowledge of the methods of the Prussian Army, found their services at a premium. Baron Pirch, formerly a Prussian officer, with his supposed Prussian expertise, managed to divert the tactical methods of the French army down the garden trail of overly precise movement thanks to his knowledge of the Prussian usage of "points of view."⁶⁴ Baron von Steuben, who self-promoted himself to the rank of a Prussian Lieutenant General to sell his services to the fledgling Continental Army, was another officer who traded on the reputation of the Prussian army to find employment elsewhere. (In fairness, it must be said von Steuben turned out to be a much better buy than Pirch.) However dubious some aspect of their lives proved to be, both of these men were also eighteenth-century examples of the circulation of military knowledge through the movement of men who had learned those techniques first hand. Less common, but not unknown, were instances of officers in one army sent to another; either as part of an effort to provide assistance,

⁶¹ Reid, *King's Armies*, 4-5.

⁶² Dundas, *Military Movements*, 55.

⁶³ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, Second Edition, Chicago, Illinois, Emperor's Press, 1996, 309-311, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 2nd Edition.

(this would be the case for many of the French volunteers who would serve with the Continental Army) or as a type of observer.

Along with these examples of the movement of new military methods around Europe via the movement of soldiers who had learned new-techniques first hand, mid-eighteenth-century armies often needed men with more mundane skills that they could not supply within their own ranks, and as a result they went looking elsewhere. Perhaps the most obvious example of this phenomenon was the Continental Army of the American Revolution; which, along with the Prussian expertise of Baron von Steuben, hired scores of foreign soldiers, most of whom are less well known today, to supply skills which were in short supply, particularly, but by no means limited to, military engineers.

In considering the efforts of the new republic of the United States to hire the military skills it needed, it is important to understand that this was not considered disgraceful or dishonorable in the eighteenth-century, neither for the army doing the hiring, nor for the soldier being hired. (Though arguably, it is a rather odd thing to do for a nation that complained, in its Declaration of Independence, of its former king unleashing hired mercenaries upon them.) Indeed, in the eighteenth-century, the very term "soldier of fortune" referred not only to a soldier serving in an army foreign to him, but to any officer who had to make his fortune, whether serving in the army of his own nation, or that of another. If it was necessary for a soldier to make his fortune, and if he could not make it at home, it was seen as no more wrong for him to go abroad to seek it, than it was for a farmer to do so. Conversely, if a state did not have the necessary military skills within its border, it was no more disgraceful for it to recruit foreign soldiers with the necessary skills at war, than to recruit foreign architects with skills that were not available locally.

The second "pull" factor encouraging European armies to recruit foreign soldiers was a shortage of recruits in their own lands. A dearth of recruits could be the result of several different sets of circumstances. First, and most obviously, a lack of men could be the result of a nation with a low population. In the mid-eighteenth-century both Britain and Prussia, to reach for the most obvious examples, found themselves fighting large wars with relatively small population bases. Getting foreign soldiers was an absolute necessity for both.

⁶⁴ Robert S. Quimby, *The Background of Napoleonic Warfare: The Theory of Military Tactics in Eighteenth-Century France*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1957, 199-209, hereafter: Quimby: *Background*.

A shortage of recruits could also be the result of an inability, for a variety of reasons, to utilize the manpower that theoretically was available within a state. Prussia had a functioning system of conscription, and so was able to mobilize a significant part of its own population by coercive methods. In most other European nation however, conscription was a much "if-ier" proposition. In fact, conscription was not politically viable in many mid-eighteenth-century European states, except in the most dire of circumstances, and often not even then. Both Britain and France attempted to conscript men during wartime, and in both cases the attempt proved to be so politically explosive that conscription was ended as quickly as possible. As a result, these states, and others similarly situated, often had to look elsewhere for soldiers

Closely related to the difficulties of raising troops in your own country, was the difficulty of raising the right sort of troops. Most recruiting officers were quite clear about the type of men they wanted. They preferred to recruit peasants, men from the countryside, men, who they believed, were strong, hardy, loyal, and not too clever. They preferred these peasants to men from the cities who they felt were physically weak, sickly, and often either potentially, or actively, disloyal. Moreover, even if not disloyal, city men were more likely to be educated, and therefore were, in the eyes of mid-eighteenth-century recruiting officers at least, also more likely to be too smart for their own good, probably not sufficiently deferential, and thusly potentially disciplinary problems. (While their reasoning might have been sound in most respects, the recruiting officers proved wrong in one area. Troops raised from cities proved to be much more resistant to disease than troops raised from the countryside, since they had been exposed to a larger disease pool. In an era when disease killed far more soldiers than battle, this was not a trivial consideration.) Moreover, this was an age in which it was commonly believed that different regions or nations produced people with common characteristics, characteristics that might make them more or less suited for military life.

For example, Humphrey Bland offered these observations upon the English as soldiers:

It is allowed by all nations, that the *English* possess Courage in an eminent Degree; but at the same time, they accuse us of the want of Patience, and consequently that which it produces, Obedience, so that by our being defective in the latter, the great Advantages which might be reap'd from the former are often lost, or at least fall short of what might be expected it. This Accusation is something severe, since by it they deprive us of an

essential Quality [discipline](and I was going to say, the most Essential one) towards the Forming of a Soldier, without which not man can be justly styled a Compleat one. They may say as well, that our Courage is the effect of Passion, and not Reason; And indeed as it generally appear to them, they have too much color for the Assertion, by our neglect of Discipline; and from thence conclude that the *English* can't be brought into it; But they are certainly mistaken in that, since none are more capable of Instruction, than the *English*; and when proper Means are used, neither Patience nor Obedience, are wanting in them.⁶⁵

In a less favorable interpretation, Frederick the Great had such contempt for citizens of his nominal capital, Berlin, that he generally excused Berliners from conscription, and this even though Frederick was always desperately short of men.⁶⁶ Whether the opinion was good or ill, these types of considerations meant that there was often a shortage of the right sort of recruits; and so, if the right sort were hard to come by in your own nation, it seemed only logical to look for them elsewhere. Conversely, if you had an excess of a soldierly population, as many of the German states were believed to have, it might make sense to try to turn this surplus to a profit. Finally, it should be noted, that, since in the pre-mechanized eighteenth-century, economic output was very closely correlated with the available population; it therefore followed that, since any man who was made a soldier was a man largely removed from the workforce, recruiting foreigners to serve as your state's soldiers would allow your native population to continue at more productive labor. Conversely, during hard times, joining the army would be the only social security, loosely defined, available to many un- or under-employed European man.

Moreover, in some cases foreign soldiers were seen as positively desirable. While, by the mid-eighteenth-century, most European monarchs sat fairly secure on their thrones, many also realized that force might be necessary at some time or another to maintain themselves there. Therefore it was sometimes seen as desirable to have a few regiments of foreign troops available, troops who would not identify themselves with the monarch's subjects, and would be willing to fire upon a rampaging mob, or who would stay loyal during an attempted coup. In fact, for most of the eighteenth-century, long-service native troops would prove reliable; nonetheless, having a few regiments of foreign troops handy was often thought, by many European monarchs, to be a

⁶⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 147.

⁶⁶ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 55.

wise precaution. Perhaps the most celebrated example of this phenomenon was the regiment of Swiss Guards that served the Kings of France. They proved this calculation correct during the French Revolution, when, even after the French Guards sided with the Parisian mob, the Swiss soldiers tried to defend Louis XVI, and were slaughtered for their loyalty.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is worth noting that, by the mid-eighteenth-century, the movement of soldiers around Europe, and their passage from army to army had been a commonplace for several centuries. It no longer seemed to inspire much comment; quite simply, for many, "going to the wars" had become customary, and there seemed no good reason to change the custom, though some were beginning to question it.

2.3.2 The Push

We have nothing in the nature of a Gallup Poll of eighteenth-century soldiers to ascertain their motives for military service in a foreign army. Contemporary opinion however, had no need of such an investigation, the answer was self-apparent to the eighteenth-century military world: it was to be found in the nationality of the soldiers entering foreign service, and in the circumstances to be found in their homeland. By universal agreement the majority of expatriate soldiers were Germans, Irish, Scots, or Swiss. These soldiers came from nations that were either impoverished, suffering from a degree of political or religious oppression, had a strong tradition of supplying soldiers, or, quite often, all three.

On occasion, particularly in the case of the central German states, and in the Swiss cantons, which had supplied soldiers to Europe for centuries, the local authorities acted as contractors or middlemen. This meant that there sometimes was an element of coercion or impressment in operation. This wholesale operation, (it often, but not inevitably, supplied the recruits in formed regiments) were conducted by the states concerned, both from motives of profit, and from considerations of international politics. Being in a position to supply troops gave the smaller European states, such as the Swiss cantons and many of the lesser German principalities, more leverage in international affairs than the might otherwise have enjoyed. This consideration was particularly important in Germany where the *Soldatenhandel* (soldier trade)

was an established tradition, and those smaller German states were vulnerable to the vagaries of international affairs, and often needed friends.⁶⁷

Recruiting, however, was equally likely to be a retail operation; one in which the men being recruited acted individually and voluntarily (if the phrase "voluntary" can be extended to describe an enlistment to avoid starvation) in response to the blandishments, and, on numerous occasions, to the fraud, of a foreign recruiting party. It was not at all uncommon to send recruiting parties abroad to find men: British regiments kept recruiting parties in German, the Austrian Army recruited throughout the Holy Roman Empire, and the Prussians eagerly recruiting just about anywhere, to supply only three examples. In parts of Europe, the competition amongst recruiting officers could become ferocious.

So important was foreign recruiting to the Prussian Army that it proved necessary to regulate the process. The King of Prussia was concerned: "that Officers recruiting in foreign countries, render the duty difficult by overbidding one another, by which means a man is sometimes in treaty with Officers of different Regiments; he therefore strictly forbids all such proceedings, and, at the same time, commands, that, as soon as a man is first spoken to by an Officer of one Regiment, no Officer, or non-commission'd Officer belonging to another, shall endeavour to pervert his intentions, either by offering him more advance money, or by reflecting on other Regiment; nor shall they interfere in his enlistment, or hinder it, while the first Officer is in agreement with him by any stratagem or means whatsoever[.]"⁶⁸ The Prussian Infantry Regulations went on to specify the rules for several different possible situations that could arise when recruiting in a foreign nation. For instance, what was to be done when a recruit began by talking to the recruiters from one regiment, but in the end enlisted with another? In those circumstances, it was determined, the regiment that finally enlisted him got to keep him. Or what happened when a recruit enlisted with one regiment but decided he preferred another? In that case the recruit had to stick with the regiment with which he had enlisted.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Peter H. Wilson, "The German 'Soldier Trade' of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: A Reassessment," in *The International History Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, August 1996.

⁶⁸ *Regulations for the Prussian Infantry. Translated from the GERMAN ORIGINAL, With Augmentations and Alterations made by the KING of PRUSSIA since the Publication of the Last Edition. To which is ADDED, The PRUSSIAN TACTICK; Being a Detail of the Grand Maneouvre, as performed by the PRUSSIAN ARMIES.* No place given, J. Nourse, 1759, New York, repr., Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968, 373, hereafter: *Prussian Infantry*.

⁶⁹ *Prussian Infantry*, 374.

The Scottish diaspora of the seventeenth-century took Scots soldiers, fleeing both religious persecution and poverty, across Europe, but particular into the Baltic, and, as a result, Scots were strongly represented in the Thirty Years War, and particularly in the army of Gustavus Adolphus. Over 50,000 Scots served on the continent of Europe during the Thirty Years War. In the eighteenth-century, and for similar motives, the Irish, in the famous “flight of the Wild Geese,” would supply much of Europe with soldiers. They were particularly apparent in the Austrian army, where a number of them, or their children, achieved high rank, including the highest. Christopher Duffy has shown that both the membership and the leadership of the Austrian Army of the Silesian and Seven Year’s War had a strong Irish contingent, with Ireland supplying no less than thirteen Field Marshals.⁷⁰

Not only did the odd corners of Europe supply a large number of soldiers for the pan-European military world: but, as an added bonus, recruits from some of these more primitive lands were seen as bringing with them, as a result of the nature of their lives in their homeland, certain special advantages. This was a type of thinking that might be described as the “wild man” school of recruiting. As was discussed earlier, by the mid-eighteenth-century, many European armies had come to realize that they needed what were termed “light troops,” that is infantry and cavalry that was able to act outside of the line of battle. The need was for troops who could skirmish, forage, man outposts, conduct raids and ambushes, and generally act independently. It was believed that this type of duty was both physically more demanding (since the troops marched greater distances, and were often without tents, or regular supplies) than the normal duties of troops of the line and, moreover, that it required a degree of field craft that more civilized soldiers did not possess.

Solutions to this problem, it was felt, were often to be found in the European fringes. Many eighteenth-century military men felt that soldiers recruited from the wilder fringe of Europe were ideal for these duties. As a result of their primitive and impoverished nations of origin, it was believed, they were naturally hardy, and not used to the level of creature comfort that more civilized troops expected. At the same time their primitive economies, involving hunting or herding, taught them the skills of the outdoorsmen, just the type of skills which,

⁷⁰ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Maria Theresa: The Armed Forces of Imperial Austria, 1740-1780*, New York, Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1977, 24-28, hereafter: Duffy, *Maria Theresa*.

military thought held, light troops needed to possess. One contemporary explanation of this line of reasoning went as follows:

The Hungarian has an inborn spark, and a natural inclination for stratagems. He lives in a country which abounds in horses. He learns to be a horseman in his childhood, and having nothing better to do in that half-savage land, he teaches his horse all sorts of tricks, and acquires a peculiar mastery of that kind of equitation. His land is thinly populated and the dwellings are consequently sparse, which means that when he is out riding he must keep a sense of direction, in order to retrace his path. With this kind of upbringing, the Hungarian becomes a perfect light cavalryman without further training.⁷¹

So, as a result of this line of reasoning “wild men” from the European fringe were often recruited as light troops: Scottish Highlanders provided light infantry of a sort for the British Army. Hungarian horsemen provided Hussars (light cavalry) for the Austrian Army, (as well as other European armies for a time) and the Austrians made a virtue out of the necessity of their long border with the Turkish Empire: they recruited the men from their “Military Borders,” (often called Pandors or Croats) to serve as their light troops.⁷²

In short, foreign soldiers were men who needed to find a way to make a living, and quite often, to find a way to keep from starving. They might also be people who found it necessary, for a variety of reasons, to leave their homelands. Beyond this, however, German, Swiss, Irish, and Scottish culture were also cultures with a strong martial tradition. Soldiering was, at least to a degree, a traditional, respected, and honorable, occupation. This consideration leads to what contemporary observers believed to be the other great motive for serving in the army of a foreign nation, the desire for honor and glory. As late as the mid-eighteenth-century it was still often held that the best place to gain honor, and thus to rise in social status, was on the battlefield. This motive probably operated most strongly on men with the status, or the pretensions, of being, a gentleman, and who therefore intended to become commissioned officers; but it cannot be completely discounted as a possible motive, or at least a partial motive for those who enlisted in the ranks as well. Finally, and probably often intermixed with notions of honor and glory, was

⁷¹ Duffy, *Maria Theresa* 96, quoting H. G. Mirabeau, *Systeme Militaire de la Prusse*, London, 1788, 25, Duffy's translation.

the desire for travel and adventure. Most commonly these restless motives would take a man to sea; nonetheless, in most armies, there was probably a minority who had a hankering to travel (or, on occasion, a pressing need to get out of town) who had succumbed to the lure of a recruiting sergeant.

2.3.3 The Un-Citizens

In this discussion of motives for serving in a foreign army, belief in their cause has not been mentioned. This was because most eighteenth-century wars were not ideologically driven, and those who fought them were seldom strongly vested in their outcome. This was one of the factors that made the creation of multinational armies possible. While the American Revolution, to a degree, broke this pattern, and was, in many ways, an ideological conflict, the Continental Army was not generally an ideological force. Some foreign volunteers, particularly the French, were serving either at the request of their own government, or out of a desire to twist the Lion's tale, in revenge for the British defeat of France in the Seven Year's War. A few of the foreign officers who served in it might have been moved, at least in part, by a belief in the ideals of the American Revolution; the Marquis de Lafayette, (1757-1834) who served with the Continental Line, and was later prominent in the early stages of the French Revolution, is often cited as an example of a foreign officer who fought out of belief in the ideals of the American Revolution. They, however, appear to have been in a distinct minority. Certainly seventeenth- and eighteenth-century armies could on occasion become enthusiastic in support of the monarchs and governments they served, nonetheless, it seems clear that many, perhaps most, members of the pan-European military world were not particularly concerned with the rights and wrongs of the cause they served.

This raises an interesting question: surely there must have been occasions when European rulers would *not* have wanted their subjects serving the armies of other nations, either because they needed their subjects as soldiers or workers at home, or they wished to deprive other monarchs of their services? Were there not occasions when European rulers tried to stop

⁷² Duffy, *Maria Theresa*, 95-99, 82-90.

their subjects from leaving home, and going off to "the wars?" The answer to this question, unsurprisingly, was yes, European monarchs often wanted to stop their subjects from serving in the armies of other nations. It is not clear however that they were always, or even often, successful in that desire.

Frederick the Great, for instance forbade his officers from serving in foreign armies. Likewise, the British crown seems to have wished to prevent, or at least control those of its subject who might be inclined to take service with a foreign ruler. Blackstone's *Commentaries* on English law included the following in book four, chapter seven; under the heading of "Felonies Injurious to the King's Prerogative," Blackstone stated that:

3. FELONIES in serving foreign states, which service is generally inconsistent with allegiance to one's natural prince, are restrained and punished by statute 3 Jac. I. c. 4. which makes it felony for any person whatever to go out of the realm, to serve any foreign prince, without having first taken the oath of allegiance before his departure. And it is felony also for any gentleman, or person of higher degree, or who hath borne any office in the army, to go out of the realm to serve such foreign prince or state, without previously entering into a bond with two sureties, not to be reconciled to the see of Rome, or enter into any conspiracy against his natural sovereign. And farther, by statute 9 Geo. II. c. 30. enforced by statute 29 Geo. II. c. 17. if any subject of Great Britain shall enlist himself, or if any person shall procure him to be enlisted, in any foreign service, or detain or embark him for that purpose, without license under the king's sign manual, he shall be guilty of felony without benefit of clergy: but if the person, so enlisted or enticed, shall discover his seducer within fifteen days, so as he may be apprehended and convicted of the same, he shall himself be indemnified. By statute 29 Geo. II. c. 27. it is moreover enacted, that to serve under the French king, as a military officer, shall be felony without benefit of clergy; and to enter into the Scotch brigade, in the Dutch service, without previously taking the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, shall be a forfeiture of 500 *l*.

All of this sounds very convincing, and it is probably true that Prussians and the English, (though not the Scots or Irish) were underrepresented in the pan-European military world. The examples of both Pirch and von Steuben, discussed above, however, indicate that even the strongest of monarchs could not stop those who truly wished to serve elsewhere; (Pirch apparently feigned illness to gain his release from the Prussian Army) and in places where the

letter of the law was less observed, for instance Scotland and Ireland, the sheer number of Scots and Irish found serving overseas suggests that prohibitions were of little use.

At the level of the common soldier moreover, concern about their possible foreign service seemed to have been mostly *pro forma*. Monsieur de Lamont for example, advised that captains, who were enlisting soldiers, should:

Then question him whether he has ever served against his country, either in rebellion at home, or in foreign armies? If he says he has, to upbraid him with his disloyalty, and make him sensible what shame it is to be false to his friends and Country, and what danger he has run if he had been taken, or if the mercy of the State had not prevailed to grant a general pardon, for then he might have been hanged, though he had returned 20 or 30 years after the offense had been committed; besides the baseness of the action and the scandal it brings on the honorable profession of a soldier.⁷³

It is hard to believe that this sort of questioning did much to stop the movement of men around Europe to serve in different armies, and for the most part it does not seem that the authorities were all that concerned about it.

It does seem however, that, around the middle part of the eighteenth-century, the number of troops leaving the British Isles to serve other nations began to slowly drop. The presence of Irish soldiers in foreign armies seemed to have declined significantly, and Scottish soldiers almost completely vanished, after about the second quarter of the eighteenth-century. While there were probably many reasons for this, it is not clear that this was so much a triumph of regulation, as it was a victory for local supply and demand. It seems likely that, from the second half of the eighteenth-century onward, Britain was maintaining a large enough army, and involved in enough wars, to furnish employment for most of the Scots and Irish who were looking (or willing) to become soldiers. This victory for the hidden hand moreover, was, admittedly, probably aided by the fact that England, united with Scotland at the start of the eighteenth-century, and finally gaining control of the Highlands, after the '45 rebellion, was thereafter, in a better position to monopolize and control the service of the Scots. Nonetheless, it also seems that, up through the Seven Year's War at least, Scottish (or at least Highland) soldiers were still regarded, by the English, as foreign troops. The fact that they were regarded as foreign

⁷³ de Lamont, "Duties," 38.

however, would not, given the nature of mid-eighteenth-century ideas about makeup of armies, and "citizenship" the have been much of a problem.

To allow the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European "wars" to function, in effect, as a nation of immigrants, a rather different set of expectations than those held today, as to what a nation's army should look like, must have been in place. Today the expectation is that a nation's army will be made up of members of that nation. As was discussed in the previous chapter, eighteenth-century Europe viewed the matter differently. To repeat what has already been said, the mid-eighteenth century European military world had armies of nations, not national armies. The "state commissioned" army did not come with a presumption that it would be recruited only within the boundaries of the state that it served; in fact, rather the opposite was assumed: it was generally understood that armies recruited whenever, and wherever they could, there was no expectation that they would restrict their recruiting to their own nation, and so, as was mentioned above, British regiments might well have recruiting parties on the Rhine to recruit Germans.

What made this type of non-national army possible was the fact that "citizen" as the term is used today was, for most European nations in the mid-eighteenth-century, something of an anachronism. The idea of a citizen who had certain specific rights, and in return, owed specific duties to the government, was still largely a theoretical concept in the mid-eighteenth-century; indeed most Europeans were "subjects" of a state, not "citizens" of a nation-state. This distinction implies that, when raising an army, Britain, or any other mid-eighteenth-century European nation state, were not calling citizens to arms to fulfill an obligation implicit in their membership in the national group; they were simply hiring worker, admittedly a very special kind of worker for a special kind of job, and there was no particular reason for the British government to hire these workers only from Britain.

Where, one might ask, does service to king or country fit into this pan-European military world; and how about patriotism? After all, if many of the members of the pan-European military world were not serving their own king and country, many certainly were. In fact, well before the age of democratic revolutions, the language of serving one's country was spoken alongside the language of soldierly honor, along with the language of desire for material reward. All three of these motives were common currency in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Armies are pragmatic institution, they used whatever tools were available to socialize and

motivate their members. Still, what seems clear was that in the British Army, as late as the mid-eighteenth-century, the claims of nationalism and patriotism do not seem to have had the primacy we would expect them to have. By the end of the eighteenth-century, after the American and French Revolution this would begin to change. Even after these changes began taking place however, it would be a slow change, and the older motivating factors of the martial culture kept much of their currency and strength for a long time to come. The old pre-national pan-European martial culture worked, and worked very well, and it hung on long after its ideological justification had been rendered obsolete; and even when it passed on, the forms it left behind lived on in very different armies, some persisting to this day.

To examine this interplay of factors which, taken together caused the multinational armies of the pan-European martial culture, it is instructive to examine the career of a Swiss soldier, Henry Bouquet, whose example, many believe, must have had a an effect on George Washington.⁷⁴ His life, and the history of the British regiment in which he served, provides a case study of the pan-European military world in action.

⁷⁴ Don Higginbotham, *George Washington and the American Military Tradition*, Athens, Georgia, The University of Georgia Press, 1985, 29-30, hereafter: Higginbotham, *Washington*. Robert K., Wright, *The Continental Army*, Washington, D. C., Center of Military History, United States Army, 1983, 138-139, hereafter: Wright, *Continental Army*.

2.4 COLONEL HENRY BOUQUET AND THE ROYAL AMERICAN REGIMENT

Colonel Henry Bouquet was a cosmopolitan exemplar of the international martial culture, as, for that matter, was the Royal American Regiment of the British Army in which he served. Henry Bouquet was born in Rolle, in the Canton of Berne, in Switzerland in 1719.⁷⁵ While his father kept an inn, the *Hotel de la Tete Noire*,⁷⁶ Bouquet had uncles who were military officers and started him on his military career.⁷⁷ He began his military employment, in April of 1736, as a cadet in the Swiss regiment of Constant, which was in the service of the Netherlands, in the Company of Captain Crousaz, in which his uncle, Louys Bouquet, was Captain Lieutenant. Henry Bouquet obtained his commission as second lieutenant in the Swiss regiment of Colonel von Diesbach, in the Sardinian service, in September 1739. He seems to have become a (full) lieutenant in the Swiss regiment of Colonel Roy, also in the service of Sardinia in May 1743, and he was appointed regimental adjutant in March 1745. He left the Sardinian service in May of 1748.⁷⁸

Henry Bouquet had gained a reputation fighting for the King of Sardinia during his wars with France and Spain, particularly at the Battle of Conys. After he left Sardinia, he entered the service of Holland. Bouquet was commissioned Captain Commandant in the Swiss Guards of the Prince of Orange in 1755, the equivalent of a lieutenant colonelcy in a line regiment. This was a considerable step forward in his military career. Over the next year Bouquet performed certain quasi-diplomatic tasks as well as his military duties. He also seemed to have gained some recognition in the world of learning.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volumes I - VI*, Donald H. Kent, Autumn Leonard, S. K. H. Stevens, John L. Tottenham, Louis M. Waddell, eds., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951-1994, *Bouquet I*, v, hereafter: *Bouquet I*, etc. Bouquet, Henry in *The Dictionary of National Biography: From the Earliest Times to 1900, Volume II*, Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee eds., Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1917, 917-918.

⁷⁶ *Bouquet I*, xvii-xviii.

⁷⁷ *Bouquet I*, xiv-xix.

⁷⁸ *Bouquet I*, xxi-xxiii.

⁷⁹ *Bouquet I*, xxv-xxvi.

One is left with the impression of a person who was capable, aloof, and rather cold. His portrait shows a slightly stout man with a self-satisfied expression.⁸⁰ G. C. F. Dumas was a contemporary who wrote a brief (and as far as is known, the only) biographical sketch of Henry Bouquet:

Henry Bouquet had goodly stature, superior intelligence, and, under a cold and imposing expression, a feeling heart. He made no claim to the good opinion of others, neither did he solicit it. One was compelled to esteem him; and because of this, many men of the profession thought they could dispense with liking him. Firmness, intrepidity, calmness, presence of mind in the greatest dangers, virtues so essential in a commander, were natural to him. His presence inspired confidence and compelled respect; it reassured and yet overawed.⁸¹

This impression of aloofness and reserve is somewhat offset in the Bouquet papers by the evidence of romantic involvement with, at various times, three different women.⁸²

After General Braddock's defeat at the Battle of the Mononogahela, the British wanted to strengthen their forces in the American Colonies. One part of this build-up was an attempt to recruit from the middle colonies.⁸³ In order to do so, it was decided that a four-battalion regiment would be raised in the colonies, numbered as the 62nd, and known as the Royal American Regiment.⁸⁴ (The 62nd was renumbered as the 60th Regiment of Foot in 1757, to prevent confusion it will hereafter be referred to as the R. A. R., or the Royal American Regiment.⁸⁵) The British had assumed, reasonably enough, that the Regiment would be raised from Swiss and German immigrants to the middle colonies, since the Swiss and Germans had a long tradition of serving as soldiers for hire throughout Europe. Therefore it was decided that experienced officers who spoke German would be recruited. An Act of Parliament (29 George II c. v.) allowed the commissioning of fifty foreign-born Protestant officers.⁸⁶ The suggestion to recruit foreign

⁸⁰ *Bouquet, II*, frontispiece.

⁸¹ *Bouquet, I*, xxiv.

⁸² *The Papers of Henry Bouquet, Volumes I-VI, passim.*

⁸³ *Bouquet I*, vi.

⁸⁴ Williams, Edward G., "The Prevosts of the Royal Americans," in *The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine*, Vol. 56, No. 1, (January 1973) 4, hereafter: Williams, Prevosts."

⁸⁵ "The Royal Americans: 60th of Foot," <<http://www.intersource.com/~gorham/60th.html>, hereafter: Internet "RAR."

⁸⁶ William Smith, *Historical Account of Bouquet's Expedition against the Ohio Indians in 1764, and a Translation of Dumas' Biographical Sketch of General Bouquet*, Cincinnati, Ohio, Robert Clark and Co., 1868, footnote, xx, hereafter: Smith, Cincinnati.

officers seems to have come from a Swiss soldier of fortune named Jacques (usually anglicized as James) Prevost.

The Prevost family would serve Great Britain for five generations and usually with distinction. James Prevost himself, however, was something of a scoundrel. In some manner he gained the patronage of the Duke of Cumberland, at that time Commander-in-Chief of the British Army, and was made Colonel of the 4th Battalion of the R. A. R.⁸⁷ His battalion was described as “a military madhouse,”⁸⁸ but in spite of this, James Prevost unjustly prospered, and rose to the rank of Lieutenant General in the British Army, and married the heir to a title.⁸⁹ Prevost did bring along two brothers and one nephew who were quite competent officers,⁹⁰ as well as other valuable Swiss officers such as Henry Bouquet and his friend Frederick Haldimand, who both took service with Great Britain in the R. A. R.. during the summer of 1756.⁹¹ (Haldimand who had also served in the Dutch Swiss Guards, would rise to be Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in North America in 1773-1774, and to a knighthood.⁹²) It says something about James Prevost these two officers both seemed to have objected to serving under him, and they were posted to different battalions.⁹³

The R. A. R. was unusual in having four battalions. It was also unusual in having a Colonel of the Regiment, (initially James Campbell, 4th Earl of Loudon) and then four Colonels Commandant, one per battalion, as well as four Lieutenant Colonels and four Majors. One source states this was done so that the British would have a supply of experienced commanders available. The Colonels Commandant were to be: “capable of independent command on detached duty.”⁹⁴ It is a tribute to the strength of the pan-European martial culture, and to the caliber of the officers whom the British commissioned, that there is no indication that the British felt that their new Swiss officers needed any retraining, or orientation; they were simply sent straight to their new commands.

While the original intention was to recruit the Royal American Regiment from German and Swiss settlers in the Middle Colonies, it proved impossible to raise enough soldiers, not only

⁸⁷ Williams, “Prevosts,” 7.

⁸⁸ Internet, “RAR.”

⁸⁹ Williams, “Prevosts,” 14.

⁹⁰ Williams, “Prevosts, *passim*.

⁹¹ *Bouquet I*, vi.

⁹² *Bouquet I*, footnote xxvi.

⁹³ *Bouquet I*, footnote xxvi.

from the middle colonies, but from any of them. A letter to Lord Loudon (the Commander in Chief in North America) reported that there was also: “no such thing as getting men in South Carolina.”⁹⁵ As a result, the R. A. R. turned into an extreme example of the international martial culture. Recruits were sought anywhere and everywhere and the 60th soon became a true “motley crew.” James Prevost recruited in Germany,⁹⁶ and the British 50th and 51st regiment of Foot were disbanded (this is what caused the renumbering of the 62nd to the 60th) and the men from these regiments were placed in the 60th.

One source has described the R. A. R.’s personnel during the French and Indian wars as one fourth assorted Americans, over one half drafted out of Ireland, and the rest assorted Germans, Poles, and Bohemians, and the men from the 50th and 51st Foot. The R. A. R. recruited alleged “Germans” from French prisoners-of-war, and was still recruiting in Germany in 1767.⁹⁷ A return for Henry Bouquet’s 1st Battalion, for July 24, 1757 describes his men as “English, Scotch, Irish, American and Foreign.” It records that sixty-two foreign men “listed” in Europe, forty-four natives enlisted in America, and ninety-three foreigners joined in America.⁹⁸ It cannot have been easy to form a new regiment under such circumstances. As Johann Ewald noted: “Discipline as well as orderliness even in the most trifling cases has to be enforced to the utmost in such newly established corps. A commanding officer can never be too strict with a gang composed of people gathered from all corners of the world.”⁹⁹ It is clear that Henry Bouquet, and the other foreign officers that Britain hired were up to this challenge

In fact it seems that their imported officers served Britain very well indeed. The most obvious evidence for this is that the R.A.R. performed as well as it did, and that it was not disbanded at the end of the Seven Years War, as numerous other regiments were. The Royal American Regiment served with Henry Bouquet on most of his expeditions and actions. Other battalions of the Regiment fought at Quebec and Ticonderoga.¹⁰⁰ After the Seven Years War the Regiment continued to serve in North America and elsewhere. It survived the American Revolution, and continued to function as the British Army’s “Foreign Legion” into the early

⁹⁴ Williams, “Prevosts,” 7.

⁹⁵ *Bouquet I*, Tulleken to Lord Loudon, January 29, 1758.

⁹⁶ Williams, “Prevosts,” 13.

⁹⁷ Internet, “RAR.”

⁹⁸ *Bouquet I*, A Return of the First Battalion, July 24, 1757, 152.

⁹⁹ Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Cassel, Germany, Johann Jacob Cramer, 1785, trans., Robert A. Selig, and David Curtis Skaggs, New York, Greenwood Press, 1991, 69, hereafter: Ewald, *Partisan*.

1800's.”¹⁰¹ In the Napoleonic Wars, the Regiment was converted to green-jacketed riflemen and became known as the “60th Rifles.” After the Napoleonic Wars, the Regiment was renamed the “King’s Royal Rifle Corps,” and today their descendants serve the British Army as “The Royal Green Jackets.”

Henry Bouquet had a distinguished, but unfortunately shorter, career with the British Army in North America. He began as the Lieutenant Colonel of the 1st Battalion of the R. A. R, but he quickly assumed more challenging duties. In 1758 he was second-in-command of Brigadier General John Forbes’ successful attack on Fort DuQuesne at the site of present day Pittsburgh. Indeed, since Forbes was often ill, Bouquet provided much of the leadership and direction for the expedition. George Washington served on this expedition as well, and many commentators have asserted that Bouquet's soldierly example must have influenced Washington’s future military career. Bouquet went on to lead an expedition to Northwestern Pennsylvania in 1760. He is best remembered for his victory at the Battle of Bushy’s Run, during August of 1763, that ended the threat to Western Pennsylvania during Pontiac’s War. One year later Bouquet commanded an expedition against the Ohio Indians in 1764 that led to peace in that region. Henry Bouquet was promoted Brigadier General and sent to British Florida. He must have felt that after years of struggle both his career and his personal life were prospering. He had just been promoted, he had investments in land in the colonies, and he was deeply in love with a woman named Margaret Oswald, daughter of a merchant marine captain¹⁰² who lived in Philadelphia.¹⁰³ Tragically, Bouquet died of yellow fever in Pensacola, Florida in 1765.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Internet, “RAR.”

¹⁰¹ Glover, Michael, *Wellington’s Army: In the Peninsula, 1808-1814*,

New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1977, 115-116, hereafter: Glover, *Wellington’s Army*.

¹⁰² *Bouquet VI*, note 798.

¹⁰³ Bouquet to Oswald, July 2, 1765, *Bouquet VI*, 799-800.

¹⁰⁴ *Bouquet I*, vii.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In the details of the military career of Henry Bouquet, we find examples of all the elements leading to multinational armies. The British Army, though it might in fact have been the most “nationalistic” army in mid-eighteenth-century Europe, nonetheless was quite willing to enlist foreign soldiers in the ranks of its “British” regiments, raise whole regiments that were, at least in theory, foreign, and, when necessary, hire regiments from German Princes. In examining the motives for this, it seems clear that all of the common “pull” factors were in operation. In the case of the Royal American Regiment for example, the British Army needed officers who were multilingual in German, English, and French. Moreover, they needed officers who were “capable of independent command on detached duty” in the wilderness of North America.¹⁰⁵ The British Army had also found the well of local recruits, in both Britain and North America, drying up, and they were compelled to find a source for the recruits who were not available locally. Quite reasonably they attempted to tap the traditional sources of supply, Swiss, German, Irish and Scottish soldiers.

The multinational armies of mid-eighteenth-century Europe inhabited a military world very different from that of today. By their very existence they show that “going for a soldier” was not limited to only going to your own nation’s army. In the twenty-first century becoming a soldier is acceptable, indeed often admirable if done for your own nation. Serving a foreign nation however, is seen as reprehensible, and “mercenary” is a strongly pejorative term today modern mercenary soldiers are seen, to use one memorable phrase, as “the whores of war,” with all the negative connotations which that implies.

This could not have been true in early modern Europe, or the phenomena of multinational armies could never have existed to the degree that it obviously did. The twenty-first century sees being a soldier as a civic duty, one of the obligations of citizenship; even a professional soldier is seen, at least in theory, as someone who has chosen a highly admirable, and sacrificial, path,

¹⁰⁵ Williams, “Prevosts,” 7.

that of protecting his home and nation. Obviously this cannot describe the life-path of men such as Henry Bouquet, since as far as we know, Henry Bouquet never fought for the land of his birth.

This suggests that the early modern world had a somewhat different conception of what soldiering was. The very existence of the phenomena of multinational armies suggests the outlines of a very different idea: It indicates that soldiering, was regarded as one of many possible occupations. Admittedly it was an occupation unlike any other, an occupation with a very distinctive way of life, an occupation that many regarded as the most honorable of all possible occupations, but nonetheless it was an occupation. And if soldiering was an occupation, then it was theoretically no more unreasonable to go where you could ply your trade as a soldier, than it was for a mason (another nomadic trade) to go where he could find work as a mason.

This conception of a soldier was one of the necessary preconditions that allowed multinational armies to exist. Once again however, we observe that this different view of the soldier was not, in and of itself, sufficient to explain the service of troops of one nation in the army of another. Soldiering *is* an occupation unlike any other; it requires its practitioners to, at least in theory, and quite often in practice as well, regularly risk their lives. This is something that most men will not do lightly. We might feel that the most pragmatic considerations of the “push” side of the equation were sufficient to bring soldiers to enlist in the armies of foreign lands; nonetheless it is hard to see that they are strong enough to explain why the soldiers stayed and fought; after all, military history is filled with examples of soldiers who deserted or who declined to fight when the time came. So the next question that must be addressed is the question of what motivated foreign soldiers to serve honorably and fight loyally for the foreign kings who enlisted them so eagerly into their ranks?

In the introduction an analogy was made between the pan-European world of the soldier, and the maritime world of the sailor. This analogy however, goes only so far. Both soldiers and sailors were fighting men; but for sailors fighting was secondary to their principle occupation, they often had to fight, but their *raison d'etre*, was to move ships across the sea. For soldiers however, fighting is central to their occupations, it is their principle reason for being; unlike sailors therefore, a more sophisticated rationale for serving than simply earning a living was necessary for a soldier. No matter how urgent the need for pay, most men will need at least an implicit justification to fight and kill: in the conditions of the mid-eighteenth-century, this justification required the soldier to answer two interrelated questions: why should we fight, and

why should we fight for the person we are now fighting for? For the mid-eighteenth-century, pre-national pan-European military world, (though this was probably never stated explicitly) the answer to these questions involve three different but interconnected ideas: a conception of soldiering as a special occupation separate from patriotism and nationalism, a sense of being a separate and unique group and an ideology of gentlemanly honor.

3.0 UPRIGHT MEN WHO ENTERED FOR STEADY ADVANCEMENT: MILITARY HONOR AND REPUTATION

"Of all States and Conditions that of a good Soldier
is most Honorable to himself, and most Advantageous to his Country."¹⁰⁶

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1763, during Pontiac's War, Lieutenant Christie and Ensign Price of the Royal American Regiment, surrendered their posts to the Indians. Henry Bouquet, their commander, considered this conduct shameful. He wrote to Captain Ecuyer, the commander at Fort Pitt, giving his opinion of their conduct: [The portions shown as struck through below were stricken out in the original.]

You can imagine how I look upon the shameful conduct of Christie who dishonors the corps by his infamous capitulation ~~Happy are those of us who die as brave men~~ The safety of a post . . . is our first duty and ~~not any justification that it is absolutely impossible to defend it as the reason for not being able to do his duty.~~ Unhappy is the person who vindicates the abandonment. ~~A way will not be found to prolong his life at the expense of his honor and that which he owes his prince and the state.~~¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Monsieur de Lamont, "The Art of War, Containing the Duties of all Military Officers in Actual Service," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Richard Bell, 1776, vii, hereafter, Lamont, "Duties, or: de La Valliere, *Art of War*."

¹⁰⁷ Bouquet to Ecuyer, July 4, 1763, Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volumes I - VI*, Donald H Kent, Autumn L Leonard, S. K. H. Stevens, John L. Tottenham, Louis M. Waddell, eds., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951-1994, hereafter: *Bouquet I*, etc., *Bouquet VI*, 293-294, the portions shown as struck through were stricken out in the original.

That he also wrote to Captain Ourry commanding Fort Bedford, on the same topic, shows how upset Bouquet was by what he regarded as a failure of honor and of character:

Humanity makes me hope that Christie is dead, as his scandalous Capitulation for a post of that Consequence, & so impregnable to Savages deserves the most severe Punishment:

The Shame of that Action will be a lasting Blot upon the Corps he belongs to. I hope the conduct of those who remain will be worthy of Men of Honor who know how to meet Death with Firmness if their Duty & the Service of their Country requires it; and would scorn to disgrace themselves by the least Appearance of a dishonorable Act.

I shivered when you hinted to me Lt Blaine's intentions. [Captain Ourry feared that Lt. Blaine was going to surrender Fort Ligonier.] Death & Infamy would have been the Reward he could expect instead of the Honour he has obtained by his Prudence, Courage and Resolution.¹⁰⁸

Much of the hold that the pan-European martial culture had upon its followers, and the mid-eighteenth-century British Army had upon its officers, was rooted in the twin poles of military honor and material reward. Military honor, which activated its followers in the abstract, along with the prospect of reward, which provided its followers with more concrete incentives, were the mainsprings of motivation in the pre-national, pan-European military world. Taken together, they go a long way towards explaining the loyal service which British soldiers offered their King, that the soldiers of the Continental Line would offer the new Republic, and, for that matter, the service that the soldiers of most European nations offered the states they served. Military honor provided a *raison d'être*, an emotional and ethical justification for serving as a soldier, one that was important whether serving your own prince, or a prince or cause not your own. Equally important, however, were the material rewards of soldiering. These were often substantial, for a fortunate few they were potentially huge, and in any case were of a more immediate and worldly nature than the abstractions of military honor.

The immediate assumption of most commentators at the time, and of many since, was that officers were motivated by honor, while reward was the motivation for the other ranks. In this view, officers fought because they were gentlemen of honor; other ranks fought for pay, rations and loot. While there is, of course, some truth to this picture, the reality was much more

¹⁰⁸ Bouquet to Ourry, July 4, 1763, *Bouquet VI*, 296.

complex. Honor and reward were positive motivations that worked on both officers and other ranks, they manifest themselves however, in very different ways to what were very different groups. Whether you were an officer or a common soldier, military honor was expected to guide your conduct, but that is not to say that the code of military honor was identical for both officers and common soldiers. There were very different expectations for the behavior of officer and other ranks - expectations that were rooted not only in their different social origins, but also in their anticipated roles both on the battlefield and off.

For officers, honor not only provided a guide for conducting themselves as gentleman; it also, to a surprising degree, guided them in the performance of what they saw as their duties. British officers of the mid-eighteenth-century, indeed all mid-eighteenth-century European officers did not so much demonstrate skill on the battlefield as they displayed honor and character and conduct. Officers defined themselves not by what they knew, but by what they were. Mid-eighteenth-century officers, both British and others, did not believe that their primary duty lay in demonstrating a mastery of military knowledge, they believed it lay in serving as an exemplar of conduct upon the battlefield. The conduct they exemplified was, of course, the honor of a gentleman. To phrase this another way, for mid-eighteenth-century British officers, honor defined not only who they were - gentlemen; it also defined what they did as officers - they demonstrated honor.

Contrary to popular wisdom, honor did not only prescribe the conduct of officers, it defined that of the other ranks as well; but, since the battlefield as well as the social roles of those two groups were very different, the type of honor that was expected to guide their conduct was also quite different. For officers, honor served as a code for what was primarily individualistic conduct in both their military and their private lives. The other ranks also were expected to behave honorably but their honor was demonstrated in a more collective form as *esprit de corps*, the collective honor of their regiments. The collective honor of the common soldiers will be discussed in greater detail in chapter seven.

Conversely however, it was not only the other ranks that were interested in the material rewards of soldiering. Most mid-eighteenth-century British officers (indeed most European officers of the mid-eighteenth-century) were in fact dedicated careerists, intensely concerned about their prospects for pay and promotion, as well as being intensely eager to gain both honor and honors. Together, military honor, and material reward were the carrots of the pan-European

martial culture, and, it must be emphasized, they were not mutually exclusive carrots. The material rewards of soldiering were many: rations, pay, promotion, and loot. That honor itself could also be a reward is less self-apparent today, (except perhaps in the self-actualization sense of living according to the standards of yourself and your peers) though it was quite clear in the eighteenth-century. In defining "Honour," the *Universal Military Dictionary* stated that: "The best recompense of a brave action is, undoubtedly, the satisfaction of having done it, but nevertheless the honour resulting to us from it is a real good, which should be dear to us."¹⁰⁹

Honor, in short, could lead to honors, not only titles, but also what is perhaps less obvious today, the hope of patronage, or "preferment:" that is, the chance to attract the notice of your superiors with the hope of appointments to offices of various kinds. For officers, as a practical matter, material reward and military honor were usually closely linked, since demonstrating honor was one of the best available path towards gaining reward as well: For instance, "[a]dvancement" the *Universal Military Dictionary* explained: "in a military sense signifies honour, promotion, or preferment in the army, regiment, or company."¹¹⁰ The desire for these types of rewards was indeed an important component of the motivation of mid-eighteenth-century officers, and will be dealt with in more detail elsewhere.

While honor and reward were probably equally important motives for both officers and other ranks, it is true to say that officers were usually expected to express their motives for service using the language of honor, while, preferably, keeping the topic of money decently under wraps. (Though it must be said that officers could often be surprisingly explicit about their desire for the more concrete rewards of soldiering.) At a minimum, when in polite company, the profit motive was expected to take second place to loftier goals. Thus in 1776, when Richard Bell republished some old military treatises, their title page promised that they would "show every officer what is expected from him; and what he ought to perform for his own honor and preferment, and for the service of the state."¹¹¹ This seems to neatly summarize the priorities of the military man, highlighting the importance of honor and reward, both of which, incidentally, judging from these titles at least, seemed to come before service to his

¹⁰⁹ George Smith, *An Universal Military Dictionary, A Copious Explanation of the Technical Terms &c. Used in the Encampments, Marching, Movements and Military Operations of an Army*, London, J. Millan, 1779, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, 130, hereafter *Universal Military Dictionary*.

¹¹⁰ *Universal Military Dictionary*, 2.

¹¹¹ de Lamont, "Duties," xi.

country. The same priorities are demonstrated by the subtitle of one of the books included in that compilation: “The Art of War, Containing the Duties of Soldiers in General in Actual Service. Including necessary INSTRUCTIONS in many capital MATTERS, by remaining IGNORANT of which a MAN will be every day in danger, of bringing DISGRACE upon HIMSELF, and material INJURY to the CAUSE of his COUNTRY.”

It is hard to determine whether concepts of honor or the possibility of advancement and reward loomed higher in the prospective officer's mind. Henry Bouquet, in a letter to General John Forbes, stated that he and his friend Frederick Haldimand (both, at this time, lieutenant colonels in the Royal American Regiment) intended to serve: “with the attention and energy which can be expected of upright men who mean to do right.” In the very next paragraph, however, he also wrote that: “We entered this service with the hope of gaining steady advancement[.]”¹¹² Most likely it was both: the chance to participate in an honorable career, and the possibility of rewards and advancement which together were for many the decisive factors in choosing to become a military officer.

While serving solely for honor might be seen as the most honorable option, being under the necessity of making your fortune was not dishonorable for a military gentleman. As Monsieur de Lamont tells us in "The Duties of Soldiers in General:

There are several motives which incline men to take up the profession of the sword. The great ones generally do it to purchase honor; for being born to great estates they want nothing but renown. Others, who have not so much cause to boast of their fortune, endeavour to advance themselves; and were it not for that hope perhaps they would be more sparing of their lives. And though the motives of the former may be more glorious than that of the latter, yet both are commendable, because both follow the dictates of virtue; and both are useful to their country, because they spend their blood for its honor.¹¹³

¹¹² Bouquet to Forbes, April 18, 1757, *Bouquet I*, 83.

¹¹³ de Lamont, "Duties," 95.

3.2 GENTLEMANLY HONOR AND THE PROFESSION OF ARMS

The martial culture of the pan-European military world originated in the concept of the honor of a gentleman. It was the honor of the gentleman that allowed men, gentle or otherwise, to join an army, whether that of their own country or that of another, with the assurance that their commitment to military service was acceptable and virtuous and honorable. It was this belief in the honorableness of military service, whether national or transnational, that allowed the pan-European military world to not only exist, but flourish, well into the eighteenth-century.

In British history the phrase "gentleman" is a loaded one that carries a wealth of important, though often contradictory, meaning. In attempting to define the term, one is almost tempted to follow the example of the American supreme court justice, who, when asked what pornography was, stated that he couldn't define it, but he knew it when he saw it. It seems that something of the same applies to the ideal of the gentleman as well. Everyone in the mid-eighteenth-century, and many since, knew a gentleman when they saw one, however, they seem to have a remarkably hard time explaining what one was.

The classic attempt at a definition of a gentleman dates from the sixteenth-century, and was given by William Harrison in his *Description of England*:

[W]hosoever studieth the laws of the realm, whoso abideth in the universities, giving his mind to his book or professeth phisc and the liberal sciences, or besides [does] his service in the room of a captain in the wars, or [by] good counsel at home, whereby the commonwealth is benefited, can live without manual labour and thereto is able and will bear the port, charge and countenance of a gentleman, he shall for money have a coat of arms bestowed upon him by the heralds . . . and shall be called master, which is the title men give to esquires and gentlemen, and be reputed a gentleman for ever after.¹¹⁴

Harrison's oft-quoted description shows that there were several different possible models for a gentleman: Writing of a somewhat later era, (the Victorian) Philip Mason, in *The English*

¹¹⁴ Quoted in Philip Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal*, New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982, 27, hereafter: Mason, *Gentleman*.

Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal, classifies them as variously: the Scholar and a Gentleman, the Sportsman and a Gentleman, the Christian and a Gentleman, and an Officer and a Gentleman.¹¹⁵ Of these different models, it is obviously that of the "Officer and a Gentleman" that is of interest here; however, what is misleading about both Mason's classification, and Harrison's classic description, is that they mentioned an "officer and a gentleman," or a "captain in the wars" toward the end of their definitions, rather than at the beginning; this is misleading because there is a strong argument to be made that it was the progenitor of the officer and a gentleman, the knight, and his code of conduct, chivalry, that were the basis of the concept of a "gentleman," as well as of his sense of honor.

Roger Manning, in *Swordsmen: The Martial Ethos in the Three Kingdoms*, offers compelling evidence for what he terms a "remilitarization" of the British aristocracy in the period from roughly 1585 - 1702, and that this remilitarization coincided with a "rechivalrization" of the aristocracy, a revival of the ideals of knight.¹¹⁶ Inevitably this rechivalrization and remilitarization of the British aristocracy, "trickled down" to the gentry, and reinforced the notion that a gentleman's honor was closely connected to his courage, and, crucially, that his courage had to be demonstrated, and thus his honor revalidated, periodically.¹¹⁷

Obviously war and battle are the logical places to go, if one wants to demonstrate courage and revalidate honor. As the writer of one book of advice for officers said, in the type of comment that was repeated over and over again: "It is true they [gentlemen] cannot gain much reputation without going into the army."¹¹⁸ Notice, however, that since this definition of a gentleman's honor means that the principle reason for a gentleman's military service is *his own honor*, not service to his king or country; therefore, if one's own king and country were not obliging enough to supply a war in which to validate one's honor, there is no reason not to go elsewhere to find a war, and many reasons to do so. To put this another way, it was the military service, in and of itself, that was important; who or what was being served was much less so.

This was the ideology that made the pan-European military world possible. It is, of course, a safe assumption that the vast number of European men, who went off to "the wars" did

¹¹⁵ I am simplifying and summarizing Mason's ideas, see: Mason, *Gentleman*, *passim*, and particularly Chapter 18: "A High Ideal."

¹¹⁶ Roger Manning, *Swordsmen: The Martial Ethos in the Three Kingdoms*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003, 15-20, hereafter: Manning, *Swordsmen*.

¹¹⁷ Manning, *Swordsmen*, 54

so for economic reasons, not out of considerations of honor, and pretensions to the status of a gentleman. The ideology of a gentleman and his honor however, did mean that: whether he was a gentleman, or an out of work tailor, whether he sought honor, or pay, whether he was serving the nation of his birth, or some other the soldier's service was moral, acceptable, and even, arguably, admirable, and one certainly not to be condemned

It is fair to say that by the mid-eighteenth-century, some of the more intense elements of the chivalric revival and the remilitarization of the gentry had faded. Most gentlemen, British or otherwise, did not undertake military service. As Harrison's definition illustrates, there were other, non-military models for the gentleman to follow, and indeed the eighteenth-century saw a widening of the career-paths open to a gentleman. This is not to say however, that all paths were deemed equal: it seems clear that the officer and a gentleman was a little more equal than the other types of gentlemen; his chosen occupation was likely to be seen as the most suitable for a gentleman, as the one most in lines with a gentleman's knightly roots, and, as a result, was probably seen as the most admirable. When looking at the honor of British officers in the mid-eighteenth-century then, we are looking at the code of behavior of men who have chosen to follow the oldest, and what they believe to be the most honorable, pattern for a gentleman to follow.

A concept of honor that made military service not merely acceptable, but admirable, a political system that de-coupled military service from citizenship and defined soldiering as an occupation, rather than a patriotic duty, and a sense of a unique and special identity: these were the necessary precondition for the existence of a martial culture and a pan-European military world. They are only preconditions however, they are too general to provide the detail description of a unique way of life. For that more specific guidance was required.

Soldiering *is* a way of life unlike any other. It is an occupation that makes unique demands on its followers, it requires them to risk their lives as a matter of course, and to be prepared to take the lives of others. Along with the hazards of battle, soldiers are also required to endure the hardships of campaign. As a result of these extraordinary demands, it was probably inevitable the pan-European martial culture would evolve in a manner that fulfilled uncommon needs. A martial culture would need to be emotionally satisfying and sustaining for men who would risk and take lives, and it would have to be special and distinctive as a recompense for

¹¹⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 73.

enduring hardship. The centrality of honor to the life of a soldier made this possible, for an officer and a gentleman it was essential in defining who and what he was.

3.3 THE HONOR OF THE MID-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY OFFICER

“The art of war being the noblest of all other arts.”¹¹⁹

That an officer was a gentleman would have been a truism in the mid-eighteenth-century. The following definition, taken from the *Universal Military Dictionary*, makes the equation of officer and gentlemanly status quite clear: "CADET, among the military implies a young gentleman who . . . serves in the army, with or without pay, till a vacancy happens for his promotion. There is a company of gentlemen cadets maintained at Woolwich, at the king's expense, . . . commissions are given to them when qualified. The proper signification of the word is, younger brother. See **Academy.**"¹²⁰

A handbook for part-time soldiers, *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, in referring to militia officers spoke with disapprobation of "gentlemen," who by a "certain degree of application become only half-officers."¹²¹ In this, and numerous other references however, the status of officers and gentlemen were always coupled, and nowhere is there any suggestion that the two conditions do not go together. In fact, to this day, the phrase "an officer and a gentleman" can still be heard, perhaps more ironically than seriously, but, if in no other way than as a cliché, the phraseology still lives. Why should this be so? Why should it be self-evident in the eighteenth-century that an officer should be a gentleman, and why should this assumption hang on so long as to still be a catchphrase in the twenty-first? The answer, it seems, was that since an officer was a gentleman, he was therefore someone who possessed honor, and in the mid-eighteenth-century gentlemanly honor was

¹¹⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 50.

¹²⁰ *Universal Military Dictionary*, CADET, 38.

¹²¹ J. Shuckburgh, *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, London, 1759, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, iii and *passim*, hereafter *Norfolk Militia*. In fairness, it should be said that there is an argument made that British Militia was likely to be officered by men of higher social status than the regular army: that is to say, by officer drawn from the local land owners; while the regular army was drawn largely from men who had no property to keep them at home. There is probably some truth to this, but it does not seem to alter the argument that in the overwhelming number of cases, a commission, whether in the regular army or the militia would at bring the holder, if he did not already have it, the status of a gentleman.

believed to be closely connected, almost synonymous in fact, with military values. Therefore the possession of honor was believed to be essential for a mid-eighteenth-century officer.

An officer was therefore a gentleman who lived by the ordinary code of behavior expected of a gentleman, but whose honor also displayed certain, specifically military, characteristics: military honor was simply a slightly more specific sub-set of the code of gentlemanly honor. In short, military honor was a version of the standard code of gentlemanly conduct of the eighteenth century, but military honor did place somewhat different emphasis on specific elements of the common code of gentlemanly behavior, and added some unique elements of its own.

For officers, honor was not simply an internal quality; it was also an external factor that governed their relationship with their fellow officers, and it could lead to very desirable results: behaving according to the code of military honor could help officers gain a good reputation, and a good reputation could significantly enhance their career, while, conversely, a poor reputation could sink it. As the *Universal Military Dictionary* also told its readers, whilst defining "HONOUR:" "Honour gives many advantages; it procures us the consideration of the public; it gives weight to our actions; it advances our fortunes."¹²² Honor was also the path to honors, that is, titles and awards and offices. In an age before complex military bureaucracies with personnel branches dedicated to managing an officer's career, an officer's reputation governed his chances for recognition and his hopes for promotion outside the boundaries of purchase and seniority. To put this another way, if an officer wished to advance rapidly in rank, he had to possess a reputation that would bring him to the attention of his superiors, and the core of this reputation would consist of his fellow officers' judgment of his honor.

So, what were the specific components of the officers' sense of military honor, and how could this sense of honor serve both as a code of conduct, as well as a reward? In examining the available evidence, it seems that the code of military honor that drove the behavior of mid-eighteenth-century officers could be subdivided into approximately four, distinct though interrelated, elements. These elements may be categorized as follows, they will be expanded upon below: 1) Courage: The quality of courage, as well as the other military virtues such as, loyalty, honorable service, ambition and obedience, obviously were (and for that matter still are) central to the life of any soldier. 2) Gentlemanly Behavior: Behaving as a gentleman included

acting the part of a gentleman: not only did it include living according to the common and accepted standards of conduct expected of a gentleman; it also embraced a sense of gentlemanly and military style, which involved dressing and bearing oneself in an appropriate, and in a martial, manner. Being a gentleman also granted a certain social status, and an officer's honor had a reciprocal connection with his social status. Those with a higher social status were presumed to have more honor, while, at the same time, gaining more honor could likewise raise your social status. At the minimum, holding a commission as an officer gave you a claim to the status of a gentleman, and officers were expected to defend this status. 3) Setting an Example: Officers justified their higher social status as gentlemen, and indeed all their other privileges, by virtue of the example of courage which they set for their soldiers, and, to a lesser degree by virtue of the command which they exercised and the responsibilities they held. A failure to set the proper example was, perhaps, the one unforgivable sin, as it threatened the status of all officers.

These then are the specific elements of an officer's sense of military honor, taken together, they generated the fourth, and possibly most important element of an officer's honor. 4) Reputation: An officer's concern for his reputation, to reiterate, was not simply a matter of *amour propre*, an officer's reputation could have a decisive effect upon his career.¹²³ His hopes of advancement, or otherwise, could hinge upon his reputation, or to define reputation in another way: the judgment of his brother officers upon the state of his honor.

The crucial importance attached to an officer's reputation points up a central truth that is key to understanding the concept of an officer's honor. Honor was neither a completely internal quality, nor a completely abstract concept, in the mid-eighteenth-century. Honor was a concrete quality that was constantly measured in an officer's interactions with his fellow officers, and it had very direct effects on his chosen occupation. As Monsieur de Lamont phrased it in a most revealing passage:

I must repeat the same thing to [the Lieutenants] which I have before said to the Serjeants, that a man before he pretends to any thing, must be capable of it, and have a reputation fixt.

¹²² *Universal Military Dictionary*, HONOUR, 130.

¹²³ My attention was first directed to the importance which his reputation held for a British officers of the mid-eighteenth-century by a paper presented by Mr. Adam Lynde at the 2002 Society for Military History Annual Conference in Madison, Wisconsin. Regretfully I have been unable to contact Mr. Lynde, and obtain any more details.

Now since this is not in our own power, though we perform all that is proper for the attaining of it, but rather depends on the will of others, who weigh our deserts as they please, and put such value upon them as they think fit; and this for the most according to fancy, without examining it by the rules of justice, but as sympathy, or antipathy leads them; or else according as we have prepared them by our previous actions, we must therefore divide this management into three several parts.

The first, which is to make an impression, and may dispose the mind of all those that may speak favourably of us, to our advantage or disadvantage. This first part contains our behaviour, our mien, our cloathing, and our equipage.

The second, our works and actions.

And the third, the use we are in the service.¹²⁴

All aspects of gentlemanly behavior then, could affect a gentleman's reputation. This is not to say that all these aspects were of equal importance to the officer and gentleman, however. An officer was a *military* gentleman, therefore it was certainly true that the so-called military virtues were of far greater importance to him, than to gentlemen who did not follow the profession of arms.

3.3.1 The Military Virtues

In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man
As modest stillness and humility;
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of a tiger;
Stiffen the sinews, conjure up the blood,
Disguise fair nature with hard-favor'd rage;
Then lend the eye a terrible aspect;
(*Henry V*, III, ii)

Of the theological virtues, faith, hope, and love, the greatest of these, we are told, is love. Sadly, war, as Shakespeare reminds us, demands different qualities, and it is not surprising to find that the military virtues: courage, loyalty, ambition, obedience and authority, loomed particularly large in the officer's code of honor. Obviously all these values are essential to the operation of any army, it seems fair to say however, that, for military men, the greatest of those was courage.

3.3.1.1 Courage

"That a Man must be satisfied that he has Courage,
before he undertakes to go to the war."¹²⁵

No other virtue loomed larger in military life than courage. That courage was (and is) central to the life of a soldier, be he officer or other ranks, is almost self-apparent, and it was clearly recognized as such at the time: "For instance, it will be no shame not to be thought brave, if [someone who is thinking about becoming a soldier] becomes a Churchman, a lawyer, or the like; but as soon as he has a sword by his side, everybody will laugh at him if he does not his duty."¹²⁶ Beyond this basic occupational requirement however, courage (and more generally honor) was of great importance in the pre-national, pan-European military world, because it was central to the military's claim to a special and exalted status in the wider eighteenth-century world. Humphrey Bland believed that: "The Military Profession has, in all Ages, been esteemed the most Honourable, from the Danger that attends it. The Motives that lead Mankind to it, must proceed from a Noble and generous Inclination, Since they Sacrifice their ease and their Lives in Defense of their Country. . . ."¹²⁷ Quite simply, courage was essential to an officer, and a failure of it was unthinkable. "[H]e must never turn his back how great soever the loss is on his side; for if a man is once suspected of cowardice, he is past all hopes. He had better be taken prisoner, which is the best course that can be for persons of worth in a general rout, this being less dishonourable than to fly among the rest."¹²⁸

Courage was such an important part of an officer's honor that the two were often conflated and treated as if courage and honour were the same. De Lamont certainly seems to treat the two as one when he opined that: "Some men have more honour than others; and when

¹²⁴ de Lamont, "Duties," 24-25.

¹²⁵ de Lamont, "Duties," 69.

¹²⁶ de Lamont, "Duties," 71.

¹²⁷ Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline, in which is Laid down and Explained The Duty of the Officers and Soldiers, Thro the several Branches of the Service*, 2nd Edition, London, Printed for Sam. Buckley, 1727, 114-115, hereafter: Bland, *Treatise*.

once they have engaged themselves inconsiderately, thought they are unfit for the employment, yet they do their duty in service as well as if they were naturally brave; it is a great hardship upon them; but I find when they have committed the first fault, they may be honoured, and reckoned as brave as any."¹²⁹

On the other hand, one of the most awkward situations imaginable was generated when an officer and a gentleman found himself lacking the necessary courage: "A campaign is soon over; and it is better for one to overcome himself for a short time than to lose himself for his whole life; yet the surest way is to weigh all things well before he engages. What I say here regards all sorts of persons. And those of the greatest quality may apply it to themselves as well as others."¹³⁰

In sum, it was clear to contemporary opinion that courage was unquestionably one of the foremost qualities of an officer, and was certainly key to his reputation, and to his hopes of advancement. "It is to be observed that valour is so noble a part that in all sorts of persons, of what quality soever, that if they can back it with good behaviour, they can never fail to distinguish themselves among other persons of their rank and condition."¹³¹

Officers expected the men they commanded to be courageous, and freely acknowledged that virtue when they saw it in the other ranks. They perceived however, a difference between the courage they displayed, and the courage they expected from the men they led.

There are two sorts of bravery, the one knows no danger, the other knows, and despises it. The first is called rashness, and the other true valour. It were to be wished the Soldiers had the former, and the officers the latter; for they standing in need of judgment to direct others, would thus have the discretion never to engage them but upon good ground, and not to require any thing of them but what was practicable. Thus an army would become invincible, having all the qualities requisite to push on a victory when an opportunity was offered, and to avoid engaging when too weak.

Judgment is one of the most necessary qualifications in an officer, and that is generally shown by his knowing how to

¹²⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 74-75.

¹²⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 71-72.

¹³⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 72-73.

¹³¹ de Lamont, "Duties," 15.

govern himself especially in battle; for if a man is of a hot and passionate temper, what good conceit can he give others of himself?¹³²

An officer, then, was supposed to add judgment to his bravery; he was suppose to posses the ability to know when to fight, and when to live to fight another day. "As dangerous as it is to be frightened, or take alarm without good cause, it is no less so to run into danger indiscreetly, because indiscretion sullies the beauty of brave actions. An officer is no more to place a brutal confidence in his valor, than to suffer himself to be seized with a pannic fear of the enemy. Both extremes are equally blamable[.]"¹³³

Thus, the officers' courage, was, according to some, superior to that of the other ranks.

Courage seems fittest for a General, and all those who command; bravery more necessary for a Soldier, and all who receive orders: bravery is in the blood, courage in the soul; the first is a kind of instinct, the second a virtue; the one is an impulse almost mechanical, the other a noble and a sublime conception. A man is brave at a particular time, and according to circumstances; he has courage at all times and upon all occasions. Bravery is so much more impetuous as it is less the result of reflection; courage, the more it is the effect of reason, becomes more intrepid. Bravery is inspired by the force of example, insensible of danger, and the fury of action; courage is infused by the love of our duty, the desire of glory, and zeal for our king and country: courage depends on reason; but bravery, on the constitution. . . . Bravery is involuntary, and depends not at all upon ourselves whereas courage (as Seneca observes) may be taught, and acquired by education: but yet nature must sow the first seeds of it.¹³⁴

In short, an officer's courage differed from that of the men they commanded because it was a reasoned, instead of an involuntary, response. It was this reasoned nature, according to Captain George Smith, the author of the *Universal Military Dictionary*, which made the courage of the officer and gentleman so valuable. One might also speculate that it is this combination of reason and courage, into reasoned-courage, that is the point at which military honor began to differentiate itself from the more standard gentlemanly code of honor. It is even perhaps the

¹³² de Lamont, "Duties," 132.

¹³³ de Lamont, "Duties," 110-111.

¹³⁴ *Universal Military Dictionary*, PREFACE, ii-iii.

emotional "jumping-off point" for the development of a more "professional" sense of what it meant to be a military officer, as the following passage suggests: "Coolness is the effect of courage, which knows its danger, but makes no other use of that knowledge, than to give directions with greater certainty: courage is always master of itself, provided against all accidents, and regulated by the present occasion; never confounded by any danger so as to lose sight of the motions of the enemy, or the means by which he may be most effectively opposed."¹³⁵

3.3.1.2 Loyal Service

Courage was obviously the preeminent military virtue, but we would expect that loyalty to, and the loyal service due, the monarch and state, to be of nearly as great, or possibly of even greater, importance to soldiers. Interestingly however, and unlike the relatively numerous references to courage, loyalty passes, amongst the military writers of the mid-eighteenth-century, almost without question. The absence of any extended discussion of loyalty, leave us in the position of Sherlock Holmes: we must look at the curious incident of the dog which did not bark in the night time. The lack of discussion, by contemporary writers, of loyalty leaves us with the impression that they believed that loyalty could be safely assumed, and disloyalty, at least in the rawest sense, was not a major concern for mid-eighteenth-century armies. Indeed, David Dundas, writing towards the end of the eighteenth-century, explicitly stated that this was the case: "The internal discipline and oeconomy of the troops have been well established, and the authority of the officers fully founded: nor is there a modern instance of great mutiny or defection; which were so common, when corps and armies were the property of individuals, or of the general, rather than of the state or prince whom they served."¹³⁶

It would only be towards the end of the century, during the American and French Revolutions, that there were again occurrences of the sort of large-scale disloyalties that were such a commonplace of the warfare of the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries. Obviously, in

¹³⁵ *Universal Military Dictionary*, PREFACE, iii.

¹³⁶ David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry. Illustrated By Maneuvres of the Prussian Troops, and by an Outline of the British Campaign in Germany, during the War of 1757. Together with an Appendix, containing a practical abstract of the Whole.*, London, T. Cadell, 1788, 2, hereafter, Dundas: *Military Movements*.

times of ideologically driven revolution, loyalty is much more likely to be up for grabs than during the dynastic wars of the early- and mid-eighteenth century. In short, it seems that loyalty was a non-issue during the mid-eighteenth-century.

Likewise religious belief, once seen as important as, or possibly as part of, one's loyalty to one's sovereign, by the mid-eighteenth-century, seems to have faded, as a serious requirement (if it had ever been important) for a military men. (Though it is worth noting that the British Army maintained its requirement that its officers be Protestants.) De Lamont, as he described the characteristics of the various ranks of officer, usually noted, in passing, the rather muted requirement that he should: "regularly practice his religion."¹³⁷ In general however, this is about the most that the military manuals have to say about religion, and, as was the case with loyalty, we are left to conclude that religion was something of a non-issue, for the mid-eighteenth-century military world.

Indeed what is most noticeable about the mostly *pro forma* references to loyalty, or to the service owed the sovereign or the state, is that they tend to come well after the references to the duty owed to one's self. Consider some of the passages quoted above: Recall Henry Bouquet's comments on Lieutenant Christie's capitulation to the Indians. He talked about: "Men of Honour " who can "Meet Death with Firmness if their Duty & the Service of their Country Require it[.]"¹³⁸ This leaves one with the suspicion that duty might in fact be directed more towards the self, that is towards the officer's own sense of honor, than towards King and Country. Bouquet reinforces this priority when he damns the officer who: "~~prolong his life at the expense of his honor and that which he owes his prince and the state.~~"¹³⁹ Moreover, the passage immediately proceeding it also states that: "The Shame of that Action will be a lasting Blot upon the Corps he belongs to. I hope the conduct of those who remain will be worthy of Men of Honor who know how to meet Death with Firmness if their Duty & the Service of their Country requires it; and would scorn to disgrace themselves by the least Appearance of a dishonorable Act."¹⁴⁰ Disgrace to the regiment is mentioned, a failure of service to the monarch is not.

¹³⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," *passim*.

¹³⁸ Bouquet to Ourry, July 4, 1763, *Bouquet VI*, 296.

¹³⁹ Bouquet to Ecuyer, July 4, 1763, *Bouquet VI*, 293-294, the portions shown as struck through were struck out in the original.

¹⁴⁰ Bouquet to Ecuyer, July 4, 1763, *Bouquet VI*, 293-294.

In the same manner, there is Richard Bell's publication of Monsieur de Lamont's: "The Art of war, Containing the Duties of Soldiers in General in Actual Service. Including necessary INSTRUCTIONS in many capital MATTERS, by remaining IGNORANT of which a MAN will be every day in danger, of bringing DISGRACE upon HIMSELF, and material INJURY to the CAUSE of his COUNTRY."¹⁴¹ Richard Bell stated that he published de Lamont's work so that it would: "show every officer what is expected from him; and what he ought to perform for his own honor and preferment, and for the service of the state."¹⁴² Once again, the danger of bringing disgrace upon oneself is mentioned well before material injury to the cause of his country, and honor and preferment for oneself is mentioned before service to the state. In sum, one suspects that George Smith had the order exactly right when he thought that an officer's courage proceeded from: "the love of our duty, the desire of glory, and zeal for our king and country[.]"¹⁴³

The repeated placing of king and country at the end, and not at the beginning, of the list of motives for service would seem to indicate that the motivation for loyal service resided as much, if not more, within the officer's conception of his honor, and of the behavior expected of a gentleman, than as in any external tie of loyalty to the monarch. While we might logically conclude that this sense of military honor was of greater importance to officers such as Henry Bouquet who were serving in foreign armies, than it was to an officer who was serving his own King and Country: the rhetoric, at least, suggests that, to most officers, their personal honor came before their prince. This is not to say that ideals of King and Country had no call upon their soldiers, it does suggest however, that it was not necessarily the primary call.

Indeed for officers, the principal issues of loyalties were not the larger scale ones of loyalty to king and country, but the smaller scale ones of loyalty to brother officers. For instance, after Braddock's defeat, Sir John St. Clair wrote that: "Our affairs here are as bad as bad Can make them, with regards to my self in particular, I was fully resolved, if we had met with Success to

¹⁴¹ de Lamont, "Duties," xi.

¹⁴² de Lamont, "Duties," xi.

¹⁴³ *Universal Military Dictionary*, PREFACE, ii-iii

desire leave to have been recall'd,. . . but as our affairs stand at present it is a thing I shall not think of[.]”¹⁴⁴

3.3.1.3 Ambition

While courage and loyalty were unquestionably the preeminent virtue for an officer, there were other military virtues expected of him as well. Ambition, for example, was seen as one of the requisites of an officer, to quote the *Universal Military Dictionary*: "AMBITION, in a military sense, signifies a desire of greater posts, or preferment. Every gentleman in the army, or navy, ought to have a spirit of ambition to arrive at the very summit of the profession." ¹⁴⁵

Ambition was, then, at least according to some, was not just an acceptable trait for an officer, it was a positive virtue. It had the additional advantage that it could lead to promotion that came from merit, not patronage, seniority, or purchase. The universal Military Dictionary declared that: “MERIT, in a *military sense*, signifies a promotion in the army according to merit, and not by purchase or interest.”¹⁴⁶ Many commentators of the time felt that some officers were not ambitious enough. De Lamont warned that some officers seemed to lack push: "This proceeds from the want of ambition, [that] there is often in the souls of some men, who place the utmost bounds of their fortune in arriving Captain."¹⁴⁷

In a related comment we are also told that: "It is the Property of a good Officer to think nothing hard."¹⁴⁸ Likewise, before the Battle of the Monogahela, Sir John St. Clair was unwilling to express his doubts about Braddock’s plans because he was “unwilling to propose anything which might look like starting Difficultys.”¹⁴⁹ One suspects that here is to be seen the origins of the celebrated “can-do” attitude of today’s armies, with all that implies for both good and ill.

¹⁴⁴ Sir John St. Clair to Robert Napier, Fort at Will’s Creek 22 July 1755, *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765: Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle*, Stanley McCory Pargellis, ed., New York, D. Appelton - Century Company, 1936, 103, hereafter: *Military Affairs*.

¹⁴⁵ AMBITION, *Universal Military Dictionary*, 4.

¹⁴⁶ *Universal Military Dictionary*, MERIT, 175.

¹⁴⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 31.

¹⁴⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 22.

¹⁴⁹ Sir John St. Clair to Robert Napier, Camp of the Van Guard of the Army at the little meadows, 13 June 1755, *Military Affairs*, 95.

3.3.1.4 Conditional Obedience and Authority

The opposite of the virtue of ambition is the virtue of obedience, since an officer was often required to muzzle his ambition, as well as other desires, to obey the orders he was given. Indeed, one segment of de Lamont work is labeled: "Of the absolute Obedience due to Superiors."¹⁵⁰ De Lamont, argues that this obedience is due in all circumstances, including when the orders are in error: "I have observed before that there is a blind obedience to be paid to those who have a right to command; but since I did not declare that this was to be observed even when they are wrong, I will prove it in this Chapter[.]"¹⁵¹ Happily however, obedience would often prove to be not a hindrance, but a help, to an officer's ambitions. Moreover, as will be shown below, obedience could often put an officer in the path of honor.

Not only was an officer expected to show obedience to his superior, he was also expected to require it of his inferiors. In the second paragraph of "What a Man ought to Know before he goes to the Wars," we are told that an officer: "must know he is bound to respect all his superiors, to be civil to his equals, to be courteous to all officers, and to have charity for all those under his command. But this charity must not extend so far as to slacken in obliging them to perform their duty to the full, for he can never be too severe in that point. The knowledge of these matters will prevent him falling into many errors."¹⁵²

The authority that he held over others was an important part of an officer's honor, his status, indeed, his identity. "[S]o, there is no Captain without a body, which is his Company, or an absolute command over some other persons."¹⁵³ "[E]ven in the case of someone who receives the honorary title of 'Captain;' [h]owever it is never given at first without some command."¹⁵⁴ The *Universal Military Dictionary* put it clearly: "CAPTAIN, in *military affairs*, is a military officer, who is the *commander in chief*"¹⁵⁵ [my italics, this phrase seems quite revealing in this context] of a company of foot, artillery, horse or dragoons. The name of captain was the first

¹⁵⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 87.

¹⁵¹ de Lamont, "Duties," 87-88.

¹⁵² de Lamont, "Duties," 73.

¹⁵³ de Lamont, "Duties," 34.

¹⁵⁴ de Lamont, "Duties," 35.

¹⁵⁵ My boldface.

term made use of to express the head of a company, troop, or body of men. He is both to march and fight at the head of his company."¹⁵⁶

It is clear then, that an officer's status was far more bound up with his role as a giver than as a receiver of orders. So it perhaps not so surprising that the obedience of the officer proved to be not so absolute after all. It was, in fact, subject to many caveats. The most noticeable exception is when an officer's superior seems to lack the virtue of courage. As Monsieur de Lamont wrote: "I am also of opinion, that an officer in a place [fortress] that is besieged, if the governor will surrender, may refused to sign the capitulation, if he thinks it dishonourable. . . .and the more because there is a punishment for those who refuse to sign the capitulation, the enemy making them prisoners of war."¹⁵⁷

An officer then was obedient only insofar as it was consistent with his honor. Logically enough perhaps, it therefore seems that a mid-eighteenth-century officer's obedience was most easily guaranteed when there was honor to be gained. Officers seemed much less eager to obey when ordered on tasks that offered little or no opportunity to gain honor. Indeed, in evaluating an officers' willingness to obey, military authorities seemed to see a direct correlation with the likelihood that obedience would lead to honor. The military actions that an officer might be required to perform were in fact divided into categories, some more honorable, others less so.

Military manuals of the times were filled with passages stating that officers were required to obey orders even when they do not seem to offer the chance to gain honor: "There are several sorts of commands in war; to some of them there is honour to be gained, in others nothing to be had but trouble. . . . However, if an officer is commanded upon a guard of fatigue, he must not refuse to obey, because the service must not be retarded."¹⁵⁸ "Guards of fatigue" were duties such as the command of working parties, that is, of soldiers digging trenches, or performing other manual labor. At sieges, for instance: "the Officers who command [working parties] have only their Swords and Scarfs; [The sword and sash {'scarf'} were important symbols of the officer's rank, however, in this case, their most important weapons, their partisans, half-pikes or spontoons, were left behind.] yet they do not pass for Duties of Honour, but only those of Fatigue; and therefore begin with the Youngest, as the other does with the Eldest." Note that

¹⁵⁶ *Universal Military Dictionary*, CAPTAIN,50.

¹⁵⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 90-91.

¹⁵⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 122.

since the duties are seen as undesirable: they begin with the least senior, as opposed to duties which were deemed honorable, which began with the most senior: "As the mounting of the Guard of the Trenches is a Duty of Honour, [where there is a possibility of combat with the enemy] it always begins with the eldest Regiment."¹⁵⁹ Indeed, an officer was expected to resist any attempt to jump the queue and do him out of his chance to gain honor: "As for commands of honour, an officer cannot be put by them without doing great wrong, and therefore he is not to put it up when an Adjutant, who knows it his turn, sends another in his place. He must complain, and can never fail of having justice done by him."¹⁶⁰

Conversely, there seems to have been a fairly persistent problem in convincing officers and gentleman that their duties extended beyond fighting. De Lamont rallied against the: "abundance of young men that go to the war before they have seen any thing, and come from home full of vanity, because they have been told, that only Princes are above gentlemen, and therefore think it would be a great lessening to them should they submit to do any thing but fight."¹⁶¹ These types of complaints seem to have been a commonplace of military writers of the period.

3.3.2 Gentlemanly Behavior and Social Status

When Monsieur de Lamont was advising the prospective officer on how to conduct himself with his fellow officers he rose to almost Polonian heights:

[The new officer should] suffer the utmost extremity of want than borrow of any man whatsoever; because if he becomes a slave to his creditors, and a scare-crow to all others, which is, should not return what he borrows, he becomes guilty of, the worst and most pernicious of all qualifications. Nor must he ever play, unless he will run the hazard of losing all he has in the world, be looked upon as a man of no self-government, and little sense, and bring himself into a thousand quarrels, besides the frequent occasion of playing the knave, after which a young man is only fit to be hanged, or leave the world with disgrace.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Bland, *Treatise*, 267.

¹⁶⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 123.

¹⁶¹ de Lamont, "Duties," 79-80.

¹⁶² de Lamont, "Duties," 26.

This sort of advice was necessary because, as de Lamont reminds us, officers were gentleman, but they were specifically military gentleman; and, traditionally military gentleman were of a notoriously hard-driving sort: "Whereas most officers of what quality soever make the duties of their post the least part of their care, but on the contrary in winter quarters spend their time in the most pernicious exercises, such as dancing, gaming, courting mistresses, drinking, and other debaucheries unworthy their profession, and which consume all their money, which ought to be laid out in furnishing their equipage for the next campaign: Nor are these excesses here mentioned only in quarters, the extravagancies, debauchery and gaming is no less in the field than elsewhere: . . . that abundance of persons, of very great parts, squander all they have in eating, drinking and gaming, which does not only ruin them, but helps to impoverish their friends, who in honour cannot see them want."¹⁶³ Even if they were military rake-hells officers were still gentlemen, and they were therefore expected to conduct themselves as such.

Displaying proper manners was an important part of the behavior expected of an officer and gentleman. For example, when thanking officers of the regular army for assisting him, the author of *A Plan of Discipline Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, spoke of "officers [who assisted him] with the most open and engaging politeness imaginable."¹⁶⁴ De Lamont advised that if an officer was "courteous to all the officers, they will all speak well of him, and he may hope to advance his fortune that way, as well as by his brave actions; reputations in war being as necessary as any other thing."¹⁶⁵ Junior officers, of course, had to display proper deference toward those who were senior to them. "An Ensign [should] visit the Colonel and all the Captains, never to be covered or sit down before them, till they desire him."¹⁶⁶ This requirement for courteous behavior however, extended in both directions: "When subalterns behave themselves as I have said, towards their Captains, the Captains are also obliged to treat them civilly."¹⁶⁷

This sort of behavior however, was not unique to the military. It was, in fact, largely a reflection of customary conduct between gentleman. Military courtesy had not yet markedly

¹⁶³ de Lamont, "Duties," 52-53.

¹⁶⁴ *Norfolk Militia*. "Advertisement," unpaginated.

¹⁶⁵ de Lamont, "Duties," 74.

¹⁶⁶ de Lamont, "Duties," 22.

¹⁶⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 87.

diverged from contemporary standards of behavior. For instance, Monsieur de Lamont's advice, given above, that an Ensign should never be covered or sit down before his superiors is the same as some of the precepts of good behavior that George Washington copied into a notebook as a young boy. His rule number twenty-seven, for instance, read: "Tis ill manners to bid one more eminent than yourself to be covered, as well as not to do it [remove your own hat] to who whom it is due. Likewise he that makes too much haste to put on his hat does not well, . . . Now what is herein spoken, of qualifications in behaviour in saluting, ought also to be observed in taking of place, and sitting down, for ceremonies without bounds are troublesome."¹⁶⁸

Inevitably gentleman would quarrel, and military gentlemen were especially notorious for their quarrels. Courts-martial dealing with the quarrels of officers fill the records. For the new officer however, his behavior in a disagreement with one of his brother officers was probably in the nature of a *rite du passage*, and, as de Lamont advised: "[If an officer is involved in a quarrel he must] bring himself off with honour and reputation."¹⁶⁹

To do so, he would have been well advised to be acquainted with the art of defense. As the *Universal Military Dictionary* told its readers: "FENCING, in the *military art*, is that of making a proper use of the sword, as well for attacking an enemy, as for defending one's self. Fencing is a genteel exercise, of which no military gentleman should be ignorant. It is learned by practice with the steel foils."¹⁷⁰ Fencing, in fact, as it was practiced in the eighteenth-century, had little relevance to the cut and thrust of the battlefield. It was however, as George Smith tells us, a genteel art, at this time much concerned with grace and display. Indeed, the author of the *Norfolk Militia* handbook thought that the ability to move gracefully was directly relevant to performing military duties. "And if he is a master of the genteel exercises, particularly that of fencing, he will be a much better judge of the propriety of any motion or attitude, (whether with regard to ease and grace, or its use in offense or defense)[.]"¹⁷¹ Moreover, while fencing might have little relevance to battlefield conditions, for an officer coming off well from a quarrel would very possibly involve a duel with a small sword, at which point his gentlemanly skills might be put to more practical usage.

¹⁶⁸ Richard Brookhiser, *Rules of Civility: The 110 Precepts that Guided our First President in War and Peace*, New York, The Free Press, 1997, 44. Note the use of the term 'saluting' to describe these marks of respect in what would today be seen as a 'civilian' context.

¹⁶⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 37.

¹⁷⁰ *Universal Military Dictionary*, FENCING, 88.

What seems surprising today is the importance that less serious and more stylistic matters of the gentleman's code held for the mid-eighteenth-century officer. He should, we are told:

If rich, he must have a good stock of handsome cloaths, well chosen, according to the most universal and received fashion; without ever being fond of following those that invent them, or ever appearing gaudy, for though it is said a young man may wear all sorts of colours, yet if he does not, he will be better looked upon, and everybody will say he is a young man that has the discretion of one in years, and is orderly in all he does. And since it is our sight which first discovers all that appears before it, no small advantage may accrue to the person that shall show himself in such a dress as may be grateful to the eyes, and by their means prepossess the mind with a favorable opinion

If he is poor he must have a suitable indifferent equipage, and take care to keep it well; he must spare out of his belly, to be handsomely, yet modestly clothed; be sure to be always neat and clean . . . Both the rich and poor must be sure to have good arms, and well looked after. . . . He must be orderly in his gait, that is he must not be starched, nor ungainly;¹⁷²

In short, appearances mattered, and an officer and gentleman had to look the part. That repeated mention of dress is in the various military manuals demonstrates its overwhelming importance to soldiers of the time. The implications of this preoccupation with style and the significance of the uniform will be considered in more detail in chapter six, here it is important to note the importance which being properly dressed had for an officer in maintaining the character of a gentleman. "[Rich Ensigns] are to show themselves by keeping a good equipage."¹⁷³ "[An Ensign should] keep good arms, and have good cloaths, well chosen, yet without gaudiness."¹⁷⁴ [A Lieutenant should] be orderly in his gate that it may not be starched nor ungainly;¹⁷⁵ "[The Captain also] must have a good equipage, and well kept."¹⁷⁶

Putting on a proper display became ever more important as an officer rose in rank. This display could be both martial and personal: For example: "*Orderly men*, tend general officers, or such other officers who are entitled to such, who walk behind them with their arms."¹⁷⁷ General

¹⁷¹ *Norfolk Militia*, xxxii.

¹⁷² de Lamont, "Duties," 25-27.

¹⁷³ de Lamont, "Duties," 19.

¹⁷⁴ de Lamont, "Duties," 21.

¹⁷⁵ de Lamont, "Duties," 27.

¹⁷⁶ de Lamont, "Duties," 36.

¹⁷⁷ *Universal Military Dictionary*, ORDERLY, 194.

officers were provided with guards whose purpose seems as much ceremonial as useful. We are told that: "The General's Guard is to honour his character; [note the choice of the word "character," it seems significant] there are only foot on it, and always commanded by a Captain; the Lieutenant and Major-Generals have their guards, but they are mounted by Subalterns. The General always makes the officer of his Guard dine with him; and tho' there be never so much company his place is always preserved."¹⁷⁸

The ceremonial aspect of military life will also be discussed in greater detail in chapter six. Note, however, the requirement imposed on the general to have the officer commanding his guard to dine. Hospitality was, of course, an important trait of a gentleman. It is therefore hardly surprising then that officers of all ranks, and senior officer in particular were obliged to make great efforts, and undertake great expense, in maintaining their gentlemanly manner of life, putting on elaborate display, and showing a generous level of hospitality. Generals, in particular, seem to have been expected to live in considerable state, some certainly lived *en grand seigneur*.

In the wake of the spectacular Prussian victories of the 1740's and 1750's, the Prussian Army regulations were translated into English, and they made a particularly strong impact on the British Army. With that thoroughness which the British would come to identify as particularly German, they laid out many of the details of the hospitality which senior officers were expected to offer, and the display they were expected to maintain, even in the field. For instance: "The Field-Marshal-General shall take into the field, one chaise, or coach, with six horses to draw it: two baggage-wagons; four chaise-marines, and as many bat-horses or mules and saddle-horses as he pleases."¹⁷⁹ In terms of hospitality, the reader was given the following instructions:

"CHAP. XXV.
Consisting of directions to GENERAL OFFICERS for the
keeping of their TABLES in CAMP.

ARTICLE I.

A Field Marshal shall have one large table of ten covers, without any desert: and one small table of six covers for the orderly Officers.

¹⁷⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 117.

¹⁷⁹ *Regulations for the Prussian Infantry. Translated from the German Original. With Augmentations and Alterations made by the KING off PRUSSIA since the Publication of the last Edition. To which is ADDED the PRUSSIAN TACKTICK; Being a Detail of the Grand Manoeuvres As performed by the PRUSSIAN ARMIES*, J. Nourse, 1759, facsimile reprint, New York, Greenwood Press publishers, 1968, 231, hereafter *Prussian Infantry*.

II A General of the foot shall have one table with eight covers, and eight dishes, without any desert; and one small table with four covers for the orderly Officers."¹⁸⁰

Note that these instructions describe the tables kept *in the field*.

The emphasis placed on the different aspects of gentlemanly behavior leads to an obvious corollary. Holding a commission as an officer brought with it a definite social status. This status was, of course, partially the result of the unique occupation of the soldiers. Of many different occupations, we are told: "among them all, none is so honorable to himself, or so beneficial to his country as that of a Soldier. For if we do but observe the dangers to which he daily exposes himself, can it be denied, that as he sacrifices all he can hold most dear for the safety of his country, even to the last drop of his blood, so his country is far more beholding to him than to those who only afford it some of their industry and care?"¹⁸¹

For the most part this social status seems to have passed without much discussion. This status was not necessarily connected to income, and it was understood that the officer concerned might be making his living, thought ideally, he would not be under this disagreeable necessity. Monsieur de Lamont, when speaking of the Captain, observed: "If he has no estate, he may, by his ingenuity, make amends for that defect, which is not caused by himself, or of his own seeking."¹⁸²

Officers however, were expected to defend their social status, and any action that threatened it would bring swift retribution. One fascinating instance of this comes from the Continental Army, whose officers, judging from the following example, were even more concerned than their British counterparts to defend their social standing: "Lieutenant *Whitney*, of Colonel *Wheelock's* regiment, tried by the same General Court-Martial for infamous conduct in degrading himself by voluntarily doing the duty of an Orderly Sergeant, in violation of his rank as an officer, is found guilty, and sentenced to be severely reprimanded by General *Bricket* at the head of the brigade."¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ *Prussian Infantry*, 233.

¹⁸¹ de Lamont, "Duties," viii.

¹⁸² de Lamont, "Duties," 36.

¹⁸³ Horatio Gates, *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, James Gregory, Thomas Dunning, eds., Microfilm Corporation of America, Sanford, North Carolina, 1979. General Orders, Head-Quarters, October 3, 1776, hereafter: *Gates' Papers*.

In spite of this incident however, it is noticeable that contemporary military manuals seemed to manifest little or no concern about any challenges to an officer, (and gentleman's) authority or status. The manuals see no need to instruct an officer that he must guard his gentlemanly status in his dealings with his men. In fact, as will be seen below, the manuals were at pains to reassure the prospective officer, that he could unbend with his men, without any danger to his status, not that he needed to distance himself to maintain his status. The modern reader is left with the strong impression, that, as in the case of loyalty, the high status of an officer, in comparison to the men he commanded, was so assured that little mention needed to be made of it. There were no indications, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, as there would be in the British Army (and others armies as well) at the end of the nineteenth-century, that officers are constantly working to maintain an artificial separation between themselves and the men they command, nor that they are asserting a set of class based distinctions that are increasingly unpopular. The impression left is that, in general, officers expected, and received, an automatic deference to their status and authority. From the prospective of the officer at least, the military, and social, hierarchy was unquestioned.

3.3.3 Setting an Example

What did officers do, to justify the exalted status they claimed? The days of the knight were long passed. The officer and gentleman was no longer a highly trained and superbly equipped killing machine. Infantry officers, at least, might never personally deal a lethal blow to anyone; in fact, they armed themselves, or more precisely disarmed themselves, accordingly: "The arming the officers with fusees, instead of espontons, may not always be approved of by some, who with great reason think, that the esponton is an excellent arm for an officer, whose business is not to fire himself, but to attend to the keeping the men in order, to make them reserve their fire till the word of command, and to level their pieces well when they present."¹⁸⁴

So what exactly did officers do on the battlefield? If we contemporary accounts are to be believed, it seems that they thought that their most important role was to set an example to their inferiors. This seems to have been the crucial matter for mid-eighteenth-century officers.

¹⁸⁴ *Norfolk Militia*, xxx.

Humphrey Bland gave both a detailed rationale for the importance of setting an example, and specific instructions to officers on how to do so while in action:

It being a general Remark that the Private Soldiers, when they are to go upon Action, form their Notions of the Danger from the outward Appearance of their Officers; and according to their Looks apprehend the Undertaking to be more or less difficult: (for when they perceive their Officers dejected or thoughtful, they are apt to conclude the Affair desperate:) In order therefore to dissipate their Fears, and fortify their Courage, the Officers should always assume a serene and cheerful Air: and in delivering their Orders to, and in their common Discourse with the men, they should address themselves to them in an affable and affectionate Manner.¹⁸⁵

That the principle duty of officers during battle was setting an example was reinforced by their physical location, because whether for ceremony or battle, for most officers, their position was in front. As Bland tells us: “As the Company Draw up, the Subalterns are to move up to the Front, the Lieutenants placing themselves on the Right of their Captains, and the Ensigns on the Left, towards the Flanks of their Companies, The Serjeants are to Form Themselves in the Rear of the Rear-Rank[.]”¹⁸⁶ This sort of positioning left most officers well placed to set an example, and the sergeants well placed to try to ensure that the men followed it.

The notion of setting an example definitely included the belief that officers should encourage and inspire their troops. The *Universal Military Dictionary*, in defining “ANIMATE” told its readers: "Actions or appearances of officers should never lead to give soldiers room to doubt, or to form unfavourable conjectures: what they see from the enemy cannot be prevented; but they should never see, hear, nor understand any bad omens from their own side; if they ever see too much, means, if possible should be made use of, to make them distrust and forget their own sight, and see only through the medium of their commanding officer’s words and inclinations. Animations, like electricity, is communicated, is catching; and the officer who is animated himself, will inspire others."¹⁸⁷

During battle in fact, some of the distance which separated the officer and gentleman from the rank and file could be set aside: "At this time he may lay aside his usual gravity, and be

¹⁸⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 144.

¹⁸⁶ Bland, *Treatise*, 3-4.

¹⁸⁷ *Universal Military Dictionary*, ANIMATE, 8.

facetious with them; for nothing is a greater proof of being void of fear that this easiness of raillery It may be objected that such jests as this will rather gain a man the reputation of a pleasant companion than of a brave soldier; but I must answer there are few of that opinion; and when a man is so far his own master, as to be capable of raillery in time of danger, it is a certain sign that his soul is not in disorder."¹⁸⁸

Probably the most telling instances of the importance, to the mid-eighteenth-century officer, of setting an example, come from defeats. What is noticeable in the following accounts is the emphasis laid on the efforts of the officers to set an example, and to inspire their men. Captain Robert Omre, an Aide-de-Camp of General Edward Braddock, writing to report Braddock's defeat (and death) at the hands of the French and Indians, at the Battle of the Monogahela stated: "[E]very exhortation entreaty and perswation was used by the General and Officers to make them advance or fallback into the line [of] March, examples of all kinds were likewise given by the Genl. and the Officers, but the Pannock was so universal and the Firing so executive and uncommon that no order could ever be restor'd,"¹⁸⁹ In fact, the account of Braddock's behavior neatly matches the advice given for Generals conducting a retreat: "A General can never give greater testimony of his courage and conduct than in a fighting retreat. There is so little difference betwixt this action and flying, that unless the commander's resolution and prudent orders make it known to the soldiers, they will be apt to mistake one for the other."¹⁹⁰ In another letter, Omre explains that the actions of the enemy "struck them [the troops] with such a pannick that all the Intreaties perswasions and Examples of the General and Officers could Avail nothing nor could Order ever be regain'd[.]"¹⁹¹

Another officer writing about the Battle of the Monogahela stated that: "[T]here was Nothing to Be seen But the utmost panick & Confusion amongst the Men; yet those officers who had Been wounded having Return'd, & those that were not Wounded, By Exhorting & threatening had influence to keep a Body about 200 an hour Longer in the Field, but could not persuade them to Either Attempt the hill again, or Advance far Enough to support the

¹⁸⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 132-133.

¹⁸⁹ Captain Robert Omre to Robert Napier, Fort Cumberland, 18 July 1755, *Military Affairs*, 99.

¹⁹⁰ de la Valiere, *Art of War*, "Greatest General's," 207.

¹⁹¹ Captain Rover Orme to Henry Fox, [undated 1755], *Military Affairs*, 101.

Cannon[.]”¹⁹² Not just regular British officers, but Provincials saw the battle in this fashion; George Washington, who served as General Braddock's Aide-de-Camp, and conceived a great admiration for him, offered similar opinions about the conduct of British officers at that battle: “[Our forces] consisted of about 1,300 well armed Troops; chiefly Regular Soldiers, who were struck with such a panick , that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive; The Officers behav'd Gallantly in order to encourage their Men, for which they suffered greatly; there being near 60 killed and wounded; a large portion of the number we had!”¹⁹³

Yet another account of disaster from Britain *annalis horibilis* of 1755, the Battle of the Great Carrying Place, states: “Our General [Johnson] harangued & did all in his Power to animate our People, I rode along the Line from Regiment to regiment, decreased the Enemy’s Numbers, promised them a cheap Victory if they behaved with Spirit, begun a Huzza [cheer] which took, & they placed themselves at the Breast-Work just as the enemy appeared in Sight, some of the Officers, but not many, seconded my Endeavours . . . “¹⁹⁴

Explaining a defeat is, perhaps understandably, always a touchy moment for a soldier. In the above accounts the reader is left with the feeling that we are reading about the duties of the mid-eighteenth-century British officer stripped to the bare essentials. With that in mind, what is noticeable in all this is that there is no mention made of the technical aspects of soldiering, no mentions made of military knowledge. In this time of crisis, we do not read about the General attempting to maneuver his troops; we read instead about his riding amongst them and exhorting them. One is left with the impression that, when the chips were down, for mid-eighteenth-century officers, any technical skill they possessed took second place to the importance of the example they set. In short, the apotheosis of the mid-eighteenth-century British officer, as one would expect, came in battle, but, it seems this did not occur when he displayed military skill and judgment; rather, that epiphany occurred when he displayed courage, coolness and resolution.

¹⁹² Journal of Proceedings from Wills’s Creek to the Monogahela: Harry Gordon to [unknown], Wills’s Creek, 23 July 1755, *Military Affairs*, 107.

¹⁹³ George Washington to Mary Ball Washington, Fort Cumberland, Md, 18 July 1755, in George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington: Colonial Series, Volumes 1-7, Revolutionary War Series, Volume 1*, W. W. Abbot, Dorothy Twohig, Philander D. Chase, Beverly H. Runge, Frederick Hall Schmidt, eds., Charlottesville, Virginia, University Press of Virginia, 1983-1991, 336, hereafter: *Washington Papers, Vol. 1*.

¹⁹⁴ Peter Wraxall to Henry Fox, Camp at Lake George, 27 September 1755, *Military Affairs*, 139

This attitude explains why eighteenth-century officers believed that: “[w]hen an Officer has the misfortune of being Beat, his Honour won’t suffer further by it, provided he has done his Duty and acted like a Soldier[.]”¹⁹⁵ It would probably go too far to suggest that the mid-eighteenth-century officer had no interest in winning or loosing. Obviously, being a winner could enhance an officer's reputation, and was more likely to lead to reward, and loosing was to be avoided, if for no other reason that it was more likely than victory to include a pile of corpses, with the officer's included in the pile. It does however explain why the mid-eighteenth-century officer sometimes seemed to be relatively unconcerned by defeat. If an officer is primarily a military technician, than winning or loosing can be a fairly accurate measurement of his skill, or lack thereof, and defeat therefore becomes something to avoid at all costs, as the ultimate sign of his failure in his calling.

If however, an officer is someone who displays traits of character and honor, and, if, as suggested above, these traits of character or honor can best be displayed in adversity then defeat becomes somewhat less meaningful. If this is true, then defeat, even if not actively sought after, is not something to be avoided at all costs, as it presents opportunities, not only to display strength of character, but even perhaps to gain honor. After all, as Humprhey Bland told his readers: “’Tis true we may be overpower’d and conquer’d, notwithstanding all our Care; but never shamefully beat, if we act as we ought: An a Man may gain Reputation, tho’ he is overcome.”¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 114.

¹⁹⁶ Bland, *Treatise*, 116.

3.4 REPUTATION

"[B]ut a Soldier, who once gets the least blemish in his reputation, forfeits all his honour; for there are those who pry into his behaviour, and will not abate him the least point.¹⁹⁷

As Monsieur de Lamont tells us, the sum total of an officer's honor was his reputation. An officer's reputation was, in effect, his honor made visible, and measured against his contemporaries.

He who is detached with a man that is in repute, must be sure to observe his conduct, that being the only and sure means to learn his trade; but all men are subject to failings, it is his part to distinguish betwixt good and bad.

Our own judgment is to decide whether a man goes well or ill in such things where the service is not concerned; and though it were, yet a young officer may see when another is in the right, or in the wrong because in all undertakings are grounded on reason, and fortune, is only concerned in the execution. Not but there are some things which bear a double construction, and which are very hard to be decided, because the praise or blame depends on the success."¹⁹⁸

A mid-eighteenth-century officer then, was perpetually being evaluated. His reputation was the report by his brother officers on his ability as an officer; because, as was argued above, character and honor were the essence of what an officer was, and his reputation was chiefly determined by what his fellow officers thought of his character and honor. So important was an officer's reputation, in fact, that he had to begin tending to it from his very first days in the service.

It is worth repeating that concern for his reputation was not a matter of mere vanity for the officer concerned. Not only did it govern his relationship with his fellow officers, it affected his chance for promotion and reward. An officer's concern for his reputation lasted throughout his career; indeed, Monsieur de Lamont felt that it should begin even before the career did. He advised that someone considering becoming an officer should think it over carefully, and make

¹⁹⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 69.

sure he knew what he was undertaking: "I have always heard it said, that we ought seriously to reflect on it before we enter upon any state of life, because it were better never to undertake a thing, than not to perform it as we ought. This is a most necessary precaution to him that designs to follow the sword, because the consequences here, are quite of another nature than in any other condition."¹⁹⁹

Assuming he did decided upon a military career, the new officer would be wise to begin it carefully and make sure that nothing marred his reputation before he began to make it: "It is worth observing, that nothing is more dangerous than to be out in the beginning, the first impressions are always the strongest[.]"²⁰⁰ Moreover, a young officer must attempt to build his reputation as soon as possible: An Ensign must: "show his courage in the trenches and upon all other occasions, for young men must settle a reputation."²⁰¹ Moreover, an officer's reputation was based upon displaying all the traits of a gentleman, not simply courage, since: "if he is courteous to all the officers, they will speak well of him, and he may hope to advance his fortune that way as well as by his brave actions; reputation in war being as necessary as any other thing."²⁰² Other virtues had their part to play as well: "Wisdom is the first qualification required in a soldier . . . [however, also] he had better be merry than grave, . . . These . . . things are so absolutely requisite in a Soldier, that if he wants any one of them he can never hope to gain much reputation."²⁰³

Nonetheless, courage was preeminent amongst the virtues, and displaying it conspicuously could bring especially great renown.

HERO, in a *military sense*, is a great, illustrious, and extraordinary personage; particularly in respect of valour, courage, intrepidity, and other military virtues. Modern authors make a distinction between a hero, and a great man; that the former is more daring, fierce and enterprising; and the latter more prudent, thoughtful, and reserved. In this sense we say, Alexander was a hero, and Julius Caesar a great man.²⁰⁴

¹⁹⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 131.

¹⁹⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 69.

²⁰⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 74.

²⁰¹ de Lamont, "Duties," 21.

²⁰² de Lamont, "Duties," 74.

²⁰³ de Lamont, "Duties," 67.

²⁰⁴ *Universal Military Dictionary*, HERO, 129.

As was said, concern for his reputation lasted throughout an officer's career, an officer could never let his guard down and relax. Indeed the more senior he became, the more of an issue it would prove to be: "but were it my case I would rather retire to my estate than expose myself to be laughed at; for the more a man is exalted above others, the less he can hope to hide his faults."²⁰⁵

An officer's good reputation, could, so Bland believed, actually enhance the fighting power of his men.

When the Private Soldiers have an Opinion of the Military Capacity of their Officers, or have had Experience of their Courage and Conduct, the [ability of their officers to encourage and control them in combat] will effectively prevail, and create in them such Opinion of their own Superiority over the Enemy, they will look upon them with Contempt, and conclude them, in a manner, beat before they begin the Action. When such a spirit is once rais'd in the Men, they seldom or ever fail of success:²⁰⁶

If, however, an officer had no reputation, it was felt that he was less likely to be effective in battle. "But when Officers have not had Experience of the Service, or neglect the Means by which they might attain to it, (of which the Private Men are strict Observers and from them form their judgment of them) the case will not hold:"²⁰⁷ An officer then, was always on stage, performing for the men under his command. "For unless the men have an Opinion of their Conduct; as well as their Courage, they won't be able to influence them in the manner above spoken of."²⁰⁸

Not only did an officer's reputation affect his relationship with his brother officer, not only did it affect his chances of promotion, his reputation would, in the end, trickle-down, and probably affect his ability to command and lead those under him as well; Humphrey Bland believed that an officer who is lax in commanding his men: "can never expect to gain much reputation, nor to be better beloved by his soldiers; for though the liberty he allows be pleasing to them, yet they despise him, feeling he has so little regard to his duty."²⁰⁹

²⁰⁵ de Lamont, "Duties," 73.

²⁰⁶ Bland, *Treatise*, 144.

²⁰⁷ Bland, *Treatise*, 144.

²⁰⁸ Bland, *Treatise*, 144.

²⁰⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 108.

Ultimately, it seems likely that reputation was the principal mechanism whereby the army controlled the behavior of an officer, to the extent that that was possible.

The most favourable time for the making of an attack is the Day: For as the Actions of every Man will appear in full View, the Brave, tho' a laudable Emulation, will endeavour, at the Expense of their Lives, to out-do one another; and even the Fearful will exert themselves, by performing their Duty, rather than bear the infamous Name of Coward; the Fear of Shame being generally more Powerful than the Fear of Death.²¹⁰

For officers, an enhanced reputation was the carrot, a blighted reputation was the stick.

²¹⁰ Bland, *Treatise*, 280.

3.5 CONCLUSION

In the military universe of the mid-eighteenth-century British officer, honor formed the largest constellation, reputation was its brightest light, and courage the pole star indicating true north. In stating this however, a question is immediately posed: why were honor and reputation so important to officers of the mid-eighteenth-century? Why were these traits of character, rather than others, required of mid-eighteenth-century officers? Why were some characteristics emphasized and others neglected?

In some cases the answers appears intuitively obvious: the first set of elements of military honor that were discussed, courage, and the other military virtues such as loyalty, honorable service, and ambition seem completely explicable. Obviously one would want soldiers to be courageous, loyal and so on. Likewise the third element discussed, the requirement for officers and gentleman to set an example for the other ranks is also quite understandable: It seems reasonable that designated leaders should be required to set an example.

On the other hand, some of the other components of the officers' sense of honor seem less intuitively obvious. In trying to explain the emphasis placed on things like gentlemanly behavior, style, and the social status associated with honorable behavior and commissioned rank, we need a somewhat greater stretch of imagination. It could be argued that these are the result of a requirement that officers live and work closely with one another, or that they are the result of drawing officers from one relatively homogeneous social class. There is probably some truth to both these arguments, though it is fair to point out that, as the institution of the officers' mess had not yet been fully developed, it did not automatically follow that officers lived together. Neither were officers necessarily all drawn from one homogeneous class, though all officers had the status of gentleman, it can hardly be stated that, in mid-eighteenth-century Britain, "gentlemen" formed one unified social class, and certainly the gentlemen of the army did not.²¹¹

²¹¹ J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981, 104-106.

Why was an officer's appearance so important? Partly, it seems reasonable to suggest, this was related to the importance of setting an example. Setting an example was a form of visual display, and this visual display was enhanced if the officer looked the part. To put this another way, it was easier to set an example of coolness and daring under fire, when dressed in a dashing and noticeable manner. Setting an example means being a star in the show and taking center stage, therefore being well dressed and having a graceful carriage was an important means of ensuring that all eyes were upon you.

At a deeper level, one can speculate, the emphasis placed by mid-eighteenth-century officers on appearance and gentlemanly behavior might be a manifestation of the old aphorism "act as you wish to be." If someone is encouraged to live as a gentleman, and dress like a gentleman, and act like a gentleman off the battlefield, then that someone is probably much more likely to act in the approved gentlemanly manner on the battlefield as well. Whether this was true or not, it seems clear that mid-eighteenth-century officers believed that it was true; and, moreover, they felt comfortable, often to a considerable degree, in judging an officer's effectiveness by his gentlemanly appearance and manner, or lack thereof. One might suggest that an officer not only had to be honorable, he had to be seen to be honorable; and that displaying the external characteristics of the a gentleman, dress, behavior, and so on, provided reassurance that the internal characteristic, honor, was present as well.

No doubt there is an element of truth to all these reasons; nonetheless, all these explanations still seem somewhat incomplete. Furthermore, they fail to explain why the code of military honor followed by mid-eighteenth-century British officers was not a code of internal values, measured against personal standards; why it was, instead, a code of external values, largely imposed by, and largely measured against, other British officers? They also fail to explain why it was that an officer's reputation - based upon the evaluation made by his peers, inferiors, and superiors, on his success or otherwise, in living according to this code of honor - was of such overwhelming importance, not just to the officer's sense of self-worth, but to his career as well?

A more complete explanation can perhaps be reached by considering the utility, within the confines of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, of the various elements of the officers' sense of military honor. The officer's sense of military honor acted within a military world marked by the *absence* of strong institutions or bureaucracies within the army to provide more

detailed guidance to, and control of, the officer corps. In studying the officers of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or indeed any mid-eighteenth-century European army, what is surprising is how *little* written guidance there was for them, and how much was a matter of custom. It is in this absence of direction that we come to a more complete explanation of the importance of the military honor. In this formulation, military honor was the principle source of guidance for the behavior of officer of the mid-eighteenth century.²¹² Today's military officers are buried under a mountain of written manuals detailing how they are to perform their duties. They will spend a considerable part of their career attending classes and participating in training which purports to teach them how to do their jobs - and how to be a leader. None of this was available to officer of the mid-eighteenth-century. Custom, as codified in their sense of honor, was one of the few guides available on the art of being an officer.

Furthermore, much of the importance which British officers attached to their reputation might, to a considerable degree, be due to the fact that, in the absence of any type of personnel bureau, reputation, as a route to patronage, offered the only means available to accelerate a military career. In a world governed by personal relationships, what others thought of you was all-important. Looked at from the other direction, reputation was one of the few levelers of control that the British Army, as an institution, had over its officers. With a commission viewed as property, and with promotion so often determined by seniority or purchase, and with courts-martial such an awkward and chancy mechanism, word of mouth and reputation were probably the strongest deterrents available to prevent misconduct, and the strongest incentives available to encourage desirable conduct. In short, from the perspective of the Army, officers were more likely to be successfully controlled, and, when necessary, disciplined, by appeals to their honor, and to the customary ways of the army, then with a reference to the details of the Articles of War, or by a courts-martial.

The weakness of this system was that the values of military honor did not always coincide with the interests of the institutional army. Military honor strongly discouraged cowardice in the face of the enemy, which obviously was in the interests of the army. Military honor, however, did nothing to encourage (indeed it might even be said to discourage) the

²¹² Joanne B. Freeman has made a similar argument for the importance of honor in providing guidance for the conduct of politicians in the new American Republic, when political institutions were still weak and unformed, and little else offered guidance for those assuming the role of politician. Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2001, xv-xvii, and *passim*.

acquisition of military knowledge by British officers, while the acquisition of military knowledge was obviously also in the interest of the army. The military honor of the British officer was not identical with the interests of the military profession and cannot simply be considered to be an instrument of control imposed by the British Army, though it did served as one of the principal means of control available to that institution.

Finally, the importance placed upon military honor, especially when considered alongside the relative lack of importance placed upon military knowledge, shows clearly that the officers of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army were still, in most respects, pre-professional and perhaps even pre-modern in their attitudes. To phrase this another way: if the definition of a professional is one who masters a specialized body of knowledge that is usually taught in a formal manner, and one whose success in his or her career is then determined by the degree of mastery of that body of knowledge, then most mid-eighteenth-century officers would have seen no point in being professional, for two important and interrelated reasons.

First, the stress laid upon inborn traits, and on character, strongly argues that eighteenth-century officers believed that most of the important aspects of being a military officer were inherent characteristics or standards of behavior, rather than acquired knowledge or skill. Being a gentleman, behaving honorably, having the skills to lead on the battlefield, these were seen by mid-eighteenth-century officers as the most important parts of being an officers, and these were also things, most eighteenth-century officers would have said, that are inborn, and could not be taught. Secondly, even those military skills that were learned, were mostly learned by experience and were often imparted as a matter of custom. Indeed, as one writer exclaimed: "it would be madness to think that a Soldier can learn all his trade by book."²¹³ With the exception of the technical fields of artillery and military engineering, whose officers usually did attend specialized training schools: (and who supplied only a very small fraction of the total officer corps) officers were, in effect, trained by a system of apprenticeship (mentorship might be a better term) and by example.

In short, since most officers learned what they needed to learn as customary practices in a customary way, and since they believed that the most important part of their job was the display of inborn traits and patterns of behavior and honor: we should not then be surprised to find that British Army officers of the mid-eighteenth-century viewed their role more as a traditional way

of life, than as a profession, that they saw battle as a test of character, rather than a display of skill, and that they believed that their honor and reputation, which were the heart of what they did, also defined what they were.

²¹³ de Lamont, "Duties," ix.

4.0 THE SOUL OF ALL ARMIES:INCONSISTENT DISCIPLINE, SAVAGE PUNISHMENT, ERRATIC REWARD AND "THE CONTRACT"

Military discipline. Next to the forming of troops, military discipline is the first object that presents itself to our notice: it is the soul of all armies; and unless it be established among them with great prudence, and supported with unshaken resolution, they are no better than so many contemptible heaps of rabble, which are more dangerous to the very state that maintains them, than even its declared enemies.²¹⁴

4.1 INTRODUCTION

If "redcoat" was the chosen phrase, in some type of military history word association test given to the general public, it seems almost certain that "flogging," or "the lash," would rank amongst the most frequent responses. The image of the British soldier as a "bloodyback," is fixed in the historical memory, and in many ways this historical memory is not incorrect; mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers were commonly punished with the lash, and not uncommonly with incredible numbers of lashes: inflictions of five-hundred or more lashes were not uncommon. Since punishments were harsh, indeed sometimes savage, many have inferred that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was well disciplined; this conclusion however is much more problematical,.

If discipline is defined as obeying orders that are given in a formal setting under strict supervision, then yes the British Army, indeed, most armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world, were well disciplined. If discipline is defined however, as "a prompt and willing

²¹⁴ *Universal Military Dictionary*, MILITARY, 175.

obedience to orders,” and, as a willingness to continue this obedience when not supervised, the state of mid-eighteenth-century military discipline seems more questionable. Moreover, if discipline, is further defined as a willingness to act as your superiors would wish you to do when you have no orders, then, in this light, the discipline of all eighteenth-century armies can be seen as quite poor. Now, certainly all eighteenth-century armies (and indeed all twenty-first-century armies) would have desired these more advanced levels of discipline - but it seems probable that many eighteenth-century leaders might well have believed them unobtainable, and they had much evidence to support this conclusion. Indeed, as will be described in greater detail in the following chapters, the very structure of military life in the pre-national, pan-European military world, and the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, acted against the possibility of truly strong discipline. Conversely many of the features of mid-eighteenth-century military life become more explicable if viewed as manifestations of armies that know their discipline is weak, and were therefore doing everything possible to prevent this weak discipline from breaking down completely.

The belief that eighteenth-century armies were well disciplined is contradicted by numerous accounts of such armies either dissolving or running out of control. For example, Frederick the Great’s army (widely believed to be the most highly disciplined in Europe) fell into anarchy during his retreat from Bohemia into Silesia in 1744. He was haunted by those images for the rest of his life, and this goes a long ways towards explain the savage punishments he allowed in his constant efforts to strengthen discipline.²¹⁵ The British Army was humiliated when General Braddock's Army dissolved at the Battle of the Monogahela, and it took some time afterwards to restore the survivors to order.²¹⁶ In short, every commander, even a commander who punished as ferociously as Frederick the Great, faced the paradox of savage punishments and yet often lax discipline.

Today it is a basic principle of maintaining discipline (though one often more honored in the breach than in practice) that praise for desired behavior is as, if not more, important than punishment for undesirable behavior. This principle does not seem to have been in operation in the pan-European military world, or the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Sadly it seems to

²¹⁵ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1974, 163, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

²¹⁶ Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2000, 96-107.

have been the case that when officers did deal with the other ranks as individuals, those dealings were more likely to be in the form of the infliction of punishment, (with the occasional exception of rewards of money discussed below) than the administration of praise.

In fact it seems that, by the mid-eighteenth-century, most British officers, and with the possible and partial exception of Prussia, most officers in the European military world, had come to define their duties very narrowly. In battle, as was discussed in the previous chapter, they felt their duty was to set an example. Off the battlefield, for British officers at least, administrative reforms that were designed to reduce opportunities for corruption had, in a classic example of the law of unintended consequences, the perverse effect of reducing company officers' administrative duties, and in the process, reducing both their opportunity, and their inclination, to involve themselves in the lives of their soldiers.²¹⁷ In short, as the mid-eighteenth-century progressed, the officers of British Army crafted an increasingly narrow definition of their duties. They set an example in battle, they punished their troops when they deemed it appropriate, and on rare occasions offered their men a reward. Within these narrow boundaries most British officers were dutiful; but, by modern military standards, mid-eighteenth-century officers were supplying a very truncated version of leadership, and in the process were attempting to impose a very simplistic version of discipline. Monsieur de Lamont described the ideal relationship between the colonel and his troops thusly "As for the soldiers, he must always keep them in great awe; and be rigid to the utmost degree in point of martial discipline."²¹⁸ It should be noted, moreover, that significant elements of "martial discipline" which mid-eighteenth-century officers were attempting to impose, were not generally accepted by their troops, and the tools available to officers attempting to impose discipline, were very unhandy ones indeed.

²¹⁷ See Alan J. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-1763*, Manchester, UK, Manchester University Press, 1985, particularly the conclusion, 162-169.

²¹⁸ Monsieur de Lamont, "The Art of War, Containing the Duties of all Military Officers in Actual Service," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Richard Bell, 1776, 48, hereafter, Lamont, "Duties," or: de La Valliere, *Art of War*..

4.2 PUNISHMENT AND REWARD

In his *Advice to Officers of the British Army*, Francis Grosse satirically suggested to colonels that: “as a good father does not spare the rod, so should not a commanding officer spare the cat-of-nine-tails.”²¹⁹ The final (indeed in all too many cases often the first) argument of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the British army, when attempting to ensure obedience to orders, was the power of military punishment. On rare occasions some form of reward might also be featured to encourage good conduct as well, but generally positive motivations took second place to punishment. Savage punishments were common within the martial culture. In the military version of carrot and stick, the stick was, literally, a stick.

The carrot, on the other hand, was used much more sparingly, and when it did appear it often came in the form of coin. Humphrey Bland opined that: “For the Hope of Reward is so strongly implanted by Nature, that it creates in Mankind even a Contempt of Death when the Prospect is in View, . . . the giving of Money; which, when duly Regulated, is exceedingly Proper, and proved of great Service in taking the Towns much sooner that they otherwise could have done;”²²⁰ In short, the enlisted men of the British Army, and the pan-European military world were occasionally encouraged to display the types of behavior that their officers desired by immediate gifts of cold hard cash. The pre-national, pan-European military world was not subtle. The simplest forms of punishment and of reward were about the only tools available to officers who wished to alter their men's behavior. Since, as will be discussed in the following chapters, mid-eighteenth-century soldiers spent so little time under their officers' control, and since their control was so often uncertain: the officers of the British Army seemed to have felt that they had to seize any opportunity to demonstrate the power of military punishment. Generally, any attempt at a demonstration had to be preceded by a court-martial.

²¹⁹ Francis Grosse, *Advice to the Officers of the British Army: A Facsimile Reprint of the 6th London Edition with Introduction and Notes*, New York, Agathynian Club, 1867, 6th Edition, 1783, 32.

²²⁰ Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline, in which is Laid down and Explained The Duty of the Officers and Soldiers, Thro the several Branches of the Service*, 2nd Edition, London, Printed for Sam. Buckley, 1727, 276, hereafter: Bland, *Treatise*.

4.2.1 Courts-Martial

In the pan-European military world, punishments were inflicted under the authority of martial law, (in the British Army, the "Articles of War"²²¹) which was usually a body of law distinct from the civil and criminal codes.²²² Broadly speaking, punishment came in two different forms, though in both cases the authority to punish came from military law. Relatively minor "crimes" (perhaps better defined as minor offences against military discipline) were simply punished on the authority of an officer. There were, however, limits to the power of officers to inflict punishment: "A captain has in most services the power of appointing his own serjeants and corporals, but cannot by his own authority break them; neither can he punish a soldier with death, unless he revolts against him on duty."²²³

More serious offenses against military discipline, which required more severe punishment, as well as outright crimes, were tried by courts-martial, which had the power to inflict more severe punishments. Courts-martial in turn were divided into two types, regimental and general. Regimental courts-martial, were as its name implied, convened by the regiment to try cases that fell into the middle range between minor offenses that could be handled under the authority of an officer, and the most serious charges which required a general courts martial. As their name suggested, the members of a regimental court-martial were made up of officers from that regiment. They dealt with much of the small change of military discipline; and as has been true in armies throughout history, much of this minor coinage came in the form of offences related to drunkenness:

DRINKING to excess in the army is at all times highly criminal, but upon service is not to be pardoned; and the consequence will be a trial by a court-martial. It has been productive of innumerable mischiefs, and is a most detestable and horrid practice. Whatever commissioned officer shall be found drunk on his guard, party or other duty, under arms shall be cashiered for it; any non-commissioned officer or soldiers, so

²²¹ *Rules and Articles For the Better Government of His Majesty's Horse and Foot Guards, And all Other His Forces in Great Britain and Ireland, Dominions beyond the Seas and Foreign Parts*, [no place] Anno 1749, hereafter: *British Articles of War*.

²²² M. Garrec, Barrie Paskin, "Law, Military," in *A Dictionary of Military History and the Art of War*, Andre Corvisier, ed., English Edition Revised expanded and edited by John Childs, Chris Turner, trans., Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 436-442.

²²³ *Universal Military Dictionary*, CAPTAIN, 50.

offending, shall suffer such corporal punishment as shall be inflicted by the sentence of a court-martial. *Art. of war*

General courts martial were convened under the authority of a commander-in-chief, and could try any cases brought before it, though usually they dealt only with the most serious of charges. They could impose any legal punishments, including capital, though sentences needed to be confirmed by the commander-in-chief. If possible, the members of a general court martial were drawn from the officers of more than one regiment, and sat with a field officer as president.

Most commanders were quite concerned to insure that they had the legal standing to enforce their authority. Military papers are liberally littered with references to courts-martial; quite often the correspondence revolved around a commander in chief delegating the power to convene general courts-martial to a distant subordinate.²²⁴ A typical warrant, giving authority to act as president of a court martial gave the authorization: "according to an act of Parliament passed in the twenty eighth year of His Majesties Reign Entitled an Act for the punishing of Mutiny and Desertion and for the better Payment of the Army and their Quarters"²²⁵

What must be emphasized was that in the British Army, there was little specificity in terms of the charges which could be brought, there were almost no standards for the infliction of punishment, and there was remarkably little guidance for conducting courts-martial. The Articles of War specified the most serious offenses and the punishment deemed appropriate for them; (another way to state this is that the Articles of War listed the offences for which death could be inflicted) but aside from this, both the definition of what was an offence against discipline, and what was the appropriate punishment was largely left up to the "customs of war," and the judgment of the officers' concerned.

Section XX, Article III of the Articles of War specified that: "All Crimes *not Capital* and all Disorders, or Neglects which Officers and Soldiers may be guilty of, to the Prejudice of good Order and Military Discipline (though not mentioned in the above Articles of war) are to be taken Cognizance of by a General Court-Martial, and to be punished at their Discretion."²²⁶

²²⁴ Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volumes I - VI*, Donald H. Kent, Autumn Leonard, S. K. H. Stevens, John L. Tottenham, Louis M. Waddell, eds., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951-1994, *Bouquet I*, 13, 97, 100 and the *Bouquet Papers, passim*, hereafter: *Bouquet I*, etc.

²²⁵ 18 May 1756, To Tho. Gage from William Shirley, Thomas Gage, *Thomas Gage Papers Collection*, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, hereafter: *Gage Papers*.

²²⁶ *British Articles of War*, Section XX, Article III, 30.

Likewise, the oath that officers sitting on a court-martial took included the following provisions: "I A. B. do swear, That I will duly administer Justice according to the Rules and Articles for the better Governance of His Majesty's Forces, . . . and if any Doubt shall arise, which is not explained by the said Articles or Act of Parliament, according to my Conscience, the best of my Understanding, and the Customs of War in the like Cases."²²⁷ In short, military law left an awful lot up to the discretion of those attempting to administer it. What all this uncertainty meant was that from the perspective of the rank and file, punishment was often arbitrary, while at the same time from the perspective of commanders, courts-martial were highly unreliable instruments for the maintenance of discipline and the administration of punishment.

To give one example, Henry Bouquet was forced to deal with problems of discipline, and the need to dispense punishment, as did every other commander in the eighteenth-century; and in doing so he found how unreliable court-martials were. One long correspondence in the Bouquet papers concerns Private Hugh Frazer, who was court-martialed for abusing and threatening a Corporal Warmsdorf. In this account it is clear that Private Frazer felt comfortable in going to his Lieutenant and complaining about the Corporal. At the same time Corporal Warmsdorf felt able to complain directly to Colonel Bouquet. The matter was referred to a court-martial that cleared Private Frazer and ordered Corporal Warmsdorf to be reduced to the ranks.²²⁸

Colonel Bouquet was very unhappy with this result and directed the court-martial to reexamine its verdict; the court then returned the same verdict a second time.²²⁹ Colonel Bouquet was highly upset and wrote to report the case to Lord Loudon, his commander, complaining about the conduct of the Court-Martial.²³⁰ Bouquet wrote that: "There is here a question of discipline, and on this matter I believe there can be no trifling. It is the foundation of the whole service, it cannot be neglected without producing inevitable disorders. We have young ignorant soldiers. They have difficulty in understanding that a corporal who eats and sleeps with them can have the authority to give them orders."²³¹

²²⁷ British *Articles of War*, Section XV, Article VII, 23.

²²⁸ Proceedings of a Regimental Courts-Martial, November 4, 1756, *Bouquet I*, 19-21.

²²⁹ Proceedings of a Regimental Courts-Martial, November 4, 1756, *Bouquet I*, 22.

²³⁰ Bouquet to Loudon, November 5, 1756, *Bouquet I*, 23-25.

²³¹ Bouquet to Loudon, November 5, 1756, *Bouquet I*, 25.

Now the written account suggests that this was a result of ethnic friction between a soldier with a Scots name and a corporal who was identified as a Saxon. In examining the verdict moreover, it is noticeable that the court-martial was composed entirely of men with British surnames. Nonetheless it is clear that discipline was fairly relaxed, and not conducted according to Colonel Bouquet's standards. It is also clear that, in this instance at least, Colonel Bouquet's attempt to enforce discipline was not receiving the backing which he felt he deserved from his officers, and from the system of military justice. It is worth noting, by the way, that this was a regimental court-martial manned by officers from the battalion that Henry Bouquet was commanding. Certainly Colonel Bouquet was here faced with the putative ability to administer harsh punishments, but at the same time, circumstances that produced lax discipline.

Demonstrating, in an even more dramatic fashion, the extremes of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army's system of military justice was a court-martial in the Royal Regiment of Ireland, which managed to generate an appalling arbitrary punishment, while, at the same time, spinning well beyond the control of the officer who ordered it, and it certainly did not produce the result he desired:

The Man is brought before a Reg^t Court martial, he thinks the Sentence Cruel & Unjust, and Modestly appeals to a General Court Martial. He receives 500 Lashes, on the face of his Appeal, & is again confined for Insolence - his application for a General Court Martial being Construed in that Sense. He was brought again before a Reg^t Court Martial in the Shockingest Condition that ever a Soldier appeared before a Court of any kind with his Bloody Shirt on his shoulders Unable to Stand Unsupported, the unpropriety & Cruelty of this was noticed by the Court, and the Major at their Intercession order'd the Court to be Suspended, therefore no Judgment was given - in the meantime the Prisoner applys for a General Court Martial which the General Granted, & notwithstanding the whole of the Reg^t attended at Brunswick to prosecute him, yet the General who by some means or Other had got a direct View of the Matter would not allow him to be punished, here they allowed a Private Soldier to Triumph over them all & have Subjected Themselves to an Action of Law, which if the Man has friends will not be easily averted -²³²

²³² *Gage Papers*, Unknown to J. Wilkins, Philadelphia, 16 May, 1774.

In short, it can be said that the mechanism of the court-martial, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, was a creaking and awkward one, and not in the least reliable. Neither justice, from the perspective of the soldiers, nor an appropriate punishment, from the perspective of the officers, was guaranteed. One result of this dichotomy was that, when officers did have an opportunity to inflict punishment, they tended to make the most of it.

4.2.2 Punishment

Military punishments were fearsome. The *Universal Military Dictionary* describes the various methods: "such as tying up to 3 halberds, and receiving a number of lashes with a whip, composed of 9 whip-cord lashes. And each lash of 9 knots, from the drummer: or running the gantlope through the parade at guard-mounting, drawn up in 2 lines for the purpose; when the provost marches through with twigs or switches, and every soldiers takes as many as there are prisoners to be punished: the prisoner then marches through the two lines, and every soldier gives him a hard stroke, the major riding up and down to see that the men lay on properly."²³³ For the truly serious cases, authorities would execute the erring soldier, usually by shooting or hanging. It should be noted that some means of being put to death were apparently seen as more honorable than others, for instance, one British orderly book recorded the following: "Should he, or any of his party, or any other party of the same Nature come with reach of our Men, it is hoped that they will not honour them with a Soldier's Death, [being shot] if they can possibly avoid it, but reserve them for due punishment, which can only be inflicted by the Hangman."²³⁴ Spies for instance, were invariably hanged, not shot:

For the most part corporal and capital punishments were the only punishments available in the repertoire of military discipline. In a few cases there were experiments with more innovative approaches to discipline. In at least two cases soldiers in the British Army in North

²³³ *Universal Military Dictionary*, EXECUTIONS, 85.

²³⁴ *For Want of a Horse: being A Journal of the Campaigns against he American in 1776 and 1777 conducted from Canada, by an officer who served with Lt. Gen. Burgoyne*, George F. G. Stanley ed., Sackville, New Brunswick, The Tribune Press Limited, 1961, Brigade Orders, 26 July 1777, 80, hereafter: *1777 Campaign Journal*. The journals author was a British officer in Brigadier General Simon Fraser's Brigade, but his identity is not known

America who had displayed cowardice in action were punished in unique ways. One soldier was sentenced to ride the wooden horse (which was a non-trivial punishment in itself as the wooden horse was given a very sharp back) "with a petticoat on him, a broom in his hand."²³⁵ On another occasion two soldiers who were felt to have shown cowardice were punished similarly, it being ordered: "that they shall stand an hour at ye necessary house [the latrine], each with a woman's cap upon his head this evening, as a small punishment for the dishonour they have brought upon the corps and their brother soldiers." Afterwards, the pair were forced to march at the head of all parties with unloaded muskets. The examples are interesting ones, and they show that at least a few officers were interested in developing more disciplinary options than flogging or execution, but, in the mid-eighteenth-century, they seem to have been in a minority. In the broader sense, punishment of these types, which rely upon public shaming for their effect, depend upon the general belief that widely held standards of behavior have been violated: in this case, if the majority of soldiers did not believe that cowardice in action was unacceptable, punishments of this sort would not be effective.

Corporal punishment was bad enough, and in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army awards of five-hundred to a thousand lashes at a time, appear to have been the standards for serious infractions of discipline, such as assault upon a superior or desertion.²³⁶ Obviously, however, an execution was the ultimate theater of military discipline. As was true in the larger "civilian world, a military execution was a spectacle intended to make an impression on those, who watched, and in the pan-European military world, some would be forced to watch. The *Universal Military Dictionary* advises us that:

Military Executions, . . . When a soldier is to be punished with death, a detachment of about 200 men from the regiment he belongs to form the parade, when a file of grenadiers shoots the prisoner to death. N. B. Every nation has different methods of punishment.²³⁷

The Emphasis on public display and spectacle, in military executions was unmistakable.

New York, April 10th 1757

²³⁵ Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 102-103, hereafter: Baumwell, *Redcoats*.

²³⁶ *Gates Papers*, Orderly Book, 1760-61, *passim*.

²³⁷ *Universal Military Dictionary*, EXECUTIONS, 85.

Sir:

You are hereby directed to cause the Prisoner William Marshall, alias Johnson, in Custody of Capt. Horatio Gates to be brought to the most public part of the Streets of Albany & to be hanged till he is dead for having been employed as a Spy by the Enemy with a label on his Breast in Dutch and English for holding and Carrying on a Correspondence and having given Intelligence to the Enemy, for which this shall be a Warrant. I would have the Execution performed as soon as he arrives in Albany. I am,

Sir

Your most obedient

Humble Serveant²³⁸

It is clear that periodically supplying an example to the troops was an important objective for most court-martials. To quote Monsieur de Lamont's opinion:

The council of war [courts martial] may abate of the rigour of the articles of war; and I have seen it practiced upon a deserter, because the poor fellow made it appear he had been listed by compulsion, and would never have gone into the army of his own accord. I have also seen councils of war in which much severity has been used, and in one of them, one of the horse guards was condemned to be cudgelled to death, for an example to all that body, that the fear of disgrace might keep them to their duty.²³⁹

Beyond this emphasis on periodically supplying a spectacle, the court-martial's decision on whether or not to impose capital punishment was wildly erratic; indeed it might not go so far to suggest that military authorities went out of their way to make the sentence of military execution as random and as uncertain as possible. At the very least it is clear that there was little effort to insure that sentences were uniform, with equivalent crimes receiving equivalent punishments, and a host of external factors were allowed to influence the sentences given.

Even after the sentence of death was passed a further injection of randomness was inserted into the process. It was quite common at the gallows, where several soldiers were to be executed, for all but one to be pardoned. In some cases, the pardons and deaths would be explicitly random, a group of condemned soldiers would be forced to cast lots, or throw dice

²³⁸ *Gates Papers*, New York, 10 April, 1757

²³⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 93-94.

with the loser executed.²⁴⁰ In other cases, the pardon came accompanied by a moralistic speech that reaffirmed traditional military values. For instance:

His Excellency S:^r Jeffrey Amherst is also pleased to pardon all the prisoners under confinement on board the *Phoenix* notwithstanding their Crimes are of the most heinous nature - - His Excellency General Monckton hopes that this Great & repeated Lenity, will work Strongly in the Minds of those that Mercy has in so Singular a Manner been shewn to. -- & that they will in the Day of Battle, wipe away their former Crimes, by a laudable & Courageous behaviour, against the avow'd Enemies of Their King and Country.--

It is fair to say that in many cases the power of pardon was being used to make an unnecessarily severe system of justice more humane. It seems likely however that the primary purpose of the mechanism of pardons was to enhance the authority and power of the pardoning authority, usually the commander in chief, or some other general officer. It allowed him to display his power and his benevolence at one and the same moment.

Whether capital or corporal, punishments of this level of severity indicate an obvious difference between military punishments in the mid-eighteenth-century and today. Today, for the most part, punishment aims at correcting the behavior of the errant soldier. For example, in the 1980's, recruits, in the United States Army, who misbehaved in basic training were sent to a "Correctional Custodial Facility" where they received "intensive retraining" to "motivate" them to amend their conduct. Neither their trials (Article 15 hearings) nor their punishments were publicized.²⁴¹ While it is unlikely that the process was quite as benevolent as it was made to sound, nonetheless, the noticeable lack of publicity given to the whole process suggests that an attempt to alter behavior of those deemed to have misbehaved was the genuine purpose of the process. The control that a modern army has over its troops, when they are in barracks, is close enough to total that an attempt can be made to catch relatively minor disciplinary infractions, and correct them before they become major; and moreover, an attempt can be made to alter future behavior to conform to the army's desires.

It is clear that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was operating on almost exactly the opposite system. Punishment in the mid-eighteenth-century military world seems to have

²⁴⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 100.

aimed, at least in theory, at setting an example to deter, perhaps terrorize would be a better word, others from committing the same offense. In some way this was logical given the lesser degree of control mid-eighteenth-century British officers had over their soldiers compared to armies of the twenty-first-century. Since, as will be discussed in the next chapter, British officers had only limited control over their soldiers for a limited time, they were unlikely to catch most offences against military discipline, and when they did the mechanism of a court-martial was an uncertain one. It seems however, that, when they, in effect, got their chance, the British Army, indeed all armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world, attempted to set the strongest possible example to others, with altering the behavior of the soldier concerned a secondary consideration. It is perhaps belaboring the obvious to point out that the conduct of a soldier who has just been executed is beyond alteration.

Looking at a deeper level, if mid-eighteenth-century military punishment was not primarily directed at altering the behavior of the man being punished, then what was its point? The logical answer to this question would be that British Army's system of military punishment was primarily intended to deter other soldiers from committing the same offence, and this would explain why the punishments were invariably performed in public. The problem with this answer is that the public punishments do not seem to have been very successful at deterring other soldiers from committing offences. It certainly did not seem to have had much success in deterring desertion for instance. So what did the military punishment system really do? It seems possible that, from the point of view of the officers, the infliction of punishment's most important function was to uphold their authority, and vest them with power, though it did not necessarily do so in the obvious way.

As the examples given above show, it was not always possible for an officer to have a soldier punished in the way he wanted. The system of courts-martial and punishment was too erratic in operation (to be fair, some of this was due to fair-minded, and independent officers sitting on the courts-martial) for an officer to be certain of punishing the man he wanted punished. In the larger scheme of things however, all officers gained by being part of the instrument of military justice, and being in position to tug on its lever, not just in trying to get a soldier punished, but also in having the power to procure pardons. This was significant power,

²⁴¹ The author's personal experience at United States Army Basic, and Field Artillery Advanced, Training, at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, January-April, 1982.

and especially in the cases of commanders-in-chief, it literally amounted to the power of life and death. It is profoundly counterintuitive, but a mid-eighteenth-century British officers' authority might have been as enhanced as much by his power to get someone *out* of trouble, as his ability to get them *in* trouble.²⁴²

One final point about corporal and capital punishment should be made. All armies of the pan-European military world were not equal in terms of either discipline or punishment. Some armies used corporal punishment much more than others. Anecdotal evidence suggests that corporal punishment was much less common, and when administered was much less severe in, for example the French Army, than in the Austrian Army, where it was in turn, much less common, and much less severe, than in the Prussian. Christopher Duffy made an interesting observation when he noted that the allegedly more humane Austrian Army, which used corporal punishment much less than the Prussian Army, executed far more soldiers than the allegedly savagely disciplined Prussians.²⁴³ This observation suggests that, in the pan-European military world, there was in fact an inverse correlation between corporal and capital punishment with more of one leading to less of the other. Comparative studies are not available but what anecdotal evidence is available suggests that the British Army, though behind the Prussians, fell at the high end of the pan-European corporal punishment scale, but much lower down the pan-European capital punishment scale. Certainly the British Army did not approach the death toll of the more "humane" Austrian Army where Duffy reports accounts of more than one-hundred corpses hanging from the same gallows, and nearly one-thousand men were hanged over the winter of 1759-60. These observations, if correct, lead to the interesting, and perhaps counterintuitive, conclusions that the more executions which were performed the less disciplined the army, and the more corporal punishment administered, the more "humane," in one sense of the word at least, the army.

²⁴² See Douglas Hay, "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," in *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England*, New York, Pantheon Books, 1975, for a description of how this process worked in the larger society of Georgian England.

²⁴³ Christopher Duffy, *Instrument of War: Volume I of the Austrian Army in the Seven Years War*, Chicago, The Emperor's Press, 2000, 210, hereafter: Duffy, *Instrument*.

4.2.3 Reward

The mid-eighteenth-century British Army believed, as did most mid-eighteenth-century armies, in the power of cash to motivate their rank and file. Money obviously is always a strong motivator. Beyond this however, money was important because there were effectively no other form of rewards available to the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or indeed to the pan-European military world. There were no orders, no medals, no decorations, no ribbons, no badges, no certificates of merit, in short, none of the vast range of "atta-boys" which modern armies dole out to encourage their soldiers, in the mid-eighteenth-century military world. (Most European nations did maintain various orders of chivalry for, and in rare cases offered peerages to, distinguished military and naval officers. Prussia and Austria created the first "medals," as we understand the term today, in the middle part of the eighteenth-century, the *Ordre Pour le Merite*, and the Military Order of Maria Theresa respectively. These medals were effectively restricted to officers during this period however.) In short, cash rewards were one of the very few tools available to military leaders to encourage positive behavior in the rank and file. Interestingly, custom seems to have largely restricted the use of cash rewards however, to a fairly limited range of situations, broadly speaking three. Soldiers were rewarded for performing exceptionally difficult work, for working at exceptionally dangerous tasks, most commonly at sieges, and for exhibiting courage in battle.

There were complex, and evolving, rules regarding what types of work could and could not be expected of soldiers. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter; extraordinary labor however, would bring extraordinary rewards of money: For instance, a letter from Gage to Bradstreet directed him to distribute money to soldiers employed with the batteaus; (batteaus were barges commonly used to move supplies in North America) he was to distribute forty shillings to the men, (and rather unusually, it is likely that these officers were provincials) four and a half pounds to each subaltern and eighteen pounds to each captain.²⁴⁴

Sieges were regarded as exceptionally trying times for soldiers in the eighteenth-century. Unlike battles, which were dangerous, but usually lasted only for a day, sieges might well require months of fairly constant danger, and they required the performance of tedious work, as well as

²⁴⁴ To Thomas Gage from Jn. Bradstreet, 21 August 1759, Thomas Gage, *Thomas Gage Papers Collection*, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, American Series, 3, hereafter: *Gage Papers*.

work that was quite dangerous. As a result it had long been customary to motivate the troops involved with extra pay. For instance: “Each Workman in the Trenches has *per* Night 8d For a Gabion [a cylindrical tube of wattle that could be filled with earth, and used rather as sandbags are today] 1s 4d”²⁴⁵ Immediate gratification, for those who were working, was deemed very important:

The Payments were made every Day, or every two days at the farthest, without which the Works would go but slowly on: For tho’ the Men so employed run a great deal of Danger, as well as undergo a great deal of Fatigue, yet the Desire of getting Money does not only soften the Labour, but makes the Danger also appear less; but unless the Men are punctually paid, it will be impossible for the Officers to keep them to their Duty.²⁴⁶

These types of payments were seen as customary, and the troops involved regarded them as their due, and any confusion or delay in paying them could lead to difficulties:

[Make sure that the workmen at sieges are paid promptly, and that accurate records are kept:] by doing of which no Disputes can happen in paying them, nor give them the least room to think they are wronged; a Circumstance of no small Importance to the Service since a contrary Proceeding is often attended either with Mutiny or Desertion; and therefore every Cause that can incite them to it ought to be carefully avoided.²⁴⁷

Almost inevitably a siege would required one or more attacks, which were seen as especially dangerous, as they amounted to frontal assaults on fortifications. It was not uncommon to recruit for these attacks by offering money: “When some desperate Attack is to be made on a little Out-Work, they generally do it by such who will go voluntarily, offering a Reward to each Man.”²⁴⁸

Mid-eighteenth-century officers had great, and usually justified, confidence in the power of reward to motivate troops. To again quote Humphrey Bland:

For the Hope of Reward is so strongly implanted by Nature, that it creates in Mankind even a Contempt of Death when the Prospect is in View, . . . the giving of Money; which, when duly Regulated, is exceedingly Proper, and proved of great Service in taking the Towns much sooner that they otherwise could have done[.]²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 256-257.

²⁴⁶ Bland, *Treatise*, 257.

²⁴⁷ Bland, *Treatise*, 259.

²⁴⁸ Bland, *Treatise*, 257.

²⁴⁹ Bland, *Treatise*, 276.

Closely related to official reward, and also a great motivator in battle was what might be viewed as a semi-official reward, the opportunity to plunder. Plundering had long been seen as the traditional "perk" of the soldier; but looting after a battle generated so much disorder that attempts were constantly being made to regulate this practice:

There are rules for plundering as well as for everything else; there are generally detachments appointed for it, while the rest make head against the enemy; they need only wait the time; but such is the greediness of the soldiers, that unless an officer stops them they will not have so much patience. . . . Neither do they thus lose their booty, for they leave one of their own men to secure it till they have repulsed the enemy.²⁵⁰

Nonetheless most attempts at regulating looting were generally unsuccessful, as repeated orders such as the following make clear: "No prisoners must be taken, unless they are men of note, before the victory is certain; nor must the horse or foot be permitted to disperse to plunder the baggage, which has often caused the loss of battles."²⁵¹ Looting of course, did not only occur after a battle, and under certain circumstance, extraordinary efforts would be made to try to offer protection against it: "SAFE-guard, in *military affairs*, a protection granted by a prince or general, for some of the enemy's lands, houses, persons, &c. to preserve them from being insulted or plundered."²⁵²

Custom was slowly changing however, and looting was beginning to seem disreputable to some in the eighteenth-century military world, and it might be fair to say that armies were less nakedly rapacious than they had used to be. Some soldiers no long believed that looting was consistent with military honor. A Germany officer, Johann Eward, offered the following vigorous opinion: "Above all, one can not deal harshly enough with those villains who mercilessly torment the peasants who are innocent of the war. The best thing to do is to chase such rabble away, since those who once stooped to plundering can never be trusted again, and they spoil the good soldiers as well."²⁵³ Nonetheless, it seems that plunder was still seen as one of the customary rewards of the soldier, and, as a practical matter, it does not seem that

²⁵⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 135.

²⁵¹ de la Valiere, "Greatest Generals," 181.

²⁵² *Universal Military Dictionary*, SAFE-guard, 227.

²⁵³ Johann Eward, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare*, Cassel, Germany, Johann Jacob Cramer, 1785, trans., Robert A. Selig, and David Curtis Skaggs, New York, Greenwood Press, 1991, 69, hereafter Eward, *Partisans*.

plundering had become all that uncommon, at best, it can be said that it was less openly accepted than it had been.

Monetary reward, then, while not uncommon in the pan-European military world, came only in a limited set of circumstances, for unpleasant work, during sieges, to reward courage in battle, and as semi-official loot. On balance therefore, it seems that reward, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army at least, came in such an irregular fashion, and in such specific sets of circumstance, that it could not really be a generally effective tool of discipline. This presented a problem for officers since when they were trying to impose unpopular disciplinary rules they had very few means at their disposal.

When trying to enforce unpopular elements of military discipline, rewards were neither common enough, nor offered in a wide enough range of circumstance, to be effective in encouraging desirable behavior. At the same time punishment was not sufficiently certain to consistently alter the behavior of the rank and file either. This seems to have been the disciplinary situation throughout the pan-European military world. Here are the comments of an experienced commander, Johann Ewald, on the tools available to maintain discipline:

[The company commander] has to enforce to the utmost everything once he has given his orders. Not the slightest infringement upon discipline, orderliness and service must be tolerated, especially not in the beginning. Once a German has gotten used to strict discipline and order it eventually becomes a habit with him. The best thing to do is not to choose a medium in rewards as well as punishments. One has to praise those who through their good behavior or conduct, whatever that might be, distinguish themselves before their comrades, and encourage them through promotions and presents. On the other hand, however, those who deserve to be punished have to be disciplined most severely.²⁵⁴

In short the tools of discipline available to mid-eighteenth-century officers were not very potent. There were real limits to the ability of officers to impose discipline. Beyond this, another limit upon any attempt to impose discipline was the demonstrable fact that if discipline became too strict, it was often surprisingly easy for soldiers either to combine and negotiate better terms of service, or to pack up and leave.

²⁵⁴ Ewald, *Partisans*, 69.

4.3 DESERTION AND MUTINY

It would be wrong to imagine that the soldiers of the pre-national, pan-European military world, and the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, meekly accepted the attempts to impose discipline standards they did not accept upon them. In fact, there was an unending war between soldiers and authority over not just discipline, but the terms of service, with the non-commissioned officers occupying the contended ground in between. Resistance was not uncommon, and ran the gamut from disobedience and abuses of superiors, on up through desertion, to mutiny and murder. In many ways however, the most popular forms of resistance were also the most effective: mutiny and desertion. Desertion, in particular, was not just common, it was commonplace.

4.3.1 Desertion

As a means of individually resisting authority, outright disobedience was not uncommon, but the most visible and common form of resistance to authority, as well as the most effective, was to leave authority behind, to desert. All eighteenth-century armies faced a huge desertion problem. A very rough estimate is that mid-eighteenth-century European armies, including Britain's, lost one-fifth of their men each year. It is not inconceivable that more than half of that loss could be attributed to desertion.²⁵⁵ Reliable figures are hard to come by, but to give one example of the extent of the problem: between 1740 and 1800 the Prussian Regiment Garde in Potsdam, the most distinguished Regiment in the Prussian Army, lost three officers, ninety-three NCO's, thirty-two musicians, and 1,525 men to desertion.²⁵⁶ It seems fair to say that desertion was the single biggest disciplinary problem faced by all armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world, and that the problem was often big enough to threaten a regiment's military

²⁵⁵ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, 16, 73, hereafter Frey, *British Soldier*.

efficiency. Certainly the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was just as vulnerable to desertion as any other army of the pre-national, pan-European military world

It is important to note however, that deserters were not necessarily lost to the pan-European military world as a whole: there is overwhelming anecdotal evidence that deserters frequently simply moved from one army to another, and most armies would welcomed them, and integrate them into their ranks with relatively little fuss. Indeed, Prince de Ligne of the Austrian Army thought that enemy deserters were a useful acquisition for his army, being skillful, brave and determined people.²⁵⁷ In fact many deserters returned to their own armies and sometimes to their own regiments.

Moreover, in what might be termed "workplace desertions" it was not uncommon for soldiers to desert one regiment to join another regiment in the same army. During the expedition against Fort DuQuesne Henry Bouquet believed that some of deserters from the "regular troops" had joined the provincials, and that "terror [fear of discovery and punishment.] began to prevail among them." He was "afraid that they would not only flee, but that they would take other soldiers with them." Bouquet dealt with this difficulty by promising pardons to all the deserters who would identify themselves and agree to serve out the campaign in their former units.²⁵⁸ Quite matter of factly, a letter to Horatio Gates, when serving with the British Army informed him that, "two of Lieu^t Smiths Recruits are taken from me ; the one as a deserter from y^e 46 Reg^t the other as a deserter from y^e 48 Reg^t["²⁵⁹ This form of desertion strongly suggests that not all deserters were displeased with military life in general, they were often just unhappy with their immediate situation.

All commanders were forced to deal with the reality of desertion. When a soldier was enlisted, his Captain was advised to: "acquaint him with the laws made against Deserters, that he may not plead ignorance,"²⁶⁰ but a commander's efforts certainly could not end there. In May of 1758, on the expedition against Fort DuQuesne, Henry Bouquet wrote to General Forbes that:

²⁵⁶ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 67.

²⁵⁷ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Maria Theresa: The Armed Forces of Imperial Austria, 1740-1780*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1977, 47, hereafter: Duffy, *Maria Theresa*.

²⁵⁸ Bouquet to Forbes, May 29, 1758, *Bouquet I*, 389.

²⁵⁹ W^m Spearing to Horatio Gates, Ticonderoga, 25 November, 1761, Horatio Gates, *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, Gregory James, Dunning, Thomas, eds., Microfilm Corporation of America, Sanford, North Carolina, 1979, hereafter *Gates Papers*.

²⁶⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 39.

“Bird’s battalion lost several men by desertion. I believe that it will be necessary for you to have a bulletin printed, to inform every individual of the penalties inflicted by the Act of Parliament *against Harbourners* [of deserters]&c.”²⁶¹ Officialdoms response to desertion varied; it could range from forgiveness to an attempt at terrorization. On another occasion, Bouquet wrote to General Forbes that “Two deserters of 2nd Battⁿ of R. A. R. have been arrested here, I beg you would give me your orders about them. They are strong young fellows, and this is their first Desertion: I shall leave them in Jayl here, they can be carried up by the two other Companies, to be tried or forgiven as you think proper.”²⁶²

The response to desertion seemed to have been dependent on how the officers judged the situation. A soldier was often pardoned if he would return to duty in his old regiment. This gentle policy seemed to have been a common response to desertion. No deserter could rely upon this mild policy however. When a commander decided that desertion had become a major danger, he could take actions that demonstrated that desertion did have its risk, as when Lord Loudoun, Commander in Chief in North America ordered the: . "execution of Maramaduke Smith private Soldier 44th Regiment of Foot, Richard Sotwick private Soldier 48th Foot, James M.Leod 55th Foot . . . for desertion [between the] hours of nine and twelve By Shooting until dead[.]”²⁶³ Note that these three soldiers came from three different regiments, which strongly suggests that this was an attempt by Lord Loudoun to set a very public example.

In effect, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army seemed to have perceived a hierarchy of desertion, running from less to more serious. The least serious form of desertion was deserting to join another regiment in the same army. This was generally treated quite leniently, as in the example quoted above, in most cases the soldier was simply returned to his original regiment. In general the major issue was whether or not the soldier concerned had received an enlistment bonus when he joined a new regiment (in fact this often seems to have been the motive for the desertion) and this he was required to return.

Desertion to the civilian world, in peacetime, was regarded somewhat more seriously, but, if retaken, the deserter still had a fair chance of receiving relatively minor punishment, and might get off completely. Moreover few European states, with the (as has so often been said)

²⁶¹ Bouquet to Forbes, May 25, 1758, Bouquet’s italics, *Bouquet I*, 364.

²⁶² Bouquet to Forbes, May 22, 1758, *Bouquet I*, 351-352.

²⁶³ 5 November 1757, To Thomas Gage, from Loudoun, *Gage Papers*, American Series 1

possible and partial exception of Prussia, had the sort of control over either their army or their civilian community to reliably detect and apprehend deserters. In fact, the key to a successful desertion to the civilian world often seems to have been the wearing of civilian cloths, possession of which allowed the deserters to merge into the general population. Earlier in the eighteenth-century, when soldiers were not necessarily issued with their full uniforms immediately, one colonel suggested that they could be given their "Ridecotes" [redcoats] more quickly so that, if they deserted: "they might be sooner taken[.]"²⁶⁴

Desertion in wartime carried greater risks, as it was far more likely that a commander might find it desirable to set an example. Writing about Bouquet's 1764 Expedition, William Smith reported that: "Two soldiers were shot for desertion; an example which became absolutely necessary to suppress a crime which, in such an expedition, would have been attended with fatal consequences, by weakening an army already too small."²⁶⁵ Desertion to the enemy in wartime was regarded as the most serious of all forms of desertion. Monsieur de Lamont noted that: "All deserters [to the enemy] are hanged, [but those who desert to the enemy while on guard duty] have some further punishment added."²⁶⁶ If a deserter joined the army of the enemy, and was recaptured, this was often regarded as treason and punished accordingly. In spite of this danger, Monsieur de Lamont tells us: "I have known Vedets in Flanders desert to the enemy, who were but a quarter of a league from us."²⁶⁷

Eighteenth-century military authority never really got a handle on the problem of desertion. They dealt with the issue on an ad-hoc basis, sometimes attempting to demonstrate that desertion would be punished, as for example when Will Eyre wrote Horatio Gates: "I shall be glad to have the Deserters of our Regt try'd here;"²⁶⁸ on other occasions authorities adopted a policy of leniency, issuing amnesties and pardons. Nothing worked very well, and commanders were constantly trying to invent new and better methods of keeping their soldiers from running away. One of the most imaginative, albeit horrific, attempts to stop desertion is recorded in the Gates papers. In a journal entry dated September 29, 1750 Horatio Gates recorded the following:

²⁶⁴ Quoted in David Chandler, *The Art of War in the Age of Marlborough*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1976, 88, hereafter: Chandler, *Art of War*.

²⁶⁵ William Smith, *Historical Account of Bouquet's Expedition against the Ohio Indians in 1764, and a Translation of Dumas' Biographical Sketch of General Bouquet*, Cincinnati, Ohio, Robert Clark and Co., 1868.39-40, hereafter: Smith, Cincinnati, *Historical Account*.

²⁶⁶ de Lamont, "Duties," 118.

²⁶⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 116.

[T]his morning a Court Martial set to try the Deserter of Warburt[ons Regiment] who was Condemn'd to dye. In the Evening the Colonel orderd the Troops under Arms. he told them the folly and Villainy of the desertion was such as nothing could parrallell. he expos'd the Folly of it, by assuring them the French sent all deserters to the Confines of Canada, where they were imur'd in Block Houses, & never suffer'd to strole on pain of immediate Death. then pointing to the deserter, he said that he was under sentence of Death, which should immediatly be put in Execution, on the desertion of the next Soldier, and the[n] dismissed them.²⁶⁹

The effectiveness of this attempt to hold the soldiers hostage is not know, but overall, neither the British, nor any other army of the pre-national, pan-European military world ever found a way to stop their soldiers from leaving, if they really wanted to go.

While the phrase "autonomy," rather than "independence," has been used elsewhere in this work to describe the life of the enlisted soldier of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, the extremely high incidence of desertion make it clear that independence was available to most soldiers who wanted it. This does not mean that men could not be coerced into an army and kept there unwillingly, they were, particularly in wartime. It does mean that, between reductions of regiments at the end of a war, with the corresponding discharge of soldiers, and the relative ease, and relative safety, of desertion, most men who wanted out of the army could, in time, find a way to do so. This means that, *in the long term*, most enlisted soldiers who stayed with the British Army, or (again with the possible and partial exception of the Prussian Army) any eighteenth-century army, were there because they wanted to be there.

Desertion was probably a big problem for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army but it seems to have been a (admittedly barely) manageable problem. It was, however, a problem that probably offered some hidden solutions to the British Army, though it is not likely that any contemporary leaders appreciated them. It seems likely that desertion provided an important safety valve to the pan-European military world. As a result of the relative ease and frequency of desertion, rank-and-file, soldiers knew that if their personal situation became too intolerable, there was a way to leave. Desertion probably acted to rid the regiment of a significant number of

²⁶⁸ To Thomas Gage from Wil Eyre, Fort Edwards 15 April 1759, *Gage Papers*, American Series, 2.

²⁶⁹ "Journal Kept on the Expedition Sent by Cornwallis, Governor of Nova Scotia, to discharge the French and Indians from Chigneto and the building of the Fort etc., 10 Sept. to 8 Oct., 1750," Sept. 29, 1750, *Gates Papers*.

malcontents, and, in a military world where so much depended on consent, and more or less willing cooperation, this very possibly worked to improve the overall state of discipline and *esprit de corps* in the regiment. Be that as it may, most officers regarded desertion as a serious problem, one that, when detected, would often require serious punishment; and serious punishment was something that the army was all too prepared to supply. Unfortunately, neither serious punishment, nor pardons, nor any measures that mid-eighteenth-century armies took seemed to be able to stop desertion. Desertion, in pre-national, pan-European military world was largely an individual action; however, the rank and file of the British Army sometimes took united action when they felt that their interests were being ignored: Mutiny, however, usually occurred as a collective response to violation of, or what could plausibly be presented as violations of, the customary terms of service.

4.3.2 Mutiny

The most direct and explicit rejection possible of military discipline is mutiny. "Mutiny," however, is a term that carried a variety of meanings in the mid-eighteenth-century military world, not all of which are still attached to the phrase today. The term was used very loosely, and it often referred to any defiance of, or rejection of, authority: offences that today would be classified as insubordination, or failure to obey orders.²⁷⁰ To a large extent mutiny, of this sort, was the most common of all violation of military discipline, and was dealt with without much difficulty. Nonetheless, mutiny, in the strict meaning of the term: as an organized, collective, refusal to obey orders was not uncommon in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army and the pre-national, pan-European military world.

Most mutinies of the mid-eighteenth-century were relatively (with a great deal of emphasis placed upon the relatively) civilized affairs, though the potential for violence was always present. In truth, most mutinies, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pan-European military world, more closely resembled modern sit-down strikes than anything else. They usually were the result of unhappiness over working conditions, and the most

common cause was disputes over pay, usually a failure to pay wages that were due, or a failure to pay all the wages to which the soldiers' felt they were entitled. The pay mutiny had a long and honorable (or dishonorable depending upon the perspective) history in the pre-national, pan-European military world. In the sixteenth-century, during the Dutch Wars, the Spanish Army of Flanders was repeatedly crippled by mutinies, frequently over pay or related issues.²⁷¹ Arguably, it was these repeated mutinies, caused at root by Spain's inability to regularly pay its troops, which lost Spain the Eighty Years Wars. Things had improved somewhat since then, as most European states had developed relatively more reliable financial and administrative systems, nonetheless disputes over pay persisted, and as a result, "mutinies" were still a common feature of mid-eighteenth-century military life.

The embarrassing situation of Major Lloyd of the Pennsylvania Regiment, during the Forbes Expedition against Fort DuQuesne in 1758, was entirely typical. He found himself compelled to write the following to Henry Bouquet, who was acting as Forbes' second-in-command: "it is with the most sensible Grief and Surprize I have heard of the Complaint of my people to you for Want of their Pay and their refusal to march on that Account a conduct which has no Foundation in Justice or Truth & expressive at the Time of the highest Ingratitude." Lloyd, sounding remarkably like a businessman embarrassed with a cash-flow problem went on to explain that: "the Hurry and Nature of my Business in coming down to this Place woud not admit of as long a Stay at Haris's as was necessary to settle the Multiplicity of my companys Accounts, that I offer'd them Money at that Time with Assurances to pay them all off at my Return from Lancaster with which they express^d great Satisfaction and Content, and that by Virtue of their Orders, I have Paid in Philad^a to their Wives and Creditors, the Ballance due to many of them and finally that I am ready to settle their accounts under the Inspection of the severest Judges, as soon as I have executed the Commands of Governor Denny I shall Tomorrow Morning sett off for Shippensburgh and give them the Pay which they have so illy [earned] and so unfairly demanded with a full resolution never to have any further Connections with them."²⁷²

²⁷⁰ N. A. M. Rodger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy*, Annapolis, Maryland, Naval Institute Press, 1986, 237, hereafter: Rodger, *Wooden World*.

²⁷¹ Geoffrey Parker, *The Army of Flanders and the Spanish Road, 1567-1659: The Logistics of Spanish Victory and Defeat in the Low Countries' War*, Second Edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, 152-176.

²⁷² Henry Lloyd to Henry Bouquet, Lancaster, 17 June 1758, *Bouquet II*, 108-109

A few weeks later we are told that: "Before Col^o Lloyed s Arrival at Shippensburgh his Company had began their march for this place, on which he immediately follw'd, being a bout a mile on this side he met them returning his promiss^g to settle & pay them here, they agreed to proceed on w^{eh} he left them & came here on Sunday Night."²⁷³ It should be noted that, though government finance and administration was much sounder in the 1750's than in the 1560's nonetheless military administration was still complex enough that, even with the best of intentions all around, there was likely to be difficulties in getting the soldiers paid regularly. Add in any degree of mis- or mal-administration and significant problems would likely ensue.²⁷⁴

As a result mutinies were not only relatively common, they became almost ritualized, with a script or set of rules that the mutineers followed to execute a "successful" mutiny. Generally the script seem to require the following: that the demands made by the mutineers should be couched in terms of the traditional rights of the soldiers, that violence be kept to a minimum, (though lots of shouting, and possibly even some shoving, was acceptable) and that, in the final resolution of the mutiny, the authority of the officers must be reaffirmed. It should be noted, by the way, that the mid-Georgian Royal Navy had similar difficulties with paying its sailors regularly, and was equally troubled with mutinies over pay and living conditions; and their mutinies had a very similar "script," as well. Remove the reference to the sea, when reading an account of a naval mutiny, and you could easily be reading an account of a mid-eighteenth-century British Army mutiny and vice-versa.²⁷⁵ Most mutinies in the British Army and the Royal Navy were, from the point of view of the mutineers, successful; they were generally settled by authority giving the mutineers most of what they wanted.

²⁷³ John Billings to Henry Bouquet, Fort Loudoun, 28 June 1758, *Bouquet II*, 139.

²⁷⁴ See for instance, Alan Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-1763*, Manchester, UK, 53-87, Manchester University Press, 1985, particularly Chapter 3.

²⁷⁵ N. A. M. Rodger, one of the foremost historians of the mid-Georgian Navy suggested that the rules of naval mutiny might be summarized as follows:

- 1) No mutiny shall take place at sea, or in the presence of the enemy.
- 2) No personal violence may be employed (although a degree of tumult and shouting is permissible.)
- 3) Mutinies shall be held in pursuit only of objectives sanctioned by the traditions of the Service.

Quite often, if the sailor's complaints seemed justified they received as least tacit support from their officers. There was also a standard procedure for dealing with the mutiny: the Admiralty sent a respected officer to deal with the mutineers; he listened to their complaints, and generally acceded to most of their demands. Rodger, *Wooden World*, 237-243.

A mutiny that closely matched this description took place in the Royal American Regiment, and the 45th Foot, in late 1763 and early 1764. The heart of the dispute was a decision taken, that since the war had ended, soldiers would no longer be entitled to free rations, and 4d of their daily pay of around 6d would be withheld to pay for their foods. Other factors such as the disbanding of several battalions, and the drafting of soldiers into other regiments, as well as problems with the issue of clothing were also creating unhappiness among the troops. The soldiers of the 45th Foot, the Royal American Regiment, and others, protested, and refused to perform their duty until the 4d was restored.²⁷⁶ This mutiny played out along the lines suggested above: most of the features of the traditional pay mutiny were to be found in this disturbance. There were threats of violence directed against some officers, but relatively little actual violence occurred; the soldiers refused to perform duty, and they presented petitions to senior officers. In return the officers harangued their men, and threatened them with punishment, though little punishment was actually inflicted. Jeffrey Amherst, the Commander-in-Chief in North America suspended the stoppages of pay, and the soldiers returned to duty. As was common in pay mutinies, in the end, the solders got a large part of what they wanted.

As Peter Way noted, these soldiers' mutinies closely followed the pattern of the traditional "conservative riot" of the eighteenth century:²⁷⁷ those were riots aimed at restoring "traditional" values or privileges; for instance rioting to restore the customary price of bread. In many cases these riots were elaborate forms of street theater, and the same was often true of military and naval mutinies as well. It must be said however, that, given the presence of weapons and men trained to use them, the threat of serious violence was always present during military and naval mutinies; conversely, from the point of view of authority, there was an even greater need, than in the civilian world, to restore order and uphold traditional authority. Usually, the rioters, or naval or military "mutineers" received what they wanted, and generally little or no punishment was inflicted upon them, but in return they had to reaffirm their respect for authority. The commander at Quebec, for example, after he settled the mutiny discussed above, staged a ceremony in which

²⁷⁶ This account is taken from Peter Way, "Rebellion of the Regulars: Working Soldiers and the Mutiny of 1763-1764," in *The William and Mary Quarterly: A Magazine of Early American History and Culture, Third Series*, Vol. LVII, Number, 4, October 2000, hereafter: Way, "Rebellion."

²⁷⁷ Way, "Rebellion," 765-766.

the former mutineers passed beneath two colors, (flags) and he then declared that the men had recovered their good character as soldiers.²⁷⁸

It would go too far to suggest that mutiny was ever routine for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or any other army of the pre-national, pan-European military world for that matter. The possibility of violence was too real, and the threat to often shaky discipline and authority too serious, to regard mutiny lightly. (Major Lloyd's small pay mutiny described above seemed to have engendered a murder, though the circumstances are unclear.²⁷⁹) Still mutiny does not seem to have seriously threatened the conduct of warfare in the mid-eighteenth-century, as it had in centuries past; and to the extent that mutiny was still a problem, it was a cloud that, like desertion, probably brought the army a silver lining of sorts, though it is unlikely the mid-eighteenth-century officers saw them in that light.

The first silver lining was that to a surprising degree the ritual of mutiny reinforced, rather than undermined, the authority of the officers. Most obviously the mutiny ritual ended with traditional values, and authority reaffirmed. More subtly, the process of resolving the mutiny generally involved an officer intervening with higher authority to resolve the soldier's grievances, as Amherst did, when he suspended the order regarding the stoppage of pay. This of course actually enhanced the prestige and authority of the officers concerned. The second silver lining was that, in the absence of any more sophisticated system to deal with grievances, the ritual of mutiny offered the Army a relatively (again, strong emphasis must be placed upon the "relatively") manageable means of addressing problems when a significant number of soldiers were unhappy.

Mutiny and desertion signify the limits of the control which officers had over the British Army, and the other armies of the mid-eighteenth-century pan-European military world. The incidence of mutiny, and its success, indicates that, like the subordination of their officers, the obedience exhibited by soldiers in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was often very conditional. In the mid-eighteenth-century it was relatively easy for unhappy soldiers to club together and get unpopular policies changed. Desertion also put sharp limits on the disciplinary standards that could be imposed for the simple reason, that, in most cases, a truly unhappy soldier could leave. The frequency of desertion was both the result of, and a cause of, the

²⁷⁸ Way, "Rebellion," 784.

²⁷⁹ John Billings to Henry Bouquet, Fort Loudoun, 28 June 1758.

relative ineffectiveness of punishment and reward as disciplinary tools. Moreover, the inability of mid-eighteenth-century armies to curb desertion demonstrated that attempts to impose unpopular disciplinary standards (again with the possible and partial exception of the Prussian Army) were largely unsuccessful. The bottom line for mid-eighteenth-century British officers, and probably most other officers of the pan-European military world, was that they could only reliably control their men when they were directly under their eyes during formal military situations, and in some circumstances not even then. In other circumstances control was a much "if-ier" proposition.

4.4 DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL CONSENSUAL COMMAND AND "THE CONTRACT"

Taken together, it seems clear that the control that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century had over its soldiers was considerably less than that exerted by modern armies. To look at this another way, to a much larger extent than has been imagined, British officers commanded by the consent of the troops they led. In one sense, all leaders, in all armies, command with the consent of the followers; modern armies however, and modern societies, have much stronger mechanisms to compel obedience, and thus they, in effect, encourage consent. Since discipline was so inconsistent, and punishment so erratic, mutiny so successful, and desertion so easy, the element of consent was much larger in mid-eighteenth-century armies than it is today, and the degree of control that officers had over those they lead was much less.

4.4.1 Discipline and Control

One of the great myths of military life, both in the mid-eighteenth-century, and today, is that soldiers obey all the orders they are given, instantly and without question, and live under constant supervision and control and severe discipline. This simply is not the case. In fact soldiers live under a variety of degrees of control, and they offer a variety of responses to orders, and receive a variety of responses to disobedience of orders, depending upon the situation. As John Hockey argues in his insightful: *Squaddies: Portrait of a Subculture*, ("squaddies" was the nick-name given to British infantry privates in the 1980's) the degree of discipline expected, and displayed, in the modern military world varies dramatically depending upon the circumstances. Hockey demonstrates that there are, in effect, high and low discipline situations. The "high discipline" situations are generally either during battle and other times of danger, or during formal military situations, often those found on the parade ground during drill or military ceremonies. In more informal situations, for instance, in the barracks, or during cooperative work projects, standards

are much lower, discipline still exists, but it is much less strict.²⁸⁰ To put this in a real-life context, a soldier ordered to perform a movement on the parade ground during a military ceremony will obey immediately, and any disobedience would bring swift punishment. At the other extreme, an order, by a corporal, given without any superiors around, to stop smoking and get back to loading a truck might well bring some complaining and foot dragging, and this might well pass without comment, provided the truck is loaded in the end. For modern soldiers, there is, in short, not one standard of discipline, but a continuum of discipline depending on the circumstances, and not one constant level of control, but a variety of degrees of supervision, again depending upon the circumstances. The situation was rather different in the pre-modern, pan-European military world.

The mid-eighteenth-century British Army pushed the control and disciplinary continuum to the extremes. Instead of the range of control and discipline that Hockey described in the modern British Army, what existed in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, were more like two poles of supervision and discipline. What the mid-eighteenth-century soldier experienced were occasions of maximum control and discipline - generally during drill, ceremonies, and guard duty, followed by periods of little or no supervision and discipline whatsoever - essentially when the soldiers were off on their own. Whatever discipline or subordination that existed outside of the formal mid-eighteenth-century military world, when the soldiers were off on their own, probably had more to do with traditional social hierarchy and the deference shown to social superiors, than any military regulations.

In short, military control in the pan-European military world, and the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was wildly inconsistent. These extremes, periods of maximum supervision and discipline contrasted with periods of little to no supervision and discipline both reflected, and were a result of, the reality (described in more detail in the next chapter) that soldiers spent so much of their time beyond the eyes of authority, living in small groups in billets, and with, during peacetime, relatively limited military duties. Moreover, with so much of military life dependent on tradition - "the laws and customs of war," there would always be room for confusion and argument as to exactly what were the standards of discipline. Furthermore,

²⁸⁰ John Hockey, *Squaddies, Portrait of a Subculture*, Exeter, United Kingdom, Exeter University Press, 1986, see especially 12-20, 54-60, 63-75, hereafter: Hockey, *Squaddies*. It should be noted that, for a work of sociology, *Squaddies* is relatively accessible for a lay reader.

extremes of supervision and discipline were mirrored by a system of punishment that, as described above, also seemed to swing to extremes of severity or nothing.

In sum, mid-eighteenth-century armies, and certainly the British Army had very limited ability to supervise the troops and impose discipline, and almost no opportunity to do so consistently. The periods when their men were under their officers' control were rather formal, and relatively infrequent; outside of these periods the standards of discipline were loose, and tied more to unwritten custom and tradition than explicit rules. In general, mid-eighteenth-century commanders could rely on discipline holding only when their troops were directly under their eye; when their soldiers were beyond direct supervision the situation was much more uncertain.

4.4.2 Consensual Command

In the end the operation of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture, and the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century, depended, to a surprising degree, upon the willing cooperation of the "common men" who made up the rank and file of its regiments. This willing cooperation was necessary for three, interrelated, reasons: The first was that, as was discussed previously, mid-eighteenth-century British officers, by twenty-first century standards, did remarkably little in the way of either leading or supervising their men. Secondly, when officer did attempt leadership, the motivational tools that were available for officers to use on their troops, whether positive or negative in nature, were surprisingly limited, and those that were used were often quite crude in their operation. Finally, officers could only rely upon the men's obedience when they were directly under their supervision, at other times discipline could not be relied upon. As Monsieur de Lamont put it:

Lastly, if he [an officer] has charity for all under his command, he must certainly be beloved, which will be no small advantage to him; for Soldiers never forsake an officer they love upon action; and he gains much honour by their sticking close to him; whereas those that are hated by their Men, are often abandoned by them, and thus shamefully disgraced, Soldiers sometimes preferring their revenge before their honour."²⁸¹

²⁸¹ de Lamont, "Duties," 74.

On many occasions the mid-eighteenth-century officer could only command when his soldiers allowed him to do so, and he very vulnerable to any refusal, on the part of his men, to obey.

Why then did the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier consent to obey when the tools available to make him consent were often very weak in nature? The best answer to that question seems to be that the soldiers consented to be disciplined and led, to the extent to which they were disciplined and led, to fulfill their half of what they perceived as their bargain. In a very real sense, mid-eighteenth-century armies, and certainly the British Army functioned because the rank and file, for the most part voluntarily fulfilled what they believe to have been their customary duties, in return for what they saw as the customary due.

4.4.3 The "Contract"

This consent, though seldom explicitly expressed in the mid-eighteenth-century, can best be expressed using the concept of "the contract." The contractual nature of eighteenth-century military service was first articulated by Fred Anderson, to describe the conduct of Massachusetts soldiers during the Seven Year's War; but military historians have now applied the idea more widely, pointing out that most early-modern soldiers thought of their service in contractual terms. The contractual nature of the soldiers' enlistment was clearly understood at the time, though the process of an enlistment was seldom formally termed a "contract." Monsieur de Lamont advised his readers that: [when the captain enlisted a soldier] "Then he is to settle on the terms on which he is listed, and to keep his word inviolably."²⁸² "{The Captain must] be strict in keeping his promise to any soldier when he listed him in his company,"²⁸³

Since in spite of Monsieur de Lamont's advice the terms of the contract were usually not made explicit, the nature of the contract was constantly being (re)negotiated. When the soldiers felt the terms were violated they would often take action. If they felt their men's complaints were justified, wise officers tried to take action to fulfill their men's "contract." The two letters that are quoted below detail an officer's efforts to do just that, and they indicate that the rank and file had the ability to bring considerable pressure to bear upon the leaders when they wished to do so:

Fort Stanwix, April 11th 1759

²⁸² de Lamont, "Duties," 38.

²⁸³ de Lamont, "Duties," 38.

I am very sorry I should be Troublesome In Writing So Often, My Mens Times are out and Demanding There Discharge according to My Promise to them In Writing [.] I am sorry I am ordered not to Discharge Them, As I am liable to be [Shot?] by them for Detaining them[.] I beg leave to resign On account of My Ill state of health, and the Unjust Reflections Cast Upon Me by the highland Officers [behind] my back, they know that I have Done all the Duty here Out of the fort, and Persued the Enemy When the Fort Gate Was Shut Upon Me[.] I have always Complied With all orders[.] I have eleven recruits Come up, whom had More Money cloathing by Order of Major Rogers As will be due to them this Two Months to come which I cannot answer for As they are Liable to all Accidents - When all the Recruits Are up here they Don't make above Fifty Men, at Most[.] When the Others are Discharged, I shall do all In my Power to keep the Men here that there times are Out till I have Your Orders to Discharge them which I hope Will be Immediately[.] And my [self?] and Officers here When, say they only have engaged for a Year, I have Promised from Under My Hand to Pay all those Men of[f] When I listed them when these Times Where out, which I had Orders for, So I beg leave to make out My Muster role And Receive the Money to Pay them all of[f] As they have done there Duty honestly And Are all farmers And want to be Home to Plow there Lands they tell Me - I beg leave to Inclose two letters

My self Honoured Sir
Your Most Obedient & Most
humble Servant -

Henry Wendell²⁸⁴

Fort Stanwix

April 12, 1759

Honoured Sir

I have the honour of Your Letter this Moment, and have Tryed All winter to Enlist Them again but could Not, I cannot Persuade them To Stay much Longer Though I have Tryed every Way As also has Coll^t Mesrie[?], as I promised to Discharge Them from [?] and at the Years End, I must pay them if Even they go away without Discharge which I hope wont be the case.

²⁸⁴ *Gage Papers*, Henry J. Wendell to Thomas Gage, Fort Stanwix, 11 April 1759.

The Deserter Most of them Their times Where out in
february Last, but have kept them till Now[. To Serve there Absent
Time over again [.] Lieut Shell[?] and Ensign Lain[?] begs Leave
To resign As they only Engaged for a year[.] I hope You Will be
so Good to Send my Dismission With Them by Lieu^t Stevens[.]

I have the Honour to Subscribe
Myself Honoured Sir
Your Most Obedient Humble Servant

Henry J. Wendell²⁸⁵

Henry Wendell was commanding provincial soldiers not British regulars, and some, most notably Fred Anderson, have argued that New England soldiers in particular were especially conscious of the contractual nature of their military service.²⁸⁶ Whether or not this is true, it is quite clear that British and other European soldiers were equally conscious of their contract, and what was due to them as well as what was expected of them.

The broad terms of the contract are obvious. The soldiers agreed to serve as soldiers in return for pay and other rewards. Two other points about the terms of the contract are less often remarked upon however. The first is that the mechanisms available, on the part of authority, to enforce the contract were weak, and, as it seems to have been relatively easy for an unhappy soldier to desert, and as the incidence of mutiny demonstrates, the common soldier retained considerable leverage in the bargain. In short military authorities depended on the willingness of soldiers to fulfill their obligations, and authority's ability, in the long term, to compel them to do so was slight.

The second point, which will be developed in greater detail in latter chapters, was that much of what European armies wanted from their soldiers was implicit rather than explicit. The mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the armies of the pan-European military world, wanted the men who enlisted to adopt the attitudes of soldiers. What military leaders wanted was for their men to become members of the pan-European martial culture, and to adopt its values. It is in this context that the various senses of military honor in operation in eighteenth-century Europe, and the British Army become important. With military discipline so weak an

²⁸⁵ *Gage Papers*, Henry J. Wendell to Thomas Gage, Fort Stanwix, 12 April 1759.

instrument, with leaving the army so easy an option, (either by resignation for officers, or desertion for soldiers) the principle hold on soldiers was their sense of honor: Whether this honor took the form of a belief in fulfilling a contract, acting as a gentleman, or displaying loyalty to the regiment, this is what kept soldiers with their color, a willingness on their part to fulfill their obligations. As Monsieur de Lamont advised: "[When a soldier is enlisted] then make him swear he will serve the State faithfully under [his Captain's] command; that if knows any thing against the service he will discover it; that he will upon all occasion hazard his life in the service, that he will never leave the Company without leave[.]"²⁸⁷

²⁸⁶ Fred Anderson, *A People's Army: Massachusetts Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War*, Chapel hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 1984, *passim*.

²⁸⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 39.

4.5 CONCLUSION

Discipline was a fickle thing in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army and the pre-national, pan-European military world. Mutiny was not uncommon, desertion was quite common, and in general the control that commanders exercised over their troops was spotty at best. It is clear that in some cases punishments of incredible severity were administered, while at the same time acts of considerable indiscipline occurred. Efforts to correct indiscipline were haphazard at best; courts-martial were chancy affairs that would not always go the way that commanders wished them. In fact it seems quite probable that authorities believed savage punishments were necessary because they felt that discipline was weak. It is here that the inability of eighteenth-century armies to actually be “total societies” was demonstrated; if they had been able to achieve the degree of control that twenty-first-century armies have over their soldiers, a degree of control often closer to that of the “total societies” than found in their eighteenth century counterparts it is likely that eighteenth-century punishments would have been much less ferocious. British officers of the mid-eighteenth-century, and most officers of the pre-national, pan-European military world, lived with the paradox that, while they had considerable power and authority, this did not translate into strong control over their soldiers.

The best generalization it is possible to make about the state of discipline of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army is that it was inconsistent; and that the causes of that inconsistency were to be found in both the structure of the pan-European military world, and in the specifics of military leadership as practiced by mid-eighteenth-century British officers and other European officers of the period. Fundamentally discipline was inconsistent because, as will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters, the pre-national, pan-European military world was not organized to impose and support strong discipline. Moreover, the standards of discipline were inconsistent, because so much of what was expected of a soldier was implicit unwritten custom, and therefore subject to debate and negotiation, rather than explicit written law.

Beyond all this, the imposition of discipline was inconsistent because training was often surprising casual, and generally not systematic. The enforcement of discipline was even more inconsistent because the soldier spent so much of his time outside of military control. The

punishment for violations of discipline were inconsistent because there were no set standards for punishment, and because punishment was directed much more towards providing a terrifying example to others, and upholding an officer's authority, than correcting the offending soldier's behavior. Reward was equally inconsistent because it was not systematic, and it was dependent upon the good will of officers, and upon being in the right place at the right time. Finally, discipline was inconsistent because, should discipline become too oppressive, the soldiers could up and desert, and have a good chance of getting away from it all. In fact so inconsistent was the whole system that, in the end, one is left with the suspicion that most soldiers regarded military punishment and military reward less as reliable guides to their conduct, than as a part of the fortunes of war: a lucky soldier might gain some cash, an unlucky soldier could be hanged or shot as an example; but in either case, most of the factors causing one or the other to happen were largely outside the soldier's control.

It should be noted however, that inconsistent though it was, the discipline of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was usually good enough. Its commanders, and often its rank and file, were justly proud of it, and often a little overawed by the effects which discipline could achieve. David Dundas, at the end of the eighteenth-century century, when comparing modern armies to others in history, wrote: "If the composition of modern armies is inferior as to the species of men; the manner of modelling them sufficiently compensates; where the authority of the prince, of the general, of the officer, and the subordination of each to each is thoroughly enforced."²⁸⁸ The leader of the Prussian Army, by universal agreement the most disciplined army in Europe experienced something of an epiphany upon that subject: In December 1740, Frederick the Great assembled 27,000 of his soldiers for the invasion of Silesia. With him was Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Dessau, known as the Alte- [Old] Dessauer who was one of the principal creators of the army that Frederick saw. Frederick remarked that it was strange that so many men, resentful, better armed, and physically stronger than the King and his generals should nevertheless shiver in their presence. The Alte-Dessauer answered simply: "That's the marvelous effect of order, discipline and narrow supervision."²⁸⁹ The Alte-Dessauer overstated

²⁸⁸ David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry. Illustrated By Maneuvres of the Prussian Troops, and by an Outline of the British Campaign in Germany, during the War of 1757. Together with an Appendix, containing a practical abstract of the Whole.*, London, T. Cadell, 1788, 2, hereafter, *Dundas Military Movements*.

²⁸⁹ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 160.

his case, even in the Prussian Army the order was not as great, the discipline as tight, or the supervision as close as it would be in later centuries - but it proved to be good enough.

In military terms discipline is relative, not absolute. In comparison to non-European armies, the disciplinary advantage of the pan-European military world was overwhelming, and European armies took pride in their discipline and the victories that that discipline let them achieve over non-European armies. In the pre-national, pan-European military world some armies were more disciplined, some less. In the European armies' spectrum of military discipline it seems likely that the British Army's discipline was, in general, at the tighter rather than the looser end of the spectrum, and in most cases it was better than their opponents.

It fell to the officers of the British Army, and the officers of the other armies of the pan-European military world, armed with only the rawest forms of punishment and reward, to attempt to enforce military laws which did not have wide support and acceptance: the most obvious example of this would be the battle against desertion which was banned by military law, but did not violate the ordinary soldier's sense of right and wrong. The evidence strongly suggests that all efforts to stop desertion, or enforce any other unpopular measures for that matter were largely unavailing. Since imposed discipline was so generally ineffectual, yet mid-eighteenth-century armies, for the most part, displayed at least minimally acceptable levels of discipline we are led to the conclusion that there must have been some other disciplinary mechanism at work in mid-eighteenth-century armies.

This other disciplinary system revolved around the observation of standards that were widely accepted and widely observed. These standards, in effect the rules of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture were generally established by common custom rather than prescribed by authority; and in contrast to the generally ineffectual efforts to enforce prohibitions against desertion, they were often successfully, but informally, enforced, with official discipline only occasionally stepping in to reinforce already accepted standards of behavior.

It did not follow however, that even a non-commissioned officer, or an "old soldiers," would automatically conform to his superiors' wishes; it would be a mistake to assume that the pre-national, pan-European martial culture was simply an imposed culture that conformed completely to the wishes of its leaders and was accepted passively by their followers: from the point of view of authority, some of the values of the martial culture were positive and others

negative. From the perspective of leaders, some traditions of the rank and file, such as fighting courageously and behaving in a "soldier-like" manner were desirable, other like drinking and desertion, which were also part of pan-European martial culture, were less so; indeed, in many circumstances the martial culture was a curse not a blessing. The leaders of the British army, or indeed of any other mid-eighteenth-century army could not assume that the cultural imperatives of the pan-European military world would generate the type of behavior they wished for under any and all circumstances. It was the case however that the standards of the pan-European martial culture were generally adhered to; standards that were imposed from the top down, and came without widespread acceptance were not.

These customary standards will be discussed in the following chapters in greater detail; what is important to note is that the popular acceptance of these standards was significant because the evidence is quite clear, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, the imposition of unpopular disciplinary rules was quite difficult, and the tools which were available, corporal and capital punishment, counterbalanced by the occasional award of cash, were crude in the extreme, and not all that effective.

Today "discipline" is most often used as a synonym for either subordination or punishment. This is unfortunate, because it hides the wealth of meaning that the term had in the mid-eighteenth-century. The mid-eighteenth-century concept of discipline was a complex one: to British officers of the period, discipline certainly embraced both the concepts of subordination, and punishment, and certainly punishment was often given for insubordination. As it was used in the mid-eighteenth-century however, discipline also embraced training and attitudes as well. As the *Universal Military Dictionary* informed its readers: "'DISCIPLINE, in a *general sense*, signifies instruction and government."²⁹⁰ When mid-eighteenth-century British officers spoke of bringing troops under discipline, they were not only speaking of making the troops accept subordination, though they certainly included that process: they were also implying that the troops had been trained as soldiers, and perhaps even more importantly, that they had adopted the attitudes of soldiers.²⁹¹ These "soldier-like" attitudes, discussed in more detail in the next chapter, were probably the single most important factor in maintaining

²⁹⁰ *Universal Military Dictionary*, DISCIPLINE, 77.

²⁹¹ The best discussion of the mid-eighteenth-century ideal of discipline can be found, perhaps unsurprisingly, perhaps perversely depending on the perspective of the reader, is in Rodger, *The Wooden World*, 205-251.

whatever discipline existed in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. It is therefore all the more surprising to find that, in contrast to modern military practices, these "soldier-like" attitudes were not inculcated in recruits by formal military training: but rather by an informal process of enculturation that seemed to have occurred holistically as the new soldiers lived alongside more experienced men and their families.

5.0 IN THE ARMY: MILITARY LIFE AND COMMUNITY, CAMP FOLLOWERS, AND MARTIAL ENCULTURATION

"A soldiers should go proudly, for he is not as other men." Old proverb

5.1 INTRODUCTION

His soldiers, the Duke of Wellington told us, in what is perhaps his most famous comment, were “the scum of the earth,” and, he helpfully added, that they “have enlisted for drink.”²⁹² This statement, which in fact dates from the first part of the nineteenth century, has nonetheless come to summarize the common and accepted view of the background, character and lifestyle of the enlisted soldiers of the entire red-coated era of the British Army. Regardless of its constant repetition however, this statement, which comes from the tongue of a frequently snobbish aristocrat, who was overly fond of a nicely turned phrase, especially an acidic one, drastically overstated the case; and the Duke of Wellington certainly knew better. To be fair, Wellington ameliorated his harshness, by noting of his troops: "It is wonderful what fine fellows we have made of them;"²⁹³ but regardless of this testimonial, the red-coated private soldier has never been able to shake the image of the drunken rogue. In spite of the best efforts of historians to supply some nuance to this view the received picture of the red-coat remains a blighted one: that of an outcast from society who was driven to enlist by poverty, addicted to alcohol, disciplined by the lash, kept in uniform against his will, and turned into a military automaton, with every aspect of his life under the complete control of his officers, who needless to say, were ignorant

²⁹² Michael Glover, *Wellington's Army: In the Peninsula, 1808-1814*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1977, 24-25, hereafter: Glover, *Wellington's Army*.

²⁹³ Glover, *Wellington's Army*, 24-25.

aristocratic dandies.²⁹⁴ Yet, so goes the popular myth, in spite of this unpromising material, some miraculous combination of flogging and the regimental flag turned the dregs of Britain into the finest infantry in the world.

Well, many men were forced to enlist in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army because of poverty, some were undoubtedly scoundrels, British soldiers were often subjected to horrific punishment, and it seems many were fond of a drink: but, while it would be going too far to suggest that the traditional picture is absolutely wrong, still, the fact is that the status, life, and character of the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier was much more ambiguous, and much less unpromising, than the received wisdom suggests. A closer examination of some of the parameters of the life of the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier suggests a somewhat less Hobbesian view of military life.

The traditional "gin and flogging" view of the British red-coat needs to be replaced with a more measured perspective which recognizes that while "going for a soldier" was not necessarily always a popular or respected option, and to do so was certainly to choose a dangerous way of life; it was also a way of life that had many attractions, and it was not necessarily always the option of last resort. A man who joined the mid-eighteenth-century British Army should be seen as someone who had chosen (or on some occasions has had chosen for him) an occupation that still had at least some claim to status; one that allowed a surprisingly amount of personal autonomy, offered a degree of material security, provided a community with a family atmosphere, and allowed the soldier to create a personal identity in which many men found satisfaction.

Compared to the lifestyle available in the twenty-first century, the life of a mid-eighteenth-century British soldier was an appalling one; compared to the life available to the just emerging British middle-class, the life of a mid-eighteenth-century British soldier was undesirable, but compared to the life available to most Britons of that time, the life of a British soldier was a gamble, but a gamble which that offered some real attractions and some real

²⁹⁴ See, for instance, Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, Chapter 1, 3-21, hereafter Frey, *British Soldier*. Frey, even after demonstrating, to the extent that records allow it to be demonstrated, that the British soldiers of this period did not come from the very bottom of society, nonetheless still largely characterized the British soldier of the mid-eighteenth century as an oppressed victim of an all-powerful military system. Likewise see: Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002, Chapters 1 and 2, 11-136, hereafter: Brumwell, *Redcoats*.

rewards to offset its dangers, and it is not at all clear that it was as bad a deal, or as unpopular a choice, as history has usually depicted it. To state this more directly: the life of an enlisted soldier in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, while quite dangerous, and certainly hard at times, was neither as oppressive nor as degraded as it is commonly portrayed by historians, and the pluses and minuses of enlisted life are much more complex than they have usually been portrayed.

This complexity centered around the fact that enlisting as a soldier, though this was perhaps not fully realized by the men who enlisted, involved not just taking up a new occupation, but also adopting a new way of life. It was in fact a paradox of sorts, that, while the British Army, or any other mid-eighteenth-century army for that matter, lived embedded within the larger "civilian" world, and in constant contact with it: at the same time, a man (or a woman, for they became part of the pan-European military world as well) who entered the British Army had also entered a different, military way of life. This military way of life was one that, while not isolated from the larger world, separated itself from it, and followed its own patterns of life, hierarchy, ideals, traditions, prejudices, and customs. The mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or any European Army of the period was not a separate institution cut-off from the larger "civilian" way of life; nonetheless a British man or woman who had joined the British Army had also joined a new and different, world, the pre-national, pan-European military world

5.2 THE SOLDIER AND MILITARY LIFE

“That wisdom is required in a soldier,
and without it he cannot hope to make his fortune.”²⁹⁵

When a man (or a woman for that matter, since, as will be discussed later in this chapter, women effectively "joined" the army as well) joined the mid-eighteenth-century British Army they joined a different culture, the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. This culture operated according to different beliefs: beliefs that, while not always recognized by the larger British society, nonetheless reflected deeply held values of the martial culture. One such belief, not necessarily shared by most Britons, was the conviction that a man who "listed" to be a soldier, gained a certain type of status thereby.

5.2.1 "Gentlemen" Soldiers

"If any gentleman soldiers, or others, have a mind to serve her Majesty, and pull down the French king; if any prentices have severe masters, and children have undutiful parents; if any servants have too little wages, or any husband too much wife, let them repair to the noble Sergeant Kite, at the sign of the Raven in this good town of Shrewsbury, and they shall receive present relief and entertainment."²⁹⁶ So trumpeted Sergeant Kite, the veteran sergeant, who was up to all the tricks, in George Farquhar's play, "The Recruiting Officer."²⁹⁷

Though uttered on a stage, not in a town-square, Sergeant Kite's recruiting spiel was echoed by many another eighteenth-century military sales-pitch. In his *Military Guide for Young Officers*, Thomas Simes offered a sample speech for officers trying to "drum up" recruits. It

²⁹⁵ de Lamont, "Duties," 69.

²⁹⁶ George Farquhar, "The Recruiting Officer," Peter Dixon, ed., Manchester, UK, Manchester University Press, 1986, I, i, 62, hereafter: Farquhar, "Recruiting Officer."

²⁹⁷ "The Recruiting Officer" was first performed in 1707. George Farquhar had served briefly as a lieutenant in the British Army.

reads as follows, the blanks are spaces to insert the name of the regiment, of its colonel, and the amount of the bounty offered:

To all aspiring heroes bold, who have spirits above slavery and trade, and inclination to become gentlemen by bearing arms in his Majesty's _____ regiment, commanded by the magnanimous _____ let them repair to the drum head (*Tow row* [indicates a drum-roll] *dew*) where each gentleman volunteer shall be kindly and honourably entertained, and enter into present pay and good quarters: besides which, gentlemen, for your further and better encouragement you shall receive _____ advances; a crown to drink to his Majesty King GEORGE's health: and when you come to your respective regiment, shall have new hats, caps, arms, cloaths, and accoutrements, and everything thing that is necessary and fitting to compleat a gentleman soldier.

God save their Majesties, and success to their arms.²⁹⁸

Now no one, then or today, should take the words of a recruiter too seriously, it has long been understood that enticing men to enlist requires stretching the truth, often to the point where it becomes unrecognizable. So, for a more jaundiced view of "listing," we can read the opinions of Ned Ward, a popular journalist of the early-eighteenth-century, who made some strikingly realistic comments about the men who joined Britain's army: "A Foot Soldier is commonly a Man, who for the sake of wearing a Sword, and the Honour of being term'd a Gentleman, is Coax'd from a Handicraft Trade, whereby he might live comfortably, to bear Arms, for his King and Country, whereby he has hopes of nothing but to live Starvingly."²⁹⁹

A popular song of the era, one not unknown to folk singers today, "Over the Hills and Far Away," has this to say about enlisting and living the life of a soldier:

Hark! Now the drums beat up again,
For all true soldier gentlemen,
Then let us 'list and march I say,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus:
Over the hills and o'er the main.

²⁹⁸ Thomas Simes, *The Military Guide for Young Officers, In Two Volumes*, London, Printed, Philadelphia, J. Humnphrey, R. Bell, and R. Aitkens, 1776, *Volume I*, 244, hereafter Simes, *Volume I*, or Simes, *Volume II*.

²⁹⁹ Quoted in Victor Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier: A History of Life in the British Ranks from 1642*, London, Cassell, 1989, 18, hereafter: Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier*.

To Flanders, Portugal, and Spain,
Queen Anne commands and we'll obey.
Over the hills and far away.

All gentlemen that have a mind,
To serve the Queen that's good and kind,
Come 'list and enter into pay,
Then over the hills and far away.

Chorus

Courage, boys, 'tis one to ten,
But we return all gentlemen
All gentlemen as well as they,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus³⁰⁰

As different as they are, all four of these sources agree on one thing: that a man who "listed" in the British Army was to be termed a gentleman.

This repeated designation of enlisted soldiers as gentlemen is one of the most puzzling pieces of mid-eighteenth-century nomenclature. This reference is made even more puzzling by the fact that these same enlisted soldiers who are being termed "gentlemen" are also referred to as "common soldiers," and, it is well known that, in the larger eighteenth-century world, "gentlemen" were, by definition, not "common." Furthermore, it is certainly true that, outside of rhetoric and song, these "common soldiers" were more likely to be referred to as rogues than as gentlemen; and, finally, no one can seriously suggest that the "real" gentlemen, that is the officers, saw the common soldiers as their peers. So what is going on here?

Obviously much of the rhetoric of the "gentleman" soldier is nothing more than blarney intended to encourage enlistment, but this is not quite all there is to the theme. Rhetoric, after all, has to have some connection with reality, or it is of no use at all. Referring to a soldier as a gentleman was a choice of phrase that had to have at least some meaning. Searching for some degree of meaning behind this improbable identification, it does seem plausible to suggest that common soldiers, while not themselves gentlemen, did share in certain of the traits of a gentleman. Decoding the rhetoric, it appears that the designation of "common" soldiers as "gentlemen" was

³⁰⁰ These three verses are not contiguous in the accepted arrangement of the lyrics. Please see Appendix III, for the a more complete set of lyrics for "Over the Hills and Far Away."

intended to signify several different things. First, it indicated that the soldier, however poor his behavior and lowly his condition was a man who bore arms, and faced danger, and thus was entitled to some slight degree of status. Second, it indicated that the soldier was a man who did no physical labor. Third, it indicated that, while a soldier was a man who obeyed orders, he was also a man who did not have a master, and, in that sense, he was free.

5.2.1.1 Bearing Arms

Bearing arms, which was symbolically, and often literally, represented by the soldier wearing a sword, still entitled the bearer to some degree of respect in eighteenth-century Britain. In the quotation given above: Ned Ward explicitly tied the title of gentleman to the act of wearing a sword when he said that: "A Foot Soldier is commonly a Man, who for the sake of wearing a Sword, and the Honour of being term'd a Gentleman, is Coax'd from a Handicraft Trade, whereby he might live comfortably, to bear Arms, for his King and Country, whereby he has hopes of nothing but to live Starvingly."³⁰¹ Likewise Thomas Simes stated that you: " become gentlemen by bearing arms[.]"³⁰² Bearing arms gave the common soldier a link, however distant, with the chivalric traditions that were at the heart of the social status of a gentleman. This was an important consideration in the pre-national, pan-European martial culture, because, as was argued in chapter three, it was the ideal of gentlemanly honor that made the pan-European military world go round. It is worth remembering that it was the need of a gentleman to validate his honor on the battlefield that provided the ideological justification for military service in European military world, even for those who, in truth, had scant claim to the status of a gentleman. Furthermore, bearing arms also marked the soldier as a man who faced danger, and thus demonstrated his honor, and in that sense he was like a "proper" gentleman, who, in so doing, revalidated his status. Moreover, as will be argued later in this chapter, bearing arms also served to heighten the soldiers' masculinity in a military world which included women, children, and men who did not have the privilege of bearing arms.

³⁰¹ Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier.*, 18.

³⁰² Simes, *Volume I*, 24.

The symbolic meaning of the sword will be considered in greater detail in the next chapter, but certainly bearing arms also indicated a connection with a sense of honor; and while mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers did not generally settle their quarrels with duels, the time was not so distant when they had,³⁰³ and the laws that governed the British Army, the *Articles of War* still found it necessary to prescribe that [my italics]: "No officer *or Soldier* shall presume to send a Challenge [to a duel] to any other Officer *or Soldier*["³⁰⁴ Finally, and most fundamentally, by enlisting and bearing arms a soldier demonstrated that he was a man who put his courage to the ultimate test of battle and as, Samuel Johnson famously observed: "Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been to sea . . . The profession of soldiers and sailors has the dignity of danger. Mankind reverences those who have got over fear, which is so general a weakness."³⁰⁵

5.2.1.2 Doing No Labor

As had been clear as far back as the time of William Harrison, being able to live without manual labor was one of the distinguishing characteristics of the gentleman.³⁰⁶ Since British soldiers were, at least rhetorically, defined as gentlemen, it followed that, at least in principle, "gentlemen" British soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century could not be required to perform manual labor. This was fine as a matter of principle, but it was a principle that, in practical terms required some modification. First, and most fundamentally, the life of a common soldier was a hard one, and one that sometimes, particularly when on the march, required great physical exertion. Moreover, the soldier was naturally required to put forth a great deal of effort to sustain his own life. So, realistically, any mid-eighteenth-century soldier was required to exert a great deal of labor. This labor however, was expended on his personal needs.

³⁰³ This was not necessarily the case in other armies however, and enlisted French soldiers seem to have maintained the custom of fighting duels up through the Napoleonic Wars at least. See Elzear Blaze, *Military Life under Napoleon: The Memoirs of Captain Elzear Blaze*, John R. Elting, trans. Chicago, Emperor's Press, 1995, 84-90.

³⁰⁴ *Rules and Articles For the Better Government of His Majesty's horse and Foot Guards, And all Other His Forces in Great Britain and Ireland, Dominions beyond the seas and Foreign Parts*, 1749 no place given, unpaginated, Sect. VII, Article II., my italics, hereafter: *British Articles of War*.

³⁰⁵ James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*.

³⁰⁶ Quoted in Philip Mason, *The English Gentleman: The Rise and Fall of an Ideal*, New York, William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1982, 27, hereafter: Mason, *Gentleman*.

Beyond the need to sustain individual life however, the process of warfare inevitably required that a significant amount of labor be accomplished, roads had to be built or repaired, trenches had to be dug, and so on, and often soldiers were the only pool of labor available. It had therefore become customary for the British Army to grant extra pay in return for performing what might be termed "military work." As a result of this custom, many tasks that today would be seen as distinctly military in nature, but did not involve "bearing arms," gained the soldier extra pay in the mid-eighteenth-century.

To give just two examples from the papers of Horatio Gates, when serving with the British Army in the 1750's we have a letter reporting that for work done by troops: "Employed at Fortifications, 598 days Work at 1/3^d extra work included L 37, [pounds] 19, [shillings] 9[pence]." ³⁰⁷ From the orderly book kept by Gates we learn:

The General Considers the Extraordinary Labor & Fatigue of the Troops employ'd in working up the Provisions Batteaux from Fort Herkeimer is pleased to Order Fifteen pence Currency p^{er} Day to be paid to each Non commissioned Officer & Soldier who shall hereafter by employ'd on that Service ³⁰⁸

This "freedom" from labor, it must be emphasized, was a matter of custom: and, as was so often true in matters relating to the customary terms of employment, custom was, in fact, constantly being altered, with one side or the other manipulating or creating "tradition" to establish a precedent for what they wanted. In the long term, in fact, military authorities would be successful in changing custom; and dating roughly from the beginning of the nineteenth-century, it became "customary" for British soldiers to labor on military projects without extra pay. Nonetheless, as late as the Seven Year's War, British Soldiers successfully defended their right to extra pay for labor.

There are, however, two different ways to view the fact that soldiers were not required to perform manual labor. One explanation, obviously preferred by the soldiers, was that the common soldier was a species of gentleman, exempted by his status as one who bore arms from

³⁰⁷ John Bradstreet to W[illia]m Alexander, 11 September 1755, Horatio Gates, *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, Gregory James, Dunning, Thomas, eds., Microfilm Corporation of America, Sanford, North Carolina, 1979, hereafter: *Gates Papers*.

³⁰⁸ Orderly Book, Oneida Station, 22th August 1758, *Gates Papers*.

menial work. The other view, not uncommon amongst the general population, was that the soldier was lazy. One eighteenth-century bit of doggerel proclaimed:

To a Cobblers Aul, or Butchers Knife
Or Porter's knot, commend me;
But from a Soldier's Lazy Life,
God Heaven, I pray, defend me.³⁰⁹

This view of the soldier lasted a long time. In the 1840's, Ulysses S. Grant, wearing his new uniform as an officer of the United States Army, was tormented by a pack of small boys who chased after him chanting: " Soldier, soldier will you work? No siree I'll sell my shirt;" and "to soldier" as a slang term for being lazy, lasted into the early twentieth-century.

For British soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century however, the principle of extra pay for extra work would certainly qualified as a cherished "perk;" and, in the teeth of this apparent violation of the Protestant Work Ethic, it seems that the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier could persist in viewing himself as a gentleman, who could not be required to perform any manual labor, even when he agreed to do so for extra pay.

5.2.1.3 Having no Master and Freedom

The common soldier's status as a "gentleman" which was symbolized by the bearing of arms, and demonstrated, after a fashion, by the traditional, though in practice, not very effective, exemption from labor, was reinforced by one other exemption, one that not all Britons could claim. The common soldier was a man without a master. At the most basic level this was literally true, a soldier called no man master, they used, as did all gentlemen, the titles of rank, or phrases like "sir," or "my lord," or your excellency," but they did not call anyone "master." The soldier served, but he was not a servant, and in this fashion also, he was like a gentleman who might enter service, but had no master save his king. In this sense, in fact, the soldier was a free man, in the way that many other Britons were not. Now, like his freedom from labor, this statement about the common soldier's lack of a master must immediately be qualified. Obviously a soldier took orders from his superiors. They were, however, orders, at least in theory, regarding honorable, martial, duties, they were not orders to perform the demeaning duties of a servant.

³⁰⁹ Quoted in Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier*, 18.

We see this distinction reflected in language used at the time, which constantly associates the life of the soldier with freedom. To turn again to song, we find a verse in "Over the Hills and Far Away" which informs us:

The 'prentice Tom he may refuse,
To wipe his angry master's shoes,
For then he's free to sing and play,
Over the hills and far away.

The patter of the recruiter likewise sang the same tune: Sergeant Kite appealed to "any prentices [who] have severe masters,"³¹⁰ Thomas Simes called to those: "who have spirits above slavery and trade, and inclination to become gentlemen[.]"³¹¹ It is unlikely that the reality of military life matched the promise, but nonetheless the soldier could see his status as different from that of a servant.

To move from rhetoric to reality, the common soldier, it was true, was supervised by his non-commissioned officers. This supervision however, was unlikely to be as onerous as that exerted by a master over the servants in his house, and it was also different in its nature. This distinction becomes important when we realize that, as late as the mid-eighteenth-century, the most common form of labor contract was still some form of servitude, with many employees being classified as either "apprentices" or "servants;" and, as a result, most Britons worked, and lived, within a household that was both a social unit and the most basic and common economic unit of production. Since they resided with their master, most servants were constantly under their master's eye, and so live under fairly close and constant supervision, their time would not be their own, and they would have relatively little control over their lives.

The life of the common soldier stood in startling contrast to the life of a servant. The soldier was a "Private man" (this was the rank given to enlisted soldiers in the infantry) who performed a limited range of martial duties: duties that were of a more important and honorable nature than those of a servant, and at the same time were more limited in scope. As the "freedom from labor" indicated, a soldier could not, in theory, be ordered to perform degrading tasks, or tasks that, in effect, fell outside his "job description." Moreover, as will be discussed in the next section, a soldier, outside of his military duties was largely left on his own. The soldier, in short, was not subjected to the close personal control that a master exercised over the servants in the

³¹⁰ Farquhar, "Recruiting Officer, I, i, 62.

eighteenth-century household. In contrast to modern expectations of military life, the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier would almost certainly have found himself under less, not more, supervision during his military life, than during his previous employment, and, in this relative freedom, he could also see himself as a gentleman of sorts.

5.2.2 Autonomous Soldiers

It is quite conceivable that one of the most attractive features of "going for a soldier" was the promise of personal freedom that it brought. In a way that is profoundly counterintuitive to those who have had twentieth - or twenty-first century military experience: mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers, outside of their periods of military duties, which in peacetime were not onerous, would probably have found that they had more, rather than less, time to themselves, and they would also have found themselves with more control over their lives than would have most "civilians;" as well. In this sense, if only in this sense, life in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, might have kept the promises made by recruiters; and it is this relative freedom from supervision combined with abundant free time, that allows the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier to be described as autonomous and part-time.

5.2.2.1 Autonomy

In his travels around England, Henry Fielding's salacious hero, Tom Jones, amongst many other meetings, also encountered soldiers. This encounter took place when, in a scene that must have been repeated thousands of times in mid-eighteenth-century Britain: "A sergeant and a file of musketeers, with a deserter in their custody arrived about this time [at an inn]. The sergeant presently inquired for the principal magistrate of the town, and was informed by the landlord that

³¹¹ Simes, *Volume I*, 24.

he himself was vested in that office. He then demanded his billets, together with a mug of beer, and complaining it was cold spread himself before the fire." ³¹²

The simple fact was that, like the soldiers encountered by Tom Jones, the overwhelming majority of soldiers, British or otherwise,³¹³ in the eighteenth-century, were quartered in *billets*.³¹⁴ Though the term is often used imprecisely today, in the eighteenth-century, billeting meant that the soldiers were quartered either in the homes of private citizens, or in public buildings. Since this meant that the soldiers of a company would be living, usually in small groups, in several different, non-military, buildings that often were fairly widely separated: billeting would also have meant that the control that a mid-eighteenth-century army had over its soldiers was much less complete than that of armies of the late nineteenth and twentieth-century armies, whose soldiers live in barracks where they could be under constant supervision. By living in billets, soldiers also lived within the "civilian world, rather than separated from it, and in many ways, were far more subjected to "civilian" influences than later "barracks" armies. In short, in their living and sleeping arrangements, British soldiers were typically outside the control of the leaders. The converse of a lack of military control was an abundance of personal control, in the absence of supervision by his superiors, the soldier, inevitably had a significant amount of freedom.

This relative freedom was, in many ways, strengthened by a system of military economy that largely left the soldier responsible for his own upkeep. When not on campaign, British soldiers were paid and assigned quarters, but otherwise expected to look after themselves. As a practical matter, the soldier had to purchase and prepare his own food and generally supply most of his other wants and needs. In a mid-eighteenth-century world that was not yet well adapted to single men (or women) living on their own, this was actually a formidable task: and so as not to be overwhelmed by domestic concerns, and, one suspect, to recreated, as far as they were able, "civilian" housekeeping, soldiers clubbed together. This process was regularized and organized

³¹² Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones: A Foundling*, New York, The Heritage Press, 1952, 376-377, hereafter: Fielding *Tom Jones*. *Tom Jones* was first published in 1749.

³¹³ Christopher Duffy, *The Art of War in the Age of Reason*, New York, Athenium, 1988, 125-129, Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1974, 58, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

³¹⁴ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 38-42.

by the British Army: for domestic purposes, British, and indeed most European, enlisted soldiers were usually organized into very small groups that lived and ate together, known as "messes."³¹⁵

Organizing men into messes was in fact an ancient and traditional way for men living away from a household to manage their domestic arrangement. The servants who looked after Henry VIII in the first part of the sixteenth-century were organized into messes, and it is likely that this system was old even then.³¹⁶ These "messes" as Humphrey Bland describes them formed very small economic, and one strongly suspects, social, units.

The Men of each Company should be divided into Messes, each mess of consisting of four or six, or accord to the men in each room; in barrack or *casernes* [in fact barracks were almost unknown outside of fortresses in the mid-eighteenth century] and every Pay-Day, each man should be oblig'd to appropriate such a Part of his Pay to buy Provisions, which Money should be lodged in the Hands of one of them, in order to be laid out to best Advantage, which the Orderly Serjeants and Corporals are to see duly executed, and make each Mess boil the Pot every Day.³¹⁷

As Humphrey Bland indicated, messes not only ate together, they usually lived together. When it was time to quarter their men, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army would usually assign their men by messes to billets, which would generally be one or two rooms in a structure of some sort. In short, the living arrangements of most British soldiers would have been small groups of around four to six men, living together, probably in a fairly small space, rather than the large barracks holding fifty or so soldiers more common in the twentieth-century. As described by Bland above, the mess cooked their own food, and, indeed, were often responsible for purchasing it as well, and probably performed most other domestic tasks needed to sustain the soldier. Another way to look at this is to say that a mess was a substitute household, and perhaps even in some ways a substitute family; and it is worth noting that the social unit that provides

³¹⁵ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, 120, includes a brief discussion of messes. See *Regulations for the Prussian Infantry*. Translated from the GERMAN ORIGINAL, With Augmentations and Alterations made by the KING of PRUSSIA since the Publication of the Last Edition. To which is ADDED, The PRUSSIAN TACTICK; Being a Detail of the Grand Maneouvre, as performed by the PRUSSIAN ARMIES. No place given, J. Nourse, 1759, New York, Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968, 243-246, hereafter: *Prussian Infantry*, for a mentioned of messes in the Prussian Army.

³¹⁶ Peter Brears, *All the King's Cooks: The Tudor Kitchens of King Henry VIII at Hampton Court Palace, London*, Souvenir Press, 1999, 27.

³¹⁷ Bland, *Treatise*, 189.

food, as did both the civilian household, and the military mess, tends to generate strong emotions and strong loyalties.³¹⁸

Moreover, in Britain, custom restricted billeting to "public houses," that is, inns, stables and the like.³¹⁹ The practical effect of this was that, to find sufficient "public houses" to hold his men, a captain might well find his company dispersed over a fairly large area. Spread out in this fashion, they would be very hard to supervise, either in terms of their welfare, or for any other purpose. Ideally, officer and non-commissioned officers were advised to visit their men and look into their welfare, and see that they were looking after themselves:

Without this to be carefully look'd into, the Soldiers will be apt to spend their Pay on Liquour, which will not only occasion their Neglect of Duty, but in all Probability, the Loss of a great many Men by Sickness for want of proper Victuals to support them, it is therefore a Duty incumbent on every Officer to be more than ordinary careful in this Particular, and not to think themselves above the looking in to these Things, since the Preservation of their Men depends so much on it: For in those Regiments where this Method is duly observ'ed the Men are generally Healthful, but where it is neglected, great Numbers fall ill and die.³²⁰

With their soldiers billeted in buildings that might well be spread out over several miles, it is easy to imagine that this duty was often neglected, and the soldiers left very much on their own.

Having their troops dispersed in small packets in this fashion, generated significant problems for their commanders: problems that went beyond concern for their troop's welfare, and extended into their preparation for war. J. A. Houlding in *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army in Peacetime*, describes the enormous limitations that this dispersion put upon

³¹⁸ Christopher McKe, in *Sober Men and True: Sailor Life in the Royal Navy, 1900-1943*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 2002, 73-101 and *passim*, writing about the Royal Navy, which, up through the 1930's, maintained a system in which it sailors were organized into messes who prepared their own food, noted the intense loyalty and comradeship which messes engendered. He describes the messes as surrogate families, 80-81, 91.

³¹⁹ In the eighteenth-century soldiers could be quartered in several different ways: the most common was by billeting, that is lodging the soldiers in private homes or public buildings. In Britain, custom prohibited the government from billeting soldiers in private homes, so "public houses" such as inns, taverns, and stables were used. Soldiers could also be sheltered by being barracked, though barracks were very uncommon except in fortresses or capital cities in the eighteenth-century; soldiers could be in cantonments, meaning they were sleeping under fairly large tents in a formal camp, or bivouacked, that is sleeping without shelter, as small shelter tents would not be common for another century.

³²⁰ Bland, *Treatise*, 189.

training;³²¹ this issue will be discussed in greater detail in chapter six, but, bluntly put, British officers often had too few troops on hand, at any one place or time, to do more than the most elementary of training. In cases where the troops were extremely spread out, just notifying the troops that they were to assemble at a given time might have been difficult.

In short, as a result of dispersed quarters and officers who were abdicating many of their administrative duties, mid-eighteenth British soldiers, in comparison to the tightly controlled troops of the armies of the later nineteenth and the first half of the twentieth-century, spent much of their time beyond the control of their superiors and on their own. This lack of control, in combination with a scale of duties that, in peacetime, was relatively undemanding meant that British soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century were, in many ways, part-time soldiers who spent only a portion of their working week involved in military affairs.

5.2.2.2 Part-Time Soldiers

The difficulties of controlling soldiers spread out over a wide area, along with the inability to do any meaningful training with the small number of troops available, with the addition of officers who were reducing the amount of attention they gave to military affairs, combined with a tradition that seemed to have put limits on the demands that could be made of the ranks and file, taken together led to a situation that the enlisted soldiers most probably found quite agreeable: many common soldiers might go days without having any, or at least many, military duties to perform.

The evidence that many soldiers were under-employed seems clear. The future General Wolfe directed that: "Every captain or commanding officers of a company is to appoint a place of parade for his company, where they are to be seen every morning at roll call by one of the officers, and from whence the corporals are to march the men for guard to the parade of the regiment."³²² It seems significant that Wolfe did not specify what the soldiers not marching on guard were to do, leaving the reader with the suspicion that it was not much. Drill was the

³²¹ J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service, passim.* and 282-283, for the especially negative effects on more advanced training.

³²² *General Wolfe's Instructions to Young Officers; also with Orders for a Battalion and an Army. Together with The Orders and Signals used in Embarking and Debarking an Army, by Flat-bottom'd Boats, &c., and A Placart to*

obvious answer, but after the soldiers became thoroughly familiar with the limited amount of drill that could be performed by the relatively small groups of soldiers that were quartered together, at some point repetition became pointless and possibly even counterproductive. (As will be discussed in the next chapter however, few contemporary officers seemed to have taken this view of the matter.) The Prussian Army, by universal agreement, the best trained, and most highly skilled army in mid-eighteenth-century Europe had this to say about the frequency of drill:

VXIII. During the month of exercise, the companies must be exercised every other, or third day, and are never to be kept out above three hours; In warm weather, they must march out early, and return from the field about nine at farthest: No man shall be exercised in the afternoon, who was out in the morning,; and all such, whose names have been taken down on account of bad behavior, must be ordered out the next day; at which time they are to be particularly informed of their errors, and taught to do better.³²³

This, it should be noted, was the schedule of the best trained army in Europe, during the "month of exercise," the peak training period of the year. To be fair, the "month of exercise" might have included periods of drill at the higher level of battalion, brigade and line of battle, as well as company drill. Nonetheless, outside the exercise season the Prussian Army drilled at four to five day intervals.³²⁴ In short, it is quite clear that mid-eighteenth-century soldiers often had little to do; with the result that, in peacetime, the eighteenth-century British Army, as well as most other armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world, was often an institution in search of any meaningful military task that could be performed. This, in turn, made what few military duties that were available of exceptional importance for the British Army

In short, the British Army, and it seems, many other eighteenth-century European Armies found it necessary to take measures periodically to remind their soldiers that they were in fact soldiers, and, in the pre-national pan-European military world, duty as a sentinel was usually the chosen method. It became customary in the British Army to juggle the number of sentry posts that were required, increasing them if necessary, so that each soldier *had* to be posted as a sentry

the Canadians. To which are prefixed, The Duty of an Adjutant and Quarter-Master, &c., Philadelphia, Robert Bell, 1778, Major Wolfe's Order's at Stirling, 7, hereafter: *Wolfe's Instructions*.

³²³ *Prussian Infantry*, 123.

every three or four days; the clear purpose of this seems to have been to ensure that the men were regularly reminded that they were soldiers. Humphrey Bland noted that:

However, it is a fixed Maxim that in most of the Garrisons Abroad, to calculate the Duty in such a Manner, that the Soldiers shall mount Guard every third Day; and tho the Troops should be very Numerous, they never suffer them to be above three Days off, and the fourth on Duty. This is done by Mounting of more Guards than usual, or by adding to the Numbers of each guard.³²⁵

The *Universal Military Dictionary* reinforces this same point:

GUARD, in the *military art*, is a duty performed by a body of men, to secure an army or place from being surprised by any enemy. In garrison the guards are relieved every day; hence it comes that every soldier mounts guard once every 3 or 4 days in time of peace, and much oftener in time of war. See **Honours.**³²⁶

As will be discussed in the next chapter, the position and duties of a sentry were of very great symbolic importance to the pre-national, pan-European military world. In fact, so important was guard duty that it inspired one of the relatively few official acknowledgements in the pan-national European military world, that a failure to understand the common language might present a problem. The Prussian regulations stipulated: "That every man may know how to behave at this post both by day and night, the Officers and non-commision'd Officer to the guard, are to give directions to their sentries at every relief, which must be interpreted to such as are not Germans[.]"³²⁷ It is clear that sentry duty had an overwhelming importance for mid-eighteenth-century European armies. It seems likely that the fact that sentry duty was often the only military duty that soldiers might perform over long periods of time, goes a long way to explain the symbolic importance that the position of sentinel acquired.

³²⁴ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, Second Edition, Chicago, Emperor's Press, 1996, 80, hereafter, Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 2nd Edition.

³²⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 153.

³²⁶ *Universal Military Dictionary*, GUARD, 118.

³²⁷ *Prussian Infantry*, 281.

5.2.2.3 Civilian by-Employment

Since British soldiers had so much time on their hands, and since they were not very well paid, inevitably many took on by-employments to bring in some extra cash. While on campaign, or when garrisoning a fortress, this by-employer might be the army, hiring soldiers to perform military work. When this military work was not available, the employer might well be a civilian needing labor. James Wolfe specified that his soldiers needed permission before he they could accept civilian employment, but Wolfe was known for running an unusually tightly disciplined regiment, (that is part of the reason his instructions were collected and published) and it is likely that most officers were not so demanding.³²⁸

The British Army, indeed all mid-eighteenth-century European armies adapted to the reality that their troops spent much of their time out of their control, and employed by others. The Prussian Army, for example, operated in a similar fashion, indeed, as Christopher Duffy noted, in places, the Prussian regulations read more like guild rules than military instructions.³²⁹ The primary concern of authority, in fact, seems to have revolved around the appearance of their soldiers while they were laboring for others, and that soldiers would not use civilian employment to avoid military duties. Wolfe's *Instructions* went on to command that: "No working man is exempt from reviews, nor is any man to be seen in the streets with a leather-apron on, or other marks of his profession, and his regimental coat on; whatever officer meets a man so offending is desired to confine him."³³⁰

(When all the variables affecting a British soldier's income are considered: the likelihood of by employment; the tradition that non-military work done for the army brought extra pay; the fact that, as shown by the North American mutiny, the deductions made from the soldier seem to have been somewhat negotiable; the different quality of billets; it becomes clear that making any statements about a soldier's actual income, or what his standard of living might actually have been, is very difficult, and simply looking at the established rate of pay would not begin to tell

³²⁸ Wolfe's *Instructions*, 8.

³²⁹ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 55.

³³⁰ Wolfe's *Instructions*, 8-9.

the whole story. No common soldier became rich from military life, but it is quite possible that some lived a bit better than has been commonly imagined.)

It should be noted that soldiers working part-time jobs often created significant problems with the local labor pool: since soldiers were already, in effect, being housed and fed by the government, they would usually accept wages lower than the going rate, and, if around for any period of time acted to drive local wages down. This process would generate much of the tension that existed between the Boston "mob," and the British soldiers quartered in Boston in the early 1770's. This tension was probably enhanced by the fact that not all British soldiers were unskilled labor, in fact skilled workmen were often to be found in the ranks of the British Army. Both Sylvia Frey and Stephen Brumwell have documented the fact that significant numbers of skilled workers, particularly weavers, tailors and shoemakers, but other artisans as well, were to be found in the ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.³³¹ The presence of these skilled workers in the ranks not only served to enhance or damage the local economy, they also helped to ensure the functioning of a regimental economy as well.

5.2.3 The Company Community and the Regimental Economy

In the eighteenth-century, most administrative functions of an army were concentrated at the regimental and company level. It was a far less bureaucratic army than those of today, and items necessary for a soldier's well being tended to come from his company and regiment. This was the age of proprietary Colonels and their Regiments, and Captains and their Companies.³³² What this meant was that administrative functions relating to the well being of soldiers almost always occurred at the level of the either the regiment or the company. British regiments, indeed most European regiments, usually purchased their own uniforms (indeed they often purchased the cloth and made the uniforms themselves) and issued them directly to their soldiers; the soldier was often paid directly by his own officers, when on campaign the regiment usually supervised the issue of the soldiers' food, and when the soldier fell ill he was treated by the

³³¹ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, Appendix, Table 8, 320, Frey, *British Soldier*, 10-17.

³³² Alan J. Guy, *Oeconomy and Discipline: Officership and Administration in the British Army, 1714-1763*, Manchester, U. K., Manchester University Press, 1985, 1-18, Frey, *British Soldier*, 135-136.

regiment's surgeon. The soldier in fact lived within a regimental economy. As a result, the links between leader and led were in some ways close and direct and so was the linkage between those who were dependent and those who supported them.³³³

The regiment however was a relatively large institution, during wartime its strength might number a thousand men, though in peacetime its strength might shrink to around three to four hundred and fifty or so. The regiment was on too large a scale for close supervision, or for close bonds to grow amongst all of its member. For interaction on a more human scale one looks to the company. The size of a company of infantry varied widely, in peacetime it might shrink to as few as thirty men, in wartime it might swell to its authorized strength of about one-hundred men. (A troop of cavalry, the equivalent unit varied from around fifteen to sixty men.) A company or troop was commanded by a captain, with a lieutenant and ensign (cornet in the cavalry) to assist him. In terms of non-commissioned officers there would be two to three sergeants, and three to six corporals. It was at this level of the company that we could reasonably expect that the non-commissioned officers at least would know the men they were supervising closely and personally, and that the British soldier would, at least theoretically, interact with commissioned officers as well. It was at the level of the company moreover, that something approaching a stable community might be expected to develop. The British soldier therefore lived his life within the confines of the household of the mess, the community of the company, and the economy of the regiment. The British soldier's life however, was not a static one, he was constantly on the move, and his household, community and economy had to be prepared to supply a movable feast.

5.2.3.1 The Mobile Life

This household of the mess, the community of the company, and the regimental economy were, of necessity, a mobile household, community and economy. Unlike our current picture of military life, in which a military unit is stationed in one particular place, British regiments in the mid-eighteenth-century were peripatetic organizations constantly on the move. As described in

³³³ Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volumes I - VI*, Donald H. Kent, Autumn Leonard, S. K. H. Stevens, John L. Tottenham, Louis M. Waddell, eds., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and

great detail in J. A. Houlding's *Fit for Service*, most regiments of the British Army spent their time in motion through the British Isles; at this time regiments of British infantry essentially had no home station.³³⁴ (The definitive identification of British regiments with the British counties, and the construction of regimental depots in those shires, did not occur until the Cardwell reforms of the 1870's.) In short, a regiment of infantry (often referred to, incidentally, and revealingly, as a "marching regiment") regularly marched from one place to another, stayed there for some months, and then moved on. As a practical matter moreover, to reduce the strain of billeting on the local economy, the regiment did not move together, it moved in several subdivisions generally by companies or pairs of companies.³³⁵

As a result of this nomadic existence, a mid-eighteenth-century British regiment had no fixed station or location. Furthermore, as a result of moving and billeting the regiment by subdivisions, the entire regiment was together only for a few weeks during the summer, when it was concentrated for review - that is a generally officer would come and review the appearance, discipline and training of the regiment. At this time the entire regiment would come together at one place, generally setting up a formal camp and living in it for a few weeks. This would also be the regiment's one opportunity for advanced training. (As a practical matter, the regiment might well be encamped with several other regiments for training and review.³³⁶) To reiterate, in peacetime for most of the year the regiment was dispersed, (with a few exceptions, principally regiments which were garrisoning fortresses) either in billets, or marching from one location to another there to again be billeted.

The great exception to this pattern of dispersal by companies for most of the year, with only a relatively brief summer encampment, occurred, of course, during wartime, when the regiment was on campaign. During wartime, the regiments that were on campaign would normally be concentrated, and would also, in fact, probably be part of a larger army. Even war would see the regiment dispersed for part of the year however: during the cold-weather months, it was common to disperse the army to "winter quarters;" this process would often repeat the

Museum Commission, 1951-1994, Loudon to Bouquet, *Bouquet, I*, September 8, 1757, 187, hereafter: *Bouquet I*, etc.

³³⁴ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 23-57.

³³⁵ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 23-57, 90-98. Houlding has identified typical patterns of movement around Britain

³³⁶ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 282-283.

pattern of soldiers billeted in small groups, and once again the regiment might be widely dispersed.

In short, a British soldier was a nomad and lived as part of a small band; the most important and enduring institutions in a British soldier's life would have been, in ascending order, his mess, his company, and his regiment. This nomadic life meant that the British soldier did not have a home station, he had a home regiment and company; the constants in the British soldier's life were not a location, they were a mobile community.

5.2.3.2 The Company Community

In many ways their company was probably more important than their regiment to British soldiers. It is tempting to see the company in particular as a sort of extended family with the captain as a provident father. This sort of company patriarchy was described by the sergeant encountered by Tom Jones, who talked about a company where the captain's lady interceded to mitigate the punishments pronounced upon soldiers.³³⁷ This at least was the ideal, but the ideal seemed to have been passing away. As discussed in chapter four it seems likely that British officers, particularly the company grade officers (ensigns, lieutenants, captains) were, to a degree withdrawing themselves from hands-on management of their soldiers. Increasingly, administrative functions were concentrated in the hands of the sergeants, and the battalion's staff officers. This does not mean that the company was not a community; given the circumstances of military life it had to be, it does mean however, that the company's officers were less involved in the community than had formerly been the case.

Nonetheless, as a result of its size, (small enough that everyone could come to know one another) and the fact that, unlike the regiment the company generally stayed together, it seems almost inevitable that, in peacetime at least, his company became the center of the soldier's loyalty. It is worth remembering that most of the men who joined the British Army came from a Britain that was still in many ways a corporate world, where the ties amongst household and village in particular were very strong. It would only be reasonable for the soldiers to attempt to reproduce, in so far as they were able, these social arrangements in the military world. It might

³³⁷ Fielding, *Tom Jones*, 384.

be assumed that, since the company itself was often fairly widely dispersed in its living arrangement, the soldiers would build strong ties within the civilian community; but the fact that the company also moved regularly would probably tend to keep ties with the civilian world relatively weak, conversely over time, this would also act to strengthen the bonds within the company. These bonds would be further strengthened by the operation of the regimental economy.

5.2.3.3 The Regimental Economy

In spite of the importance of the company to the soldier, ultimately the regiment was the font of most of the good things that came the soldiers' way. As the company officers gradually withdrew from administrative duties, the slack was picked up by the regimental staff officers (the adjutant and quartermaster) and the non-commissioned officers. Even with good staff officers however, the battalion commander still had a great deal to do, and the company commander, or at least some company commanders, would still have to intervene periodically to get their soldiers the necessities of life. The operation of the regimental economy demanded that, no matter how distant he might be from his soldiers, and no matter how autonomous his soldiers were: an officer was forced to deal, at least to some degree, with the daily reality of ensuring that his soldiers were fed, clothed and shod. This responsibility applied from the general on down to the company officers:

When an army is to encamp for any time in one place, for the most part the General goes himself to order it. He is then to consider what provisions there are in the place, or about it, what conveniency of securing them and bring them to the army, and if there be corn, how it may be made into meal. If there be no provisions, he must consider what methods there are for bringing them, and be sure it may not be in the power of the enemy to cut them off. He must also reflect on the conveniency of forage, of water, of shelter, of wood, and of the wholesomenss of the air, to prevent diseases; if he must intrench, he is to seek out a convenient ground for intrenching.³³⁸

³³⁸ Chevalier de la Valiere, "The Rules and Practices of the Greatest Generals," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Robert Bell, 1776, 158, hereafter, de la Valiere, "Greatest Generals."

At a more basic level, officers still had to make efforts to see that their soldiers were sheltered and had the necessities of life. Since soldiers in peacetime were expected to purchase their own provision, it was sometimes necessary for officers to intervene in, or sometimes set up, a local market: "Sometimes the inhabitants will have the Soldiers pay like other men, and sometimes the officers are for paying nothing; but the general rule is, that where the prices are not settled, the Soldiers are to pay a saving price for their provisions; that is, not as they are generally sold by retail, but so much as they cost by wholesale, that the seller may neither be a gainer or a loser."³³⁹ Likewise, Henry Bouquet would note in a letter: "Besides the King's Provisions [food] the Act of Parliament Specifys that the Soldiers shall receive gratis [without cost to themselves] in their Quarters [besides] five Pints of small Beer per diem, Candles, Salt Vinegar, Wood and the necessary Utensils to dress and eat their Victuals."³⁴⁰

When on campaign, ensuring that the soldiers received the necessities of life became both much more important, and much more difficult. Good officers at least, would make efforts to see that their men had what they needed. One officer reported that: "the extreme cold of last night make me the more earnestly wish we had the means of keeping the men from feeling what they now do, that from a number of wants"³⁴¹ Major Clephane at Fort Stanwix was concerned that: "we have no pease [peas] this winter, and almost neither greens nor roots of any kind, for a good time passed the men have had nothing but salt pork, flower and butter by a wheel several symptoms of the Scurvy begin daily to appear upon the men,"³⁴²

The existence of this regimental economy is demonstrated most strongly by the way in which regimental officers were swamped with administrative and accounting work. For example, while on a mission to Charleston, South Carolina, Henry Bouquet was forced to account for money he had distributed for recruiting, money that he had given to detachments of the R.A.R. for subsistence [food], money he had given for subsistence to the Regiments of Highlanders and money for other contingencies.³⁴³ He was also required to deal with an account of clothing sent to the R. A. R.,³⁴⁴ and he fussed about not having enough specie so he was

³³⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 139.

³⁴⁰ Bouquet to Ellis, March 1758, *Bouquet I*.

³⁴¹ 31 January, 1759, To Gage, from Cpt P. [?] Gordon, 1st or Royal Regiment, *Thomas Gage Papers Collection*, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, American Series 1, hereafter: *Gage Papers*.

³⁴² 10 February, 1759, To Gage?, from [Major?] James Clephane, *Gage Papers*, American Series 1.

³⁴³ Loudon to Bouquet, September 8, 1757, *Bouquet I*, 187.

³⁴⁴ Loudon to Bouquet, Invoice of Cloathing, September 8, 1757,,*Bouquet I*, 189-190..

required to use bills that would cost the government two-percent in interest.³⁴⁵ He also decided: “to keep the new Cloathing till in the Spring, & to have the Coats fitted out this Winter.”³⁴⁶ In fact, the first two volumes of Bouquet's papers are littered numerous references to accounts, and other housekeeping matters.³⁴⁷

In short, the British soldier probably found it easy to conceptualize the hierarchy of military organization, and relate them both to the level of economic activity which they generated, and the degree of influence which they exerted over his life. His household was his mess, the place where he lived, slept and ate. His company was his home village, and the regiment was the market town that he visited occasionally. One might even go a little further and speculate that the British Army was his county (or "country") and the "wars," the pre-national, pan-European military world, his nation. The validity of this type of extended homey analogy would have been enhanced by the fact that the soldier's household his village, indeed, even his nation, included a quite surprisingly large number of women and children.

³⁴⁵ Bouquet to Lord Loudon, October 16, 1757 *Bouquet I*.

³⁴⁶ Bouquet to Colonel Stanwix, October 18, 1757, *Bouquet I*.

³⁴⁷ *Bouquet I, passim, Bouquet II, passim.*

5.3 CAMP FOLLOWERS AND FAMILIES

In 1764, Henry Bouquet, led an expedition from Western Pennsylvania to pacify the Ohio Indians. Among the written orders for that expedition, one read: "One woman belonging to each corps and two nurses for the general hospital were all that were permitted to follow the army. The other women in the camp, and those unnecessary to the garrison were ordered immediately down the country into the settlement."³⁴⁸

Today, camp followers, particularly women, are the forgotten stage hands whose work, which help produce the dramas of the great battles of the eighteenth-century, is so often ignored. They were not ignored in the mid-eighteenth-century, but neither did they commonly receive much attention. For the most part, they passed with routine mention. Women had been part of the European military world for centuries, and they had a well established role, but that role was also definitely found backstage. As Bouquet's order quoted above demonstrated however, and numerous other examples help detail, that backstage role was also a very necessary one. Camp followers had an important part to play in the mid-eighteenth-century military world. Women and other camp followers were not, as some would lead one to believe, parasites who batted on to an army and progressively weakened it.³⁴⁹ On the contrary, camp followers, a category that included women, children and non-combatant men, fulfilled many important functions for an army. Either formally, on the ration strength, as private servants, or informally, as unsanctioned camp followers, camp followers did many necessary things. Many of the male camp followers provided vital logistical support for the army. Women who followed the army cooked, cleaned, nursed, and generally maintaining the camps and quarters for the army. At the same time,

³⁴⁸ William Smith, *Historical Account of Bouquet's Expedition against the Ohio Indians in the Year 764, Under the Command of Henry Bouquet Esq.*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1765, facsimile reprint, Ann Arbor, Michigan, University Microfilms, Inc., 1966 39, hereafter: Smith, *Historical Account*.

³⁴⁹ Cynthia Enloe describes this view of women camp followers as the 'classic formulation,' implying that it was the commonly held view. She argued that it was a view partially created by military authority, and used by military authority as one means to control women camp followers. Cynthia Enloe, *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarization of Women's Lives*, Boston, South End Press, 1983, 2, hereafter Ehloe, *Does Khaki*.

women, and other camp followers provided much of the social structure which helped make military life bearable. As Bouquet's order concerning "unnecessary women," and as the directions for the women who would be taken on the expedition show: women were essential to the effective operation of a mid-eighteenth-century army and its commanders' would also take steps to ensure that they were available, if it was necessary for them to do so.

Perhaps more importantly, the presence of large numbers of women and children, living intimately and closely with soldiers, created a military world that contrasts sharply with that of today. The families of the soldiers, and other non-combatants were an integral part of the martial culture. Their presence would inevitably have a strong impact on the social atmosphere of the military world. In particular, gender roles within eighteenth-century European military forces would have been quite different from those of armies of later periods. Furthermore, the presence of women and children living closely with the soldiers, would mean that methods for socializing, enculturating, and motivating male soldiers would have borne little resemblance to the techniques used in armies of the later nineteenth and twentieth-centuries.

5.3.1 Camp Followers

The armies of eighteenth-century Europe did not consist solely of soldiers. A long tail of putative non-combatants followed the wars and made up a large portion of the military world. In English they were usually referred to as "camp followers." These non-combatants consisted of women, children, and men who serviced the soldiers in various ways. Women and children, who were the families of the soldiers, made up the largest portion of those termed camp followers. There was, however, also a large body of noncombatant men. These men occupied several slightly different, but overlapping, categories. Some were artisans who provided skills the army needed, such as blacksmiths and carpenters; others provided auxiliary services the army needed, most notably teamsters, private servants, sutlers and assorted others.³⁵⁰ It is important to note that these camp followers were crucial to the operation of a mid-eighteenth-century army. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth-century, these functions were militarized, taken over by the army, and would increasingly be performed by uniformed soldiers specially trained and assigned

to those duties. In the eighteenth-century, by contrast, these jobs were either performed by combatant soldiers detailed to that duty, (and therefore often unable to perform their primary duty of fighting) or by hired civilians, or by the women and children who followed the army.

Sutlers were merchants licensed to follow the armies and sell to the soldiers. They, and other merchants, were vital to an army, for they provided certain foodstuffs and goods, such as fresh foods and vegetables, which the army did not generally stock.³⁵¹ Henry Bouquet was careful to organize and license them on the march to attack Fort DuQuesne in 1758.³⁵² Most other good commanders would do the same. His license read in part:

Whereas it is for the good of His Majesty's Service that a certain number of well regulated Merchants & Sutlers, be allowed to follow the Army on the Western Expedition.

This is therefore to permit you to attend the Said Troops for this campaign, to furnish them with Dry Goods & Liquors. . . . And no soldier, or Women belonging to the Army, is to have any Spirits or other Strong Liquors from you, without Leave in writing from the Commanding Officer of the Regiment they belong to.³⁵³

The language used in the license is very revealing. Women are described as "belonging to the army," and what sutlers do is described as "for the good of His Majesty's Service." This license also hints at both the services camp followers provided, and the problems that they posed. Drunkenness constantly troubled commanders, yet alcohol (in moderation) was deemed necessary to the smooth functioning of an army. Camp followers often supplied the spirits, but became a problem if they themselves imbibed too much, or allowed soldiers to do so. From the point of view of authority, camp followers could be an attractive nuisance who tempted soldiers from their duty and led them into disorder.

Many of the sutlers were, in fact, women: women who often had a reputation for being very formidable characters.³⁵⁴ A famous literary example is the character of Mother Courage from Bertolt Brecht's play "Mother Courage and her Children," which pertains to the period of the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648. In the mid-eighteenth-century, at a review at Potsdam,

³⁵⁰ Holly Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution*, Columbia, South Carolina, University of South Carolina Press, 1996, 16-17, hereafter: Mayer, *Belonging*.

³⁵¹ Mayer, *Belonging*, 85-121.

³⁵² Forbes to Bouquet, June 19, 1758, *Bouquet, II*, 112-113.

³⁵³ Form for Sutlers' Licenses, June 19, 1758, *Bouquet, II*, 114.

³⁵⁴ Mayer, *Belonging*, 7.

Frederick the Great is said to have ridden up a nearby hill to view his soldiers. At the top he found that two *Marketenderinen* (women sutlers) had set up their stalls. They informed Frederick that this location was perfect for their pitch, while he could watch his toy soldiers anywhere. Frederick is said to have beat a hasty retreat.³⁵⁵

5.3.2 Women

Tradition has it there was usually also a large and assorted group of wives, mistresses, prostitutes, as well as entertainers and other miscellaneous followers, who trailed an army to entertain soldiers and extract most of their spare cash. George Farquhar's Sergeant Kite, when asked who he was married to, responded with a list of five, that included Mistress Sheely Snickereyes, and Polly Guzzle.³⁵⁶ Prostitution and other forms of sexual misconduct were perhaps not as common as horrified commentators imagined, but a certain percentage of women camp followers, as well as male soldiers, misbehaved. According to a letter written by Lieutenant-Colonel Stephens to Henry Bouquet in 1759:

I saw your direction to Co. Armstrong about the fair, I may say the foul Sex. I informed Him that I would advise you of his Conduct, who would have thought it? He has brought up a mere Seraglio [harem] with him and among the Rest, three of our Cast offs, Sent down some time ago.

If a person of his rank and Gravity, a person whose example is so much respected, Connive at these things I fancy the thing will soon gain ground.

All the women I wanted to get rid off, claim his patronage, and I have been obliged to Confine a Groupe of them, for pretending to go down, and then fetching a compass and Returning in the night to the Suburbs of Ligonier again.³⁵⁷

One probable reason for the commonly held view that most camp followers were

³⁵⁵ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 134. See *Prussian Infantry*, 240-242, for the Prussian regulations relating to sutlers, servants, and an acknowledgement that in many cases the sutlers are the wives of soldiers. The Prussian Army allowed one sutler per company.

³⁵⁶ Farquhar, "Recruiting Officer," I, i, 67-68.

³⁵⁷ Stephen to Bouquet, September 16, 1759, *Bouquet IV*, 114.

prostitutes, was the fact that marriage customs were much more informal and unregulated amongst the "lower orders" that made up most of the rank and file, and the women camp followers, in eighteenth-century European armies. As a result many marriages, which were probably considered valid by the parties concerned, were often judged unsanctioned and immoral by outside observers. Moreover it was customary for a women of the army (as indeed it was generally the custom amongst the "lower orders") whose husband died to take another husband almost immediately. This horrified more refined observers.

(It should also be noted that public disapprobation was not always confined to the women of the common soldiers. Those who accompanied officers were sometimes seen as dubious as well. In his licentious travels, Tom Jones, encounters a Mrs. Walters who, was the lady of Captain Walters, but according to the sergeant who was imparting this information: "'Some folks' says he, 'used indeed to doubt whether they were lawfully married in a church or no.'"³⁵⁸)

Many women doubled up on their duties. In Francis Grosse's famous (and satirical) *Advice to Officers of the British Army*, which offered humorous suggestions to all ranks of the British army on how to better their lot, sergeants were advised that:

In order to turn the penny, contrive, when in camp, to let your wife keep a hut in the rear, and sell ale and gin. The standing orders only say, *you* shall not do it, but they do not prohibit *her*. Here you may settle with your men; and if they spend the greatest part of their pay in liquour, it is no more than they would do elsewhere, and you may as well have their money as another.³⁵⁹

One suspects that this was quite common practice. Many women camp followers were ingenious, and always on the lookout for a chance to make a little money. For instance, on the sultry morning of the Battle of Kolin, June 18, 1757, wives of the Prussian Regiment of Bevern broke into an ice-house and sold the chunks of ice, at high prices, to the soldiers who were sweltering in the ranks.³⁶⁰

Sometimes ladies ("lady" being a description usually reserved for officers' wives) would

³⁵⁸ Fielding, *Tom Jones*, 384.

³⁵⁹ Francis Grosse, *Advice to the Officers of the British Army: A Facsimile Reprint of the 6th London Edition with Introduction and Notes*, New York, Agathynian Club, 1867, 6th Edition, 1783. 107, hereafter: Grosse, *Advice*.

³⁶⁰ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 59-60.

also come to follow the armies. While some followed the armies' full time, many more came only for a short visit. Perhaps the most famous example of this was George Washington's wife Martha, (often referred to as "Lady" Washington) who periodically came and visited the Continental Army.³⁶¹ Occasionally a lady gained official status with an army. Charlotte Brown was assigned as Matron to the General Hospital for Braddock's Army in North America in 1754. She seemed to have had the status of lady, she came with a maidservant, and the army assigned her a wagon to use as shelter, and horses, certainly better than the lot of the average camp follower.³⁶²

Since ladies usually had more genteel manners than the wives and camp followers of the enlisted men, they tended to escape some of the derision directed at most camp followers, who, on the whole, had an unsavory reputation, being regarded by most civilians as disreputable and probably immoral.³⁶³ Camp followers in particular were often accused of looting.³⁶⁴ In fact, in the mind of authority, camp followers, and trouble seemed to have gone together. The Regimental Orders for the 47th Foot, during the attack on Louisbourg, for the 27th of June, 1759 specified that: "The General Has Directed in publick orders That no women be permitted to land with the troops and that No Insult of any kind be offered to inhabitants of this Island."³⁶⁵ In truth many, perhaps most, members of eighteenth-century armies, of both genders and all occupations, looted. More importantly than their looting however, in the eyes of military authority, was the fact that the eighteenth-century army's tail of non-combatants provided much of the logistical support for the army, as well as contributing to the social fabric of the eighteenth-century military world.

There would have been many more women following the army than those officially on the ration strength. Sylvia Frey estimated that five thousand women followed the British Armies in America during the Revolutionary War.³⁶⁶ The numbers who followed an army in Europe

³⁶¹ Mayer, *Belonging*, 15.

³⁶² "The Journal of Charlotte Brown Matron of the General Hospital with the English Forces in America, 1754-1756," in *Colonial Captivities, Marches and Journeys*, Isabel M. Calder ed., Port Washington, New York, Kennikat Press Inc., 1935, 1967, 169, 177-178, hereafter: Brown, "Journal."

³⁶³ Mayer, *Belonging*, 146-147.

³⁶⁴ Frey, *British Soldier*, 76-77.

³⁶⁵ *French and Indian War Orderly Books at the Massachusetts Historical Society*, Number 10, 47th Regiment of Foot, British Army, under Peregrine Lascaelles, kept by [Thomas G. Willow] 2 June-14 September, 1759, 27 June 1759, hereafter: *French and Indian War Orderly Books*.

³⁶⁶ Frey, *British Soldier*, 17.

would have been far larger than those in North America, due to the smaller distances involved, and the lack of a need to travel overseas by ship. These women did more than simply provide companionship for lonely soldiers. They performed many functions which were important for the maintenance of any army, and for which no official provision was made. They cooked, nursed the ill and wounded, sewed, did laundry, cleaned the quarters, acted as servants to officers, and performed many other necessary daily tasks. Some women were customarily allowed rations in return for doing the cooking and cleaning for a company, but since there were usually women following the army who were not entitled to rations, the pool of available auxiliary labor was much larger than the official numbers would suggest

And whereas formerly when the Crown furnished fresh meat, it was found difficult to Issue the bellies of any of the Oxen, whereby that useful part was entirely lost or given away: It is therefore proposed that at all and each of the Posts where Women are allowed Provisions that each Belly should be issued out to them, an and after the rate of Six Pounds of Beef, in part, or in the whole of their allowance -³⁶⁷

This example illustrates however, that, while the army did normally make some provision for the women who followed the army, their usual priority was last.³⁶⁸ Since there were generally far more women following the Army than there were on the ration strength, the competition for food, in times of shortages, would probably have become ferocious.

Although some camp followers stayed in quarters when the armies went on campaign, others followed the army.³⁶⁹

Louisbourg 2 June 1759

The regiment to receive provisions For no more than three women p^r Comp^y and to 4 women p^r comp^y of one Hundred

The Commanding Officers of Every Comp^y is to Send the women on Shore tomorrow morning Excep^s four None are to remain on boards who have Children

The Colonel has apply'd to the General That provisions may be allowed to those who remain here during the Campaign and does not Doubt But that they will have that Indulgence³⁷⁰

³⁶⁷ To Thomas Gage from Rob^t Leake[?], Commissary, Albany, 19 April 1759. Gage Papers, American Series, 2.

³⁶⁸ Frey, *British Soldier*, 20.

³⁶⁹ Frey, *British Soldier*, 20.

³⁷⁰ *French and Indian War Orderly Books*, 2 June-14 September, 1759, 2 June 1759.

In this context, "followed" is the operative verb. The women and children traveled by literally following, walking behind the army as it marched. In 1757 Henry Bouquet directed that: "[n]o Women or Children are allowed to set upon the Waggon; & they shall follow upon the March the direction of that Officer [in charge of the baggage]."³⁷¹ In the Prussian army³⁷² camp followers observed the same custom, the as they did in the Austrian,³⁷³ indeed all the European armies.

Following the army could be an exhausting business. Charlotte Brown's *Journal* details the effort that was involved in keeping up with the Army, and the hardships that bad roads and poor weather could cause. When the road was so bad that her wagon was unable to proceed, Charlotte Brown 'walked till my {feet} were blister'd[.]'³⁷⁴ This must certainly have been a common occurrence for many camp followers. Charlotte Brown's brother died on the march, and the rigors of campaigning eventually broke down her health as well.³⁷⁵

Some women not only followed the army into the field, they even followed it into action. Women commonly carried water into the ranks during battles and sometimes served as baggage guard. Sylvia Frey reports that during the American Revolution, the wife of a Grenadier was killed in the action leading up to the occupation of Philadelphia; and during the fighting at Fort Ann a woman who kept close by her husband's side during the engagement was mortally wounded.³⁷⁶ Indeed, stories of women found among the dead seem to have been a staple of the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century battle reporting.

Camp followers were subjected to military discipline when necessary. In theory, the military law that governed the relationship between the army and camp followers was straightforward, Article XXIII of the *Articles of War* stated: "All Sutlers and Retainers to a Camp, and all Persons whatsoever serving with Our Armies in the Field, though no inlisted Soldiers, are to be subject to Orders, according to the Rules and Disciplines of War."³⁷⁷ In practice however, it seems that a more ambiguous relationship existed. Normally, camp followers were not subjected to the full rigors of military discipline, probably for the simple

³⁷¹ Bouquet: Return of Camp Equipage, March 18, 1757, *Bouquet I*, 58.

³⁷² Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 59.

³⁷³ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Maria Theresa: The Armed Forces of Imperial Austria, 1740-1780*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1977, hereafter: Duffy, *Maria Theresa*.

³⁷⁴ Brown, "Journal," 178-183.

³⁷⁵ Brown, "Journal," 184-188.

³⁷⁶ Frey, *British Soldier*, 20.

reason that camp followers were free to go if they were unhappy with the way they were treated. When it seemed necessary however, the hard hand of military authority could be employed. One of the most fascinating documents in the Bouquet papers reads as follows:

Carlisle
4th June 1759

Honoured S^r/

Please to hear the Petition of your Poor unfortunate Servant Martha May now confined in Carlisle Gaol Please your Hon^r as my husband is an Old Soldier and Seeing him taken out of the Ranks to be Confined Put me in Such a Passion that I was almost beside myself but being informed, after that I abused Y^r Honour, to a High degree for which I ask Y^r Honour a Thousand Pardons, and am Really Sorrow for what I have said&done; Knowing Y^r Honour to be a Compationate, and Merciful Man, I beg and hope you'll take it into Consideration that it was the Love I had for my Poor husband; and no ----- hill will to Y^r Honour, which was the cause of abusing so good a Colonel as you are. Please to Sett me at Liberty this time & I never will dis-oblige y^r Honour nor any other Officer belonging to the Army for the future as I have been a Wife 22 years and have Traveld with my Husband every Place or Country the Company Marcht too and have workt veryhard ever since I was in the Army I hope y^r honour will be so Good as to pardon me this [onct (stricken out)] time that I may go with my Poor Husband one time more to carry him and my good officers water in y^e hottest Battles as I have done before.

I am

Y^r unfortunate petitioner and Hum:^{ble} Servant

Mar^a May

[Endorsed]Petition of Martha May to carry Water to the Soldiers in the heat of Battle.

[Addressed]

To the Right Hon^{ble} Colonel Bouquet These³⁷⁸

³⁷⁷British *Articles of War*, 21.

³⁷⁸Martha May to Henry Bouquet, June 4, 1758, *Bouquet II*, 30.

Martha May did not seem to have regarded it as exceptional that she had carried water in the 'hottest Battles', though she did view her self-proclaimed good service record as a sufficient reason to be released from jail. Nor did she seem to find it unusual that her husband's Colonel had locked her up, though she certainly wanted to be released. As this document shows, some women considered themselves to be "in the Army" and adopted attitudes appropriate to actual military service. Martha May had made an emotional and ideological commitment to the values of the army, and essentially identified herself as a member of it.³⁷⁹ She was angry not just that her husband was arrested, but angry because "my husband is an Old Soldier and Seeing him taken out of the Ranks to be Confined Put me in Such a Passion that I was almost beside myself."

This level of commitment was certainly not unique to Martha May. Matthew Bishop, who served in the British Army during the War of the Spanish Succession, tells of a Sergeant in "my Lord Hartford's Regiment' who 'had a sister in the French Service.'" The Sergeant arranged to have his sister cross the lines and meet him in the British camp.³⁸⁰ In the course of a joyous reunion, enlivened with the brandy the sister had brought with her, the Sergeant tried to convince his sister that she should join the British Army. The Regiment's officers got into the act and "boasted of our Provisions being far better than the French Army's, that we had good Beef, Bacon, and extremely fine Geneva [Gin], good bread, and above all, the English Pay was double that of the French." She replied that "[s]he thought the French Provisions were preferable to ours, that all the world would allow their Bread to be better than that of any other nation; they had fine juicy Beef, none better to her Palate; and Brandy enough, which revived her soul; what could a Women desire more?" Undaunted, the Sergeant's sister maintained her allegiance to the French Army, eventually returning to the French Camp. After which, "the poor Sergeant's Joy was turned to Mourning, for he took on greatly when he saw himself disappointed of getting his sister into our Army."³⁸¹ (The language used is again significant and illuminating: the sergeant "had a sister in the French Service" and was intent upon "getting his sister into our Army.") In essence, the woman concerned was "in the army."

³⁷⁹ Mayers, *Belongings*, 4-7, makes this point in regards to the camp followers who followed the Continental Army.

³⁸⁰ "Matthew Bishop, Life and Adventures," in *The Oxford Book of Military Anecdotes*, Max Hastings, ed., New York, Oxford University Press, 1985, 148-149, hereafter: "Bishop, Life."

³⁸¹ "Bishop, Life," 148-149.

For an eighteenth-century camp follower, when she joined an army she joined a new world. As Martha May did, she might well have: "Traveld with my Husband every Place or Country the Company Marcht too and have workt very hard." There was a real possibility that the vicissitudes of war might lead her into the army of a nation other than her own. Over time a camp follower might well find that she had more in common with her fellow camp followers than she had with the home she had left behind. Her children were likely to become soldiers or camp followers themselves. One camp follower from the Thirty Years War is quoted as saying "I was born in war; I have no home, no country, no friends; war is all my wealth and now whither will I go."³⁸² In fact she did have a home and a country of sorts. It was the wars, the pan-European martial culture. While those who followed the eighteenth-century military world were not isolated from the larger world, they were caught up in a martial culture that embraced not only their public and military lives, but their private and family lives as well.

5.3.3 Children

It was not just the wives and women of the soldiers who were caught up in the eighteenth-century military world. The pre-national, pan-European martial culture embraced all the dependent members of the soldiers' family. With so many women following the drum, there was, of course, also a vast number of children. Frey computes that the average British company had eight births annually, or, a total of about fifty births per regiment per year. She estimates that during the American Revolution, with a British troop strength of 39,196, there were about 12,000 children (and, as noted above, 5,000 women) with the Army; and this, moreover, was in wartime, when military birthrates customarily dropped and many woman and children would have found it difficult to follow their regiment across the Atlantic.³⁸³ In 1776, the Berlin Garrison of Frederick the Great consisted of 17,056 men, 5,526 women and 6,622 children. Since these women and children lived in the camps or barracks with the soldiers, they were directly subjected to, and a part of, the army and of martial culture.³⁸⁴ Inevitably, their lives would reflect this.

³⁸² Quoted in Enloe, *Does Khaki*, 4.

³⁸³ Frey, *British Soldier*, 60.

³⁸⁴ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 60.

Children were often raised to be soldiers, or soldiers' women, and many a soldier or camp follower was probably literally born into the army. The well known opera 'La fille du Regiment' ('The Daughter of the Regiment'), composed by Gaetano Donizetti in 1840, is a romanticized account of this common situation. In France in the eighteenth century, as was probably the case everywhere in Europe, it was customarily understood that boys who grew up following the army were intended to become soldiers as soon as they reached the necessary bodily height. In 1766, Etienne-Francois de Choiseul, the French Minister of War, granted boys half pay from the age of six.³⁸⁵

Even more than women, children were the invisible camp followers, and in the case of boys, often the invisible soldiers as well. While the belief that all drummers were drummer-boys seems incorrect, it is true that boys were often trained to be musicians (this term included the drummers and fifers of the infantry, artillery and dragoons, and the trumpeters of the cavalry) when young. Furthermore, boys who were following the army provided a ready source of servants for officers, and others who might hire them.³⁸⁶

Moreover, in the days before the existence of birth certificates, and when recruiting instructions were, at best, guidelines, boys became full-fledged soldiers when they were judged strong enough to handle arms. On occasion, efforts were made to leave the younger boy-soldiers behind, or to transfer them, when a regiment was ordered overseas, but this does not always seem to have happened. It is clear that, while the average age of a mid-eighteenth-century army is older than we might imagine: (Sylvia Frey computed the average age, in several British Regiments which fought during the American Revolution, most seem to fall into a range around twenty-eight to twenty-nine years old.³⁸⁷) some combatants were almost certainly young boys, in their mid-teens. It should be added that it was not only in the ranks that very young soldiers were to be found. Very young officers, in at least a few cases, are known to have taken the field with the British Army.³⁸⁸ One young officer is reported to have begun his career at age twelve, sadly,

³⁸⁵ J. Chaignot, and John Childs, 'Families, Military,' in *A Dictionary of Military History and the Art of War*, Corvisier, Andre, ed., English Edition Revised expanded and edited by Childs, John, Turner, Chris, trans., Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1994, 236.

³⁸⁶ Mayer, *Belonging*, 162

³⁸⁷ Frey, *British Soldier*, 23-27.

³⁸⁸ A. W. Cockerill, *Sons of the Brave: The story of Boy Soldiers*, London, Leo Cooper in Association with Secker & Warburg, 1984, 35-65, hereafter: Cockerill, *Sons*.

he then ruined it, by killing a man in a duel at age sixteen.³⁸⁹

Boy soldiers were often seen as future non-commissioned officers, after all, they had grown up in the business, so to speak, and they were usually far more knowledgeable about their military duties than men who had been recruited from the civilian world. Non-commissioned officers generally had to be literate however, so, by the second half of the eighteenth-century, many European armies began to make efforts to educate their boy soldiers. One of the earliest efforts in public education in Europe occurred in Austria. There, after the Seven Years' War, Maria Theresa made vigorous efforts to extend primary education to her subjects. The Army seized on this project with great enthusiasm, expanding upon existing efforts to educate the affiliated children. In most armies the regimental chaplain was expected to educate the children, an obligation that in practice was often ignored. The Austrian Army enlarged upon these arrangements with soldier-schoolmasters. It was felt that better education for the regiment's children would have many good results. It would prevent the regiment's children from running wild, and it would eventually provide the regiment with a supply of literate non-commissioned officers.³⁹⁰ In short, the eighteenth-century European military world was often a cradle to grave proposition. One was born into it, educated by it, and quite possibly died in it.

³⁸⁹ Cockerill, *Sons*, 41.

³⁹⁰ Duffy, *Maria Theresa*, 57-58.

5.4 GENDER ROLES, "SHE-SOLDIERS," MARTIAL ENCULTURATION AND "SOLDIER-LIKE" BEHAVIOR

The presence of large numbers of women and children in a mid-eighteenth-century army, living in close proximity with male soldiers would have produced a social atmosphere much different from that prevalent in late nineteenth- and twentieth-century armies. Quite clearly, eighteenth-century soldiers did not live in the isolated military environment experienced by soldiers in more recent times. It is necessary, because we tend to view them as the norm, to spend a few moments considering the nineteenth and twentieth-century military worlds, to appreciate how different they were from the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. A vast change began to occur in western armies in roughly the second quarter of the nineteenth century. Many of the duties of the camp followers were militarized and taken over by soldiers. For example, in the 1860's and 1870's most armies began including cooks on the establishment, and the soldier, who previously had supplied his own cooking, or had it done for him by a camp follower, now began to get his meals in a military mess hall. Increasingly, the camp follower, and to the large degree women, vanished from western military life. From the late nineteenth century until very recently, western armies have been gendered: not only was soldiering a gendered occupation, that is one which could only be filled by a male, but armies themselves were gendered, that is they were all male societies, where women were to be only occasionally found as wives or nurses.

World War I and World War II saw the beginning of change, with the development of women's auxiliaries in many western armies; nonetheless, there were also very strong efforts, in most western armies, to maintain a considerable degree of separation between men and women in the military. For example, (though it must be admitted that this example is extreme) women serving with the United States Army's Women's Army Corps in the Pacific in World War II were described as living in "barbed wire compounds," "which were thought necessary to protect them from the thousands of sex-starved GI's nearby."³⁹¹

³⁹¹ Ronald H. Spector, *Eagle Against the Sun: The American War with Japan*, New York, Random House, 1985, 395.

By no means was this the experience of all women who served in the world wars. Some women saw combat with the Russian Army, and with partisan forces. In Britain some women served with anti-aircraft units. Moreover many women, whose roles were theoretically noncombatant and auxiliary, came very close to the war indeed. Broadly speaking, however, male-dominated armies saw these happenings as exceptional, and the end of wartime emergencies saw most western armies removing women from combat roles, and quite often from close interaction with male soldiers. Women were frequently kept at a very great distance from the lives of male soldiers.

David Hackworth, writing about married life in the United States Army in the 1950's and 1960's, described the lot of women married to Army officers in this fashion: "all things considered theirs was a pretty empty lot We men just never stopped. . . . Having such a tight group of officers did wonders for the morale of the whole outfit but it took a hell of a toll on the home front. . . . None of us consciously decided to lock the girls out, but there was a certain perverse pleasure in speaking in the silent shorthand we'd developed over many a beer . . . while our wives, oblivious chatted away by our sides."³⁹² Hackworth describes an Army in which military wives were kept separate from many of the important elements of army life.

Speaking of the modern French Foreign Legion, admittedly an extreme example of this trend, one observer commented thus: "The real woman does not exist. The Foreign Legion is a unit without women. For starters it is too virile for them. . . . Outside the barracks, it is physical sexuality, mechanical, in pleasure spots. Inside the woman remains in the idealized imagination."³⁹³

While this model of a gendered army has been changing in the years since World War Two, this has been a slow process, and there is still a strong tendency by many to view a male-gendered army as the norm. These expectations about gendered roles in a military setting have caused modern western armies to adopt means of motivating male soldiers that are based upon this gendered conception of military life. Since women and children were far more present in the eighteenth-century European military world, efforts to motivate male soldiers in the eighteenth century would have had to have been somewhat different.

³⁹² Colonel David Hackworth and Julie Sherman, *About Face: The Odyssey of an American Warrior*, New York, Simon & Schuster Inc., 1989, 368 hereafter Hackworth and Sherman, *About Face*.

³⁹³ Douglas Porch, *The French Foreign Legion: A Complete History of the Legendary Fighting Force*, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, 1991, 426.

5.4.1 Gender Roles

Western armies, during the later nineteenth and for much of the twentieth-century, have used what Craig M. Cameron had described as a particularly "hypermasculine" and sexually isolated environment to motivate their male soldiers and make them aggressive.³⁹⁴ A key part of this process is that male soldiers are separated from women, and the qualities that the army desires from them, discipline, physical toughness and aggression, among others, are identified as masculine and are praised. Undesirable traits are scorned as feminine and weak, and the soldiers displaying them are identified as sissies, or girls, or by some other phrase which signifies a undesirable femaleness.³⁹⁵ (Enloe argued that "[m]en are taught to have a stake in the military's essence-combat; it is supposedly a validation of their own male "essence." This is matched by the military's own institutional investment in being represented as society's bastion of male identity."³⁹⁶) Since modern soldiers have typically been isolated, in all male settings, it has been possible to change their values using this method. Moreover, and less subtly, opportunities to visit the civilian world, and interact with women, could be manipulated very blatantly by authority as a tool to control soldiers. For example, retired United States Army Lieutenant Colonel David Hackworth describes how, as a young corporal commanding a squad of soldiers in 1948, he motivated them by withholding their passes, and thus their ability to visit the civilian world and women.³⁹⁷

In the twentieth century, since roughly World War One, this process was further concentrated and ritualized in basic training. Typically in basic training, new recruits were completely isolated from civilian influences, and not coincidentally, were also segregated from women. Until quite recently this segregated basic training was the norm in western armies.³⁹⁸ The single sex, all male barracks, also common in western armies until comparatively recent times, helped to continue this segregation after basic training, and so helped maintain the values that were encouraged by basic training. In fact, this method of motivating male soldiers has been

³⁹⁴ Craig M. Cameron, *American Samurai: Myth, Imagination and the Conduct of Battle in the First Marine Division, 1941-1951*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1994, 49-88.

³⁹⁵ Enloe, *Does Khaki*, 14-15.

³⁹⁶ Enloe, *Does Khaki*, 15.

³⁹⁷ Hackworth and Sherman, *About Face*, 42-43, 215.

³⁹⁸ John Hockey, *Squaddies: Portrait of a Subculture*, Exeter, United Kingdom, University of Exeter, Exeter University Publications, 1986, 33-35.

so common that it often seems the norm.

These were certainly not the norms in the military world of eighteenth-century Europe. Mid-eighteenth-century armies, and certainly the British Army of that period, did not have a long period of quarantined and ritualized basic training to inculcate martial values into their soldiers. Nor is there any evidence that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century, or any other eighteenth-century army made any general effort to isolate its soldiers from the larger civilian world, or from women, if for no other reason than the process of billeting troops made it impossible. The very different norms of the armies of eighteenth-century European armies, in comparison to those of modern armies, pose certain questions: What effect would the non-isolated, sexually integrated environment of the eighteenth-century army have had on gender roles, and on the eighteenth-century armies' efforts to motivate soldiers for battle?

Since eighteenth-century armies did not isolate their soldiers from either women or the larger civilian world, they therefore could not use interaction, or the denial of interaction, with women as a motivational tool. Since soldiers were not isolated from women, they could not be motivated by this sort of isolation to behave more aggressively, and otherwise act in accordance with military values. Armies reflected the larger eighteenth-century world, with men, women and children all present in that smaller military world.

It does, however, seem possible that the presence of women, children and non-combatant male camp followers might have been used in other and different ways to bolster the male identification of the combatants. Instead of the absence of women being used to heighten men's aggression, and so make men more effective soldiers; perhaps the presence of women and children might have served to heighten the protective instincts of the soldier, and strengthen his identification of himself as an arms-bearing male, with a duty to protect others. In this manner, women, children and non-combatant men would serve as a strong motivational factor for mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers, as well as the soldiers of other contemporary armies of the pan-European military world.

Traditionally, masculinity has been identified with bearing arms and defending women.³⁹⁹ The immediate presence of women, children, and non-combatant men who did not, for the most, part use weapons, would have helped to highlight this element of masculinity in the

³⁹⁹ Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1987, 1995, 5, hereafter: Elshtain, *Women and War*.

soldiers who did bear arms. Bearing arms would also have clearly signified, and helped to reinforce, their status as soldiers.⁴⁰⁰ There is ample evidence that many soldiers valued the status that bearing arms gave them. Most obviously, there is the importance attached by mid-eighteenth-century soldiers to the possession of a sword, which was discussed earlier, and will be considered again in chapter six.

Moreover the presence of women, children and non-combatant men, with whom the male soldiers had emotional ties, who were often on the field of battle, or nearby, would have been a powerful motivating force. In effect the soldiers would have been fighting directly to protect the lives of their loved ones, and to prevent their possessions from being looted. This was certainly not the only motivational force working on the eighteenth-century soldier. It might not even have been the primary one. Certainly however, it must have had a strong effect on eighteenth-century soldiers.

There is evidence to suggest that women did sometimes directly encourage the soldiers to fight. During the massacre of the Army of the new United States under the command of Arthur St. Clair in Ohio in 1791, it is reported that the women camp followers shamed the cowards among the men.⁴⁰¹ This sort of encouragement is seen as one of the traditional roles for women in warfare.⁴⁰² Eighteenth-century armies simply made it possible to apply this sort of encouragement directly and unsubtly.⁴⁰³ It is not hard to imagine that Martha May's husband might well have received some strong additional motivation to fight by the sight of his wife coming through the ranks bearing water.

At an even cruder level of encouragement, soldiers who did not display sufficient courage were sometimes punished with methods that suggested they were women. As was discussed earlier in chapter four, at least some soldiers in the British Army in North America who had displayed cowardice in action were shamed by public punishments that suggested that they were women. In one case, a soldier was sentenced to ride the wooden horse: (which admittedly was a non-trivial punishment in itself as the wooden horse was given a very sharp back) "with a

⁴⁰⁰ I am indebted to my colleague Jennifer Belden-England of the Department of History at the University of Pittsburgh for suggesting this possibility, and Professor Bruce Venarde, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh for discussing this concept with me.

⁴⁰¹ Edward Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986, 26.

⁴⁰² Enloe, *Does Khaki*, 5.

petticoat on him, a broom in his hand."⁴⁰⁴ On another occasion two soldiers who were felt to have shown cowardice were punished by being made to: "stand an hour at ye necessary house, [the latrine] each with a woman's cap upon his head this evening, as a small punishment for the dishonour they have brought upon the corps and their brother soldiers." Afterwards, the pair were forced to march at the head of all parties with unloaded muskets. Punishments of this type would not be effective if they did not appeal to widely accepted gender roles, their use testifies to a gendered world in which bearing and using arms was masculine, and failing to do so, or displaying cowardice, were seen as feminine.

This military atmosphere, however, probably also served to reinforce many traditional gender roles for women. It has been argued that masculinization and feminization are ideas that emerge in tandem. They feed off one another.⁴⁰⁵ This suggests that the effort which eighteenth-century armies expended to produce male soldiers proud of bearing arms and the status that implied, would also have tended to act to restrict women to designated feminine occupations. So by and large, women camp followers were confined to traditional women's activities. They cooked, sewed, washed clothes, nursed, tended children and so on. They did not normally bear or use weapons, or actively participate in the fighting. The well-known, and perhaps legendary, story of Molly Pitcher manning an American cannon is an exception that helps prove the rule. Generally, women camp followers seemed to have performed every possible task to aid soldiers up to the point of using weapons and fighting the enemy.

5.4.2 "She-Soldiers"

It was not unknown however, for a woman who wished to fight as a soldier to disguise herself as a man and enlist. While this was still fairly uncommon, nonetheless there seems to have been a relatively large number of these cases in eighteenth-century armies; and this phenomenon helps demonstrate the strength of the gender identifications discussed above. One Englishman joked in

⁴⁰³ Linda Grant De Pauw, *Battle Cries and Lullabies: Women in War from Prehistory to the Present*, Norman, Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, 1998, 19 and *passim*.

⁴⁰⁴ Baumwell, *Redcoats*, 102-103.

⁴⁰⁵ Elshtain, *Women and War*, 258.

1762 that there were so many women serving in disguise as soldiers that they should have their own regiment.⁴⁰⁶ The *Universal Military Dictionary*, offered this interesting definition:

AMAZON, one of those women who inhabited a country so called. They are said to have composed a notion of themselves, exclusive of males, and to have derived their name from the cutting off one of breasts, that it might not hinder or impede the exercise of their arms. This term has often by modern writers been used to signify a bold daring woman, whom the delicacy of her sex does not hinder from engaging in the most hazardous attempts. The last and former wars with France have furnished us with several instance of females who have undergone the fatigue of a campaign with alacrity, and the run the hazards of a battle with the greatest intrepidity.⁴⁰⁷

An English ballad entitled "The Gallant She-Soldier" offers a relatively approving description of one such woman-soldier:

With musket on her shoulder, her part she acted then,
And every-one supposed that she had been a man;
Her bandeleurs about her neck, and sword hang'd by her side,
In many brave adventures her valor have been tried.

For exercising of her arms, good skill indeed had she,
And known to be as active as any one could be,
For firing of a musket, or beating of a drum,
She might compare assuredly with any one that come.

For other manly practices she gain'd the love of all,
For leaping and for running or wrestling for a fall,
For cudgels or for cuffing, if that occasion were,
There's hardly one of ten that might with her compare.

Yet civill in her carriage and modest stil was she,
But with her fellow soldiers she oft would merry be;
She would drink and take tobacco, and spend her money too
When an occasion served, that she had nothing else to do.⁴⁰⁸

Hannah Snell (1723-1792) provided a very was well known example of a "she-soldier."

⁴⁰⁶ Elshtain, *Women and War*, 105.

⁴⁰⁷ *Universal Military Dictionary*, AMAZON, 4.

⁴⁰⁸ Quoted in, Neuburg, *Gone for a Soldier*, 86.

According to her account, after her husband deserted her, Hannah Snell enlisted in General Guise's Regiment of the British Army, deserting after she was flogged. She then joined the British Marines, and went to India with them. She fought in the Battle of Devicotta, and claims to have been wounded eleven times, including one wound in the groin. After returning to Britain, she then revealed her sex to the Duke of Cumberland, the commander-in-chief of the British Army, and appealed, successfully for a pension. Later in life she kept a pub (known as either *The Female Warrior*, or *The Widow in Masquerade*) and published a very popular account of her adventures in 1750 entitled *The Female Soldier: The Adventures of a Female Soldier*. She remarried twice, (her first husband had been executed for murder) bore two children, and died insane in Bedlam.⁴⁰⁹

This relative abundance of women disguised as men and serving as soldiers in the eighteenth-century was a complex phenomenon, with many different causes, and many different implications. It seems clear however that this phenomenon was, at least in part, a tribute to the strength of eighteenth-century military gender roles. It argues that the role of soldier was so firmly gendered as male that any women who wished to be a soldier had therefore to make herself into a man. This strong gender-identification might explain the emphasis on the effectiveness of the women's disguise, and the physical strength and skill at arms described in the ballad quoted above.

Paradoxically then, the presence of women disguised as men serving as soldiers, suggests, among other things, the importance of the eighteenth-century gender identification of some, but not all men, as arms-bearing soldiers, and women as non-combatants. The transvestite woman warrior can be seen as both supporting and subverting gender roles, and modern scholars debate this issue.⁴¹⁰ Their numerous appearances in contemporary ballads, the generally approving tone of those appearances, the lack of any evidence of a concerted effort to root them out at least in the early and mid-eighteenth-century: all this, taken together seem to argue that these transvestite warriors did not seriously threaten the identification of the soldier as primarily male. The "she-soldier" of ballads, according to Diane Dugaw, was usually searching for love and glory, and many ballads ended with the she-soldier returning to her feminine identity and

⁴⁰⁹ Internet: *Wikiverse Encyclopedia*, Hannah Snell.

⁴¹⁰ Dianne Dugaw, *Warrior Women and Popular Balladry, 1650-1850*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1989, 1996, 3-5, footnote 8, 215, hereafter: Dugaw, *Warrior Women*.

marrying.⁴¹¹ He/she highlighted the different worlds which men and women occupied in the martial culture, she/he did not seriously shake them.⁴¹²

There does however, seem to be some evidence to suggest that the "she-soldier" was meeting with somewhat less acceptance as the century passed. Though there is not really enough information to safely generalize, it seems that towards the last quarter of the eighteenth-century there was a greater sense that "she-soldiers" were violating norms. While most published accounts of the time, and many historians since, have accepted the view that these women successfully disguised themselves as men: it seems hard to believe that women, living in close proximity with many men, in primitive conditions, could successfully maintain such a deception for long periods of time.⁴¹³ (Leaving aside any other issue, how could it not be noted, in a time when men did not shave every day, that these soldiers did not show beard stubble? An argument that she-soldiers presented themselves as beardless youths does not seem convincing. Other suggested camouflages, such as the woman learning to urinate standing up, hiding their genital area while defecating, binding their breasts, and altering their uniform, seem equally unconvincing, and it is very hard to imagine that any of these could be successfully maintained as long term deceptions.⁴¹⁴) It seems far more likely to suggest that there was often a tacit acceptance of these "she-soldiers;" an unspoken agreement between the soldiers and woman who wished to join them that said, in effect, to the "she-soldier:" if you make a reasonable effort to pass yourself as a man, and if you don't flaunt your sex in our face, we will accept you as a "gendered man," and as a soldier, and leave you in peace.

If this argument is correct, and there was a tacit understanding of this sort, it leads to some intriguing questions: from a military perspective, (and leaving the wider question of why women would want to become soldiers to other historians) why were women soldiers accepted as men, and what happened towards the end of the eighteenth and the start of the nineteenth-century to end what seems to have been a long established custom? Any answers to these questions have to be speculative, but it is possible to make some informed guesses: The obvious answer to the first question is that most European armies were always short of recruits, and most recruiters had

⁴¹¹ Dugaw, *Warrior Women*, footnote 8, 215.

⁴¹² I am indebted to Dr. Bruce Venarde of the Department of History, University of Pittsburgh for discussing aspects of gender-roles, masculinization and feminization, and the implications of the "she-soldier" with me.

⁴¹³ Alfred F. Young, *Masquerade: The Life and Times of Deborah Sampson, Continental Soldier*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, 99-104, hereafter: Young, *Masquerade*.

strong motives not to ask too many questions about any recruit who presented him- (or her-) self for enlistment.⁴¹⁵ The answer to the other question might lie in the fact that the end of the eighteenth- and the first half of the nineteenth-century saw a general redefinition of woman's roles towards a more "private" and "middle-class" model, a style that would latter be described as "Victorian." Whether or not this gradual change would make women more or less likely to want to disguise themselves as men and "go for a soldier," it would certainly make male soldiers less likely to accept them. More generally, it seems likely that as European armies moved away from a more traditional "martial culture," and towards a more national and modern military, many old customs were likely to be less respected, and to gradually disappear. These traditions became less necessary, as armies developed new and, perhaps, more certain methods of turning civilians into soldiers; in contrast, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was forced to rely upon the informal transmission of martial culture, and a gradual adoption of its values, to transform civilians into soldiers.

5.4.3 Martial Enculturation

If the British Army, and other armies of the mid-eighteenth-century operated according to a traditional "martial culture," and if this martial culture was distinct from that of the wider "civilian" world, then an obvious question leaps to mind. How did soldiers who joined armies learn this "martial culture?" As has been described above, neither the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, nor any other European Army of that era, had a formalized "basic training," which consciously aimed at altering the attitudes and behavior of recruits. Bluntly put, the only training that British officers were concerned with was drill, and many thought that they did not pay enough attention to that, let alone to any more sophisticated attitudinal adjustment. So how were recruits turned into eighteenth-century soldiers? How were they made part of the pan-European martial culture and military world?

The strength of gender roles, and the operation of "gendering" the occupation of the soldier suggest the answer. It appears that mid-eighteenth-century soldiers were "enculturated,"

⁴¹⁴ Young, *Masquerade*, 105

made part of the pan-European military world by living amongst it. This is an answer arrived at by a process of elimination,, but it is based upon the simple logic that no other methods of altering attitudes seem to have been in operation. In short, while the corporals and sergeant took on the task of training the recruit to handle his arms, it was the household of the mess and the community of the company that seem to have taught the recruit to be a soldier. The most detail oriented of the mid-eighteenth-century armies, the Prussian, formalized this process at least to a degree: each recruit was explicitly assigned to an experienced soldier for his recruit year. This veteran taught the recruit what he needed to know.⁴¹⁵ Even if the process was not so formalized in the British Army, it seems reasonable to suggest that in joining the surrogate household of the mess, and becoming part of the community of the company, and, by adopting the attitudes which were appropriate for these institutions: the recruit, in the process, gained the attitudes appropriate to a soldier.

Beyond the question of aggression and the motivation to fight, the presence of women and children who accepted, and were a part of, the martial way of life might well have assisted in the enculturation of the new soldier into the way of the military world. Once again, there is a profound difference from the twentieth-century norm. Rather than an isolated and ritualized basic training process, where new soldiers are indoctrinated with military values: we might instead speculate that, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, there was a process whereby new soldiers are sent to live amongst older soldiers and their wives and children, who have all accepted the values and culture of the pan-European military world. It is worth noting that non-commissioned officers, men, who by definition have accepted the values of the martial culture would be the ones who would be most likely to have their wives on the ration-strength, and living amongst the other soldiers. Their wives, it seems fair to suggest, would also have an implicit authority that would help ensure that new soldiers heeded their example. The process probably took some time, and certainly some resisted. Nonetheless, if a man stayed around long enough, he took on the appropriate attitudes, he accepted the role of a soldier, in short, he gradually became "soldier-like."

⁴¹⁵ Alfred Young makes this argument in the case of Deborah Sampson, one of the most celebrated of the Continental Army's "she-soldiers," Young, *Masquerade*, 100, and cites Linda Grant De Pauw making this argument as well, 8, f.n. 5.

⁴¹⁶ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 2nd Edition, 79.

5.4.3.1 "Soldier-Like:" The Individual Values of the Common Soldier

While the mid-eighteenth-century military world saw the honor of the common soldier as being primarily vested in the collective honor of the regiment, nonetheless they also realized that it had an individual component as well; and, though this individual component did not, at least in the eyes of the leaders of the British Army, rise to the exalted level of the officers' sense of honor, nonetheless its existence was recognized, and surprisingly often respected. In short, there does seem to have been a limited understanding, held by both officers and the other ranks, of what was the appropriate conduct of the common soldier, and of what was due to him as well. Unlike the officer's language of honor however, in which the expectations were commonly spoken of, and explicit, the code of conduct for the common soldier tended to be unspoken and implicit. When it was necessary to verbalize the individual qualities that were expected of the common soldier, phrases like "soldier-like," "soldierly," and other related terms seemed to have been the ones generally used.

Most contemporary usage of those terms however, at least on the part of officers, suggests a rather superficial appreciation of the soldierly qualities; one is left with the impression that the appearance of the soldier is its most important component, and any deeper meaning was only rarely considered. Nonetheless there was also an understanding that a soldier, as an individual, was courageous, loyal, comradely, and displayed *esprit de corps*. In return for meeting these expectations, an enlisted soldier not only received the material rewards of his occupation, the common soldier also had a certain minimum of personal dignity: a "soldierly" self worth that, while it did not approach that of his officers', nonetheless would be respected by them, and when his soldierly dignity was violated the soldier was entitled to seek redress, often with the support of at least some officers.

It is important to reiterate nonetheless, that, from the perspective of the British officer, appearance seems to have been at the heart of being soldierly. Their attitude seems to have been that if a man looked like a soldier, he was; and this is perhaps not surprising since, as discussed in chapter three, officers seemed similarly preoccupied with their own appearance and to have made similar judgments as well. It should be pointed out however, that for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, appearance extended beyond the clothing to include norms about bearing, deportment, military courtesy, and, in general, most of the externals of military life. Still, as will

be discussed in the next chapter it must be admitted that British officers often seem preoccupied with the minutiae of appearance. British officers essentially assumed that behind the facade of appearance, there was the reality of a good soldier: that their men would be courageous and loyal and good comrades, and, by and large, they seem to have been justified in their assumption.

A typical usage of the term "soldier-like" occurs in the handbook for the Norfolk Militia, whilst discussing the manual of arms:

We must own here, that, if there is any part of our exercise with which we ourselves are not thoroughly satisfied, it the 5th motion of this explanation, though we have in it copied the exercise of the army; but we must think, that the Prussian manner of coming up to their proper front, advancing the right foot before the left, and bring the fire to the left side has something in it much more graceful and soldier-like; as the men by this means keep fronting the enemy, and take their motions from the right, which is a more regular and proper manner: whereas this way of casting back the firelock to the rear, making a face to the right, gives the men an appearance of turning away from the enemy, and they then must take their motion from the rear; the manner likewise of the Prussian shouldering, from the position of loading, is very graceful and military.⁴¹⁷

This passage, obviously, is primarily concern with appearance. The quality of "soldier-like" is linked with externals, specifically graceful motion. The importance of a "soldier-like" appearance, as well as the repeated usage of the terms "soldier-like" and "graceful," as they relate to a specifically military style, will be discussed in much greater detail in chapter six. To drastically understate the case however, it is quite clear that appearance was very important to mid-eighteenth-century soldiers and the language employed, strongly suggests that appearance was a vital part of the identity of soldier, and to the soldiers' sense of what was "soldier-like." This passage also suggests however, that there was more to being "soldier-like" than simply appearance.

Being "soldier-like" also seems to have been connected to the courage expected of a soldier as well; for example one small party of British soldiers were complemented: "for their very Gallant and Soldier-like behaviour in engaging and taking prisoners 32 Rebels in a Bateau.

⁴¹⁷ *Norfolk Militia*, 15, footnote.

Courage and Conduct cannot fail of Success, and this instance of Both in these few Men will, it is hoped inspire others to follow their Example."⁴¹⁸ It is noticeable in this passage that "soldier-like" behaviour is connected to both "Courage and Conduct." Moreover, in the passage quoted above from the handbook for the Norfolk Militia, a "graceful and soldier-like" appearance was related to the belief that it is not entirely appropriate to turn ones back to the enemy. This connection between appearance, conduct, courage and the other soldierly qualities has been discussed before, in connection with the officers' sense of military honor; and much the same ideas seem to have applied to the enlisted men as well, although the flamboyance and individuality of the officer was certainly not appropriate to the other ranks.⁴¹⁹

As it was for the officers, courage was also requisite for the common soldiers, though (as was discussed in chapter three, and will be considered again in chapter seven) it was not considered to be the same sort of courage as was expected of an officer. Nonetheless, British officers not only recognized and appreciate the courage of the other ranks, but were confident enough of it that they believed that they could expect it as well; while at the same time they understood that there were limits to what they could demand:

In military plans and arrangements, those that execute are not so sanguine as he who designs; and therefore the event generally falls short of the expectation: experience should make allowances and not require more than human nature furnishes. - What we have a right to expect from the soldier is, undaunted bravery in the first attack; but obstacles insurmountable are not to be thrown in his way. - After a repulse, perseverance depends on circumstances; where there is not a great probability of prevailing, the multitude will not exert themselves: the few instigated by principles of honour are capable of it, but the many must have their prospects of success pretty apparent; every method must be taken to ensure it, by order, discipline, and example.⁴²⁰

⁴¹⁸ Brigade Orders, July 26th [1776] given in *For Want of a Horse: Being A Journal of the Campaigns against the American in 1776 and 1777 conducted from Canada, by an officer who served with Lt. Gen. Burgoyne*, Stanley, George F. G., ed., Sackville, New Brunswick, The Tribune Press Limited, 1961, 80, hereafter: *Burgoyne's Campaign Journal*.

⁴¹⁹ Please see Chapter VI for a more detailed discussion of the how the differing expectations held of officers and other ranks are reflected in their uniforms.

⁴²⁰ David Dundas, *Principles of Military Movements, Chiefly Applied to Infantry. Illustrated By Maneuvres of the Prussian Troops, and by an Outline of the British Campaign in Germany, during the War of 1757. Together with an Appendix, containing a practical abstract of the Whole*, London, T. Cadell, 1788, 24, hereafter: Dundas, *Military Movements*.

In short, British soldiers were brave, but there were reasonable limits to that bravery.

Given these limits, it seems likely that it was at the boundaries of "reasonable courage" that the officers' example was especially important. Indeed, according to Humphrey Bland, when English soldiers broke and ran, it was more likely to be the result a failure of the officers, than a want of courage in the other ranks: "I must do the Common Soldiers of our Kingdom the Justice to say, that they are as seldom guilty of the Failing her complain'd of, as those of any other Nation in *Europe*: And that whenever it does happen, it proceeds oft'ner from the want of Conduct in Officers than Courage in the Men: For the *English* are naturally Active, Strong, Bold and Enterprizing, always ready to go on to Action; but impatient when delayed or kept back from it."⁴²¹

While most often appeals to the courage of the common soldier were addressed to the common soldiers' collective courage, that is their regimental pride or *esprit de corps*: (*esprit de corps* will be considered in more depth in chapter seven) officers would, on occasion address themselves to the individual values of their men. It was customary for officers to address their men before going into action, or beginning a campaign. In Thomas Simes: *The Regulator, or Instructions to Form the Officer and Complete the Soldier*, a guidebook for officers, the typical form for one of these addresses is given. To "brother soldiers[,]" it promised respect and recognition for the brave, censure and disgrace to the cowardly: "It is likely you may soon be brought to the test, when, if you perform like brave men against the enemy, I shall applaud, esteem and respect you: if otherwise, you may rest assured of meeting with the disgrace and punishment due your cowardly behavior."⁴²² This eighteenth-century "pep-talk" is interesting, both for its individualistic appeals, as well as for the fact that it contains one of the relatively few suggestions that the officers and common soldiers share in the freemasonry of arms; there is also the relatively rare suggestion that the soldiers' conduct would be individually evaluated.

Monsieur de Lamont offered rather similar advice for the pre-battle blarney; it is noteworthy that he also emphasized the importance of the appeal to the individual sense of worth of the soldier. In fact he manages to both appeal to the sense of honor of the individual soldier, whilst denying its existence at the same time stating: "Soldiers do not always fight for the sake of honour; and if their officers were not witnesses of their behaviour, they would not act

⁴²¹ Bland, *Treatise*, 143.

⁴²² Frey, *British Soldier*, 127.

altogether so bravely upon all occasions."⁴²³ Nonetheless he also advised that: "When the men led on to the charge are forward of themselves, they must rather be encouraged by discourses that put them in mind of honour and glory, than of shame and disgrace." He went on to explain why this was so:

These reflections are only fit for cowards, brave men will wonder they should be suspected of cowardice, when they have given no token of it, either in words or actions.

Besides, most men being full of vanity, cannot endure to be told of their faults; therefore it is much better not talk to them of any, but the confidence that is reposed in their valour; for they believing all that is said to them is really meant, for the most part endeavour to keep that reputation which has not cost them any thing gaining.

But if in fight they should make any show of quitting their ranks, than all other methods may be used, either of threats or reproaches; for either may contribute much towards working a change on them. There are many instances of this nature in history.

However, sometimes the soldiers fear is above all threats and reproaches, and then; as has been said elsewhere, rather than share in their infamy an Officer must suffer himself to be taken prisoner.⁴²⁴

While the rather condescending belief that the common soldiers believed all that was told them is questionable, it is nonetheless true that officers did seem to have believed that their soldiers had a personal sense of honor; and, moreover, they spoke as if they expected a response to appeals to it, as well as appeals to the collective honor of the regimental. Officers however also seemed to have believed that the other ranks' sense of personal honor was much weaker than that of the officers, and was much less to be relied upon.

If the soldier's personal sense of honor existed, albeit to a much lesser extent than that of the officer's, then it perhaps logically followed that there were also standards of treatment that the common soldier was entitled to expect from his officers; and he could attempt to claim redress when it was violated. The existence of this rather limited, yet understood compact can perhaps best be seen when it was violated. In 1773, the Royal Regiment of Ireland (which

⁴²³ de Lamont, "Duties," 130-131.

⁴²⁴ de Lamont, "Duties," 133-134.

seems to have been having a *very* bad year) generated several examples of soldiers attempting to receive redress of grievances, and officers reacting with sympathy to what they perceived as violations of the dignity of the common soldier. One such case is described as follows:

The Man is brought before a Reg^t Court martial, he thinks the Sentence Cruel & Unjust, and Modestly appeals to a General Court Martial. He receives 500 Lashes, on the face of his Appeal, & is again confined for Insolence - his application for a General Court Martial being Construed in that Sense. He was brought again before a Reg^t Court Martial in the Shockingest Condition that ever a Soldier appeared before a Court of any kind with his Bloody Shirt on his shoulders Unable to Stand Unsupported, the unpropriety & Cruelty of this was noticed by the Court, and the Major at their Intercession order'd the Court to be Suspended, therefore no Judgment was given - in the meantime the Prisoner applies for a General Court Martial which the General Granted, & notwithstanding the whole of the Reg^t attended at Brunswick to prosecute him, yet the General who by some means or Other had got a direct View of the Matter would not allow him to be punished, here they allowed a Private Soldier to Triumph over them all & have Subjected Themselves to an Action of Law, which if the Man has friends will not be easily averted -⁴²⁵

Sometimes exceptions prove the rule. When closely examined, this account of the appalling treatment meted out to a British soldier nonetheless shows that British officers also had a sense that their soldiers were entitled to their soldierly dignity; the unknown author of this letter felt that the soldier had appeared in the: "the Shockingest Condition that ever a Soldier appeared before a Court of any kind[.]" He further noted that: " the unpropriety & Cruelty of this was noticed by the Court, and the Major at their Intercession order'd the Court to be Suspended[.]" Finally, this maltreated soldier was successful in his attempt to gain a General Court Martial, where: "the General who by some means or Other had got a direct View of the Matter would not allow him to be punished[.]" This commentator thought, in fact, that the soldier had an opportunity to pursue the matter even further as the officers involved: " have Subjected Themselves to an Action of Law, which if the Man has friends will not be easily averted [.]"

None of this should be taken to mean that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century was a soldier's paradise. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that the type of injustice and

savage punishment recounted in this example were not uncommon, and certainly the soldier would have been wise to have "friends" if he wished to pursue the matter. Nonetheless, it does seem true that there was at least a limited sense of soldierly dignity due the common soldiers, and if that dignity was violated the soldier concerned had at least a fighting chance of re-establishing his dignity, and receiving some redress

Pulling these rather inchoate ideas together, it does seem clear that both officers and other ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army shared a rather limited consensus as to what being an enlisted soldier entailed: this shared ideal seemed to have embraced standards of appearance and bearing, courage and loyalty, skill at arms and *esprit de corps*, and a sense of soldierly dignity as well. When mid-eighteenth-century writers wanted to describe these ideals, they often used the phrase "soldier-like." While this conception was limited, it was also widely accepted, and both officers and other ranks acted to uphold it. This conception was however, also much less thoroughly defined than the military honor of the officer, and perhaps as a partial result of this lack of definition, was probably less completely respected, and more likely to be violated, as well.

More generally however, the limited definition of "soldier-like," also suggests that there were strict limits set upon the demands that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century could make upon its soldiers. Moreover, unlike the code of military honor of the officer, which was, in many ways, codified and explicitly spoken of, the individual honor of the enlisted man was much less clear-cut. The very vagueness of the nature of being "soldier-like" testifies to the informal nature of its transmission. Rather than being formally taught, the essence of being an eighteenth-century soldier came through attitudes informally passed on, many, it seems likely, learned within the family circle of the mess and the community of the company.

⁴²⁵ Please see Appendix II for the full text of this remarkable letter.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The eighteenth-century European military world was, unsurprisingly, very different from that of today. The presence of a large numbers of camp followers, the majority of whom were the families' of the soldiers, was perhaps the greatest of those differences, but it is only the greatest of many. In spite of living embedded within, rather than separated from, the larger "civilian" world, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army functioned according to the guidance of a very distinctive martial culture, and this culture was of great importance since, in many ways, the institutional army had so little control over its members

Common soldiers were seen as gentlemen, of sorts, and were entitled to the freedom from menial labor that that implied. These soldiers, however, lived within a very limited social horizon, only occasionally moving beyond the bounds of the household of the mess, and the community of the company, while at the same time their household and community would have traveled far from home. The autonomy of the common soldier brought personal freedom, but the social structure of the mess and company, probably put significant limits upon it. A soldier was not rich, but the regimental economy ensured that he was fed, sheltered, and otherwise looked after, and this was more than many eighteenth-century Britons possessed.

In contrast to the late-nineteenth and twentieth-century view of an army as an institution that kept control over its soldiers twenty-four hours a day: the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or indeed any European army of the period accepted that there would be long periods of time during which their soldiers would be beyond their control. When this lack of control is combined with the extremely limited idea of leadership embraced by the officers of the British Army, a new conception of service in the armies of the mid-eighteenth-century pan-European military world emerges: one which sees service in the army as a opportunity for more personal autonomy than was available to many eighteenth-century Britons, rather than less. The relatively extreme personal autonomy of the mid-eighteenth-century British soldiers was probably enhanced by the fact that British soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century were often, in effect, part-time soldiers, who had a great deal of time on their hands. Further enhancing the autonomy of the other ranks was the fact that, in many circumstances, a large portion of their income would

come from what they would see as "non-military work," either work sponsored by the army, or in the form of civilian by-employment. In a very real sense, some Britons might well have joined the army to gain freedom, and succeeded in that quest by so doing.

It seems reasonable to suggest that women and children and other camp followers who followed the drum provided a social structure for the army that helped to make eighteenth-century European military life tolerable. One suspects that this martial social structure could in fact be described, in many ways, as family-like. As many have noted, military authority has often found that creating a family atmosphere can be very important for maintaining the morale of soldiers, and that for this purpose women and children, unsurprisingly, were very useful.⁴²⁶

Moreover, this social structure, from the point of view of the army concerned, also provided an important component of the soldiers' motivation to fight. Oddly enough, the type of environment that the presence of women and children created was, in fact, a strongly male gendered military world. This world might well have encouraged attitudes amongst the soldiers that a military finds valuable, courage and the willingness to fight. Moreover the presence of camp follower might often have created a situation were soldiers would be very unwilling to run away, since this fleeing might well put ones family at risk. One suspects that it was this very "family atmosphere" that was the principle mechanism of martial enculturation, it was the means by which soldiers where taught the values of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. During this process the soldier was given an identity, an identity moreover, that brought some measure of prestige with it, that of a man who bore arms. He was taught to value his appearance as an arms-bearing soldier, and, in this way drawn deeper into a world of military style, and the attitudes that this military style encouraged

Most importantly, the presence of camp follower, women and children who were the families of the soldiers, helped enhance the power of the martial culture, as a culture. It made the military way of life even more all-embracing, since the soldier was not simply a "warrior for the working day," (though his daily soldierly duties might have amounted to part-time work) and neither was his family. This was perhaps even more important when military authority was less omnipotent and omnipresent than it would be one hundred and fifty years later. The soldier served and fought for many reasons, but one of them was that he was often serving and fighting directly for his family, who traveled with him, in the army.

6.0 EVERYBODY LOVES A PARADE: MILITARY STYLE IN THE MID-EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH ARMY⁴²⁷

The marching well is an affair of so much importance in real service, that the officers must take the most particular care to render the men as perfect in it as possible, and spare no attention nor pains for that purpose; the regularity and beauty of all manoeuvres and evolutions, and especially that most essential point, the keeping in good order, in advancing towards or retreating from an enemy, intirely depending on it.⁴²⁸

6.1 INTRODUCTION

When Christopher Duffy, a distinguished historian of eighteenth-century military history, was asked in an interview what drew him to the period he gave the following reply: “I think like lots of people who are asked about this, the answer is, ‘We like the hats.’ The tricorn hats. I liked the fashions. I think there’s something magical about it, a bit fairy tale about it.”⁴²⁹ Duffy was probably joking, but one suspects that there is also a great deal of truth in his jest; moreover, one also suspects that he is correct in his supposition that this liking applies not only to Christopher Duffy, but also to a great number of other military historians as well. There is indeed something appealing, something attractive, something toy soldier-ish, about eighteenth-century armies, and a

⁴²⁶ Enloe, *Does Khaki*, 5.

⁴²⁷ This chapter was made possible in part by the generous awards of a one month Scholarship-in-Residence at the Bushy Run Battlefield by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in May, 1998, and by a Scholarship awarded by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Daughters of the American Colonists in September, 1999.

⁴²⁸ J. Shuckburgh, *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, London, 1759, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, Part II, 18-19., hereafter *Norfolk Militia*.

⁴²⁹ Dana Lombardy, “A Nazi Blitz Survivor and ‘Romantic Academic,’” in *Napoleon: International Journal of the French Revolution and the Age of Napoleon*, Issue 16, Summer 2000, 9. I am indebted to my friend Mr. Arthur Chenin for drawing my attention to this quotation.

great number of people perceive this. In short, there was an element of style in the mid-eighteenth-century military world, and this military style has gone largely unexamined by historians.

It might be that historians should embrace their inner child, and examine this appeal. A closer examination of the toy-soldier nature of the mid-eighteenth-century military world reveals the existence, within the mid-eighteenth-century pre-national, pan-European martial culture, of a distinctive sense of style: a sense of style that can be seen in everything from uniforms to tactics, and which certainly seemed to permeate the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century. It might therefore be worthwhile to examine some of the external elements of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, examine their stylistic nature, and then consider what larger messages this military style might have sent the members of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture.⁴³⁰ This examination should tell us a great deal about the "look and feel" of the mid-eighteenth-century military world that has previously gone unnoticed.

What constituted this "look and feel," this mid-eighteenth-century martial style? First there was a preoccupation with appearance, something that we might not be surprised to find amongst soldiers, since today we expect soldiers to look smart in their uniforms, but a preoccupation that was perhaps new, or just developing, within mid-eighteenth-century armies. A soldier's appearance is, of course, closely associated with the wearing of a uniform, and this uniform, it will be argued, was designed to send some very specific messages to the wearer. In a like manner, performing the manual of arms and drill is also, even today, one of the defining preoccupations of the soldier, but the mid-eighteenth-century martial culture took this drill, and the linear tactics which it enabled, to unreasonable, and possibly even counter-productive, extremes. Finally, there are the ceremonies of military life to consider: ceremonies, by definition, are intended to convey a message, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, the ceremonies of the

⁴³⁰ This chapter was begun before reading Scott Hughes Myerly's *British Military Spectacle: From the Napoleonic Wars to the Crimea*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1996, hereafter: Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*. Upon reading this work, it became clear that Dr. Myerly had covered much of the same material as this paper proposed to do, and had done so with far greater detail and insight, and with a much larger body of research to back up his conclusions. While acknowledging his expertise, however, it seems that his analysis can be usefully extended backwards to the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century; it is hoped that this has been done with some new information and insights, so as to build upon Dr. Myerly's conclusions. Likewise, early drafts of this chapter were completed before I became aware of Chapter 4 of Dr. John A. Lynn's *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture*, Boulder, Colorado, 2003, which deals with many of the same themes as this chapter, though more from the perspective of Continental Europe and eighteenth-century France.

mid-eighteenth-century British Army sent very different messages than those of today's military world.⁴³¹

⁴³¹ I am indebted to Dr. Bruce Venarde of the Department of History, University of Pittsburgh for discussing aspects of gender and style with me.

6.2 A PREOCCUPATION WITH APPEARANCE

Style is a term that is usually applied to appearance, and the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century was preoccupied with its appearance. This seems, at first hearing, a crashing statement of the obvious, since today there is a general expectation that uniformed soldiers will look smart. Historically however, armies' concern with their appearance has varied widely from age to age and army to army. It does not seem that uniforms were common before the beginning of the seventeenth-century, and it does not appear that most seventeenth-century armies worried particularly about their looks. In fact, it seems probable that the "spit-and-polish" ethos, which developed over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century, was, like so many other military trends, if not invented by, was given impetus by, the wide-spread enthusiasm for all things Prussian in the mid-eighteenth-century military world. The Prussian infantry regulations, which were translated into English in 1759, seem to be the first that included detailed instructions on how to wear the uniform and keep it neat and tidy.⁴³² Be that as it may, evidence suggests that, by the mid-eighteenth-century, the British Army's level of concern about its appearance was high, and the numerous manuals which were written for the use of officers are full of tips and exhortations upon that subject.

6.2.1 Appearance

At the most basic level, officers were instructed to look after their men's individual appearance, even when their soldiers were engaged in work that might be expected to mar it: "A subaltern is also to be careful that the Troopers keep themselves neat; which is very hard to be done in the

⁴³² *Regulations for the Prussian Infantry. Translated from the GERMAN ORIGINAL, With Augmentations and Alterations made by the KING of PRUSSIA since the Publication of the Last Edition. To which is ADDED, The PRUSSIAN TACTICK; Being a Detail of the Grand Maneouvre, as performed by the PRUSSIAN ARMIES.* No place given, J. Nourse, 1759, New York, Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968, 417-421, hereafter: *Prussian Infantry*.

army, because the forage [forage was hay and straw for the army's animals] spoils the cloaths and linens."⁴³³ In general, soldiers were always to appear "dress'd in a Soldier-like Manner,"⁴³⁴

This concern for appearance became even more important when the troops were on the march, and exposed to public view. For instance, before marching into a town or garrison, a regiment was advised to take a short halt: "This small halt is only to give the Men time to roll their Cravats, cock their Hats, and put them-selves in the best Order they can, that they may appear in a decent and Soldier-like manner upon their entering the Town."⁴³⁵ Needless to say, when appearing before the public, the sergeants were expected to devote much of their attention to keeping their troops looking smart: "The Serjeants are to March on the Flanks, and to see that they [the men] carry their Arms well, and keep their Ranks straight."⁴³⁶ The officers were expected to dismount and march into town with the men, carrying their half-pikes and colors - the Colonel normally rode in front, but was expected to dismount before passing in front of the governor of a fortress, or other superiors.⁴³⁷

The British Army was not merely concerned with the general appearance of its soldiers; it was also, unsurprisingly, specifically concerned about their performance of drill: "[The major should] observe in marching that the men keep their distance, that they carry their arms well, all of a height, that their ranks be straight, and all other particulars be exact, and every thing managed with decency and a good grace."⁴³⁸ Note the use of the phrase "grace," as it will constantly reoccur. The British Army, it turns out, was not merely concerned that the men perform the drill well, it was also very concerned that the drill should present a good appearance. Again and again we find a concern that soldiers should move with "grace," and that they should appear "graceful."⁴³⁹

We are told that: "[s]tanding shouldered, is the first position of a soldier under arms: it is the most graceful and easy manner of carrying a firelock, either standing or marching, and that

⁴³³Monsieur de Lamont, "The Art of War, Containing the Duties of all Military Officers in Actual Service," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Richard Bell, 1776, 83, hereafter, Lamont, "Duties," or: de La Valliere, *Art of War*.

⁴³⁴Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline, in which is Laid down and Explained The Duty of the Officers and Soldiers, Thro the several Branches of the Service*, 2nd Edition, London, Printed for Sam. Buckley, 1727, 2, hereafter: Bland, *Treatise*.

⁴³⁵Bland, *Treatise*, 150.

⁴³⁶Bland, *Treatise*, 2.

⁴³⁷Bland, *Treatise*, 150.

⁴³⁸de Lamont, "Duties," 46.

⁴³⁹*Norfolk Militia*, 1-2.

from which all other actions are to be performed, with the greatest facility and grace."⁴⁴⁰ Though, since: "the position of being shouldered, though easy and graceful, becomes tiresome if long continued[.]" the soldier could then be commanded to order his arms since: "[t]he ordering, is an easy and graceful attitude for a soldier to repose himself, leaning on his piece; which is then ready (if commanded) to ground."⁴⁴¹ Conversely, authorities also wished to eliminate certain actions which were ungraceful: J. Shuckburgh, the author of a manual for the Norfolk Militia removed certain movements of the manual and substituted others based on the gracefulness or lack thereof: "We have retrenched the resting on their arms, as have likewise the Prussians and French; since the ordering answers the purpose full as well, and is a more graceful attitude; the soldier presenting his whole body better, and standing more upright; his shoulders being necessarily drawn back, by the position he stands in."⁴⁴² These examples could be multiplied almost indefinitely.

There seems to have been a conscious effort to reach a stylistic ideal. One drill movement was condemned because: "[i]n the military exercise, the halting upon the left feet occasions both ranks to stand in a very ungraceful, awkward position, till the next word of command Halt is given."⁴⁴³ The stylistic goal that was sought seems to have been summed up in the oft-repeated phrase, "soldier-like:" "In marching, the men must be taught, to assume themselves a soldier-like air, to hold their heads up, look to the right, and when they pass by an officer, look him boldly in the face; . . . to carry their arms well[.]"⁴⁴⁴ Conversely, "[u]nsoldier-like method[s]"⁴⁴⁵ were to be avoided. "Soldier-like," as was discussed in the previous chapter, seems to have been a code-word that carried a wealth of meaning that included, not only the concept of a soldierly appearance, but a somewhat deeper sense of what a soldier was, and what was due him, as well.

There was, it is true, a pious hope that the most "graceful" and "soldier-like" methods of executing a given movement were also the most efficient and useful: "And this is one of the advantages, which this manner of marching has over that which was formerly practiced. The others are, that it is incomparably more graceful and genteel, and that a body moves faster and gains more ground by it; the progressive motion being continued during the whole of the step."

⁴⁴⁰ *Norfolk Militia*, 2, footnote 1.

⁴⁴¹ *Norfolk Militia*, 6.

⁴⁴² *Norfolk Militia*, 4, footnote 3.

⁴⁴³ *Norfolk Militia*, 19, footnote 13.

⁴⁴⁴ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 39.

⁴⁴⁶ Still, it seems clear that a concern with appearance drove much that appeared in the drill manuals of the British Army. This can be seen most clearly in the British Army's concern to "size" the formations of its troops. (It was not just the British Army which "sized" its troops, the Prussian Army did so as well, indeed, it seems to have been common throughout the pan-European military world.⁴⁴⁷) The basic rule of sizing were that the soldiers were arranged in their ranks so that the tallest were in front, and the shortest behind; but as the following illustrates there were some refinements applied to this principle:

The sizing of a company well contributes to its good appearance; for which reason it is proper, that it should be not a little attended to.

Though the general rule is, that the tallest men should be in the front rank, yet, if a man has a fine person, and is well made, he ought to be put into the front, in preference to one who is taller, but not of so good a figure. Each rank should also be sized separately, placing the tallest men on the flanks, and the lowest in the centre: this the serjeants may do with great ease, by having a size-roll of the company;⁴⁴⁸

The suggestion that the sergeants keep a special "size-roll" of the company to facilitate this procedure illustrates the importance that it held, yet sizing a company can do nothing whatsoever to improve its military efficiency. In fact, since sizing made it more difficult for the rear rank men to see the enemy and aim their muskets; and since it also made it more likely that the rear-rank men, when firing, would injure those in front of them, sizing a company with the tallest men in front actually reduces military efficiency. To be fair, it can be argued that sizing a company helped gain a psychological edge over the enemy, in that it made a formation appear more imposing, with the tallest, and presumably the strongest, men in front. Whether this psychological edge justified the loss of effectiveness in firepower seems questionable however. Quite simply, it appear that sizing was a procedure designed largely to improve the appearance of the company, with, at least, a slight cost in military effectiveness.

The nadir of the preoccupation with the size, as well as the appearance of soldiers, was reached with one of the great military eccentrics of the eighteenth-century: The father of Frederick the Great of Prussia, Fredrich-Wilhelm, maintained a regiment of "giant" grenadiers,

⁴⁴⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 3.

⁴⁴⁶ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 22.

⁴⁴⁷ *Prussian Infantry*, 12-13.

and, even within his own lifetime, was generally held to be somewhat unbalanced in his concern with their size, as well as their appearance and uniforms:

His passion for tall men was extravagant, beyond belief; and to recruit his great useless regiment of giants, he spared no expense, although covetous to excess[.] . . . His whole country was one great garrison; every man who was handsome, and had a fine person, was compelled to serve[.] . . . [H]is whole pleasure and employment was the adjusting their dress and accoutrements, which he would do with his own hand, and the exercising and reviewing them ; he never chose to expose them to the dangers or fatigues of war[.] . . . All this added to the particularity, and even fancifulness of their dress caused them, in his life time, to be looked upon as mere puppets, fit only for show[.]⁴⁴⁹

As in so many other aspects of eighteenth-century military life, the Prussian example was important; because, under the leadership of Frederick the Great, the Prussian Army had established itself as premier military force in mid-eighteenth-century Europe, and its example was eagerly followed by the rest of the pre-national, pan-European military world.

While not reaching the extravagant heights of Fredrich-Wilhelm, nonetheless, the leaders of the British Army would seem to have spent at least as much of their time fussing over appearance, as they spent worrying about more practical matters. A typical exhortation directed at officers states that: "The officers will then inspect and examine the men, to see that the serjeants have done their duty; and the men are exactly sized, well dressed, and their cloaths, hats, and accoutrements clean, and put on in a soldier-like manner."⁴⁵⁰

It is fair to point out however, that many writers of the time saw a concern for appearance as a positive good, in the military sense. They felt that the appearance and dress of a soldier had important implications, that the attitudes involved in a concern for appearance directly contributed to fighting ability. "[I]t is a known maxim, that a man who does not take delight in his own person, and is not neat in his dress, arms, and accoutrements, never makes a good soldier. Perhaps, it may not be exaggerated to say, that one of the most important parts of the Prussian discipline, is the strict attention they give to the dress and cleanliness of the men; this they indeed carry to what we, perhaps, may call an excess; but it certainly contributes not a little to the

⁴⁴⁸ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 43, footnote 1.

⁴⁴⁹ *Norfolk Militia*, xxi-xxii.

⁴⁵⁰ *Norfolk Militia*.

making them such excellent troops."⁴⁵¹ This attitude was not blind prejudice, there was at least some element of logic behind it, as a concern for appearance and uniforms, it was believed: "tends to inspire the men with sentiments of respect for the service and their officers; . . . Mankind in general, and the vulgar especially, are greatly captivated and taken with show and parade; and when the common men see that their officers treat the affair of exercising and the rest of their duty, with a certain ceremony and decorum, they will do the same, and be attentive and diligent[.]"⁴⁵²

The reports of reviewing officers, whose business it was to examine the military efficiency of the regiments, makes it clear that appearance was an important consideration in rendering their judgments. A report on the condition of the 1st Battalion of the 1st Foot (The Royal Scots) describes their appearance in an almost gushing fashion: "A steady and Martial Countenance, a spirited & graceful manner, a peculiar exactness in all their Motions, a most complete military Appearance, exhibits the high discipline of this excellent Regiment, proud to distinguish itself . . ."

⁴⁵³

In sum, it seems clear that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century was deeply concerned with the appearances of its troops. The question that needs to be asked however, is why? Why did the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century, indeed, the pre-national, pan-European military world, think that a smart military appearance contributed to combat effectiveness? The heart of a soldier's appearance has always been his uniform. Therefore it is perhaps not surprising to find that the uniforms of the British Army also shows a great concern for a certain sense of style, and that these stylish uniforms may also have something to say in answer to this question.

6.2.2 Uniforms

The stylish element of mid-eighteenth century British Army life can be seen more clearly in its uniforms than in anything else. This was the great age of the red coat. By the mid-eighteenth-century the rank-and-file of the infantry and the medium and heavy cavalry of the British Army

⁴⁵¹ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 3-4

⁴⁵² *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 3-4.

had been dressed in the famous red coat for almost half a century; and their officers, who had long resisted uniforms as the degrading symbol of a subservient status, had finally been cajoled into wearing it as well.⁴⁵⁴ There are numerous reasons for eighteenth-century armies dressing their soldiers in such a stylishly uniform. Many of these reasons have long been common knowledge both to the professional soldier and to the military historian. At the most pragmatic level, dressing the soldiers alike allowed great economies in purchasing the cloth and making the uniforms. There are, thinking on a more sophisticated level, obvious man-management advantages to dressing all member of a military unit alike, it builds a sense of common purpose and an *esprit-de-corps*. Furthermore, a smart uniform has always been a great aid to recruiting, whether in the eighteenth-century or today.

It is certainly true that the uniforms of the common soldiers of the British Army were often rather crudely made. It is also true however that they were far more decorative than they needed to be. The uniforms of the British Army, indeed, the uniforms of most eighteenth-century European armies were not designed for either fighting or working. What they were designed for, as the comment by Christopher Duffy quoted at the beginning of this chapter suggests, was for display and for a very specific type of display.

The uniforms of the rank-and-file were in fact, imitations, though crude imitations, of the costume of a gentleman. This can be seen clearly in the bright colors of the uniform, the use of colorful lace and other trimming, and most importantly, in the wearing of a sword. The common soldier's uniform, in short, offered the imitation of gentlemanly elegance, and this is reinforced by the fact that the "proper gentlemen," that is the officers, wore similar, though much fancier and better made, uniforms as well.

Why should the common soldier be dressed as a gentleman albeit a coarsened imitation of a one? The rhetoric that identified the common soldiers as a "gentleman" has been discussed in chapter five. It seems likely that there were also "visual rhetorical" reasons for dressing the common soldier as a cut-price gentleman. The heart of this sartorial rhetoric was an to attempt to manipulate the common soldier into maintaining a sense of military honor; to cause him to adopt, again in a crude fashion, the standards of a gentleman.

⁴⁵³ Major General Patrick Tonyn, June, 1789, quoted in J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, 316, hereafter: Houlding, *Service*.

⁴⁵⁴ Personal conversation with Dr. Roger Manning, Department of History, Cleveland State University, who has completed a two-volume study of martial culture in seventeenth-century England.

What were these gentlemanly values that armies were so eager to have their soldiers adopt? As was discussed in the previous chapter, the common soldier was expected to look, and act, in a "soldier-like" manner. Furthermore, as will be argued in greater detail in chapter seven, the other ranks were expected to have a type of military honor that embraced, though in a collective fashion, courage and loyalty and *esprit de corps*. These were virtues that were also closely associated with gentlemanly behavior. By dressing their soldiers as down-market gentlemen, the armies of Europe, and of Britain, gave their men (cheapened) symbols of these gentlemanly values, and encouragement to adopt and maintain them.

The identification of a common soldier as a gentleman, and the connection of this identification with his clothing was explicit in the eighteenth-century. As described in the previous chapter George Farquhar's play *The Recruiting Officer* opens, Sergeant Kite is looking for "gentlemen soldiers;" and holding up a grenadiers cap, he terms it a "cap of honour," and states that it "dubs a man a gentleman[.]"⁴⁵⁵ The recruiting patter which Thomas Simes suggested in his *Military Guide for Young Officers*, included a promise to the newly enlisted soldiers that: "when you come to your respective regiment, shall have new hats, caps, arms, cloaths, and accoutrements, and everything thing that is necessary and fitting to compleat a gentleman soldier."⁴⁵⁶ It seems that a uniform was necessary to "compleat a gentleman soldier."

Furthermore, by the mid-eighteenth-century, the uniform coat had, to a degree, become a national, or, perhaps more accurately, royal, livery. Anyone wearing it was clearly identified as a loyal servant of the king. Most British soldiers carried the royal monogram on their cartridge box. Officers wore their monarch's monogram on their gorgets.⁴⁵⁷ In short, by wearing the uniform, soldiers were reminded at the same time of their duty of loyalty, and their membership in a highly honored occupation. For the soldiers however, perhaps the most important symbolic element of the uniform was the sword.

Most eighteenth-century soldiers carried a sword, even though those in the infantry (whose swords were termed hangars) and artillery had little expectation of using them in combat. This sword was clearly intended to mark a special status, and the honor was carefully guarded,

⁴⁵⁵ *The Recruiting Officer* was first performed in 1706. George Farquhar, *The Recruiting Officer*, Manchester University Press, Manchester, UK, 1986, Act I Scene 1, 62-63.

⁴⁵⁶ Thomas Simes, *The Military Guide for Young Officers, In Two Volumes*, London, Printed, Philadelphia, J. Humnphrey, R. Bell, and R. Aitkens, 1776, *Volume I*, 244, hereafter Simes, *Volume I*, or Simes, *Volume II*.

and denied to those camp followers who were not actually soldiers. For example, in the French army during the Napoleonic Wars, officers' servants were forbidden to carry swords, except when actually in the field.⁴⁵⁸ In the Prussian service it was noted that: "the soldier came to associate this weapon with a certain concept of honour, and he would consider it shameful to have carried no sword."⁴⁵⁹

Why, for both officers and common soldiers, did the sword acquire this symbolic significance? The significance of the sword, in defining the soldier as a gentleman of sorts, and as a male who carried arms has already been discussed in chapter five. Beyond this, it seems reasonable to suggest that the sword had come to represent three other important ideals. First, the sword was part of the formal dress of a gentleman in the mid-eighteenth century. (One famous illustration of the importance of this status symbol was that George Washington wore a sword to his inauguration as President of the new republic of the United States.) By wearing the sword the common soldier was indicating his status as a (species of) gentleman. Second, carrying the sword symbolized a willingness to defend your gentlemanly honor. Third, the sword represented allegiance to the military virtues. An anecdote from Monsieur de Lamont might help make this point: An officer in the French service decided that military life was not for him, "being the first that made a jest of his fear, told his friends he would give any leave to cudgel him, if ever he wore a sword till he went to the campaign. This done, he threw up his commission, and bought a civil employment."⁴⁶⁰

The symbolism of wearing a sword then, especially for the enlisted soldiers, was both important and obvious. It indicated both their status as a (type of) gentleman, and the way in which that status was connected to a martial way of life. It marked them as men who were privileged to bear arms, and who were expected to do so courageously. The eighteenth-century journalist Ned Ward, in a passage that has been previously quoted in chapter five, clearly coupled the wearing of a sword with the status of a gentleman: "A Foot Soldier is commonly a Man, who for the sake of wearing a Sword, and the Honour of being term'd a Gentleman, is Coax'd from a

⁴⁵⁷ Cartridge boxes were leather boxes in which the soldiers carried their ammunition; gorgets were decorative half-moons of metal, that officers wore on ribbons around their necks to indicate their commissioned status.

⁴⁵⁸ John R. Elting, *Swords Around a Throne: Napoleon's Grande Armee*, New York, The Free Press, 1988, 177.

⁴⁵⁹ Christopher Duffy, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1974, 80, hereafter, Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

⁴⁶⁰ de Lamont, "Duties," 72.

Handicraft Trade, whereby he might live comfortably, to bear Arms, for his King and Country, whereby he has hopes of nothing but to live Starvingly.”⁴⁶¹

It is quite clear that the sword fell into a special category of weapon, in the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century as well. When Lieutenant Colonel Henry Bouquet received orders to reduce the Royal American Regiment from four battalions to two in 1763, the discharged soldiers were, of course, expected to turn in their muskets and bayonets without receiving anything in return. Nevertheless: “Each, Corporal, Drummer and Private Man, [were to receive] Three Shillings in Lieu of his Sword/ which Swords are to be Delivered with the other Arms into our said Stores of Ordnance[.]”⁴⁶² The special attention given to the sword is even more telling when you realize that the Royal American Regiment was raised for service in the North American colonies, and it is in fact unlikely that the soldiers of that Regiment had ever carried their swords on active service. The swords might, in fact, never even have been issued. Clearly swords had a special status, which differed from the more mundane weapons.

Sword-money was not unique to the Royal American Regiment it was commonly paid to all soldiers in the British Army. Nonetheless, the fact that discharged soldiers were entitled to compensation for the loss of their swords is a striking indication of the importance which that weapon held. It is noteworthy moreover, that even after British infantry ceased carrying a sword, the symbolism of the sword was transferred to the bayonet, and the bayonet remained part of a British soldiers' walking-out dress until well into the nineteenth-century.⁴⁶³ Simply put, swords, and later bayonets were part of the military style, a sense of style that also embraced a certain type of behavior as well.

6.2.3 Stylish Behavior

The soldiers then were dressed, to some degree, as gentlemen. One important attribute of a gentleman was a sense of elegance or style. The uniform helped to create a stylish army; and, it

⁴⁶¹ Quoted in Victor Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier: A History of Life in the British Ranks from 1642*, London, Cassell, 1989, 18.

⁴⁶² Abstract of Royal Orders to Reduce the Army, May 18, 1763, Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volume VI*, Louis M. Waddell, ed., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1994, 187-188.

⁴⁶³ Meyerly, *British Military Spectacle*, 20-21.

can be argued, this stylishness extended beyond the costume, and affected behavior as well. The sort of stylish behavior displayed however, depended upon the status of the person concerned. While the rank and file were expected to behave stylishly in battle, the style expected of them was different than that of the officers. The style of the common soldiers was displayed in a collective form, analogous to their common uniforms; officers who were allowed more individualism in their dress, were likewise more individualistic in their conduct on the battlefield.

It seems obvious that dressing the soldiers alike, in a uniform fashion, reinforces their sense of being part of a collective. More subtly, common dress, it is suggested, encouraged the common soldiers to adopt a passive collective response, rather than an active individual one, to the dangers of the battlefield; and this passive response, perhaps counter-intuitively, was what was desired of soldiers, infantry in particular, on the battlefield.

6.2.3.1 The Battle Culture of Forbearance

John Lynn has described what he has termed an early modern “battle culture of forbearance.”⁴⁶⁴ This refers to the behavior that the rank and file soldiers, particularly infantrymen, who made up the majority of a mid-eighteenth-century army, were encouraged to display in battle. Good troops were expected to appear unshaken by their enemy’s actions, and to otherwise bear stoically whatever befell them. John Lynn was writing about the seventeenth-century, but this concept appears equally valid in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army as well; indeed, it seems to have been part of the culture of most European armies of the period. There were, of course, sound tactical reasons for this attitude. For instance it was widely held that the line that reserved its fire would defeat the line that fired first: “it being a received Maxim, that those who preserve their Fire the longest, will be sure to Conquer.”⁴⁶⁵

It is quite possible however that a military-stylistic value lurked inside this tactical argument; it seems likely that having their soldiers wait steadfastly while appearing unmoved by the enemy was also seen as a matter of style. Certainly the language of forbearance was often

⁴⁶⁴ John Lynn, *The Wars of Louis XIV, 1667-1714*, London and New York, Longman, 1999, 66.

⁴⁶⁵ Bland, *Treatise*, 134.

expressed in terms of bearing and style, for instance to "keep good order," or to have "a good countenance," or as one British officer described it, to maintain a "nobly awful" silence.⁴⁶⁶

Again, it must be emphasized that there were sound practical reasons for many of these stylish notions. For example: "In Marching up to attack the Enemy, and during the Action, a profound silence should be kept, that the Commanding Officers may be distinctly heard in delivering their Orders: Neither are the Officers who command the Platoons to use any more Words than what relate to the Performance of their Duty."⁴⁶⁷ Indeed, maintaining a "profound" silence seems to have been a principal objective of drill and training in the British army of the period. "The first thing the officers are to attend to, as a matter of the utmost importance, and absolutely essential to the teaching the men well, is to accustom them to observe a profound silence, when under arms: never suffering them to talk, or even speak a word on any account; but obliging them to give an entire attention to the officer who exercises them."⁴⁶⁸

Nonetheless, the language used to urge these principles often appeals to a sense of military style, and again, one is left with the impression that appearance was as important as any tactical advantage: "A Captain must not allow his men to talk loud, or to sing as they march; that does not at all become Soldiers; not but upon some occasions, they may be permitted to talk to one another, but it must be low always, thereby to show the respect they bear their Officers, and that they always in readiness to hear their commands."⁴⁶⁹ If battle was a stage, it was the officers who, in theory at least, held whatever speaking roles were available, the rank and file were condemned to be the silent spear-carriers.

6.2.3.2 The Officer on the Battlefield

General Wolfe, in his influential *Instructions to Young Officers*, argued strongly against the idea that an officer's duties consisted solely of: " learning a little of the exercise, firing his platoon in its turn, mounting a few guards (carelessly enough) and finally, exposing his person on the day of

⁴⁶⁶ *An Historical Journal of the Campaigns in North America for the Years, 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760*, by Captain John Knox, A.G. Dougherty ed., Toronto 1914, Vol. II 78-79., quoted in Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 225, hereafter: Brunwell, *Redcoats*.

⁴⁶⁷ Bland, *Treatise*, 132.

⁴⁶⁸ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 5.

⁴⁶⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 103.

battle;" and against the belief that this alone would: "acquire him the character of a good officer."⁴⁷⁰ Wolfe's complaint, however, nicely illustrates what was, in fact, the common and expected role of officers in battle in the mid-eighteenth-century.

Officers, as was argued in chapter three, were expected to set an example on the battlefield. To accomplish this, the officers, in contrast to the rank and file, were expected to show their stylishness on the battlefield in more individualistic ways. Generally positioned in front of the massed ranks of soldiers, they were expected to inspire their men by exposing themselves to the enemy's fire while exhibiting a nonchalant and reckless attitude, combining this with the occasional extravagant gestures.⁴⁷¹ This, after all, was the age that gave us legendary incident when, while advancing at the Battle of Fontenoy, Captain Lord Charles Hay of the 1st Foot Guards is supposed to have drunk a toast to his opponents while crying out: "Gentlemen of the French Guards, fire first."⁴⁷² It says something about the pan-European nature of the martial culture that the French also take credit for this famous gesture, insisting that it was their officers who in fact performed this feat, crying out: *Messieurs les Anglais, tirez les premiers.*⁴⁷³

This different role in battle was reflected and encouraged by the different type of clothing worn by officers. While British officers were dressed in uniforms that were similar to that of the rank-and-file, these uniforms were at the same time distinctive enough to make it clear that the officers were not part of the anonymous herd. (Sergeants, who traditionally have been the mediating mechanism between the officers and the other ranks, sartorially occupied a middle position as well. According to de Lamont, for example, the Sergeant was always to "be decently clad, but without gaudiness and a light temper, always be well shod, and wear a good sword, and a handsome hat and belt, take special care of his halberd."⁴⁷⁴) It is well known that officers wore uniforms that were more decorative and of better quality than their soldiers; this might well have

⁴⁷⁰ *General Wolfe's Instructions to Young Officer; also with Orders for a Battalion and an Army. Together with The Orders and Signals used in Embarking and Debarking an Army, by Flat-bottom'd Boats, &c., and A Placart to the Canadians. To which are prefixed, The Duty of an Adjutant and Quarter-Master, &c.*, Philadelphia, Robert Bell, 1778, 13.

⁴⁷¹ *The Manual Exercise, as ordered by His Majesty, in the Year 1764. Together with Plans and Explanations of the Method generally Practiced at Reviews and Field-Days, with Copper Plates*, Philadelphia, J Humphrey, R. Bell, and R. Aitken, 1776, 2, in Simes, *Volume II*, plates, hereafter *1764 Manual*.

⁴⁷² Armstrong Starkey, "War and Culture, a Case Study: The Enlightenment and the Conduct of the British Army in America, 1755-1781," in *War & Society*, Vol. 8, No. 1, May, 1990, 1.

⁴⁷³ David Chandler, *The Art of Warfare in the Age of Marlborough*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1976, 133, hereafter Chandler, *Art of Warfare*.

⁴⁷⁴ de Lamont, "Duties," 16.

helped to inspire subordination and deference among their soldiers, while, at the same time, made it easier to set an example of dashing behavior on the battlefield. Officers moreover, were also far less likely to be held to the letter of the specified uniform, and were therefore free to display more individuality in their dress, thus leaving themselves room to exhibit an individualistic sense of style, both in their costuming and on the battlefield.

Officers, it should be noted, were not only expected to dress well, they were also expected to move well: "The exercise off the officers is, we believe, totally new, and different from any that has been hitherto composed: and we cannot help flattering ourselves, that the exercise of the officers will be found easy and graceful."⁴⁷⁵

Simes gave, as an example of the type of desirable comments that a reviewing officer might make about a regiment's officers, the following: "Properly armed, ready in their exercise, salute well, in good time, and with a good air: their uniform genteel. A good corps, that makes a handsome appearance."⁴⁷⁶ Another manual gives careful instructions as to just how the officers were to make that salute:

As the General passes along the Front, the Officers are to salute him with their Half-Pikes or Partisans; and to Time it in such a manner, that each may just finish his Salute, and pull off his Hat when he comes opposite to him. The Ensigns who carry the Colours are to drop them, (if the General is to be saluted with Colours) bring the Spear pretty near the Ground, just when the Colonel drops the Point of his Half-pike, pulling off their Hats at the same time, and not to raise the Colours 'till he has passed them.⁴⁷⁷

In short, appearance was an important, perhaps predominant consideration for officers. This, it seems, both reflected and encouraged their battlefield role. On the other hand, the collective of the rank and file with their emphasis on uniformity, were expected to fulfill a different role, one that required the collective and uniform execution of movements.

⁴⁷⁵ *Norfolk Militia*, xxx.

⁴⁷⁶ Simes, *Volume I*, 104.

⁴⁷⁷ Bland, *Treatise*, 57.

6.3 DRILL

No one would argue with the fact that a "manual exercise" or as we would term it today, a manual of arms, was absolutely necessary to train soldiers in the complicated procedures necessary to load and fire an eighteenth-century flintlock musket. Nor is anyone likely to argue that, with the close formations in use during that period, the manual had to be performed in unison. Nor are any likely to argue that constant drilling was necessary for soldiers to move in the formations required by the linear tactics of the period. Nor is anyone likely to dispute that constant repetitive drill, of the type known to British soldiers of today as "square-bashing" was necessary to maintain proficiency in those procedures. Nor would many argue that drill had a whole host of desirable side effects for eighteenth-century armies, inculcating the habits of obedience, and building cohesion being, perhaps, the most obvious examples. Nevertheless, even when all this is taken into account, on examining the evidence today, one is left with the feeling that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army had a preoccupation with the *minutiae* of drill that bordered on the ridiculous. As one manual stated: "It is one of the greatest perfections in exercising, to have all the firelocks carried so exactly even, and the motions performed so true, that in the looking from the right or left of a rank, you can see, as it were, but one firelock: and the same standing in front to a file, each piece covering the others exactly."⁴⁷⁸

This commandment was not mere rhetorical excess; many officers (and, one suspects, even more so the sergeants) strove for this level of exactness. Officers for instance, when they were drilling their men in the manual of arms, were told that they: "must be very attentive, to see that the men perform all their motions perfectly true; making the stops exactly at the time and in the manner, directed in the explanations of the manual exercise; in doing of which, it will be necessary to give attention to the following points, which are those that the men are most apt to fail in."⁴⁷⁹ This admonition was followed by twenty-one points to which the officer was to be attentive. This degree of concern with precision in the manual exercise leaves the suspicion that something beyond simple preparation for battle was going on.

⁴⁷⁸ *Norfolk Militia*.

6.3.1 The Manual Exercise (The Manual of Arms)

The "manual exercise," or in modern terms, a "manual of arms," was a series of prescribed motions that the soldier performs with his weapon, usually in unison with other soldiers. Today it is completely ceremonial in function. In the eighteenth-century it also trained the soldier to load and fire his musket. It follows therefore, that relentlessly training the soldiers in this procedure was appropriate. What does not follow was that it was appropriate to train the soldiers to an almost superhuman level of precision in this procedure, to the point that other types of training suffered, yet this is what seemed to have happened.

Historians who today argue that the manual exercise received inordinate attention are not just being wise after the fact. Many observers of the time commented on the absurd preoccupation with the "tossing of firelocks. ("Tossing of firelocks" was a contemporary term for the constant repetition of the manual of arms.) To take just two examples: Thomas Simes wrote that "The manual exercise is certainly a branch of military discipline, necessary to render the soldier steady, adroit, &c. but . . . it is not of sufficient importance to engage his whole attention." He also urged that the regiment must have, "two field days a week, at least, and the maneuvers often varied; which will improve and direct the officers; instead of tiring their patience with repetitions of the manual exercise."⁴⁸⁰ Brigadier General Richard Kane, noting that *cavalry*, who had no realistic expectation of ever using the manual exercise in action, were intensively drilled in it, stated scornfully: "How preposterous is it to see our English Jack-Boot-Men, [this refers to the tall stiff boots worn by the cavalry] with all their accoutrements, perform an exercise on foot."⁴⁸¹

To give but one example of mindless precision, the Manual Exercise of 1764, on its very first page, immediate after describing "The Position of a Soldier Under Arms," directed that you should, "be very exact in counting a Second of Time, or One, Two, between each motion."⁴⁸² Other manuals made the same point: "Great care must be taken not to begin a motion, till the word of command, or signal on the drum be ended; and then to perform it as quick, and with as

⁴⁷⁹ *Norfolk Militia*.

⁴⁸⁰ Simes, *Volume I*, 209, 204.

⁴⁸¹ General Richard Kane, *Discipline for a Regiment of Foot upon Action*, London 1745, 116-117, quoted in Chandler, *Art of Warfare*, 106, hereafter Kane, *Discipline*.

⁴⁸² *1764 Manual*.

much life as possible, . . . and the major, or exercising officer is to take the space of two seconds, between the end of each motion and his giving the word of command or signal for another; and this the men are likewise to observe, when they exercise by one word of command only.⁴⁸³

This was in 1764, when only a small minority would even have owned a watch. Moreover, when looking closely at the manual exercises in use during this period one finds it filled with excess motions, movements that do not contribute to moving the muskets quickly from one position to another.⁴⁸⁴ Some writers of the time recognized and discussed these issues: "We must make this observation upon the present military exercise, that no less than five works of command, and ten motions are used for the performance of one single action, *viz* fixing the bayonet; and to shoulder again, there are two words of command, and five motions used. To return the bayonet, four words of Command, and ten motions: and to shoulder, two words of command, and five motions."⁴⁸⁵ Taken together, a preoccupation with over-exact timing, and the addition of needless motions in the manual, leaves the strong impression that something other than loading and firing quickly was at stake.

Many commentators at the time admitted that appearance had become as important a consideration in the manual exercise, and in drill, as other, more practical, considerations. A rather long passage from the handbook for the Norfolk Militia gives both a good summary both of the need for a manual exercise, and the appeal that an attractive appearance had for soldiers of the time: "When the use of fire-arms began to be generally established, the necessity of a great regularity and uniformity, in the manner of using these arms, became apparent: . . . It was therefore necessary to exercise the troops in loading quickly and firing together by word of command: . . . This is the origin of what is called the manual exercise; which when it was once invented, (beside the real utility of it) made troops show to such advantage, and motions appear so regular and beautiful, that it soon was copied by other nations, and came into general use."⁴⁸⁶

Moreover, there were periodic attempts to simplify the manual exercise and render it more suitable for battlefield use. George Grant wrote *The New Highland Military Discipline* in 1757, which he describes on the title page as a "Concise Service." It was clearly intended to be a

⁴⁸³ *Norfolk Militia*, 1-2.

⁴⁸⁴ To give just one example, there is the complex procedure of coming to the "rest" between the positions of "order" and "shoulder" when shouldering the musket. See, *1764 Manual*, 7.

⁴⁸⁵ *Norfolk Militia*, 8, footnote 8.

⁴⁸⁶ *Norfolk Militia*, xvi-xvii.

simplified version of the manual of arms, and to deal with the issues of overly complex arms-drill. On its last page, Grant stated that, "I have printed the foregoing Regulations for the good of my King and Country and the Ease of the Soldier. . . . In Case of Invasion my method of Firing may be taught in Twenty-four Hours. So far as this deserves Merit, I hope it will meet with due Encouragement."⁴⁸⁷ Grant clearly recognized, as did many others, that the manual exercises currently in use were needlessly complex, and in the event of an emergency could not be quickly taught to new recruits. The author of the handbook for the Norfolk Militia, writing of the manual exercise stated:

Many likewise of the motions were quite useless, serving only for parade and show; and most of the actions were performed in a round-about way: whereas the use and intent of the manual exercise being to teach the soldier, how to execute in the best and most expeditious manner, all that is necessary to be done with the firelock; there cannot be too much attention given, to go the shortest way to work; and to do every action, with as few motions as possible; and that more particularly, in the firing and loading part; in which the old exercise was remarkably tedious, and full of useless motions and attitudes. However, such is the attachment, which men have for old customs and, and for what they have been long used to, although the reason for them subsist no longer, and they are become absurd and ridiculous; for it is not till within a very few years, that this old exercise has been laid aside in England, and other nations: and even then, against the opinion of many old officers; who insist upon it, that those constrained attitudes, and forced motions, which (now that our eyes begin to be disused to them) would appear grotesque and caricatures, were graceful, stately, and showed a fine exertion of strength.⁴⁸⁸

J. Shuckburgh, the author of the Norfolk Militia handbook, like George Grant, attempted to develop a simplified manual exercise: "It will be proper, my Lords, that I should assure you, that I have seen this short and easy exercise taught and executed with the greatest success. I have myself, made a gentleman perfectly master of it in two or three mornings, so as to perform it with grace and spirit. Our Militia men learn it in seven or eight days, some of them in less time."⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁷ George Grant, *The New Highland Military Discipline, or Short Manual Exercise Explained, with the words of Command; In which is laid down the Duty of the Officer and Soldier through the several Branches of that Concise Service.*, London, George Brickman, 1757, facsimile reprint, Alexandria Bay, New York, Museum Restoration Services, 1967, 1988, 1995, 20, hereafter: Grant, *Highland*.

⁴⁸⁸ *Norfolk Militia*, xxv.

⁴⁸⁹ *Norfolk Militia*, v-vi.

He did this in the obvious way, by separating the important from the unimportant, and concentrating on the essentials. "False motions or irregularities in the other parts of the manual exercise are faults, rather from their being deformities, and taking off from the uniform and elegant appearance of the troops, than from any great inconvenience that can immediately arise from them; but in that part which relates from the firing and loading, no fault can be committed, or false motion made, without a manifest inconvenience or danger."⁴⁹⁰

The author of the handbook for the Norfolk Militia clearly believes that the regular army's manual exercise and drill, was too complicated, too concerned with appearance at the expense of practicality, and too difficult to teach; and that, moreover, trying to achieve a useless precision at the manual exercise and drill takes up valuable time that could be better used on other things:

[T]o those who defend any additional useless motions, by saying the serve to set off and show the men more to advantage, we shall answer that there are certain parts of the exercise, which are most essential, and of the greatest importance in real service, such as the marchings, wheelings and the firings, these cannot be too much practiced; nor too much assiduity used to bring the men to perform them with the greatest quickness and accuracy imaginable; to do which to perfection will afford full employment for both officers and soldiers, even of the regulars, let them be ever so diligent, or take ever so much pains; and therefore every thing that renders the less important parts of the exercise more complicated, and difficult to be performed, must be wrong; as it takes up so much more of the soldiers time and attention, which may be employed to greater advantage."⁴⁹¹

Sadly, the author of the Norfolk Militia handbook was also compelled to admit that most soldiers were attracted more by flashy manual exercises and drills, than by practical ones; as, for example the drill of the Prussian Army, which in the wake of their successes in the Silesian Wars, and the Seven Years War spread throughout Europe: "[I]t is no wonder . . . that the Prussian exercise is so much admired as to have been, in some measure, copied by most nations[.] We must be less surprised at this, when we consider, that the first composer of it had nothing so much at heart, as to make his troops show to advantage, and to make a figure on a parade; and therefore

⁴⁹⁰ *Norfolk Militia*, Part II, 15.

⁴⁹¹ *Norfolk Militia*, 3-4, footnote 2.

often attended more to the brilliant effect of a motion, though difficult, than to ease and shortness:"⁴⁹²

Even at this time it was recognized that some officers concentrated on spit, polish and drill to the detriment of other, more important, aspects of the military life. In his famous (and satirical) *Advice to the Officers of the British Army*, Francis Grosse suggested that, "ignorance in the higher branches of your profession can only be covered by the strictest attention to punctilio and the *minutiae* of the service. . . . A proper attention to these together with utmost severity, particularly in trifles, will soon procure you the character of a good officer."⁴⁹³ It seems however that most officers missed the satirical element to be found in this preoccupation with drill, and took it quite seriously.

Perhaps the best account of the British Army's preoccupation with the manual exercise, as well as one possible explanation for its persistence, is found in J. A. Houlding's *Fit for Service*.⁴⁹⁴ Houlding convincingly describes constraints, which he terms "the friction of peace," that compelled the British Army to focus on the manual exercise, and the most basic levels of drill, to the detriment of more advanced training. As described in chapter five, Houlding demonstrates that the regiments of horse and foot were usually dispersed in small garrisons around Britain, Scotland, and Ireland, and were constantly moved from one location to another: as a result of this dispersal, he argues, they were unable to perform any advanced training, and thus concentrated on more basic military skills.⁴⁹⁵ Holding's argument seem valid, within the limits of existing drill books. As convincing as Houlding's explanation is however, it seems possible to argue that there were other factors lurking behind this emphasis on the "tossing of firelocks."

Houlding's explanation rather begs the question of why drill books focused only on those skills, rather than other military skills. It also begs the question of why only skills from the drill manuals were practiced, rather than other skills not described in the manuals; or, indeed, why did the British Army did not adopt the alternatives of doing nothing at all, and allowing the soldiers to be idle? In short, it seems possible to argue that the *minutiae* of drill and the "tossing of firelocks" had some deeper attraction for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

⁴⁹² *Norfolk Militia*, xxvi-xxvii.

⁴⁹³ Francis Grosse, *Advice to the Officers of the British Army: A Facsimile Reprint of the 6th London Edition with Introduction and Notes*, New York, Agathynian Club, 1867, 6th Edition, 1783, 8. For clarity, the order in which these two statements appear in Grosse's text has been inverted in this quotation.

⁴⁹⁴ Houlding, *Service*.

One likely explanation might be that as the manual exercise, or any other type of drill, attained greater precision it offered greater aesthetic rewards. Soldiers, dressed in attractive uniforms, marching and moving their muskets about in unison, might or might not be increasing their skill in battle, but they certainly offered an attractive spectacle. “The beauty of all exercise and marching consists in seeing a soldier carry his arms well, keep his firelock steady and even upon his shoulder, the right hand hanging down, and the whole body without constraint. . . . Every motion must be done with life, and all facings, wheelings, and marchings, performed with the greatest exactness.”⁴⁹⁶

Everyone, as the old saying goes, loves a parade. It seems plausible to suggest that the stylish and attractive elements of drill, the precision, the unison, as well as the geometry and symmetry, exerted a powerful attraction over the British Army, and indeed over other eighteenth-century armies as well.

6.3.2 Linear Tactics

Page one of Thomas Simes' *The Military Guide for Young Officers* is headed "Military Discipline." The first sentence of its first paragraph reads: "Next to the forming of troops, military discipline is the first object that presents itself to our notice. It is the soul of all armies[.]"⁴⁹⁷ The sentiment regarding military discipline is one with which no eighteenth-century, or indeed twenty-first-century, soldier would be likely to disagree. Notice, however, that in fact discipline is not put first; the forming of troops is actually put ahead of military discipline, which suggest the importance it held in military thinking of the time. The *Universal Military Dictionary* made exactly the same point in a slightly different fashion, when it defined an army was defined primarily in terms of the formations it adopted:

ARMY is a large number of soldiers . . . under the command of one general, . . . composed of brigades, regiments, battalions and squadrons, . . . and formed into three lines; the first

⁴⁹⁵ Houlding, *Service, passim.*, particularly Chapters I, IV, and V.

⁴⁹⁶ George Smith, *An Universal Military Dictionary, A Copious Explanation of the Technical Terms &c. Used in the Encampments, Marching, Movements and Military Operations of an Army*, London, J. Millan, 1779, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, EXERCISE, 86, hereafter *Universal Military Dictionary*.

⁴⁹⁷ Simes, *Volume I*, 1.

of which is called the front-line, a part of which forms the vanguard, the second the main body, and the third, the rear-guard, or corps of reserve. When an army is drawn up in order of battle, the horse are frequently placed at five feet from one another, and the foot at three. In each line the battalions are distant from one another about 180 feet, . . . and the same holds true of the squadrons which are about 300 feet distant, . . . The front line is generally about 300 feet from the centre line; and the centre line as much from the rear[.]⁴⁹⁸

It seems clear that, for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, the very idea of an "army" had become conflated with the geometric formations that it adopted.

Once again, no one is likely to dispute the argument that, in the mid-eighteenth-century, placing troops in the rectilinear formations of linear tactics was vital; because linear tactics, given the limited effectiveness and difficulty of use of the eighteenth-century flintlock musket, were very effective on the eighteenth-century battlefield. As with the manual exercise, however, some commentators of the time recognized that much greater attention was devoted to linear tactics than could be justified by its tactical utility, and that the linear tactics used by the British Army were much more complex than they needed to be. Grant argued as much in his *Highland Discipline*: "I deny regular Platooning being Battle Form, it is too formal for that, and never done without some mistakes. . . . Why should we train Men up in one Method, and leave them to find out another how to fight the enemy. For these regular Platooners as soon as you take them out of the Way they are taught, will be all in confusion."⁴⁹⁹

George Grant was well ahead of his time however, and the simplification of the British Army's drill would be a slow process. Throughout the eighteenth-century, the British Army continued to be preoccupied with placing its soldiers in geometric formations. Within this preoccupations, it seems likely stylistic values are again to be found. Certainly the language of linear tactics was sometimes expressed in terms of appearance, as indeed sometimes were the calls for reform. Calling for one uniform system of drill for the British Army, to replace the several different ones in use, Brigadier-General Richard Kane wrote in 1745: "Everyone will allow, that 'tis absolutely necessary that the troops should be brought under one method of

⁴⁹⁸ *Universal Military Dictionary*, ARMY, 11.

⁴⁹⁹ Grant, *Highland*, 19. "Platooning," in this sense referred to the firing drill used by a battalion of infantry. It embraced, both the manual of arms, and the linear tactics used by the battalion to deliver fire.

discipline; that when His Majesty shall please to order them together, or a General Officer is to receive them, they may perform a graceful exercise."⁵⁰⁰

6.3.2.1 Geometric Formations

Eighteenth-century tactics were essentially rectilinear in nature, that is to say that the soldiers were placed in, and moved about in formations that were combinations of rectangles and lines. Certainly these linear tactics were both necessary and effective given the weaponry of the time. There is, however, strong evidence to suggest that they were often carried to unnecessary lengths of precision and complexity; one example of this being the forming line of battle *en muraille*, which became common in the middle part of the eighteenth-century. This involved forming one unbroken line, with only very small intervals between the units forming the line, a procedure that was very complex, and led to many practical difficulties.⁵⁰¹

There is strong evidence to suggest that portions of the eighteenth-century world found the geometric formation of drilling soldiers very attractive. For example the eighteenth-century controversy over tactical systems, the great debate, particularly in France, between the *ordre profond*, (columnar tactics) and the *ordre mince*, (linear tactics) often showed, particularly on the part of the proponents of the *ordre profond*, a real preoccupation with geometric shapes and occasionally with fantastical formations. Interestingly, this debate sometimes spilled over from the military presses into the *salons* of France.⁵⁰² This would seem to suggest that maneuvering soldiers had an attraction that is outside the purely military. This debate found its way to the British Army as well, for instance, Thomas Simes' *Guide for Young Officers*, includes a section discussing the merits of column versus line.⁵⁰³

To explain this attraction, an analogy might be made with the attraction which *trace italienne* fortifications (also known as bastion-trace, or often, but incorrectly, as Vauban-style fortifications) had for the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth-century military and civilian

⁵⁰⁰ Kane, *Discipline*, 116-117, quoted in Chandler, *The Art of War*, 106.

⁵⁰¹ Please see Appendix IV, for a more detailed discussion of these issues.

⁵⁰² Quimby, *Background*, 4, 108.

⁵⁰³ Simes, *Volume I*, 35-40.

worlds.⁵⁰⁴ *Trace italienne* fortifications are the ultimate in geometric structures. They were unquestionably functional but they were not necessarily the only effective type of fortifications; they are however, most people agree, also quite beautiful. In explaining their adoption, Professor Thomas Arnold of Yale has forcefully argued that the attraction of *trace italienne* fortification was as much aesthetic as military.⁵⁰⁵ Perhaps much the same attraction could be found on the parade-square. The straight lines of the maneuvering regiments echoed the Euclidean outlines of *trace italienne* fortification, with much the same aesthetic attraction.

This preoccupation can also be found in the widespread belief that mathematics and geometry was essential to understand not simply siege warfare, artillery, and military engineering, but all elements of warfare. Monsieur de Lamont stated that: "An ensign must be perfect in all the duties of a soldier; must understand arithmetic as far as the extraction of the square root, because it is the basis and principal foundation of the art of war."⁵⁰⁶ He then proceeded to make the same statement about nearly every other officer in the military hierarchy.⁵⁰⁷ Indeed there does seem to have been a belief that warfare itself, as a phenomena, was mathematically based. The *Universal Military Dictionary* argued that: "The knowledge of military mathematicks regards the operations of war in general; every thing there consists of proportions, measure and motion: it treats of marches, encampments, battles, artillery, fortifications, lines, sieges, mines, ammunition, provisions, fleets, and every thing which regards war; but no just notion can be acquired without geometry, natural philosophy, mechanics, military architecture, and the art of drawing."⁵⁰⁸

It has been noted that not only did the science of fortresses and siege warfare in the seventeenth and eighteenth century require an understanding of geometry:⁵⁰⁹ it also helped produce a belief that one day all warfare would become scientific, which is to say understandable and controllable.⁵¹⁰ It seems likely that rectilinear, geometric formations produced a similar sense. Certainly, to the educated eighteenth-century world, with its emphasis on reason, and its exposure to Newton's clockwork universe, geometric military formations must have seemed a

⁵⁰⁴ For a good explanation of the complexities and the attractions of *trace italiene* fortifications see: Christopher Duffy, *Fire & Stone: The Science of Fortress Warfare, 1680-1860*, London, David & Charles Newton Abbot, 1975, hereafter: Duffy, *Fire & Stone*.

⁵⁰⁵ Thomas Arnold, Lecture at the 2000 Summer Seminar on Military History, at the United States Military Academy, West Point, June 2000.

⁵⁰⁶ de Lamont, "Duties," 19.

⁵⁰⁷ de Lamont, "Duties," 21, 23, 20.

⁵⁰⁸ *Universal Military Dictionary*, EDUCATION, 80.

⁵⁰⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 40-41.

reassuring sign that, like other fields of human endeavor, warfare was becoming subject to rationality. In short, rectilinear drill formations were a visible expression of human control.

Moreover, *trace italienne* fortifications made a powerful statement of cultural superiority, and this was also true for soldiers drilling *en masse*. A fortress was, amongst other things, a large-scale domination of the landscape. Thousands of soldiers moving in unison were a large-scale domination of humanity. It would, one expects, have had a profound effect on both participants and observers, particularly in a world not yet accustomed to much large-scale human activity. It is a statement that says we, as a culture and society, are able to organize and create this great thing. Geoffrey Parker has noted the way in which Europeans marked their mastery over non-Europeans with the rectilinear, geometric design of their fortresses.⁵¹¹ It seems likely that rectilinear, geometric, patterns of marching soldiers had a similar effect.

Rectilinear formations, and the sense of superiority that they engendered, were often consciously used to impress the non-Europeans. In 1764 Henry Bouquet led an expedition against the Ohio Indians. It is reported that before a conference with the Indians: “the troops were fashioned as to appear to the best advantage[.]”⁵¹² Inevitably, the camps of the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century also succumbed to the desire for geometric regularity. On that 1764 expedition, Bouquet’s soldiers built a camp, with, one suspects, the intention of impressing the Indians: “so that with the officers’ neat houses, ovens &etc. this camp had the appearance of a little town in which the greatest order and regularity were observed.”⁵¹³ Thomas Simes offered three pages of instruction for setting up camps, with a specified formation for the tents, as well as the distance between them.⁵¹⁴

For whatever reason, the British Army made great efforts to cling to its geometric formations, even when they might not have been the most suitable answer to the tactical problem. To give another example, in his orders for the 1764 Expedition against the Ohio Indians, Bouquet provided very specific instructions for the formation his troops were to adopt while on the march. It envisioned his army marching prepared to form a hollow square and it

⁵¹⁰ Duffy, *Fire & Stone*, *passim*.

⁵¹¹ Geoffrey Parker, Lecture at the History Department, University of Pittsburgh, 12:00 PM, February 5, 1997.

⁵¹² William Smith, *Historical Account of Bouquet’s Expedition against the Ohio Indians in 1764, and a Translation of Dumas’ Biographical Sketch of General Bouquet*, Cincinnati, Ohio, Robert Clark and Co., 1868.52, hereafter: Smith, *Historical Account*.

⁵¹³ Smith, *Historical Account*, 60.

⁵¹⁴ Simes, *Volume I*, 89-92.

specified, in very great detail, the particulars of the formation:⁵¹⁵ While it is undeniable that this formation offered great advantages, in that it offered protection from an attack coming from any direction, which was a matter of no small importance when proceeding through heavily wooded terrain; nonetheless, when reading the precision with which the formation is laid out, one wonders if in this formation one can also see the martial culture attempting to cling to an important element of its identity, its sense of superiority, and not least, of its ceremony and its style.

6.3.2.2 The Cadenced Step (Marching in Step)

Marching in step is so closely identified with the soldier, that is hard for us to believe that armies ever lost the habit of "the cadenced step," but historians are unanimous that it seems to have largely vanished from the practice of both the British, and most other European Armies by the later seventeenth-century; and was only widely reintroduced in the mid-eighteenth-century.⁵¹⁶ Marching in step still seems to have been something relatively new and difficult in the 1750's. Describing marching, *The New Manual Exercise by General Blakeney*, printed in Philadelphia in 1755, directed that: "[The men] are to march very slow, and take great Care that the Whole move like one man: which they may easily do, by keeping Time in the Lifting up and Setting down of the same Feet together."⁵¹⁷

Those who favored the adoption of the cadenced step had to overcome some resistance to it, resistance that, interestingly, was also sometimes phrased in terms of its appearance. To overcome these objections, it was necessary to offer reassurances that the appearance of marching in step, with practice, would be quite acceptable. Humphrey Bland, whose *Treatise on Military Discipline* was unquestionably the most highly regarded guide for officers in the early and mid eighteenth-century, spent several paragraphs describing the merits of the cadenced step.

In the doing of this, they are to take but short Steps, and to
move on very slow, but with an equal Pace, lifting up and Setting

⁵¹⁵ *The Orderly Book of Colonel Henry Bouquet's Expedition against the Ohio Indians, 1764*, Edward G. Williams, ed. Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Privately Printed, Mayer Press, 1960, 14-15.

⁵¹⁶ Brent Nosworthy, *The Anatomy of Victory: Battle Tactics, 1689-1763*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1992, *passim.*, hereafter Nosworthy, *Anatomy of Victory*, and Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 277-279 and *passim.*

⁵¹⁷ *The New Manual Exercise by General Blakeney. To Which is added, The Evolutions of the Foot by General Bland, Corrected with Additions*, Philadelphia, William Bradford, 1755, 10.

down of their right and left Feet with one another, thus: All who are in Motion, must lift up and set down their right Feet together, and do the same with their left.

The bringing of a Battalion to such Exactness as to perform it in due time, will I am afraid, appear so difficult that it will deter a great many from attempting it, but let those who are of this opinion only try, and they will find it much easier in the Execution, than they imagin'd.

The common Objection against it, is that it looks too much like Dancing, and makes the Men appear with too stiff an Air. I own it may have this Effect in the beginning, but a little Time and Practice will bring the Men to perform it in so easy and genteel a Manner that the Objections will vanish. But as the Evolutions are perform'd in exact time why is not the same objections raised against them? Because we are accustomed to the one and not to the other. If this is the Case, then Time will reconcile this also. Besides, I think it just as reasonable that the first Movement of a Battalion, which is the Opening of Files should be perform'd with as much Regularity and Exactness as those which come last. A great many other reasons may be brought to support this Argument were there an Occasion for it, such as the bringing of the Men to walk with a bolder Air, giving them a freer Use of their Limbs, and a Notion of Time; which, in my opinion, are sufficient to silence those who oppose it; and therefore I shall not trouble the Reader any further, but proceed to the Point in Hand.⁵¹⁸

It also seems revealing that mid-eighteenth-century military writers connected the cadenced step to mathematical principles. According to the *Universal Military Dictionary*: "CADENCE, in *tactics*, implies a very regular and uniform method of marching, by the drum and music beating time: it may not be improperly called mathematical marching; for after the length of step is determined, the time and distance may be found. It is by a continual practice and attention to this, that the Prussians have arrived that point of perfection, so much admired in their evolutions."⁵¹⁹

Historians of tactics assure us that the reintroduction of the cadenced step allowed great advances in tactics, particularly in maneuvers that involved the ranks being closed up, and that this drastically speeded up breaking into column and reforming line, and plying into column and

⁵¹⁸ Bland, *Treatise*, 12-13.

⁵¹⁹ *Universal Military Dictionary*, CADENCE, 38.

deploying back into line.⁵²⁰ These arguments are not completely convincing.⁵²¹ The cadenced step undoubtedly speeded up some maneuvers, *on the parade ground*. (Note however, that since the cadenced step prohibited moving *faster* than the cadence, it would not always speed up maneuvers since, at least in theory, it would also prohibit hurrying a necessary maneuver.) It seems reasonable to believe that armies were able to maneuver on the battlefield quite successfully without marching in step, for the simple reason that that is what usually happened both before, and after, the adoption of the cadenced step. Let us start with an appeal to common sense. Is it really possible that armies moving over anything other than the smoothest parade ground were able to keep step? Is it truly likely that they did so under fire? Even if it is granted that they could do these things, which seems highly unlikely, is it plausible to think that they were able to do both together?

If the appeal to common sense is not convincing, how about the words of Prussian soldiers, by universal consensus the best soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century. Christopher Duffy, in his *The Army of Frederick the Great*, quotes a Prussian about the difficulties of keeping step:

Certainly it sometimes happens that the thing turns out well and the battalion of 200 or 300 files makes a fine impression as it advances on a broad front towards the dilettanti who are standing directly in front. The soldiers' legs with their elegant gaiters and close-fitting breeches, work back and forth like the warp on a weavers frame, while the sun is reflected blindingly from the polished muskets and the whitened leatherwork. In a few moments the moving wall is upon you. Yet these splendid evolutions are just a luxury of the exercise field, and even there they do not always come off. A ploughed field or a churned up meadow are enough to reduce the harmony to dissonance. Some of the soldiers lose step, and in trying to regain it they make a couple of hops and fall behind. When they fall back into step the others promptly lose it. The advance hesitates and the whole line falters.⁵²²

⁵²⁰ Eighteenth and nineteenth century armies *formed* or *reformed* line parallel to a column, and when they wished to form a column parallel to the line they *broke* the line into a column. When a line formed a column perpendicular to the line the line *ployed* into column. When a column formed a line perpendicular to the column it *deployed* into line. Of these terms only "deploy" has survived in modern military usage in something close to its original meaning. All four of these procedures required great precision in movement. They were time consuming and could be nerve-racking when performed, as they often had to be, in the presence of the enemy.

⁵²¹ Please see Appendix V for a more detailed discussion of these issues.

⁵²² Quoted in Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 88.

In short, it seems that the cadenced step is least likely to be possible when it is purportedly most needed. If this is in fact the case, then how do we explain the universal adoption of the cadenced step, and its becoming one of the identifying hallmark of the soldier down to the present day?

It seems probable that much of the attraction of the cadenced step was the same as that of a precision execution of the manual exercise. It offered a pleasing effect; it looked good. Most contemporary comments that discuss the cadenced step show as much concern with appearance, as with any practical benefits it might offer, as, for example the following from the handbook of the Norfolk Militia:

In the way in which the two regiments[the 67th {General Wolfe's,} and 72nd {Duke of Richmond's}] before mentioned perform it, it appear no other than an easy genteel manner or walking in cadence; but we must observe that they remit a little of the exactness of the Prussians, (who perform it just as we have described;) and do not keep the knee so straight, nor the ballance of the body so far back, nor mark the time so strongly as they do: which certainly takes off that appearance of stiffness and dancing which some have objected to the Prussian step; though we must think without reason, and that when well executed it has the most graceful and military appearance imaginable;⁵²³

In short, it is hard not to believe that one of the principle attractions of the cadenced step for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was that it enhanced the appearance of marching troops. Beyond this, marching in step, as Houlding would perhaps argue, was, like the manual of arms, one of the relatively few military skills that could be pursued by the British Army in the dispersed conditions of peacetime garrison duties as well.

⁵²³ *Norfolk Militia*, unpaginated addition, Addition to Note 3d. Page 21.

6.4 CEREMONY, GUARD DUTY, AND MUSIC

Life in the mid-eighteenth-century military world was filled with ceremonies. They varied from gigantic reviews involving thousands of troops, to the individual ceremony of a soldier saluting his officer. These ceremonies, many accompanied by some sort of music, were of great importance in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pre-national pan-European military world. They served to designate military life as something colorful, special, unique and different, and they also signify and reaffirm values and customs of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. These ceremonies were not confined to times of peace, so important were they that they followed the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and all the other armies of the pan-European military world, to war.

6.4.1 Ceremony and Guard Duty

While there is a distinction to be drawn between drill and ceremony: it is probably not a difference that would have been important to soldiers of the British Army of the period, because drilling was done ceremonially, and ceremonies inevitably involved the performance of drill, as the ceremony of the rejoicing fire neatly illustrates:

REJOICING-*fire*, in *military affairs*, is used on obtaining a victory, or on celebrating some public festival. There are, however, two forms of rejoicing fire; the one by a volley, and the other by a running fire from right to left of the battalion or line. When a volley is to be fired, the battalion or line is to fire together, either by a signal, or by word of command. But should running fire be made, it is to be performed from right to left in the succession of files; that is, the men on the first file on the right of the battalion are, on the word of command, *Begin*, to pull their triggers; and then as soon as those of the second file observe the flash in the pans of the first, they are also to pull their triggers; and so on from

one file to another, 'till the fire ends with the left hand fire of the battalion or line.⁵²⁴

Conversely, the performance of drill could almost be described as ritualistic. For instance, the British Army split its drill into five elements of increasing complexity, the “manual exercise,” the “platoon exercise,” the “evolutions,” the “firings,” and the “maneuvers,” and, more generally, drill often followed a prescribed course of instruction.⁵²⁵ With so much importance attached to drill, and with drill performed in a ritualized manner, it is likely that these two different processes, drill and ceremony, merged in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army and the pre-national, pan-European military world.

Even after making allowance for the practical nature of much of the drill which was done, yet again, we are left with the feeling that something is occupying an inordinate amount of the time and attention of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Soldiers spent a great deal of their time participating in large and small-scale ceremonies. Anyone reading Simes' *Military Guide for Young Officers*, or indeed any other of the guides available to officers, could not help but be struck by the enormous amount of attention that is devoted to military rituals. Just to give one example, the ceremony prescribed for bringing the colors (the battalion's flags) to the battalion covered several paragraphs.⁵²⁶ Simply spelling out the military honors to be offered to various people in various circumstances takes Simes five pages, with another two devoted to spelling out the honors which the guard offers to the various officers who might pass by.⁵²⁷

The military day and the military year were therefore marked with important group ceremonies, such as daily parades, lodging the colors, periodic review, and so on. Moreover, the soldiers also regularly participated in individual rituals such as saluting, uncovering before officers, and the like which reinforced both their obedience and deference, and their identities as soldiers. Most importantly, common soldiers regularly participated in guard duty. So important was guard duty that the lowest enlisted rank in the infantry “Private,” was often termed “Private

⁵²⁴ *Universal Military Dictionary*, REJOICING-fire, 223.

⁵²⁵ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 160.

⁵²⁶ Simes, *Volume I*, 206-209.

⁵²⁷ Simes, *Volume I*, 100-104, 147-148.

Sentinel.”⁵²⁸ The position of sentinel was given an important, it might not go to far too say sacred, status:

Monsieur De Ville, in his book of martial justice, gives an account of a Light-horseman of the King's guards, who had his head cut off for assaulting a Corporal upon his duty. This is not a violation of an order or proclamation, but subverting all this is sacred in an army; for when a guard is once posted, it is an heinous offense to insult any that belongs to it; and though a man has never so just cause of complaint against one, he must defer his revenge until another time.⁵²⁹

Guard duty was so common that most soldiers could expect to encounter it on a weekly basis if not more often. The *Universal Military Dictionary* tells us that: "GUARD, in the *military art*, is a duty performed by a body of men, to secure an army or place from being surprised by any enemy. In garrison the guards are relieved every day; hence it comes that every soldier mounts guard once every 3 or 4 days in time of peace, and much oftener in time of war. See **Honours.**"
530

It says a lot about the importance that military ceremony held for the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century that the dictionary entry for guard duty refers the readers to "Honours." Guard duty, was surrounded by exceedingly elaborate ritual and military *minutiae*. Successfully participating in guard duty required a mastery of the ceremonial side of soldiering. For example: "To Generals of Horse and of Foot, the guards turn out, rest their arms, beat three ruffles, and the Officers salute." On the other hand, "[to] Lieutenant-colonels their own quarter-guard turn out with shouldered arms once a day; at other times, they only turn out, and stand by their arms."⁵³¹ In fact guard duty was as often ceremonial in its nature, as it served any practical purpose. Indeed, under certain circumstances, the regiment supplying the guard was to consider itself as being honored: "When the King, a Prince of the Blood, the Captain-General, or a Person of Authority who is entitled to a Guard, comes into Garrison, the Eldest Regiment is always to mount a proper Guard on him during his Stay there."⁵³²

⁵²⁸ *Rules and Articles For the Better Government of His Majesty's Horse and Foot Guards, And all Other His Forces in Great Britain and Ireland, Dominions beyond the Seas and Foreign Parts, Anno 1749*, 12.

⁵²⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 101.

⁵³⁰ *Universal Military Dictionary*, GUARD, 118.

⁵³¹ Simes, *Volume I*, 147, 148.

⁵³² Bland, *Treatise*, 159.

The procedure of mounting guard (forming up the men detailed to guard duty each day) was an elaborate one, and one of the most important in the military day: Making a good appearance was vital: “[the person who is forming up a detachment of men detailed to go on guard] must likewise Size them as soon as they are Form’d, which should never be omitted even in a Detachment of 12 men, since it will add vastly to their Appearance.”⁵³³ As with other military ceremonies, music also played an important role in the ritual of guard. .⁵³⁴

This meticulous attention to performing ceremony properly begins to make sense if we remember that the drills and ceremonies of the soldiers, as well as providing functional training, group cohesion, and a sense of superiority, were also impressive displays. Scott Hughes Myerly in *British Military Spectacle* has noted the importance that display and ceremony had in maintaining cohesion and a sense of identity among British soldiers.⁵³⁵ Large-scale maneuvers, for instance, also provided a large, interesting spectacle. In a pre-industrial age, they might well have been the largest spectacles that both participants and spectator had ever seen or participated in. One suspects that the effect was often overawing, both for the participants, and for any spectators as well. Ceremony was also a way of reaffirming important values of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture. To reach for one obvious example, ceremonies honoring the regimental colors reaffirm the value of the colors, and of regimental *esprit de corps*.

One important point to be made about the military ceremonies in which eighteenth-century British and European soldiers participated, is that they were often subtly different from military ceremonies of today. At the risk of over generalizing, it seems safe to say that today most military ceremonies are intended to reaffirm abstract loyalties, as, for example, ceremonially saluting the flag, or to celebrate abstract values, as for instance parades to award decorations. While these sorts of ceremonies certainly existed in the British Army of the mid-eighteenth century, they were not the only, or even most common sort of military ceremonies. Many, perhaps most, of the military ceremonies of the mid-eighteenth-century were intended to directly celebrate the authority of individual officers over their soldiers. For the officers concerned they were rituals that reaffirmed their authority, for the rank-and-file, they were re-affirmations of their deference.

⁵³³ Bland, *Treatise*, 154.

⁵³⁴ Bland, *Treatise*, 155.

⁵³⁵ Myerly, *British Military Spectacle*, *passim*.

First consider that the salute (using salute in the modern sense of the term) exchanged by soldiers in the mid-eighteenth-century was commonly given by taking off one's hat: "After this, the Officers advance towards one another, paying the usual ceremony with their Hats."⁵³⁶ Removing one's hat, during the eighteenth-century, was commonly understood as showing deference to one's superior. The meaning of the phrase "salute," in the eighteenth-century, shows, in an even more pointed fashion, the deferential nature of mid-eighteenth-century military ceremonies:

SALUTE, *in military matters*, a discharge of artillery, or small arms, or both, in honour of some person of extraordinary quality. The colours likewise salute royal persons, and generals commanding in chief; which is done by lowering the point to the ground. In the field when a regiment is to be reviewed by the king or his general, the drums beat a march as he passes along the line, and the officers salute one after another, bowing their half-pikes or swords to the ground; then recover, and take off their hats. The ensigns salute all together, by lowering their colours.⁵³⁷

The ceremony laid down for "Turning out of the Line," reinforces this point clearly: "The line turns out without arms whenever the General commanding in chief comes along the front of the camp. . . . When the line turns out, the private men are to be drawn up in a line with the bells of arms; the Corporals on the right and left of their respective companies; the picquet forms behind the colours, their accoutrements on, but without arms."⁵³⁸ Four more paragraphs of instructions follow, but the point is made, this is a ceremony that clearly reinforces the dominance and authority of the commander-in-chief. It is also worth noting that this is a ceremony that takes place *in camp*. Modern soldiers would probably find this degree of ceremony inappropriate while in camp in the field, but clearly the mid-eighteenth-century British Army felt that ceremony was as necessary when on campaign as at home.

Finally, there is a ceremony laid down for "Forming and returning the picquet of the Infantry." Picquet, in this case, refers to the guard that was posted outside the camp for security against the enemy. By modern military standards this is a tactical procedure. Not only would ceremony not be appropriate, it would be seen as a positive hindrance to the process. Simes

⁵³⁶ Bland, *Treatise*, 159.

⁵³⁷ *Universal Military Dictionary*, SALUTE, 228.

⁵³⁸ "Bells of Arms" are small tents where the soldiers stored their muskets. Simes, *Volume I*, 93.

however tells us that: [after having formed the picquets in the company streets] "When the retreat begins they [the officers] are to march them forward the front rank even with the bell of arms, each orderly Serjeant and Corporal advancing three paces and remaining at the head of his men. The Officer, Serjeants, drummers, and fifers for the picquet, go on to the head of the colours; and taking their arms and drums wait there." Simes continues on for another page's worth of the description of the ceremony. All of this military ceremony, much of it executed when in the field on campaign, would almost certainly help blur the distinction, so clear to the twenty-first-century military mind, between garrison, and field, between military ceremony, and battle itself.

6.4.2 Music

The pre-national, pan-European military world had a soundtrack. Music marked the routine of daily life, and it supplied color for more special occasions.⁵³⁹ Music, for instance, supplied signals for things to happen during various stages of the ceremonies that peppered military life: "Officers" for instance, in one ceremony, were to "do simultaneous about turns to drum beat during drill as they March to rear of the Battalion[.]"⁵⁴⁰ Music was also used to render salutes and honors when it was appropriate, and the forms of these musical honors were carefully specified. As the *Universal Military Dictionary* specified: "RUFFLES, RUFF, a beat on the drum. Lieutenant Generals have 3 ruffles, major generals 2, brigadiers 1, and governors 1, as they pass by the regiment, guard, &c."⁵⁴¹ Music, in short, was an important part of the ceremonial life of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

At a more fundamental level, the routine of the military day was marked out by the sound of music. Each company of infantry had a drummer, who sounded the various "beats" that signaled the happenings of the military day, which began with: " *The reveille*, [which was] always to beat at break of day, and is to warn the soldiers to rise, and the centinels to forbear

⁵³⁹ Kate van Orden, in her *Music, Discipline, and Arms in Early Modern France*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2005, while approaching the topic from a very different direction, touches on several of the themes in this chapter both in regards to music and drill, as well as the importance of geometric formations, particularly in Chapter 5, 186-234, hereafter: van Orden, *Music*.

⁵⁴⁰ Bland, *Treatise*, 14.

⁵⁴¹ *Universal Military Dictionary*, RUFFLES, 227.

challenging, and to give leave to come out of quarters, and ended with the: "*Retraite*, [which was] always beat in both camp and garrison a little before sun-set, at which time the gates are shut, and the soldiers repair to their barracks."⁵⁴² Each troop of cavalry had a trumpeter who performed the same function. Music in fact, was one of the means whereby the British Army was "put on the clock," and subjected to a simultaneous routine governed, at least in part, by inflexible time, long before this happened to the general population.

Generally speaking each company of infantry also had a fifer, (not necessarily paid out of government funds) so at a minimum, each battalion of infantry would have a fife and drum band of about twenty. Beyond this, many battalions had a smaller band or "chapel" of hired musicians, who played other instruments such as oboes and bassoons, (known as hautboys, from the French *haut bois* - high wood), flutes, sackbuts (primitive trombones) and possibly a trumpet. The music produced by these eighteenth-century bands was very unlike the throbbing brass sound of a modern military band playing a John Philip Sousa marches, or the slightly more complex harmonies of Kenneth Alford, composer of the "Colonel Bogey March:" the military music produced by mid-eighteenth-century military bands was relatively gentle, melodic, and, one could go so far as to say, elegant.

The functions that this music served were not simply ornamental. Music was seen as having an important role in helping soldiers maintain the cadenced step: "The effect of the musick in regulating the step, and making the men keep their order, is really very extraordinary; and experience seems fully to confirm Marshal [S]axe's opinion; who asserts, that it is the best and indeed the only method of teaching troops to march well; and of making a large body (especially of any considerable depth,) move altogether; and advance faster or slower as may be required, in a regular uniform manner, without opening its ranks, or falling into disorder."⁵⁴³

In the end however, the symbolism of music was probably more important than any functional value it might have had, and that of the drum in particular had a position of great significance in the army. The drum itself was often seen as emblematic of military life. For instance, both soldiers and camp followers were often referred to as people who were, "following the drum." The legal authority to recruit was known as "beating orders," so called because recruiting parties typically had a drummer with them; and so recruiting was referred to as

⁵⁴² *Universal Military Dictionary*, DRUM, 79

⁵⁴³ *Norfolk Militia*, unpaginated addition, Addition to Note 1ft. Page 19.

"beating" or "drumming up," recruits. When chaplains held a service in the field, their altar was formed by stacked drums; and when a court-martial was held in the field, the function of a desk was often supplied by a drum, thus giving us the expression: "drum-head court-martial." In reporting a victory, the numbers of colors and standards surrendered, as well as the number of drums captured, was the measure of success. Conversely, a defeat was indicated by sending a drummer to beat the *chamade*, which signified a desire to parlay.⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴⁴ *Universal Military Dictionary*, DRUM, 79.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Academic military historians are often warned not to allow themselves to become uniform enthusiasts, seduced by trim and button, and they are sternly encouraged to direct their attentions to more important subjects. It is possible, however, that the uniform enthusiasts have sensed something that is often missed by more "serious scholars." The origin of this chapter lies in an intuitive sense, a sense that most people who have spent any time around an army seem to share, that the uniform and the *minutiae* of military life are very, very, important. This chapter is a preliminary exploration of this subject, and one that certainly raises more questions than it offers answers. With that said, what conclusion can be drawn from the military style of the mid-eighteenth-century?

It has not been the intention of this chapter to argue that the pre-national, pan-European martial culture's sense of style was the only reasons for the British Army's adoption of the red coat, for its preoccupation with the manual of arms, linear tactics and drill and military ceremonial. These things had very practical purposes to serve. What it does argue was that the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century's sense of military style goes a long way to explain the priority it gave to those things at the expense of others. It argues that where there was a choice to be made among several, relatively reasonable, alternatives, the British Army's sense of style prompted it to choose the ones that fit best with its own stylistic notions. This would go some way to explain just why the British Army clung to many of these things: uniforms, drill, linear tactics, and ceremonies, until late into the nineteenth-century, when they were no longer appropriate, and why there was often resistance to adopting more appropriate measures.

Perhaps the tricorn hat, which Christopher Duffy cited as the root of his fascination with eighteenth-century, can serve as both metaphor and paradigm for this process. The tricorn hat started life at the end of the sixteenth century as a simple broad-brimmed, low crowned, hat, ideally suited for keeping the sun and rain off the head of the wearer. Over time however, fashion began to bend and shape its brim, so, by the eighteenth century, the broad -brimmed hat had transformed itself into the tricorn (the term usually used by the British was "cocked") hat, infinitely more fashionable by the standards of the time; and, while it was not completely useless,

it offered much less protection against sun and rain than the broad-brimmed hat from which it evolved.⁵⁴⁵

In his excellent work on British naval command at the Battle of Jutland, Andrew Gordon makes a point that is so obvious that it is often neglected: "Military cultures impart doctrine by corporate ambience as much as by explicit teaching."⁵⁴⁶ While the modern concept of military doctrine cannot be directly translated to the eighteenth-century military world, it seems that Gordon's larger point is valid. What messages did the corporate ambience, the military style, of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army send to its members?

Since battle is the principal reason for the existence of an army: the messages sent by the corporate ambience, or military style, of the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century, or indeed of any army of the pre-national, pan-European military world, would probably help to create a series of assumptions as to what a battle should be. These assumptions might be something like the following: handsome uniforms, and the omnipresence of drill and ceremony suggest that battle (and, for that matter, military life in general) was an affair of style and ceremony and spectacle. The emphasis on the manual exercise and drill argue that battle is also an affair of precision. The geometric figures of linear tactics and drill, as well as the military ceremonies of deference, create an impression that battle is something which can be directed and controlled; and that taken together, military life, as well as warfare and battle, was an occupation of hierarchy, style, and elegance.

It is not intended to suggest that these assumptions were held with equal force after the British Army had experienced long campaigns and battles; the evidence is that they were not.⁵⁴⁷ It is intended to suggest that they influenced the peace-time army's view of war and battle, that these assumptions were surprisingly resilient, and that as a result, the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century made strong efforts to regain its military style once the wars had ended.⁵⁴⁸

One might go so far as to suggest that these messages combined to produce a belief that battle itself was a large spectacle, and that in this battle, display, ceremony, and style were as

⁵⁴⁵ John Lynn offered this example at the 2002 Annual Meeting of the Society for Military History, in Madison, Wisconsin, April 5, 2002.

⁵⁴⁶ Andrew Gordon, *The Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command*, Annapolis, Maryland, Naval Institute Press, 1996, 580.

⁵⁴⁷ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, Chapters 6 and 7.

⁵⁴⁸ Brumwell, *Redcoats*, 262-263, and Michael Glover, *Wellington's Army: In the Peninsula, 1808-1814*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1977, 55, hereafter: Glover, *Wellington's Army*.

important as more mundane military considerations. It is for this reason this chapter was entitled: "Everybody Loves a Parade." To put this another way, Vegetius, the Roman writer on military affairs famously stated that the Roman Army conducted its "drill as bloodless battles and its battles as bloody drills." It seems that the military style of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and of the pre-national, pan-European military world, acted so as to rewrite Vegetius' famous dictum: The British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century saw their parades as bloodless battles, and their battles as bloody parades.

7.0 COMMON SOLDIERS: COHESION, METAPHOR, AND *ESPIRIT DE CORPS*

"Pay well, command well, hang well"
Sir Ralph Hopton, *Maxims for the Management of an Army*, 1643.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

It was an older and somewhat bitter Frederick the Great, who, in one of his most famous, and callous, pronouncements, declared that: "the soldiers . . . should fear their officers more than all the dangers to which they are exposed."⁵⁴⁹ Like Wellington's characterization of his soldiers as "the scum of the earth," Frederick the Great's contemptuous comment, dating from the middle of the eighteenth-century, has come to summarize the general understanding of the motivation and discipline of the common soldiers of the pre-national, pan-European military world. Officers fought, it was believed, because they were men of honor; common soldiers, it was assumed by many, both at the time and since, were coerced, and fought for pay and loot and because they were beaten and drilled until they became military automata.

As in all cliches, there is an element of truth to this picture, but only an element: coercion was unquestionably used by mid-eighteenth-century armies, most soldiers wanted their pay and were not averse to picking up a little plunder along the way, and they were certainly drilled incessantly. Nonetheless, motivations more complex, and more positive, than loot, the lash, and blind obedience were in operation within the enlisted ranks of the pre-national, pan-European military world; and Frederick, like Wellington, was certainly aware of this. Less often quoted

⁵⁴⁹ Frederick the Great in *The History of My own Times*, quoted in *Frederick the Great on the Art of War*, Jay Luvaas, ed. and trans., New York, The Capo Press, 1999, 78, hereafter: *Frederick's Art of War*.

was what preceded Frederick the Great's chilling dictum; Frederick prefaced his statement by declaring that: "Everything that one can make of the soldiers consists in giving them an *esprit de corps*, or, in other words, in teaching them to place their regiment higher than all of the troops in the world."⁵⁵⁰

This more measured judgment, coming from a man regarded as one of the greatest soldiers of his time, as well as one whose name has become a by-word for inflexible discipline, indicates that Frederick understood (as, undoubtedly, did most other military leaders of his era) that men cannot simply be compelled to fight: men must be willing, and preferably, at some level, eager to fight, for an army to be victorious. As Frederick's comment indicated, regimental *esprit de corps* was one of key elements that helped make mid-eighteenth-century soldiers fight. Less obviously, it also helped keep the regiments of the pre-national, pan-European military world together when they were not fighting as well. In early-modern Europe, before nationalism, patriotism, and political ideology had become popular causes, and in an European military world where discipline was weak, the powers of coercion was erratic, desertion was commonplace, and training was unsystematic, *esprit de corps* offered the strongest glue available to bond military units together. This was certainly true for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

Esprit de corps, was a motivation that, theoretically at least, included both common soldiers and officers; this inclusiveness makes it especially significant. It has been emphasized elsewhere that, as a result of the autonomy of the common soldiers, and the professional disengagement of their officers: leaders and followers, *even in military terms*, had relatively little in common, and relatively few points of connection, in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pan-European military world. It follows then, that what they did have in common was probably of great importance. Regimental *esprit de corps*, as an ideal shared by both officers and other ranks, thus became of great significance - it was one of the most important elements of the *collective* half of the pan-European martial culture.

In many ways *esprit de corps* can be seen as the individualistic values of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture made universal. The gentlemanly honor of the officers, and the "soldier-like" values of the common soldiers, (together with the sense of style that impregnated military life) motivated soldier and officer in individualistic and somewhat abstract ways. *Esprit de corps* was the mechanism whereby these individual values were connected to

⁵⁵⁰ Frederick the Great in *The History of My own Times, Frederick's Art of War*, 78.

those of other soldiers and officers, making a collective and concrete whole. Courage, loyal service, a handsome appearance, and reputation, the heart of the honor of the officer, and the soldier-like behavior of the common soldier, were, by the mechanism of *esprit de corps*, melded into brave, loyal, smart regiments, which also had good reputations. So, how was this *esprit de corps* created, nourished and strengthened? This question is especially pressing since it is not at all clear that the officers of the British Army, or of any other army of eighteenth-century Europe, consciously tried to build *esprit de corps*: it appears more as if the pre-national, pan-European martial culture assumed *esprit de corps* from its followers, and its followers acceded to its demands, and supplied it.

Esprit de corps however, is, in fact: "the spirit of the corps;" so before it could come into play, a group of men would have to be formed into a body, a collective whole. This was a long and involved process, and many things had to happen. For a regiment to be "fit for service" two separate sets of procedures had to be undertaken, one focused on individual skills and values, the other on collective training. In terms of individual training, it is obvious that soldiers must be trained and disciplined; the soldiers had to be brought under discipline, (or perhaps more accurately had to come to accept discipline) and the newer soldiers in particular had to be punished for misconduct and rewarded for good conduct to encourage them to become, and remain, trained and disciplined soldiers. Beyond this, recruits needed to be formally taught their individual skill: skills such as the manual of arms, and the details of guard duty by the non-commissioned officers, and the older soldiers needed sufficient training to keep those skills refreshed. Recruits also needed the informal instruction which came from living within the military community for a time and acquiring the unwritten lore and the attitudes of a soldier: they needed to become, in short, "soldier-like." In terms of collective training, both new and old soldiers needed to be drilled together to learn, or practice, their collective skills. All these processes takes time, and for this reason eighteenth-century armies drew a sharp distinction between experienced and inexperienced troops, and put a very high value on soldiers with long service.

The regiments manned by these trained and disciplined soldiers would then (hopefully) manifest their unity and prowess by displays of regimental *esprit de corps*. Regiments were given visible expressions of *esprit de corps*: symbols such as the regimental colors and the like; these symbols acted first to build, and later to express, the collective solidarity of the regiment.

Expressions of *esprit de corps* would also help to bind officers and common soldiers together, as both shared an interest in the collective honor of the regiment. Moreover, *esprit de corps* and its symbols would also provide a mechanism which officers could use to appeal to, motivate, and control their troops. *en masse*.

So how was this shared ideal of *esprit de corps* created and nurtured by the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pan-European military world? The answer is something of a puzzle. There were relatively few strong areas of interaction to be found between the officers and other ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century: training and discipline, which amounted essentially to drill and punishment, were the most important. It was in these areas of interaction that we must look for most of the mechanism that controlled and motivated the regiments of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pre-national, pan-European military world. Moreover it seems reasonable to assume that it was here, where the military acted as a collective, institutional, whole, that, to the extent that it was created and nourished by mid-eighteenth-century armies at all, most of the British Army's nurturing of *esprit de corps* might be found.

Nonetheless, training and discipline as explanations for the *esprit de corps* of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army seem inadequate. The degree of solidarity and *esprit de corps* displayed by the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, indeed of all armies of the mid-eighteenth-century military world, seems much stronger than can be accounted for by the feeble efforts devoted to its development. In the final analysis, the impression is left that regiments of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army were unified bodies with *esprit de corps*, not as a result of any effort to develop or inculcate these military virtues on the part of authority; but, rather, because soldiers of the pan-European military world were expected to demonstrate loyalty to their regiment, and *esprit de corps*, and simply did so. In short, it seems that the "contract" between the British Army (indeed, for all armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world) and its soldiers, included a responsibility for both parties to the bargain to respect and display *esprit de corps*, and by-and-large, both sides kept their half of the bargain.

Any military organization is an exercise in collectivization; this is a fancy way of saying that one of the principal objectives of any army is to turn individuals into part of a whole that will be greater than the sum of its parts. The goal is the obvious one, to produce a military unit (in mid-eighteenth-century terms, a regiment) that will be able to maneuver and fight together,

and will do so in spite of the action of the enemy and the hardships of campaign. The modern term for this military version of togetherness is cohesion, and it is almost tautological to state that cohesion is an important component of *esprit de corps*.

7.2 COHESION

"Cohesion" is a modern term for a long-understood military attribute. It is the ability of a military organization to stay together and function under the stresses of campaign and the dangers of battle. Saying that a unit is cohesive implies several things: first, that the socio-military structure of the unit is strong, meaning that the members of the unit have a degree of loyalty towards the unit, and towards one another, and will not easily abandon their unit. It also suggests that the members of that military unit also have a degree of confidence and trust in its leadership, and will generally attempt to follow their orders, and moreover, have the training to do so successfully. Perhaps most importantly saying that a unit is cohesive means that it will "hang in there," and "do what they gotta do," even when "the going gets tough;" in less colorful language, the unit has the collective will to try to do its duty. It is believed, with good reason, that cohesion is a pre-requisite for a unit to be military effective. As a practical matter, it is generally assumed that the way to build a cohesive military organization is for the unit to live and train together. It is also assumed that a unit that is cohesive will display at least a modicum of *esprit de corps* - unit pride.

While the term "cohesion" was not used, in this military sense, in the eighteenth-century, the concept was certainly understood. Most obviously, eighteenth-century military men realized that regiments that had trained together for a long time were much more likely to "stand" in battle than newly formed regiments. In fact "standing under fire" was almost the *sine qua non* of eighteenth-century infantry - this is the quality (discussed in the last chapter) that John Lynn described under the rubric of: "the battle culture of forbearance."

It is a crashing statement of the obvious to observe that mid-eighteenth-century British Army wanted cohesive regiments - regiments in which the soldiers were loyal to the leaders and were good comrades to one another: regiments, in short, which would remain functioning military units during hard campaigns, and would "stand" under fire during battle. With that in mind, what is surprising about the mid-eighteenth-century British Army is how little it did to produce any of these desirable results.

7.2.1 *Espirit de Corps* and Cohesion: A Modern Perspective

In arguing that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army did little to build cohesion, it is worthwhile to examine how a regiment of the regular British Army of the early twentieth-century, the 2nd Scottish Rifles, developed very strong cohesion and high *esprit de corps*. The 2nd Scottish Rifles became moderately famous during World War I, as the regiment that "went over the top" at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in 1915, with nine-hundred men, and returned with one-hundred and fifty. While those casualty figures were slightly overstated, (more accurately the regiment attacked with approximately seven-hundred men, of whom about five-hundred were killed or wounded) that is only a quibble, since the evidence is clear that, at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, the 2nd Scottish Rifles demonstrated incredible determination and courage. After several days of fighting, with less than three-hundred effective soldiers left, under the command of a reservist 2nd Lieutenant (the only officer not killed or too badly wounded to carry-on) and the Regimental Sergeant Major: the 2nd Scottish Rifles had completed a night approach march, and were preparing to attack again, when they were withdrawn from combat. By any standards, the conduct of this battalion was phenomenal, indicating a regiment with great cohesion, high morale, and admirable *esprit de corps*. What made this incredible military performance possible?

7.2.1.1 The 2nd Scottish Rifles at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle

In 1967, a British Army officer named John Baynes, (whose father had commanded a battalion of the 2nd Scottish Rifles after the Great War) decided to investigate the battalion's remarkable performance. He turned the results of his investigation into a book entitled *Morale: A Study of Men and Courage*.⁵⁵¹ This work has become a classic of military history, and while it is possible to disagree with some of Baynes' methodology, for most soldiers, and for most military historians, Baynes' book, and his conclusions, ring true. *Morale* can be read as a case study in

⁵⁵¹ John Baynes, *Morale: A Study of Men and Courage, The Second Scottish Rifles at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle, 1915*, London, Leo Cooper, 1967, 1987, hereafter: Baynes, *Morale*. The discussion of casualties is to be found on page 84.

cohesion and *esprit de corps*, and can therefore function almost as a checklist on how to develop these militarily very desirable conditions.

Baynes closes his work, by attributing the regiment's astonishing performance at Neuve Chapelle to its high morale, and to explain this high morale he lists five factors, they are worth quoting at length:

First, I would place Regimental loyalty; the pride in belonging to a good battalion, in knowing other people well and being known by them; in having strong roots in a well loved community.

Second, the excellent officer-other rank relationship; the high quality of the leaders, and the trust placed in them by their men; the mutual confidence and goodwill which developed in the harsh life of the trenches.

Third, strong discipline; the balance between self-discipline and the imposed sort.

Fourth, the sense of duty of all ranks; highly developed in the officer by his background,; developed in the soldier both by his training and by the realization that someone else would have to do his job if he failed to do it properly himself.

Fifth, sound administration, so that in spite of many difficulties the battalion was well provided with the necessities of war such as rations and ammunition.⁵⁵²

This list, it is worth repeating, was compiled by a professional soldier of the British Army, whose father had served in during World War I, and had commanded a battalion of the regiment that John Baynes was writing about. Moreover, as *Morale* was written during the 1960's, it was based upon interviews with, and questionnaires answered by, veterans of the Great War, as well as upon journals and letters. In short, while it should not be taken as gospel, the analysis presented by Baynes in *Morale* deserves to be treated seriously.

What is striking about this list is that, with the exception of item four, how very little of it applies to the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century. Most of the mechanisms Baynes cited were simply not in operation in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. To phrase this another way, by the standards of the early twentieth-century, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was doing everything wrong. To state this more historically, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was, unsurprisingly, quite different than the twentieth-century British Army; and, since the mid-eighteenth-century British Army developed regiments that were reasonably

cohesive, and had acceptable *esprit de corps*, its neglect of the cohesion and *esprit de corps* building methods described by Baynes provides a puzzle that calls out for explanation. To perceive the force of this argument, it might be worth while to compare John Baynes' list of factor contributing to high morale with the usual practices of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

7.2.1.2 Cohesion and the Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Army

Morale is a paen of praise to the British Army's "regimental system," and the immense *esprit de corps* it builds. In Baynes' list of reasons for the 2nd Scottish Rifle's high morale his first point bears repeating: "First, I would place Regimental loyalty; the pride in belonging to a good battalion, in knowing other people well and being know by them; in having strong roots in a well loved community." This is the heart of the modern British Army's famed "regimental system" in which a soldier joins not the British Army as whole, but one individual regiment, one often associated with his home county, and serves with it for most of his military career. This is the essence of what Baynes is talking about, a community of long-service soldiers who live together for a long period of time, and, as a result, build very strong bonds with one another, and therefore great regimental cohesion, and high *esprit de corps*. There is a tendency to think of this regimental system as old fashioned, and therefore ancient, but in fact, the regimental system of the British Army dates back only to the so-called Cardwell reforms of the 1870's. This was emphatically not the British Army of the mid-eighteenth-century.

While many of the soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army served for long periods in a "regimental" army: that is, an army where administrative functions were concentrated at the regimental level; perhaps counter-intuitively, it does not follow that the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier served within a "regimental system." It is certainly true that the common British soldier of the mid-eighteenth-century enlisted in a particular regiment, not the army in general, but there the comparison with the British Army of the early twentieth-century breaks down.

⁵⁵² Baynes, *Morale*, 253-254.

As has been true of most standing armies, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army spent more time at peace than at war, and more time at home than abroad. Inevitably the British Army developed a system to provide the requisite different levels of troops strength for regiments at home or abroad, and at peace or at war; and they also attempted to rotate (admittedly often over a very long period of time) regiments around the British isles, to overseas duty, and back home. It became quite common, in fact routine, for British soldiers to be moved from one regiment to another to accommodate the changing demands of peace and war and home and overseas service.

In his invaluable *Fit for Service*, J. A. Houlding describes the common pattern of rotation for British regiments in the eighteenth-century as they moved around Britain and overseas. What is noticeable was that, in peacetime, British regiments not sent overseas were allowed, partially as an economy measure, and partially as a reflection of the difficulty of recruiting soldiers, to shrink in size to about three-hundred to four-hundred-fifty or so men, or around thirty to fifty men per company. Those reduced regiments that it was not possible to station in England were then, usually, "parked" in Ireland, where they functioned, in effect, as a reserve of (though this term was not then used by the British Army) "cadre" regiments.

When these regiments were needed, to be sent overseas or on active service some of these cadre regiments could be quickly brought up to strength (around a thousand men per regiment and a hundred men per company) by "draughting" [drafting] trained men from regiments that were not being deployed, and transferring them to the regiments that were. The regiments that lost men would then recruit new soldiers and begin training them.⁵⁵³ Conversely, when a war ended, many regiments would simply be disbanded, others would have their establishments reduced, and, in either case, the men not discharged would often be redistributed to other regiments. For example, in August 1763, Henry Bouquet received an order from Jeffrey Amherst instructing him to implement the reduction of troops ordered after the conclusion of the Seven Years War. Amherst's letter read in part:

I Enclose you a Copy of an Additional Order from His Majesty, Empowering me to Cause as many Drafts to be made from any of the Reduced or Disbanded Corps, as may be wanted to Fill up the Several Regiments destined for the Service of North America;

⁵⁵³ J. A. Houlding, *Fit for Service: The Training of the British Army, 1715-1795*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981, 1-57, hereafter: Houlding, *Fit for Service*.

And I should have likewise sent you a Copy of the Orders & Instructions for the Reduction; but as the 42^d Regiment is Under the Establishment, and that the 77th, after Furnishing what Drafts may be Necessary for Compleating the 42^d are to Return to Britain there is no Occasion for Transmitting those Orders.

When the Service will Permit you to Form the 42^d Regiment, agreeable to the Enclosed Plan, I wold have you Compleat it by the Best Men You can find from the 77th Observing that Each Company must Consist of Forty Five Real Effectives

Should there by any of the Men of the 42^d that are Really Invalid, or are Entitled to their Discharge by the times for which they Enlisted being Expired You will Discharge them accordingly, giving the Invalids Passes to proceed to this place, that they may be Recommended to Chelsea, if they are Entitled thereto;⁵⁵⁴

What this meant was that, as a practical matter, many British soldiers would not be serving in the regiment they enlisted with, and when going on active service most British soldiers would either find themselves in a strange regiment, or with strangers in their ranks. While long service overseas or on campaign would help turn strangers into comrades, the fact that reinforcements often came in the form of new draughts would simply replicate the problem. In short, the type of long service regiment that Baynes describes was not the sort of regiment that existed in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

Moreover, as was discussed in chapter five, the mid-eighteenth-century soldier did not so much live with a regiment, as with a particular company, and as a practical matter, he was probably quartered in some "civilian" establishment. This is not the life described by Baynes, in which soldiers lived an isolated military existence in barracks, sharply marked off from the civilian world, a life that centered upon their regiment. Furthermore, it should be noted that the officers that Baynes described usually served most of their careers with one regiment, and indeed, by 1914, many had a family connection with the regiment they served with. Again, the situation was different in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army when officers, especially those with "interest," (friends or patrons able to advance their careers) or those able to purchase their rank, frequently moved from regiment to regiment. Moreover, mid-eighteenth-century British officers

⁵⁵⁴ Jeffrey Amherst to Henry Bouquet, New York, 7 August 1763, Henry Bouquet, *The Papers of Henry Bouquet: Volumes I - VI*, Donald H. Kent, Leonard, Autumn L. S. K., H. Stevens John L. Tottenham, Louis M. Waddell, eds.,

might well spend time, often long periods of time, on "half-pay" meaning that they were not on active duty, as well. In sum, neither mid-eighteenth-century British enlisted men, nor mid-eighteenth-century British officers were tied anywhere near as tightly to one regiment as were the officers or other ranks that Baynes' described.

The second point that Baynes cites, in explain the morale and cohesion of the 2nd Scottish Rifles, was: "the excellent officer-other rank relationship; the high quality of the leaders, and the trust placed in them by their men; the mutual confidence and goodwill which developed in the harsh life of the trenches."⁵⁵⁵ It would be very hard to argue that this sort of officer-other rank relationship prevailed in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army. Baynes cites, as an example of the leadership prevalent in the 2nd Scottish Rifles, the rule that: "No officer in the Scottish Rifles was allowed to take off any of his own equipment on return from a long march until he had inspected his men's feet and had seen them have a meal."⁵⁵⁶ It is quite impossible to imagine mid-eighteenth-century British officers inspecting their men's feet, and, moreover, most rode while their men walked. Baynes goes on to report that good officers in the 2nd Scottish Rifles knew the names of all the men in their company, and something about them as well, and the names of most of the men in their battalion. He describes the officers as leaders who would take infinite pains to sort out any problem their men might have.⁵⁵⁷ This level of involvement in the lives of their men probably did not exist in the mid-eighteenth-century either. It does not seem that mid-eighteenth-century British officers were not encouraged to learn the details of the lives of their men; (though, over time, some might have done so, particularly those enlisted men who had acted as their servants, or had served for a long period of time) and it is not at all clear that their men, in general, would have welcomed this level of involvement in any case.

For his third point Baynes cites strong discipline, made up of both self-discipline and discipline which was imposed.⁵⁵⁸ Discipline was discussed in chapter four; at this point, it is sufficient to repeat that, contrary to popular opinion, it is not at all clear that discipline in mid-eighteenth-century armies was strong, though punishments certainly were often very harsh. Baynes' final point concerned sound administration, the soldiers in the 2nd Scottish Rifles knew

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1951-1994, Vol. VI, 346, hereafter *Bouquet Papers I-VI*.

⁵⁵⁵ Baynes, *Morale*, 253-254.

⁵⁵⁶ Baynes, *Morale*, 121.

⁵⁵⁷ Baynes, *Morale*, 120.

that their superiors did everything in their power to insure that they were well looked after. Again, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army operated with a rather different set of assumptions. As has been made clear in previous chapters, the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier was largely expected to look after himself: in normal circumstance he purchased his own food, and he and his mess prepared it, for example. Moreover, as described in chapter four, his company officers were slowly absenting themselves from the administrative duties that had previously fallen to their lot. In short, mid-eighteenth-century British officers were not regularly taking the types of actions that early twentieth-century British officers took that helped show their soldiers that they were cared for, and that their officers looked after their well-being and valued them. Indeed, it seems probable that the early twentieth-century British soldier, as described by Baynes would have found it far easier to visualize himself living in the sort of nurturing patriarchy that was held to be the ideal mid-eighteenth-century household, than would the actual mid-eighteenth-century British soldier. In sum, the only point of comparison that might have held constant over time was Baynes' fourth, it seems that the sense of duty of both the officers and the other ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was as highly developed as that of those of the twentieth-century: it must be noted however, that the definition of duty was, in many cases, very different, and by twentieth-century standards often deficient.

It is clear that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was not taking the sort of actions that the early twentieth-century British Army was taking to build cohesion, *esprit de corps* and high morale. It is equally difficult to argue that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was taking the sort of actions that would prepare its soldiers to war. At best, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was an institution that prepared its soldiers to drill; fortunately however, drill, besides teaching the choreography of soldiering, provided some useful by-products as well.

7.2.2 Training and Muscular Bonding

Collective and individual training was obviously crucial in teaching soldiers to perform the complex maneuvers employed on mid-eighteenth-century battlefield. The very obviousness of this makes even more surprising the relatively haphazard approach to training taken by the mid-

⁵⁵⁸ Baynes, *Morale*, 253-254.

eighteenth-century British Army. As was detailed in the previous two chapters, formal individual training was largely limited to teaching the soldier the manual of arms and the *minutiae* of guard duty; whatever other "individual training" that took place was left to the informal enculturation of the household of the mess and the community of the company. (This was true for infantry at least, and infantry was, by far the largest part of any mid-eighteenth-century army; the story for cavalry and artillery was somewhat more complex.) Collective training, on the other hand, in the pre-national, pan-European military world, largely amounted to drill, and, as was discussed in the previous chapter, for the British Army at least, generally the more elementary levels of drill; and moreover, the drill performed often exhibiting a preoccupation with military style at the expense of practicality.

So the mid-eighteenth-century British soldier drilled a great deal. It is probably impossible to overstate the importance and the ubiquity which drill and ceremony had to the soldier in the British Army, and indeed in all European armies of the mid-eighteenth-century. The performance of drill could almost be described as ritualistic. The British Army split its drill into five elements of increasing complexity, the "manual exercise," the "platoon exercise," the "evolution," the "firings," and the "maneuvers,"⁵⁵⁹ and the soldiers of the British Army repeated this sequence over and over again.

This division of drill into a progressive series of exercise however, give a false impression, it implies that there was some sort of systematic plan of training soldiers for war. What was in place in the British Army, indeed in all mid-eighteenth-century armies, was a systematic plan for teaching soldiers drill. What was not in place was any attempt to systematically train soldiers to perform any of the other things besides drill that they would need to do on campaign and in battle. In effect, and unlike the early twentieth-century British Army that Baynes described, there was practically no other form of training in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army.

Drill then was generally the only form of training that mid-eighteenth-century armies undertook. Even mid-eighteenth-century field days, (which were generally few and usually occurred during the summer camps when the regiment was together and being reviewed) simply involved drill being performed on a larger scale than normal, and out in a field rather than on a parade ground. As a result all armies drilled and they spent a lot of time at it, even when, as was

argued in the previous chapter much of it seemed to be of little relevance to what happened on the battlefield. Nonetheless, even pointless drill was collective training of a sort, and collective training is obviously an important element in building *esprit de corps* and cohesion. What the various elements of drill had in common, was that they involved the soldiers performing rhythmic exercises in unison. Any activity performed as relentlessly as mid-eighteenth-century soldiers drilled must have had a significant impact. To attempt to describe the physiological and psychological effects of drill, historian William H. McNeill has coined the phrase “muscular bonding.”

“Muscular bonding,” McNeill believes, is the process that cause people to bond together, to achieve a sense of group cohesion when they perform rhythmic muscular exercise in unison.⁵⁶⁰ Drill, needless to say, can be described as rhythmic muscular exercise done in unison. (Indeed McNeill explicitly identifies it as such, and devoted much time to discussing its effects.) While muscular bonding is not a recognized physiological or psychological phenomena, as anyone with experience of being drilled can attest, McNeill is describing a very real phenomena.

McNeill argues that, when performing drill, armies were not only increasing their tactical effectiveness, they were also increasing their cohesiveness. Furthermore, it seems reasonable to suggest that since drill was a uniquely military exercise, they were reinforcing their identity as a separate and unique culture. Beyond this drill, also by definition, involved many men obeying the “word of command” of one man. Drill therefore was also a very unobvious reinforcement of the soldiers’ obedience and deference.⁵⁶¹ In short, when drilling, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was not only practicing battlefield maneuvers, and not only indulging its stylistic sense, it was also developing cohesion and obedience.

This suggests that, in some ways, drill was a very good investment in time for European armies. McNeill believes that drill engendered profound transformations in soldiers. It would so change these soldiers, he suggests, that armies, recruited from the dispossessed in Europe, would become such reliable supporters of the state that they were prepared to shoot down their own

⁵⁵⁹ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 160.

⁵⁶⁰ William H. McNeill, *Keeping together in Time: Drill and Dance in Human History*, Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1995, 2-4, hereafter: McNeill, *Keeping Together*.

⁵⁶¹ Sylvia Frey, *The British Soldier in America: A Social History of Military Life in the Revolutionary Period*, Austin, Texas, University of Texas Press, 135, hereafter Frey, *British Soldier*.

people when ordered.⁵⁶² McNeill also argues, quite convincingly, that the superiority of European armies over other, non-European, armies in modern times, is largely the result of the psychological superiority obtained as the result of drill.⁵⁶³ This, he believes, goes some ways toward explaining the success of European armies in the imperialistic expansion of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. During this period European armies repeatedly defeated non-European armies which were much larger, and did so without the technological edge in weaponry which would be present in the latter nineteenth century. While there were certainly other factors involved, nonetheless it is true that European armies in the eighteenth-century displayed, in comparison to non-European armies, impressive cohesion. Even if McNeil overstates his case somewhat, most soldiers, and many military historians agree that the process of drill has significant effects on those who are drilled, and most identify a sense of cohesion and a habit of obedience as a big part of what drill engenders.

One of the principle outward manifestations of successful cohesion and obedience is *esprit de corps*. Almost by definition, any functioning army must succeed in producing cohesive units with a least a modicum of *esprit de corps*. While cohesion and *esprit de corps* are not quite the same thing, it is hard to imagine one without the other, and it seems reasonable to assume that where one is present the other, to a degree at least, is to be found as well. If we accept McNeil's premise, drill helped build both cohesion and *esprit de corps*, and, in many ways, this was perhaps as important an outcome for the British Army and the other armies of the pan-European military world, as the tactical ability which was drill's stated purpose.

Building cohesion in this fashion, through group exercise, is however time-dependent: that is to say that the longer the same group of men drill together the stronger their cohesion - their shared sense of togetherness - will be. In the mid-eighteenth-century military world, this time-dependant collective training, was coupled with a system of individual training that, for the common soldiers, amounted to slow and subtle enculturation which also required time to become effective.. To put this in plainer language, new soldiers were slowly made a member of the military household of the mess and the community of the company, and, over time, learned and adopted the attitudes of a soldier of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture; they were also slowly bonded to the company and regiment over a period of time by repeatedly

⁵⁶² McNeill, *Keeping Together*, 131-132.

⁵⁶³ McNeill, *Keeping Together*, 3.

participating in drill. When you put all these time-dependant process together, it meant that there was an extremely profound difference between soldiers with short, and solders with long, periods of service; with long service soldiers far more trained and reliable that those with shorter service.

Obviously, this difference between short and long-service soldiers still exists today; but modern methods of training have attempted, and to a considerable degree succeeded, in minimizing the difference between new and experienced soldiers. Formalized basic training, and intensive military schooling aim to rapidly change "civilians into soldiers" by abruptly altering values and quickly imparting new skills.⁵⁶⁴ Since these methods were not used in the mid-eighteenth-century the difference between new and experienced soldiers was far greater in the pan-European military world: therefore experienced, long service, soldiers were highly valued. The high value attributed to long-service soldiers was justified because they supplied the framework around which the regiment both literally, and figuratively, formed

7.2.3 Short and Long Term Service

The other ranks of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army would have certainly come in many different sizes, shapes and flavors; nonetheless, the crucial distinction, in the eyes of their officers, would be between those who had served a long time with the regiment, and those who had not. In effect, the rank and file of a British regiment would consist of two different groups of soldiers, each with different attitudes and different interests. One group, which might be identified as "the cadre," consisted of the non-commissioned officers, musicians, long-service privates, and their families. The other group, who might be termed the "migrant labor," would consist of soldiers recruited relatively recently, soldiers "draughted" from other regiments, and, possibly, some men who had been impressed, or otherwise conscripted, into military service. The interaction between these two groups would set much of the tone of daily life in the regiment, and from the point of view of the officers, would go a long ways towards determining the military success, or otherwise, of the regiment as well.

⁵⁶⁴ An typical description of twenty-first century basic training, taken from a newspaper article, goes as follows: "The idea is to break the recruit down, instill discipline and make him a well-trained part of a cohesive fighting

7.2.3.1 "The Cadre" and the "Migrant Labor"

The first group of soldiers to be found in a mid-eighteenth-century regiment were those that could be termed: "the cadre;" they were the soldiers who stayed with the regiment, even when it was reduced in establishment during peacetime, or on return from active service, and was "parked" in Ireland. These were the men that the regiment's officers had protected from the drafting process. Though the term was not in use in the mid-eighteenth-century, they were enlisted men who had decided to make the army a career. In modern military slang, they were "lifers." At the end of their military career, when they were too old to soldier on, they would have at least some claim to patronage, or a place at the old soldiers hospital [home] at Chelsea, or the Royal Kilmainham Hospital in Ireland. To again quote Ned Ward, on the pattern of a soldier's life: "if he spends twenty years in Wars, and live to be Forty, perhaps he may get a Halberd [i.e. be promoted Sergeant]; and if he survives Three-score an Hospital . . ." ⁵⁶⁵ More generally, long-service soldiers were men (women who followed the drum could be considered long-service as well) who were relatively content with military life, and who had largely accepted the values of the pan-European martial culture.

The other group would be soldiers who were more transient - they were brought in to fill-up the ranks of the regiment for active service. These men might be newly recruited, they might have been coerced, since on some occasions during the mid-eighteenth-century, Britain impressed men for the army, or they might have been "draughted" from another regiment. When the establishment of the regiment was next reduced some of them might stay on and become part of "the cadre," but others would be discharged or drafted into other regiments, and many would have informally discharged themselves through the process of desertion. It seems self-apparent that the attitudes of this group towards military life might well be more mixed, and less positive, than that of "the cadre."

The first and most important task of any regiment which received "draughts" of new men would be to train them, and in the process of training them, integrate them into the regiment. It was upon the non-commissioned officers that the principal responsibility for training the new

unit." Dylan T. Loyan, "D. I.'s convicted of abusing recruits," in Cleveland, Ohio, *The Plain Dealer*, June 28, 2005, A8.

⁵⁶⁵ Quoted in Victor Neuberg, *Gone for a Soldier: A History of Life in the British Ranks from 1642*, London, Cassell, 1989, 18.

soldiers fell. The non-commissioned officers of the British Army were therefore men who discharged important responsibilities. Having skilled and knowledgeable non-commissioned officers would be critical to a regiment's success. Unlike the commissioned officers however, the non-commissioned officers were promoted from the ranks.

7.2.3.2 Non-Commissioned Officers and Promotion

While the numbers varied depending upon the authorized strength, normally each infantry company would have a compliment of five non-commissioned officers, two sergeants and three corporals, meaning that a regiment of ten companies would have twenty sergeants and thirty corporals, and possibly more.⁵⁶⁶ These non-commissioned officers probably did most of the hands-on supervision (both in a literal and metaphorical sense) of the British Army. In fact, since British officers were withdrawing themselves from many of the administrative duties they had formerly performed, it seems likely that the duties of the non-commissioned officers, and of the sergeants in particular, were actually increasing. The non-commissioned officers would have also conducted most of the individual, and much of the collective, drill of the soldiers. As a practical matter, corporals and sergeants would have been the authority figure that the private soldier most often encountered. Moreover, since non-commissioned officers were unlikely to be drafted, and unlike officers did not move from regiment to regiment, they were probably the strongest force for continuity in any regiment, and would be the font of most of the available institutional wisdom.

Traditionally the position of corporal has been the most difficult in the military hierarchy to successfully discharge. Each corporal supervised about one third of the private soldiers in his company, yet at the same time he lived among them, and his uniform and equipment were the same as the men he was to lead. All in all the position of corporal could be a difficult one, and for a corporal to assert his authority could be awkward. Henry Bouquet described the situation

⁵⁶⁶ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, Appendix C, 415-420, While this author has encountered references to a "Sergeant Major," that is a sergeant superior to other sergeants, he has not encountered an authorization for this rank, or any indication that he received extra pay. A reasonable conclusion would be that this person was either the senior sergeant of the regiment, [this is the literal meaning of "sergeant major"] or that the sergeant major was an appointment given by regiment's commander. It is also possible, perhaps even probable, that the senior sergeant in each company had additional responsibility and authority as well.

in his battalion thusly: "We have young ignorant soldiers. They have difficulty in understanding that a corporal who eats and sleeps with them can have the authority to give them orders."⁵⁶⁷

The position of sergeant was much more important. As a practical matter the sergeants did much of the actual management of his company. The distinctive insignia of a sergeant was his halberd, essentially an axe head, and spear point on a long staff. As a weapon of war, it had very little utility, but it performed several useful functions - it served, held horizontally, as a barrier to keep soldiers from moving backwards, and to shove them forward when it was necessary. Traditionally the sergeant's halberd was lashed with five other into a tripod to supply the frame to which a soldier was tied when he was to be flogged. As an edged weapon, like the officer's spoontoon, the halberd marked the sergeant as a man of higher status than the musket carrying rank and file. The sergeant was a man who directed others in the act of killing, and was not necessarily expected to do so himself.

Promotion has always one of the most important means of motivating soldiers. Monsieur de Lamont advised that the Captain select his sergeants carefully: "And since these officers have their dependence on him, he is to make choice of them upon full knowledge of their merit, and not upon recommendation of another."⁵⁶⁸ We know little about the mid-eighteenth-century British Army's non-commissioned officers as a group. Naturally it was from the ranks of "the cadre" that most non-commissioned officers would have been promoted. There was however, one significant caveat, sergeants had to be literate and numerate, as they had numerous rolls to keep, and many administrative duties to perform; and it would certainly be preferable that corporals were as well. (Since most sergeants were promoted from the ranks of the corporals, in practice most probably would have been.) Given that literacy was not yet general in the British Isles, this would vastly reduced the pool of potential non-commissioned officers; the corollary to this would be that, if a literate man stayed on as a long service soldier, and was relatively reliable and "soldier-like," his chances of promotion were probably rather good.

The need for literate sergeants does suggest that some tentative conclusion about the social origins of the non-commissioned officer can be drawn. John Baynes, in discussing the class origins of British soldiers before World War I, noted that non-commissioned officers, while

⁵⁶⁷ Bouquet to Loudon, November 5, 1756, *Bouquet I*, 25.

⁵⁶⁸ Monsieur de Lamont, "The Art of War, Containing the Duties of all Military Officers in Actual Service," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Richard Bell, 1776, 28, hereafter, Lamont, "Duties, or: de La Valliere, *Art of War*."

still from the lower classes of British society, came from a noticeably higher level than the privates.⁵⁶⁹ To put this more plainly, the non-commissioned officers that Baynes studied, came from what he described as the working class, while the privates came from what he termed the "real poor." Obviously, this cannot literally be true for the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, as the class structure looked very different in 1750 than in 1914. Nonetheless, while the suggestion that most non-commissioned officers, in the mid-eighteenth-century, came from a somewhat higher social level than the privates is speculation, it is speculation that has the ring of truth, especially given that literacy was a lot less common in 1750 than 1914. Given that respect for the social hierarchy, and deference, were still relatively common in mid-eighteenth-century Briton, this might have helped establish the authority of the sergeants in particular.

Whether or not sergeants came from a higher social plane than the rank and file, once they arrived at that rank, they were certainly treated as if they did. Their uniforms, for instance, were of a higher quality than that of the privates and corporals, and it was usually decorated with more and fancier lace. Perhaps most revealingly, when sergeants committed infractions of discipline, they were often protected from corporal punishment, and dealt with as if they were commissioned officers, rather than enlisted men: For instance, "Malcolm M^cDonald, private Soldier" was accused of "being drunk, Mutinous, & abusive to Ens: Carden . . . when on Guard." On being "found guilty of the crimes laid to his Charge" he was "sentenced to receive 500 Lashes."⁵⁷⁰ When, however, Joseph Horne, a sergeant in the Royal American Regiment was "Accused of & Try'd for Insulting Ens: MacDoald . . . The Court Sentence[d] The prisoner Joseph Horn to ask pardon of Ens: MacDonald at the Head of The Guards."⁵⁷¹ While these two charges were not quite identical, it is clear nonetheless that sergeants were being treated quite differently than privates

This suggestion that sergeants hailed from a slightly more elevated social strata than most enlisted soldiers is given additional weight by the fact that, once the rank of sergeant was reached, further promotion was not out of the question. (Monsieur de Lamont, in his booklet promised to: "inform them [Sergeants] what they are to observe, in order to gain reputation, and

⁵⁶⁹ Baynes, *Morale*, 134-137.

⁵⁷⁰ Horatio Gates, *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, Gregory James, Dunning, Thomas, eds., Microfilm Corporation of America, Sanford, North Carolina, 1979, Orderly Book, 2 January, 1762, hereafter: *Gates Papers*.

⁵⁷¹ *Gates Papers*, Orderly Book, 21 August 1760.

advance themselves to the greatest posts."⁵⁷²) Houlding has calculated that about four-hundred sergeants received commission as ensigns or lieutenants between 1739-and 1765.⁵⁷³ While one suspects that they did not always achieve social equality with others officers, and it is noticeable they tended to serve in regiments stationed outside Britain, they also seemed to have been valued for their military knowledge; they tended to be appointed as adjutants, or in other positions where their expertise would be useful. This meant that the impact that they had on the British Army was probably greater than their numbers suggest. A typical example would be Lieutenant Elrington of the fourth battalion of the Royal American Regiment, who, had served as a "Sergeant Major in England but makes a very good Officer and knows his Duty," and was appointed Adjutant of the fourth battalion.⁵⁷⁴

Traditionally a military organization has been made up of two distinct and mutually exclusive groups, commissioned officers, and enlisted soldiers,⁵⁷⁵ while sergeants have been the mediating figures between the two. Those sergeants who were commissioned as officers had crossed a barrier, a barrier that in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was very high, with noticeable differences on each side. Nonetheless, in many ways officers and sergeants shared a role in common, both were supervisors and managers; their business was not so much to do things themselves as to direct and encourage others, usually others in fairly large numbers, in the doing. This is never an easy task, but it was made harder in the mid-eighteenth-century by an interesting rhetorical and conceptual absence: the vocabulary for encouraging others to work together, and explain how it was done was surprisingly limited, and many of themes available to twentieth- and twenty-first century officers were unavailable to those of the eighteenth-century.

⁵⁷² de Lamont, "Duties," 15.

⁵⁷³ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 105

⁵⁷⁴ Lord Loudoun to the Duke of Cumberland, New York, April 25-June 3, 1757, in *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1765: Selected Documents from the Cumberland Papers in Windsor Castle*, Stanley McCory Pargellis, ed., New York, D. Appelton - Century Company, 1936, 355.

⁵⁷⁵ See John James, *The Paladins: A social history of the RAF up to the outbreak of World War II*, London, Macdonald, 1990, 135, for a lucid psychological and sociological description of the difference between these two groups.

7.3 THE CASE OF THE MISSING METAPHORS

What is noticeable, when reading eighteenth-century military tracts, is the absence of two great metaphors, metaphors which are almost constantly invoked today to explain the operation of modern armies. These are concepts of the work place and of teamwork. References to working together, or the workplace as an analogy for military life were effectively unknown. Equally unknown were references to team sports, team spirit, or teamwork, as an explanation for how an army should function. When this absence is compared to the ubiquity that exhortations to working as a team have in military life today, two things becomes clear: first, this rhetorical absence is not merely a linguistic curiosity; since both mid-eighteenth-century battle tactics and twenty first century battle tactics depend on a large number of people working closely and uniformly together, the lack of these metaphors represents a real-lack in the mid-eighteenth-century. The absence of the metaphor of the workplace or of teamwork had consequence in the way in which British officers understood the functioning of a military organization, and it affected how they prepared their men for work and battle. Second, so vital is this concept to military endeavors that if working together and teamwork were not available as metaphors, it is clear that something must have taken their place in the mid-eighteenth-century military world.

The absence of work place or team sports analogies are not particularly surprising: in the mid-eighteenth-century, large-scale workplaces, while not unknown, were not yet common; and team sports had not yet achieved anything approaching the popularity (one might say the fetishization) they enjoy today. Taken together, the absence of these two metaphors also put real limits on the rhetoric available to leaders of the British Army, and more generally, of the pre-national pan-European military to use in encouraging their men to work together, and in explaining how working together is done. (The closest equivalent available to military writers seems to have been the imagery of a machine, and even this was not yet a commonplace in the mid-eighteenth-century. In regards to the work place metaphor, it is also worth noting that the metaphors in fact seem to have gone in the opposite direction, those supervising the earliest large-scale "manufactories" often reached to the military metaphor to describe their operation.) This rhetorical *lacunae*, combined with the relative ineffectiveness of appeals to nationalism and

patriotism, forced officers to constantly recycle certain well-worn themes: punishment, reward, military honor and *esprit de corps* were the perennial staples of the military pep-talk and the pre-battle blarney.

7.3.1 Whatever Happened to the Primary Group?

The lack of these analogies had real world consequences: their absence seemed to have affected the way officers of the British Army, and other armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world conceptualized the organization of their armies and the leadership of their troops. This can be seen most clearly in the way that mid-eighteenth-century armies commonly organized "fatigues," "details," "detachments", "parties," and in fact, the way they organized for battle itself.

It is axiomatic in any army today that whenever possible the "primary group" should be kept together. The primary group is generally understood to be a group of four to eight men who form particularly close bonds, in modern military organizational terms the primary groups corresponds to a "team," "squad," or "section," these are the smallest and most fundamental of military units. Usually the "primary" group lives, works, and trains together - therefore in modern military man-management, when a group of men is needed for any task, one sends a primary group, or multiples of a primary group to accomplish it. This is an entirely rational procedure, since the primary group has formed close interpersonal bonds, the group will work well together, and aid one another when necessary, and since the group has trained and lived together, they will display team work and skill at the task as well. What this policy means in practice, in today's armies, is if there is a job for around four soldiers, a team will be sent, if eight a squad, if forty a platoon, and so on up the military organizational chart. This policy is so commonplace that it passes without discussion today, and is automatic part of any officer's management of his troops.

It is quite noticeable that the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and indeed, the pre-national, pan-European military world did not operate upon this assumption. Generally when a "party" needed to be formed for any purpose, the standard procedure was to draw the necessary soldiers equally from the various sub-units concerned. Brigade orderly books regularly have tables showing how many subalterns, sergeants, corporals, musicians, and privates each regiment was to supply for guards, instead of, for instance, having one regiment at a time supply one

company of soldiers.⁵⁷⁶ Most "details," "detachments" and "fatigues," were formed in the same way: rather than ordering one regiment to supply one company, or whatever the number of men required, several regiments would each be required to supply a fraction of the men required. Likewise, when a number of troops were needed for a task within a regiment, rather than detailing one company, or fraction of a company for a task, each company would supply an equal number of men.

Perhaps most surprisingly, combat patrols, where one would assume an established military structure would be desirable were often formed by this method of "detail." For instance on July 29, 1777, General Burgoyne's army sent out: "a Strong Reconnoitring party . . . It consisted of Canadians, a party of Savages, and two Subalterns of the British with about 36 privates of the Grenadiers, and Light Infantry. The whole commanded by Monsr. Boucherville, a Canadian Captn."⁵⁷⁷ Even if we grant that the Indians and the Canadians brought special skills that the British regulars lacked, by modern military standards drawing the British regulars from two different military organizations would amount today to military malpractice.

This disregard for the primary group was reflected in the way the British Army organized its regiments for battle as well. A British regiment was administratively organized into companies commanded by captains. Its tactical organization however was completely different. A British regiment reorganized itself for battle, moving from the larger to the smaller, into: "grand divisions," "divisions," and "platoons." In theory at least, this was done with complete disregard for the regiments administrative organization; the regiment was lined up, and the nine line companies were divided into sixteen platoons, with the grenadier company forming two more. As the platoons were to be equal in size, and the number of platoons was not proportional to the number of companies, it would be quite possible for a soldier to be forming with relative strangers around him. Moreover, as the officers were then also distributed proportionally, a soldier might find himself going into battle under a strange officer, and an officer could find himself leading relative strangers into battle.⁵⁷⁸ In short, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army does not seem to have had believed that keeping the primary group intact, or indeed

⁵⁷⁶ *Gates Papers*, Orderly Book, 21 August 1760, 23 August, 1760.

⁵⁷⁷ *For Want of a Horse: Being A Journal of the Campaigns against the American in 1776 and 1777 conducted from Canada, by an officer who served with Lt. Gen. Burgoyne*, Stanley, George F. G., ed., Sackville, New Brunswick, The Tribune Press Limited, 1961, 29 July, 1777, 81, hereafter: *1777 Campaign Journal*.

⁵⁷⁸ Houlding, *Fit for Service*, 318-321.

keeping men of the same unit together, was at all important; and this form of organization for battle, and disregard for the primary group was common throughout the rest of the European military world as well.

There were reasons, logical to the mid-eighteenth-century pan-European military world for these practices. As has been discussed earlier, an army was conceived of partly as a geometric formation - a line of battle. If you assign an entire company at once to, say, guard duty, there would be a literal hole in the line of battle: thusly the policy of pulling a few men from several different companies or regiments minimized the holes in the line of battle. Likewise, it seemed necessary for precision of maneuver that all the sub-units of a battalion be of equal size, thusly the division of a regiment into grand divisions, divisions, and platoons, instead of the more organic companies. It must be said however that none of these reasons hold up very well, and one suspects that stylistic values lurk behind many of these practices. Beyond this, one is led to the conclusion that the mid-eighteenth-century military world simply did not adequately appreciate the importance of primary group bonds and of teamwork.

It is fair to say that these military habits were starting to change. It would become more and more common for the British Army in North America to send out its parties by company instead of detailing them from the line. By the beginning of the nineteenth-century the British Army would begin to make the company synonymous with the division and so bring its tactical and administrative organization in line. It seems however to have taken the British Army an awful long time to have adopted what seem to be very common-sensical man-management procedures; and it also seems clear that the absence of the idea of the workplace, or of teamwork put the leaders of the British Army at an intellectual disadvantage in the way that they organized and used their manpower. An inadequate understanding of the importance of teamwork would also lead to real rhetorical disadvantages as well, and it forced leaders, when speaking to their troops, to recycle the same limited number of themes.

7.3.2 A Limited Rhetoric

Absent the useful metaphors of the workplace, team work and sports, and with appeals to patriotism and nationalism less potent in the pan-European military world of the mid-eighteenth-century than they would later become, the rhetorical arsenal for encouraging and explaining to

soldiers how they should act, and why they should fight in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, or indeed any army of the pan-European military world, was limited. This meant that punishment, reward, military honor and regimental spirit were about the only rhetorical *tropes* available to explain how and why soldiers should act collectively. In short, do this because you will be punished if you don't was the negative argument; the positive argument was: do this for either your own honor or the honor of the regiment, or for reward. Since, as has been discussed previously, coercion and reward were crude instruments and not really very effective, personal and regimental honor were the most effective motivators available to mid-eighteenth-century officers.

Therefore, soldierly honor and *esprit de corps* were vitally important concepts to the mid-eighteenth-century military world. They offered the strongest arguments available to explain why a soldier should do his duty and fight for his regiment. These motivators however, would not necessarily have a strong effect on recruits or men who had not made a commitment to military life. Appeals to soldierly honor and *esprit de corps* would likely have had their greatest effect on fully trained, experienced, and committed soldiers- on the "compleat soldier."

7.3.3 The "Compleat Soldier:" Attitudes and Differential Enculturation

What made a fully trained soldier, in mid-eighteenth-century terms, and how was this soldier produced? While no single definition is available, it seems reasonable to suggest the following: the mid-eighteenth-century British Army believed that the "compleat soldier" was "soldier-like" and disciplined in his behavior, had internalized the military sense of style, possessed skill-at-arms, (that is, he knew his drill) was loyal to his comrades, manifested *esprit de corps*, and had some experience of military service. In sum, they would display, an understanding of the military way of doing things, and perhaps most importantly, they would accept, and possibly even enjoy, military life. Producing a trained and discipline soldier, a "compleat soldier" was a time-consuming process, it did not happen quickly, and for this reason experienced soldiers were relatively valuable resources, not to be expended lightly.

The differences between short and long term soldiers was not only a difference in military skills, but even more dramatically, a difference in attitudes. Why should there be different attitudes toward military service between short, and long-service soldiers. The answer is not

surprising, it can largely be explained as a matter of time. As has been argued in the two previous chapters, the common soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army were not so much abruptly changed into soldiers, as they were gradually enculturated into the martial world and so became "soldier-like."

Long-service soldiers, and non-commissioned officers, that is, members of the "cadre," had become "soldier-like" in their attitudes; broadly speaking they had accepted the values of the pre-national, pan-European military world, and had committed to them in general, and to the British Army (perhaps more accurately to one regiment of the British Army) in particular. In short, they had been enculturated to the pan-European martial culture. They had put down roots in the pan-European military world and the British Army, and for many, their families would have done so as well; it would be their wives and children who would supply the majority of the camp-followers, and, as discussed in chapter five, it seems that many camp followers saw themselves as in the army, and part of the martial world as well. This enculturation over time was a particularly important process since so much of what went into making the "complete soldier" was unwritten custom and tradition. Naturally, it was generally those with long service, particularly those with some education, who were selected for promotion to the ranks of corporal and sergeant.

The "migrant labor," on the other hand, had almost certainly not spent as much time in the army, as had members of the cadre. Obviously newly recruited or impressed soldiers, by definition, had not spent much time in the army. Some might well be unhappy with their new occupation, and wish to be elsewhere. When so much of a soldier's training was informal, and consisted of adopting values that were learnt over time this means that most of the "migrant labor" would not have had the time to learn the unwritten material, and to be enculturated into the pan-European martial culture. Moreover, the fact that so many of the "migrant labor" might well have not wished to be there at all, would probably have meant they would not yet have made the attitudinal shift involved in accepting military discipline; this in turn would be likely to generate problems in an army where discipline was generally weak, and largely dependent upon the rank and file accepting and enforcing martial standards of behavior.

Soldiers drafted from other regiments might well have more time in the army, and have begun the process of enculturation, but, it is still a safe assumption that they would have had relatively less time in the army than members of "the cadre;" since regiments were normally

very unwilling to give up their experienced soldiers, it seems certain that the overwhelming majority of soldiers who were drafted would not have been very long in the service, or were soldiers who, for whatever reason, their regiment was glad to see the back of. (The major exception to this rule would have been at the end of a war when entire regiments were being disbanded.) Furthermore, as was discussed above, even if drafted soldiers had, in principle, become "soldier-like," and accepted the values of the martial culture, there was still the very specific issue of cohesion - it would take them a period of time to build bonds with their new comrades in their new companies and regiments. It is safe to assume moreover that some, perhaps many, of the soldiers drafted into other regiments would be less than pleased at being moved from a regiment where they had begun to feel at home, to a strange place and strange people. A significant number of drafted soldiers might well have arrived at their new regiments anywhere from slightly to significantly unhappy with military life. While drafting soldiers was vitally necessary to bring regiments up to strength in numerical terms, in military-social terms it was almost certainly a profoundly mixed blessing.

7.3.3.1 Differential Enculturation and Regimental Cohesion

Given the "cadre" system with which it operated then, when embarking upon a war the mid-eighteenth-century British Army immediately faced a series of problems: The policy of drafting men, meant that most regiments began active service with a significant portion of its strength not fully trained, not fully integrated into the regiment and not fully assimilated into the martial culture. Furthermore, lacking modern methods of training, mid-eighteenth-century armies in general, and certainly the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, took far longer to turn new recruits into fully trained men, with the attitudes of soldiers, than does a modern army. Given, however, enough time to allow the "migrant labor" portion of the regiment to become fully drilled, settled into the regiment, and sufficiently enculturated to become "soldier-like," a regiment might become very formidable indeed.

We might well doubt that many, perhaps even most, of the "migrant labor" portion of the typical regiment ever fully accepted the role of soldier. With however, a reasonable ratio of "the cadre," who had become "soldier-like" to newer soldiers who had not, and given the close-order tactics of the time which put these men in close physical proximity to the "migrant labor," and

with enough drill to build a reasonable degree of cohesion, then the "soldier-like" could normally carry the rest along. Absent these conditions however: if, for whatever reason, "the cadre" was weak, or if the proportion of "cadre" to "migrants" was low, or if the regiment was caught right after being filled up with new men, and, especially if the regiment's physical formation was broken up on the battlefield, (this both removing the officers and "cadre" from proximity to the "migrants" and ratcheting up uncertainty as the lessons of drill were suddenly voided) then very bad things could happen, and the regiment might dissolve ("break" was the common expression in period) in battle.

It seems likely that this was exactly what happened to the unfortunate General Braddock at the Battle of the Monogahela. In any contest of the most reviled general's in the history of the British Army, Edward Braddock would be a serious contender for the winner. He as gone down in history as the incompetent, unimaginative, bull-headed commander, who, ignoring the sage advice of colonial leaders experienced in backwoods fighting, foolishly led his soldiers into ambush by the French and Indians at the Battle of the Monogahela on July 8, 1755. In this case the judgment of history is almost certainly unfair. There is strong evidence which argues that Braddock was a very competent officer who was let down by his troops.

The two regiments of British regulars which were Braddock's principle fighting force, the 44th and 48th Foot, were not the thoroughly trained and tightly disciplined regiments that they are sometimes portrayed. Instead both had been "upon the Irish establishment," before being deployed to North America, and the plan was that: "upon their present low footings [they were] to be complemented in America[.]" It was hoped that "the officers of the 2 Irish regiments now proposed would be sufficient with their men to discipline any new recruits[.]"⁵⁷⁹ This plan was half fulfilled. The two regiments were made up to a strength of about five-hundred men each, by drafts from other regiments, before they embarked for North America, in the late autumn of 1754. They were still receiving recruits in April of 1755.⁵⁸⁰ What they did not have was enough time to train their recruits and build cohesion in their ranks. The results of this were tragic. In the not yet very experienced military opinion of George Washington, Braddock's troop "were struck

⁵⁷⁹ Thomas Robinson to the Duke of Newcastle, 22 Spetember 1754, quoted in Lee McCardell, *Ill-Starred General: Braddock of the Coldstream Guards*, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1958, 124-125, hereafter: McCardell, *Ill-Starred General*.

⁵⁸⁰ McCardell, *Ill-Starred General*, 136, 178

with such a panick that they behaved with more cowardice than it is possible to conceive[.]”⁵⁸¹
A more measured view suggests that, almost predictably, the 44th and 48th Foot, filled with drafted men and new recruits, who had not been fully trained, or fully assimilated, broke under the strain of combat. They had not had the time to build the sense of community, cohesiveness, and *esprit de corps*, which regiments which had trained together and lived together for longer periods of time possessed. With more time to train, these regiments would have been much less likely to break, and if broken, much more likely to reform.

Regiments which broke and ran suffered some measure of disgrace; if they reformed quickly the disgrace would be minimal, but in any case the regiment had lost some degree of its honor, as had the soldiers who made up its rank and file, since unlike the individualistic and personal honor of the officer and the gentleman, the honor of the common soldier was primarily vested in the collective honor of his regiment. Nonetheless, the honor of the common soldier was not a trivial thing to his officers, it was vitally important because it formed the basis of their most potent means of motivation and control.

⁵⁸¹ George Washington to Mary Ball Washington, Fort Cumberland, Md, 18 July 1755, in George Washington, *The Papers of George Washington: Colonial Series, Volumes 1-7, Revolutionary War Series, Volume 1*, W. W. Abbot, Dorothy Twohig, Philander D. Chase, Beverly H. Runge, Frederick Hall Schmidt, eds., Charlottesville, Virginia, University Press of Virginia, 1983-1991, 336, hereafter: *Washington Papers, Vol. 1*.

7.4 THE HONOR OF THE PRIVATE SOLDIER

Contrary to the assumptions of many commentators, mid-eighteenth-century enlisted soldiers were understood by their officers to possess a type of military honor, it was, however, honor of a very different type than that possessed by the officers. In contrast to the military honor of the officers, which was expressed individually, the honor of the enlisted men found its principle expression collectively, in the honor of their regiment. The values that the regiment as a whole embodied were, however, similar to the values that officers as individuals embraced. That is, the regiment as a whole was expected to fight courageously, and serve faithfully and loyally. The regiment was also expected to take pride in its appearance, and even be jealous of its reputation. These values were, however, being acted upon in a group setting: the outward manifestation of these values, this honor, took the form of *esprit de corps*.

7.4.1 *Espirit de Corps*

This distinction was well understood by mid-eighteenth-century commanders, and was an important tool in their ability to command. The best examples of this is to be found in the army that the British, as well as most other European armies used as a model in the mid-eighteenth-century: the Prussians. True to the antecedent to his most famous pronouncement quoted at the beginning of this chapter, Frederick the Great, allowed his common soldiers their sense of honor, and he made use of it. On December 5th, 1757, at Leuthen, Frederick the Great was in desperate straits. Greatly outnumbered by the Austrians, he came, as near as this harsh man ever did, to appealing to his soldiers. He stated that he intended to attack and: “if any regiment of cavalry shall fail to crash straight in to the enemy, when ordered, I shall have it dismounted immediately after the battle and turned into a garrison regiment. If any infantry battalion so much as begins to waver it will lose its colours and its swords, and I shall have the braid cut from its uniforms.”⁵⁸²

⁵⁸² Duffy, Christopher, *The Army of Frederick the Great*, New York, Hippocrene Books Inc., 1974, 176, hereafter: Duffy, *Frederick the Great*.

Here Frederick the Great was threatening his soldiers, but he was threatening them on two levels, and neither, it is worth noting, involve physical punishment. The principle threat, the one mentioned first, was that of collective disgrace and was aimed at the entire regiment. Being dismounted was a disgrace to cavalymen, and garrison regiments were the home of the worst soldiers, and the old and worn out. For a regiment to lose its colors was the greatest disgrace that could befall it. The second portion of Frederick's threat however, was aimed at the individual soldier, and its terms suggest that even the private soldiers were understood to have some degree of personal honor as well. Frederick threatened that infantrymen would lose their swords, and to lose the sword was to lose the symbol of both the military profession and personal honor. The threat to have the braid cut off their uniform coats was directed at their appearance, and it suggests that Frederick, at least, believed that this was important to his soldiers. In short, Frederick's appeal, (which to modern ears seems indistinguishable from a threat) operated on two levels, it was principally directed at collective honor, with a secondary appeal directed at the enlisted men's sense of themselves as soldiers.

In the Prussian Army of his time, Frederick the Great's "appeal" worked. We are told that, after Frederick the Great's speech before the battle of Leuthen quoted above: "The old warriors, who had already won so many battles under Frederick, shook each other by the hand and promised to stand by one another loyally. They made the young troops swear not to shrink before the enemy, but to go straight at them regardless of the opposition."⁵⁸³ Many years after the war, veterans were still reduced to tears whenever that magical speech was repeated.⁵⁸⁴ Odd as this reaction seems to us today, nonetheless, it is clear that even common soldiers in the eighteenth-century martial culture were understood to possess a type of military honor, and would respond to appeals that were directed at it.

This type of motivation or, depending upon one's point of view, manipulation, was not, by any means, confined to the Prussian Army. It was utilized in the mid-eighteenth-century British Army as well. There is at least one recorded case where a sergeant threatened to strip the facings from the uniform of Neal Cosgrove, a soldier of the 43rd Regiment (who was accused of theft and later deserted) "as he thought him a disgrace to the Corps."⁵⁸⁵

⁵⁸³ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 176.

⁵⁸⁴ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 176.

⁵⁸⁵ Quoted in Stephen Brumwell, *Redcoats: The British Soldier and War in the Americas, 1755-1763*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2002, 115, hereafter: Brumwell, *Redcoats*.

It is worth repeating that it is not intended to suggest that the enlisted soldiers' sense of military honor was identical to that of his officers. Frederick the Great's speech made explicitly clear that, while a private soldiers' individual sense of honor was understood to exist, (after all it was the individual who would lose his braid and sword) this was secondary to their corporate sense of honor; a corporate sense that was bound up in the collective body of his regiment. This collective honor found its expression in *esprit de corps*, or, in less refined language, unit pride. The punishments that Frederick the Great threatened with first were collective disgraces that were directed at the group. The entire regiment would be shamed by its demotion to garrison infantry, or the loss of its colors. Note that even when the punishment was applied to individuals, loss of swords or braid, for example, it was inflicted *en masse*, there was no suggestion that punishment would be distributed on a case-by-case basis, or that any effort would be made to sort the brave from the cowardly.

When comparing the honor of the other ranks with that of the officers a model emerges: it seems as if the armies of mid-eighteenth-century Europe operated on the following set of assumptions: officers, it was believed, were primarily concerned with their individual honor, while enlisted men looked principally to the collective honor of their regiment; conversely, for officer, the collective honor of the regiment was of secondary (though still great) concern, as was true for the individual military honor of the enlisted soldier. This difference can be illustrated by the enormous emphasis laid by officers on their individual reputations, while it seems to have been assumed that the other ranks were more concerned with the collective reputation of the regiment.

This distinction, between the individual honor of the officers, and the collective honor of the other ranks, seems broadly consistent with social practices in Europe at this time. Gentlemen were allowed some measure of what later would be termed individuality but the lower orders, from whence the common soldiers came, were still often dealt with on a group basis. On the continent, obligations such as payment of taxes, and the provision of conscripts for military service were often placed upon territorial, social or corporate bodies, rather than upon individuals. Likewise, immunity from obligations often was given to distinct groups of peoples, not individuals. While Britain was moving away from this sort of corporate society, the older ideals still had a great deal of life left in them.

In short, the mechanisms of the mid-eighteenth-century state, as well as those of culture and society, were more often geared to dealing with groups than with individuals. It should not be surprising then to discover that the martial culture often dealt with its enlisted soldiers *en masse*; both in terms of their positive motivations, as seen in appeal to their collective sense of soldierly honor, and in terms of negative motivation, such as attempts to shame the group. Moreover, these motivations, whether positive or negative, were consistent with a common sense idea of how battlefields must have worked. It is hard to imagine that soldiers could have been regularly driven forward solely by threat of punishment, although these threats were clearly made by all armies. (Note again that even Frederick the Great, the embodiment of harsh coercive discipline, did not, in the above example, threaten his soldiers with physical punishment, or proclaim that they would be driven to fight.) Punishments were unpleasant, but dying was worse. Even a threat of execution might be more distant and less fearsome than the immediate reality of a battlefield. There would need to have been positive motivations to bring soldiers to advance toward the fire and steel of the enemy. Furthermore, battlefields were often very confusing places; and it was quite likely that many individual acts of both courage and cowardice would go unnoticed, therefore making individual rewards and punishments sometimes difficult to arrange. Thus the necessity of a collective sense of honor which worked upon soldiers as a group. As the author of the handbook for the Norfolk Militia put it:

Indeed the lance, the pike, the sword, and shield, and the other weapons that were used before the invention of gunpowder do not require the precision and uniformity in the use of them, which fire-arms do; neither indeed do they admit of it; for, with these weapons, every thing must chiefly depend on the valour, strength, dexterity, and skill of the individuals; and every man must exert himself in proportion to his natural and acquired abilities, which are very unequal in different men: whereas fire-arms have reduced mankind more to a level; and, in fact, in the ancient histories we read continually, of the brave actions and feats of arms, or particular heroes, excelling in valour and strength: on the contrary, in the modern histories, private valour seldom, but by great chance, is remarked or recorded; though we find frequent relations of whole bodies of men, which have signalized themselves, and are there praised for their firmness and discipline.⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸⁶ *Norfolk Militia*, xi.

One is free to doubt that all, particularly all of the enlisted men, shared in a sense of military honor, even in the collective sense of regimental honor. These were the values that the officers wished them to share, and that they attempted, to some slight degree, to inculcate in the men, but many a soldier must have resisted them.⁵⁸⁷ As was discussed above, European armies did try to hold onto their soldiers for long service, and it does seem plausible to suggest that the non-commissioned officers, and the longer service soldiers, would be more likely to hold these values than newly enlisted, and particularly conscripted, soldiers.⁵⁸⁸ From the point of view of motivating and controlling the regiment, however, these might have been enough. If enough members of the regiment shared these values, particularly the older soldiers and the leaders, and evidence suggests that they usually did, then social pressure would probably be able to ensure that the newer soldiers would be forced to act as if they shared them as well.

7.4.2 Symbols

The importance attached to the honor of the regiment, can help to explain, what, to twenty-first century eyes, appear to be some of the more bizarrely ornamental manifestations of the pre-national European martial culture: the cult of colors and standards, the etiquette of "posts of honor," and the ceremony of capitulation (surrender) which so often involved attempts to preserve these items. What makes these manifestations of martial culture doubly interesting was that they seem to be some of the very few examples of efforts on the part of authority to consciously and deliberately reinforce regimental honor and *esprit de corps*. If colors, posts of honor, and other items of this nature are understood to be the symbolic expression of the collective honor of enlisted men, then the attention given to them, which seems so overdone to twenty-first-century eyes, becomes more understandable.

7.4.2.1 Colors

Colors, (the term used by the mid-eighteenth-century British Army to describe the flags carried by infantry) and standards, (the flags of cavalry regiments) were the visible embodiment of the

⁵⁸⁷ Frey, *British Soldier*, 112-130.

regiment, and of its honor. In the seventeenth-century, generally each company of foot, or troop of horse, or company of dragoons had its individual color, known respectively as an ensign, cornet or guidon. Not coincidentally these were also the titles given to the most junior officers in the company or troop, who had the responsibility of carrying them. By the mid-eighteenth-century the custom was, in the British Army, for each battalion of infantry to have two colors, (still often termed ensigns) and each squadron of cavalry one (the term cornet remained in use for the rank, but had fallen out of use for the flag) standard. These colors were considered objects of near-mystical importance, and were treated with military honors. They were, for instance, carefully guarded, Monsieur de Lamont informs us that: "The Standard guard is at the head of every regiment of Horse, to guard the Standard;"⁵⁸⁹ and it was the Cornet's principle duty to see that this happened: "I know not any positive business he has but to carry his standard, and provided he knows he is never to take it abroad without two Troopers on his sides to guard it, I think he knows all he is obliged to know."⁵⁹⁰ Indeed, it was even held that guarding the colors was, in and of itself, an honor. "A sentinel placed before the colours, and at the door of the commanding officer, is a post of honour."⁵⁹¹ There was certainly an attempt to make the colors an object of veneration to the soldiers, using veneration in both a secular, and, to some degree, in a religious sense.

The British Army surrounded its colors with elaborate ceremonies, the importance of this ceremony is indicated by the following detailed instructions for bringing the colors from the place where they were lodged, to their regiment, please note that only a portion have been quoted below:

The officers having taken their posts, the colours are thus to be sent for: viz.

The major orders the grenadier drummers and fifers to beat and play the drummer's call; which is a warning for the Officers who carry the colours, the drummers and fifiers. He then orders a flam; upon which the Officers, drummers, and fifers face to the right, the Officers advancing their espontoons

at the same time; on the immediate sound of another flam, they march to the head of the grenadiers, and turn to their proper front. The Captain then orders the company to advance their arms, and marches off in the following order.

⁵⁸⁸ Frey, *British Soldier*, 118.

⁵⁸⁹ de Lamont, "Duties," 117.

⁵⁹⁰ de Lamont, "Duties" 85.

⁵⁹¹ Universal Military Dictionary, POST, 207.

[A diagram shows the formation to be used.]

So soon as the Captain comes to the place where the colours are lodged, he must draw up the company three deep, with the sergeants in the rear; and then give the following words of command.

Fix your bayonets.

Shoulder your firelock.

When the Ensigns receive the colours, the Captain gives the word.

Present your arms.

Upon which the grenadiers present their arms, the serjeants charge their halberds, and drummers and fifers beat and play a point of war; after which the Captain orders;

Shoulder your firelocks.

Advance your arms

To the right (or left) wheel.

March.

They march back to the battalion beating and playing the grenadiers march.

When the colours approach the flank of the battalion, the Commanding officer orders, *Present your arms*, and *Face the battalion to the left*, the drummers and fifers beating . .

⁵⁹²

and they go on and on for several more pages. This elaborate ceremony was clearly intended to demonstrate that the colors were objects of great importance, and that they were to be treated with military honors. It is not hard to imagine that participating in this type of ceremony on a regular basis would go a long ways towards convincing British soldiers that the colors were special and important. Certainly, the officers of the British army acted as if the colors were very important both to themselves, and to the troops they commanded.

On receiving his new colors, a British colonel made the following speech to his men:

Though we do not worship the colours, yet the awful ceremony of this day sufficiently evinces, that they are with us, as in ancient times, the object of peculiar veneration; they hold forth to us the ideas of the prince whose service we have undertaken, of our country's cause which we are never to forsake, and of military honor which we are ever to preserve. The colours, in short, represent everything that is dear to a soldier; at the sight of them all the powers of his soul are to rouse, they are a post to which he

⁵⁹² Simes, Thomas Simes, *The Military Guide for Young Officers, In Two Volumes*, London, Printed, Philadelphia, J. Humnphrey, R. Bell, and R. Aitkens, 1776, *Volume I*, 206-209, hereafter Simes, *Volume I*, or Simes, *Volume II*.

must repair through fire and sword, and which he must defend while life remains, to this he is bound, besides every other consideration, by the acceptance of a most solemn oath: to desert them is the blackest perjury and eternal infamy: to lose them by such an accident, even as one might otherwise judge unavoidable, is not to be excused, because to lose them, no matter how, is to lose everything; and when they are in danger, or lost, officers and soldiers have nothing for it but to recover them or die.⁵⁹³

Since the publication of drill books began in England, in the last part of the sixteenth-century, it had become almost a cliché to declare that the colors embodied the honor of the regiment, and that soldiers of the pre-national European military world were expected to fight to the death to preserve them. For instance, Henry Hexham, in *The Principles of the Art Militarie*, published in 1637, writing of the duties of the Ensign, (the officer whose responsibility it was to carry the color of the infantry, which were also often termed an "ensign") noted, almost in passing, that:

He ought to have a singular care, that his collours be guarded, as well to his lodging, as in other places.

Also in the day of battaile seeing he carries the honour and Ensigne of his country, rather then to loose them, hee ought to make them his winding sheet, and in the company, or in a body or division, hee is to march with gravity, and modesty, and thus so much of an Ensigne.⁵⁹⁴

It is clear that this was not mere rhetorical excess. British soldiers, indeed all soldiers of the pan-European military world, acted upon that principle. There are numerous, and well documented examples of soldiers fighting and dying for their colors. One of the most famous is that of Trooper Thomas Brown.

At the Battle of Dettingen in 1743, the last battle at which a British monarch personally commanded his own army in the field, Trooper Thomas Brown of the Third Dragoons spied his Regimental Standard lying on the ground. A French Cavalryman seized it, and bore it away in triumph. Although two fingers of his bridle hand had been cut off, Trooper Brown galloped after his Standard, killed the French cavalryman and fought his way single-handed back through the French lines to safety. He returned with three bullet holes through his hat and seven wounds in

⁵⁹³ From *Sgt. Lamb's Journal*, quoted in Frey, *British Soldier*, 122-123.

⁵⁹⁴ Henry Hexham, *The Principles of the Art Militarie Practiiced in the Warres of the United Netherlands*, London, Matthew Symmons, 1637, 3.

face and body. At the end of the day, George II marked his victory by creating a number of knights-banneret, including among them, Trooper Thomas Brown.⁵⁹⁵

Predictably perhaps, it is the Prussian Army which had the most detailed directions for the procedures followed when a regiment received new colors: these directions give some idea both of the importance which armies of the pre-national-European military world gave to their colors, and to their attempt to attach religious significance to them, they are worth quoting at length:

When a Regiment receives new colours, they must be nailed on, in the General's or Commanding Officer's quarters, with one Serjeant, one Colour-bearer, one Corporal, and ten men a company, are to attend the ceremony.

II. The day after the colours are nailed on; the whole Regiment is to march out by companies to a place appointed, where, as soon as they arrive, and are drawn up together, the Colonel posting himself opposite the center, orders them to shoulder their firelocks, and the colours to march to their respective companies, after which he gives the word of command,

From the right and left wheel inward and form the circle!

N.B. The Officers stand in the front of their companies, the colours of every company on the center, and the Drummers in the rear of the colours: and because the new colours have not yet been sworn to, no honours are to be paid to them, when they are brought out of the Commanding Officer's quarters, and carried to their companies at the rendezvous.

The colours are not to be folded up, but kept flying.

III. As soon as the circle is formed, the Colonel makes them rest their firelocks, and the Auditor is to make a short harangue, and read the Articles of War; after which the Colonel gives the word of command,

Order your firelocks!

The Chaplain then says a prayer, imploring God, out of his grace and goodness, to save every soldier from being perjured, and so to govern him, that, on all occasions, in battle, in sieges, and in all engagements, he may continue firm to his colours, and maintain them against an enemy to the last drop of his blood: When the prayer is ended, the Colonel gives the word of command,

⁵⁹⁵ David Chandler, *The Art of War in the Age of Marlborough*, New York, Hippocrene Books, Inc., 1976, 60-61, hereafter: Chandler, *Art of War*.

Bring your firelocks to your left sides!

After which all the officers and Soldiers lift up their fingers, and swear to the colours.

IV. When the Regiment has sworn to the colours, every Captain must exhort his company to keep inviolate the oath which they have taken[.]

V. When the Regiment has marched back into quarters again; either on the same, or the following day the old colours must be carried by the ten-Colour-bearers to the nearest arsenal, attended by one Officer, two non-commission'd Officers, one Fifer, one Drummer, and thirty Grenadiers, and there deposited.

N. B. The usual honours must be paid to the colours untill they are lodged in the arsenal, when they march into night-quarters, or into the garrison wherein such arsenal is, the Grenadiers are to carry their firelocks high in their right arms, and to march in without beat of drum.⁵⁹⁶

The directions for this interesting ceremony show a conscious effort to equate devotion to the colors to devotion to the soldiers' religion, as well as to associate several of the key ideals of military service with the colors: The colors were presented as the object of the oath; and the form of the oath tied the honor of both officers and soldiers to their preservation. More generally, the colors were also associated with courage, and faithful service. Overall, this ceremony was designed to impress upon its participants that the colors, and the values associated with them are of great importance. It is not surprising to discover that British Army made every effort to attach the same values to their colors as the Prussian Army did to theirs. Taking a step backward, it seems clear that the function of colors, and of the ceremonies which surrounded them was to attach the individual values of the officer's sense of military honor: courage, honorable service, loyalty and so on, to the group, that is to the regiments of infantry and cavalry, by the use of symbols and ceremonies. In that sense it can be truly said that colors were the symbols of embodied military honor.

⁵⁹⁶ *Regulations for the Prussian Infantry. Translated from the GERMAN ORIGINAL, With Augmentations and Alterations made by the KING of PRUSSIA since the Publication of the Last Edition. To which is ADDED, The PRUSSIAN TACTICK; Being a Detail of the Grand Maneouvre, as performed by the PRUSSIAN ARMIES.* No place given, J. Nourse, 1759, New York, Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968, 329-331, hereafter: *Prussian Infantry*.

7.4.2.2 Posts of Honor

This theme is repeated in certain other ceremonial aspects of mid-eighteenth-century military life, for instance in the establishment of "posts of honor." "Posts of honor," were specific locations, or duties that were considered especially honorable for those who held or occupied them. As the *Universal Military Dictionary* phrased it:

Post of *honour*. The advance guard is a post of honour: the right of the two lines is the post of honour, and is always given to the eldest regiment: the left is the next post, and is given to the next eldest and so on. The centre of the line is the post the last honourable, and is given to the youngest regiment. A sentinel placed before the colours, and at the door of the commanding officer, is a post of honour.⁵⁹⁷

The concept of the post of honor, at least in theory, operated on the battlefield as well: "When an enemy appears, and the General is going to charge them, the guard may demand its due, which is to charge first. Thus much of the Camp-Guard, which is relieved every twenty-four hours; and the officer that relieves it has always his sword in his hand, and takes the right hand of him that is relieved."⁵⁹⁸

In fact, if taken too literally, the business of posts of honor could significantly inhibit the commander-in-chief's efforts to organize and deploy his army. There is some evidence, that, at least in the French Army, this did become a problem. As Monsieur de Lamont tells us:

Every man may add or diminish according to his own fancy, providing he does not depart too far from this proportion. The eldest corps has the right, the next the left, and so on according to the eldership in the centre, which is always the last place.

The first line, which is the Van-guard, is more honorable than the main battle, and the main battle than the rear guard. The Guards are always in the line of battle, and never in the Van or rear guard, because that is their fixt post.

The Carabiniers, Fuzileers and General's guards, are on the wings, somewhat advanced before the other troops.⁵⁹⁹

⁵⁹⁷ George Smith, *An Universal Military Dictionary, A Copious Explanation of the Technical Terms &c. Used in the Encampments, Marching, Movements and Military Operations of an Army*, London, J. Millan, 1779; facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, POST, 207, hereafter: *Universal Military Dictionary*.

⁵⁹⁸ de Lamont, "Duties," 116.

⁵⁹⁹ Chevalier de la Valiere, "The Rules and Practices of the Greatest Generals," in Chevalier de la Valiere, *Art of War*, Philadelphia, Robert Bell, 1776, 177, hereafter, de la Valiere, "Greatest Generals."

The implications of "posts of honor" are obvious, and are summed up by their title: it is either an explicit connection of individual honor to specific military tasks - guarding the colors for instance; or it explicitly connects the individual value of honor to the activities of a group - taking a specific (and often, in theory, more dangerous) position in the line of battle for example.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that posts of honor, colors and standards, and other visible symbols of the regiment, which were also often tokens of the esteem in which the regiment was held, were truly important to some members of the pan-European military world. To reiterate, while we cannot assume that every soldier held their colors in the reverence that military authority seemed to presume they did, nonetheless, the vast amounts of ceremony which surrounded the colors, and the willingness of soldiers to fight and die to preserve them, indicates that they held real importance for many, perhaps most, soldiers. This in turn suggests that these symbols represented very important values, and it is hard to see what values the colors symbolized, if not the honor of the regiment.

Moreover these symbols could, at least on some occasions, be manipulated by leaders to produce remarkable results. There is strong evidence to suggest that appeals to *esprit de corps* were often effective, and attempts to manipulate the symbols of *esprit de corps* often worked. The most famous example once again comes, as the most extreme examples of the mid-eighteenth-century pre-national pan-European martial culture so often do, from the Prussian Army. In one famous instance, Frederick the Great's, manipulation of regimental pride, and *esprit de corps* produced exactly the results he desired.

On the night of the 21st/22nd of July 1760 the Prussians were breaking the siege of Dresden. The besieged Austrians saw the Prussians removing some of their guns, and sortied out to interfere with the process. They broke and scattered the Prussian Regiment of Anhalt-Bernburg. Frederick was enraged and: "the punishment was without precedent in Prussian military history. The common soldiers had to give up their swords, while the officers and NCO's [non-commissioned officers] were deprived of the braid of their hats."⁶⁰⁰

A month later Frederick the Great engaged the Prussians at the battle of Liegnitz. Some of the more enthusiastic members of the Regiment of Anhalt-Bernburg were eager for redemption, and for revenge upon the Austrians. To quote Ensign von Gochausen:

I can still see brave old General v. Bulow spring forward and mark out the brigadier, Prince Bernburg, and call out to him from some distance: 'My dear sir what is your regiment up to? For God's sake, hold your brigade together!' But shouts and orders were now powerless to influence events. The three battalions of the regiment of Bernburg lept forward and deafened themselves, the generals and the enemy with the dreadful cry of "Honour or death!"⁶⁰¹

The Bernburg Regiment broke the enemy line, and helped force the Austrians to withdraw. Frederick conveyed his thanks in very warm terms, and restored the Regiment of Bernburg to favor. He undertook to buy the braid for their hats at his own expense.⁶⁰² We do not have to accept every line of the stirring story as gospel truth to realize that the Regiment of Bernburg displayed considerable collective pride; and that this pride was at least partly activated by symbols, in this case swords and braid, and that Frederick the Great successfully manipulated the symbols of soldierly pride to produce the results he wished.

7.4.3 Capitulations

It is clear that, for the leaders of the British Army at least, preserving the colors, and other symbolic items and values, were important as well: Indeed, so important were they, that their preservation often took priority over other, more concrete concerns. The importance of these symbols can be seen most clearly, oddly enough, in defeat, when their preservation, or otherwise, was an important element in negotiating the instrument of surrender known as a capitulation.

As the *Universal Military Dictionary* explained:

CAPITUALTIONS, in *military affairs*, implies the conditions on which the garrison of a place besieged agree to deliver it up, &c. This is likewise the last action, both in the attack and defense of a fortification, the conditions of which may be of various kinds, according to the different circumstances or situations in which they are. As soon as the capitulation is agreed on, and signed hostages are Generally delivered on both sides, for the exact performance of the articles; part of the place is delivered to the besiegers, and a day appointed for the garrison to evacuate the place. The usual and most Honourable conditions are, with arms and baggage,

⁶⁰⁰ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 193.

⁶⁰¹ Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 193.

⁶⁰² Duffy, *Frederick the Great*, 193-194.

drums beating, and Colours flying: matches lighted, and some pieces of artillery; wagons and convoys for the baggage, sick and wounded, &c.⁶⁰³

The formula for an honorable surrender was ancient one, dating back hundreds of years:

We must here observe, [in the past] that the soldiers, in action, put the bullets in their mouths, in order to have them more ready to drop into the piece, after they had charged with powder out of the horn, or bandalier: and we frequently find it stipulated in capitulations, when a garrison is to be allowed all the honours of war, that they are to march out with matches lighted, ball in the mouth, &c. that is to say, in a completely warlike posture, ready to defend themselves: and not like vanquished men: and this expression has been continued as a common form in capitulations, till within a few years, if yet totally disused; though of no meaning according to the present forms of discipline.⁶⁰⁴

Enforcement of the terms of capitulation was entirely in the hands of custom; and the fact that the terms were, in the main, followed says a great deal about the nature of eighteenth-century warfare, and the strength of the pre-national European martial culture. While complaints about violations of the terms of capitulations were common, most reported violations were relatively trivial; and most parties generally made good-faith efforts to fulfill the terms of the capitulation, as can be seen in the following account of the efforts the British made to fulfill their agreement after the French surrender of Niagara in 1759. The emphasis on good manners and fellow feeling is noticeable, and reflects the freemasonry and comradeship amongst members of the pre-national pan-European military world, particularly on the part of the officers:

Report of a Flag of Truce Sent from Oswego by Order of Lt. Col. Mapy to Convoy Twenty Six Women Children a Jecollet [Jesuit?] & one man (being part of the Garrison taken at Niagara) to La Galiette or the first French Post

[August 4th] [Travels and meets a French Sergeant and suffers terrible storms.] Mons de Blunville a French Regular Officer Arrived with three birch canoes & 30 men to see what boat we were. He knew nothing of the taking of Niagara [and] inform'd one of the Women that her husband Mons Dourvill Governor of Toronto had passed three some days before but could not say if the Fort was taken [.] he was very polite & Told me he'd shew me all

⁶⁰³ ⁶⁰³ Universal Military Dictionary, CAPITULATIONS.

⁶⁰⁴ *Norfolk Militia*, XV, footnote 5.

the politeness in his power & would early in the morning if the storm abated conduct me to [?] where he said they'd host me in the best manner their Lines afforded[.] [? the women there no Fort there now ?] about 10 o'clock another French officer Mons Normanville arrived with 2 Battus and a Birch Canoe brought me a letter from Mons de Corbien Commander of Caderawgui Thanking me for the Great Care the English had taken of the Prisoners that he was sorry he Could not have the pleasure of seeing me but he feared the Nations he had with him might be troublesome So he had sent me this gentleman to receive the priest & women he brought meat for my party 2 half barrels of pork & 2 bags of biscuit . . .

[August 5th] This morning arrived for use in a birch Canoe 3 half barrels of Pork & 2lb Loaves of 6 pr. each which was a loaf a man for my party. . . .

[An Indian Guide vanished:] Apply'd to the French officer for assistance but he refused me saying if I got him I may force him with me but it was a breach of the Capitulation & he would not meddle in but that if he got him hereafter & found he was our prisoner would send him[.]

[August 6th] As Ensign Robert's was leaving the French:] "made me a speech to thank me for the good treatment the French had received from the English & to assure me none of their people would molest me in my return . . . They shook me by the hand two or three different times and bid me farewell friend.⁶⁰⁵

It cannot be denied however that there were also occasional bitter disagreements over perceived violations of the terms of capitulations - for the British Army in North America, two in particular were deemed especially infamous: the "massacre" of British soldiers by Indians, after being promised safe passage from Fort Henry in 1756, and the bitter argument over fulfilling the terms of the capitulation following the British defeat at Saratoga in 1777. While relatively uncommon, occasional failures to meet the terms of a capitulation were almost inevitable since, by definition, a capitulation represented a bargain between two unequal sides: once the surrender had taken place fulfillment of the agreement was entirely in the hands of the victors, the party that had surrendered had, by definition, lost its ability to do anything about violations of the bargain.

Customarily, the surrendering party opened the negotiation, and presented the terms under which they were prepared to surrender: (the term "capitulation" originally referred to the list of

headings under which the proposed surrender terms were listed) the other side then had the option of accepting, rejecting, or suggesting modifications to the proposals. It is a fact, however, that much of the negotiation of the terms of the surrender involved efforts to preserve the symbols of military honor; these efforts indicate the genuine importance that these symbols held for many in the pre-modern, pan-European military world. Furthermore, it is noticeable that the most favorable terms of surrender (very difficult to obtain in practice) would allow the officers to keep the symbols of their individual honor, their swords, and the soldiers to keep the symbols of their collective honor, their regiment's colors.

When British Lieutenant General "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne was compelled to surrender to Continental Army Major General Horatio Gates, following the battle of Saratoga during the American Revolution, the surrender negotiations almost broke down over one, to modern eyes, quite trivial, issue. This was the actual ceremony of surrender, which Horatio Gates intended to include the following:

These terms being agreed to and signed, the Troops under His Excellency General Burgoyne's command, may be drawn up in their Incampments, where they will be ordered to Ground their Arms, and may thereupon be marched to the River side to be passed over in the way towards Bennington.⁶⁰⁶

This arrangement was completely unacceptable to Burgoyne, and he responded forcefully: "This article is inadmissible in any Extremity - sooner than this Army will consent to ground their Arms in their incampments, they will rush on the Enemy determined to take no Quarter."⁶⁰⁷ Why was this provision so unacceptable? It was unacceptable to Burgoyne, as it would have been to any general of the pre-national pan-European martial culture because Gates was attempting to deny to Burgoyne the right to surrender with the "honors of war," as described above: Burgoyne was to be denied the right to march his men out with colors flying, furthermore grounding arms [laying them on the ground] rather than being allowed to "pile arms" [placing the muskets with butts on the round and leaning them against one against forming tripods] was an additional disgrace. Burgoyne, followed up this rejection by sending another message to Gates' Adjutant-

⁶⁰⁵ To ? from Benj^m Roberts, Ensign 46th Regiment, 7 August 1759, Gage Papers, American Series, 3.

⁶⁰⁶ *1777 Campaign Journal*.

⁶⁰⁷ *1777 Campaign Journal*, 167.

General stating: "If General Gates does not mean to recede from the 6th article, [the demand that the British ground their arms in their encampment] the Treaty ends at once. The Army will to a Man proceed to any Act of Desperation, rather than submit to that Article."⁶⁰⁸

In the end, Burgoyne got what he wanted, which was to surrender with the "honors of war." The first article of the articles of the Convention signed at Saratoga on October 16, 1771 read:

The Troops under Lieut. Genl. Burgoyne to march out of their Camp with the Honours of War, and the Artillery of the Intrenchments to the Verge of the River, where the old Fort stood, where the Arms and Artillery are to be left; the Arms to be piled by Word of Command from their own officers.⁶⁰⁹

The second article, if fulfilled would have allowed General Burgoyne's Army "free passage . . . to Great Britain, on condition of not serving again in North America during the present Contest[.]"⁶¹⁰ This would prove to be too much for the Continental Congress, who would decline to honor this provision of the surrender. Their failure to do so would upset not only General Burgoyne and the forces that surrendered with him, but Horatio Gates as well. Horatio Gates was widely perceived by many Americans as being entirely too cozy with the British, which perception was perhaps enhanced by the knowledge that he had served in the British Army during the Seven Years' War. From Gates' perspective however, he was acting in accordance with military culture of pre-national Europe, which saw soldiers, and particularly officers, as common members of an international occupation. This can be seen clearly in the provisions of the surrender that allowed officers to: "retain their Carriages, Batt-Horses, and other Cattle, and no Baggage to be molested or searched[.]" and perhaps even more clearly in the article which stated that: "During the Stay of the Troops in Massachusetts Bay, the officers are to be admitted on their Parole, and are permitted to wear their side-Arms."⁶¹¹ (According to the *Universal Military Dictionary*: "PAROLE, in a *military sense*, the promise made by a prisoner of war, when he has leave to go any where, of returning at the time appointed if not exchanged."⁶¹²) This provision

⁶⁰⁸ *1777 Campaign Journal*, 167.

⁶⁰⁹ *1777 Campaign Journal*, 167-168.

⁶¹⁰ *1777 Campaign Journal*, 168.

⁶¹¹ *1777 Campaign Journal*, 168-169.

⁶¹² *Universal Military Dictionary*, PAROLE, 199.

meant that British officers would give their word not to escape, and would then be allowed to move around unguarded, while wearing their swords.

Why did swords and braid carry such significance for the pre-national, pan-European military world? Why were symbolic considerations, such as whether or not they would march out with the "honours of war," and would be allowed to "pile" rather than "ground" arms, so important that Burgoyne, who had already decided to surrender, was prepared to continue to fight, a fight that he admitted would be suicidal, to gain them? Why was preserving the colors so important that soldiers were genuinely prepared to sacrifice their lives to keep them from being captured? From the perspective of the twenty-first century, colors, posts of honor, and surrendering with the honors of war appear as examples of rococo excess, similar to, and about as functional as, the gold lace on the uniforms of the officers.

The eighteenth-century perspective was different; practical soldiers understood that these symbols of military life were very concrete and functional, for they could be used to motivate and control their troops. It was precisely for this reason that Burgoyne, and any other soldier in the unfortunate position of surrendering, would make such strong efforts to surrender with the honors of war. The symbols of *esprit de corps* had to be treated as important, because they were effective tools of motivation and control only as long as they were believed to be important. In short, it was important for Burgoyne to attempt to protect the symbols of his army's honor because he, and all other officers, had to demonstrate to their troops that they, the leaders, valued these symbols. For officers, preserving the symbolic representations of *esprit de corps*, the facade of regimental spirit, was of critical importance because it was one of the few tools of command available; to the enlisted men, it was an important demonstration that officers shared in their collective identity, the collective honor of the regiment, *esprit de corps*.

7.5 CONCLUSION

The collective honor of *esprit de corps*, and the individualistic honor of the officers as well as the "soldier-like" behaviour of the other ranks, should be seen as mirror images of one another; the same values, courage, loyal service, and so, were being expressed, but expressed either collectively or individually depending upon the settings and persons concerned. They were two faces of the same coin, and if one had no effect the other might. From the point of view of those who controlled the Army, these senses of soldierly honor, whether collective or individual, were important, very possibly the most important, mechanisms of control over both officers and other ranks. Honor, in its various forms, was important, because not only the officers, but the other ranks of the British Army as well, spent much of their time beyond the control of authority; and, in any case, institutional means of controls, such as coercion, inculcation of attitudes, or even organized training, were very weak. As a result, the mid-eighteenth-century British Army depended upon the more or less willing cooperation of its officers and men to function. From the perspective of those whose business it was to control and command a mid-eighteenth-century army, military honor, in its various forms, especially *esprit de corps*, was a necessity not a luxury; only those regiments with a acceptable level of *esprit de corps* could be relied upon to perform in battle, or even for that matter to function as organized military units in peacetime.

Esprit de corps was closely related to the quality of cohesion, and one of the more puzzling things about the mid-eighteenth-century British Army was that it did relatively little to build either cohesion or *esprit de corps*. In fact, many of the British Army's organizational practices would, theoretically at least, have had a negative impact upon cohesion and *esprit de corps*. At the very least, the mid-eighteenth-century military world did not adequately appreciate the importance of the primary group bond, and seemed to lack an understanding of the concept of team work as well. Moreover, training, and organizational practices combined to create a sharp distinction between long-service soldiers, and the new troops who filled out a regiment when it went on active service. This meant that a noticeable period of time was necessary to turn the new men into members of the regiment, and build the level of cohesion necessary for a regiment to function, and for all, or at least a majority to develop a reasonable level of *esprit de corps*.

Beyond this, the mechanisms of *esprit de corps* were especially important to commanders because, in many ways, their vocabulary of leadership was otherwise very small, compared to the range of motivations in use today, with certain important modern themes, team work in particular, unavailable to mid-eighteenth-century leaders.

Espirit de corps was honor made collective and visible. It was a value which all, officers and other ranks, and quite possibly their families and camp followers as well shared. The conditions of mid-eighteenth-century military life helped, in some ways, to build *esprit de corps*, but in other ways acted, one would think, to retard it. In many ways mid-eighteenth-century armies did not so much build *esprit de corps* as simply assume it would be present, and generally it was. It seems that the common soldiers of the pre-national, pan-European military world accepted that part of their bargain with the army they joined was to manifest a reasonable level of *esprit de corps*, and generally they fulfilled their "contract" and supplied it.

It was these elements of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture, of *esprit de corps*, bloodless battles and bloody parades, of drill, uniforms, appearance, of style, of the household of the mess and the community of the company, as well as inconsistent discipline and perhaps most importantly, military honor: in short, all the traditions of the pre-national pan-European martial culture embodied in the British Army that the thirteen American colonies would reach for, as they formed their Continental Line, the regular army that would be the principal instrument of their struggle for independence.

8.0 LOVING LIBERTY: THE CONTINENTAL LINE AND THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN MARTIAL CULTURE

8.1 INTRODUCTION

On May 30th, 1778, Jacob Morgan wrote to George Bryant, Vice President of the Pennsylvania State Assembly reporting on the state of the Continental Line. The first paragraph of his letter read as follows:

I returned last nigh from Camp, where I see 15 Regiments under arms, I think as well disciplined as any of they british troops can be, they performed several manovres with great exactness & dispatch, under they direction of Baron Steuben, and afterward review by his Excellency Genl. Washington. I am informed that our whole army are in as good order as them 15 Regiments, their arms and accoutrements are indeed in good order, and they looked pretty well cloathed.⁶¹³

The Continental Line was the thirteen colonies' attempt to imitate the regulars of the British Army, and while they never quite equaled them, as Jacob Morgan's report indicated, they certainly came close. In most important respects the Continental Line looked very like the British Army; not identical of course, the Continental Line was identifiably American, just as the British Army was British, the Prussian Army, Prussian, and so on. Nonetheless, there were certainly far more similarities than differences between the two armies. In short, the Continental Line was part of the pre-national, pan-European military world, and the reasons for this were the straightforward and obvious ones: the overwhelming majority of its leaders had served either

⁶¹³ Jacob Morgan jr. to George Bryan, Reading, 30 May, 1778, Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, *The Papers of General Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben, 1777-1794*, Zemenszky Edith von, Schulman, Robert J., eds., Millwood, New York, Kraus International Publications, 1982, hereafter: *von Steuben Papers*.

with or along side the British Army, or with other European armies, and the soldiers came largely from the same groups of people who supplied the rank and file of the British Army, and the other mid-eighteenth-century European armies.

The Commander in Chief of the Continental Army, George Washington, worked hard to create a "regular" army, in the pan-European martial tradition: and, as the war went on, the Continental Line became ever more like its opponent, in the words of one historian of the Continental Army, it underwent a process of "Europeanization."⁶¹⁴ In fact, the leaders of the Continental Line, for the most part, consciously and deliberately imitated the practices of the pre-national, pan-European military world, generally, but not inevitably, those of the regular British Army. This was perhaps an unexpected development in the process of the American Revolution, after all, one of the principal complaints of the colonists against Britain was the presence of regular soldiers in the colonies. Nonetheless, it was a development that should have surprised no one, since the commander in chief of the Continental Army was a man whose youthful ambition was to achieve a commission as a British officer.

So it came to pass that the cause of American liberty was defended, not by free citizens-in-arms, but by soldiers whose demographic make-up and martial way of life looked remarkably like the British soldiers they were fighting. These soldiers were led, moreover, by officers who attempted to mimic the manners of the British officers who were their counterparts. In so far as they were able, Continental Line officers adopted the code of gentlemanly and military honor, and they commanded according to the "laws and customs of war." The Continental Army lived according to a code of military discipline that was just as inconsistent, and just as concerned with setting an example and upholding the authority of officers, as was the British Army, though its punishments admittedly were not as savage. Continental Army officers and soldiers entered into the world of military style by mimicking the pan-European preoccupation with drill, and they attempted, with some success, to dress the part as well. The soldiers of the Continental Line lived in the same sort of military community as their British opponents, which is again unsurprising since a significant portion were, in the best traditions of the pan-European military world, deserters from the British or Hessian regiments. Even the Continental Army's "mutinies" tended to follow the traditions of the pan-European martial culture, they were mostly disputes about pay,

⁶¹⁴ Robert K. Wright, *The Continental Army*, Washington, D. C., Center of Military History, United States Army, 1983, 152, hereafter: Wright, *Continental Army*.

and even the most serious, the so called "Newburgh Mutiny" of its officers, was a quarrel about a privilege granted to British officers, half-pay.

There were, of course, some differences from the British Army. Like the provincial regiments that were its forbears, the Continental Army was never intended to become a standing army: its leaders, and its rank and files, knew that it was destined to end when the war did. It therefore lacked the sense of long-term continuity, into both the past and future, which European armies possessed. Furthermore, isolated as it was in North America, the Continental Army's enlisted ranks probably did not contain the numbers of foreigners that most European armies did. Moreover, the Continental Line was probably more isolated from the civilian population than were most European armies, since the Continental Army lived its life in camps, rather than billeted upon the civilian population.⁶¹⁵ In the end, however, the differences between these adversaries were outweighed by the similarities. Most importantly the Continental Army, like its British opponent, was primarily motivated by the various forms of soldierly honor and *esprit de corps*, and its officers commanded, like their European counterparts, by the consent of the men they led.

Finally, it must be noted that the Continental Army, again like the British Army, was a successful one. The decision to develop a regular army, one that operated in accordance with the pre-national, pan-European martial culture was validated by events. The regular army of the American Revolution, the Continental Line, provided the Continental Congress and the thirteen American colonies with an army that stayed in the field, and by doing so, won the American Revolution.

Nonetheless, if history has proven this decision the right one, it does not follow that it was the obvious one. A regular army was seen as an instrument of tyranny, and, moreover, according to (largely incorrect) colonial memory, free Americans had proved far better soldiers than British "hirelings" in the French and Indian Wars. In short, as many both then and since have noted, the Continental Army by both its nature, and by its very existence, seemed to violate the ideals of the American Revolution. At the very least, for the writers of patriotic history, the ethos of the Continental Line has required some distortion to fit the heroic myth of the American Revolution.

⁶¹⁵ I am indebted to Dr. Van Beck Hall of the Department of History, University of Pittsburgh for making these points to me.

8.2 PRESENT AT THE CREATION

The military worlds of the British Army and that of the American Colonists were not separate and distinct, they derived from the same roots, and they would cross and intersect regularly thereafter, most obviously, and most recently, during the Seven Years' War; this truth would be demonstrated vividly during the American Revolution. When the time came that the colonists found it necessary to form a new regular army to fight Great Britain, this army would not spring full born from the brain of George Washington. In the same way that the political institutions of the new nation that came to be known as the United States would be developments of longstanding British traditions, albeit with local adaptations, so too the first military institution of this new nation, the Continental Army, would also follow longstanding British traditions, again with local adaptations.

This should surprise no one. The military leaders of the American Revolution were not operating in a vacuum. By and large those who were appointed leaders of the new Continental Army were men who had seen military service, either with the British Army itself, or along side it during the Seven Year's War. Once the decisions had been made to form a regular force, and once George Washington, and others who served with the British Army, had been selected as its leaders, the result was predictable. Given the experience of those who were to be its commanders, it was inevitable that the model of the British Army would be followed. In the same way that, during the American Civil War, the rebellious Confederate States would develop an army that, in most ways, largely mimicked that of the Federal government they opposed: so also would the rebelling colonies develop an army that largely mirrored that of the British government they opposed, and for much the same reasons. In both cases the leadership of the new army was largely drawn from those that had first gained their military experience with the old.

8.2.1 The Creation of the Continental Line

That a regular army would be created by the Continental Congress, the political leadership of the American Revolution, was not foreordained, nor indeed, does it seem in retrospect, to be the most obvious choice for a revolutionary movement to make. Viewed in the abstract, for a revolutionary movement that was heir to a tradition which feared a standing army as a threat to liberty, which believed the presence of the British Army in the thirteen colonies was an outrage, and that viewed that army's actions in Boston to be an illustration of the tyranny of an army: to then proceed to recreate a near perfect replica of the same army seems counterintuitive, to say the least.⁶¹⁶ One could argue that the logical, and indeed expected, path for a revolution would have been to mobilize an army of citizen soldiers who were filled with enthusiasm for the cause, rather as the forces of the French Revolution would do fifteen years latter. Ultimately, however, the leaders of the American Revolution did not adopt the idea of the nation-in-arms, though the rhetoric of the citizen soldier was omnipresent. Instead they formed a small army, the Continental Army, that, in the end at least, was to be a close replica of the British Army, and of the armies of the pan-European military world, and supplemented it with local militias.

Why was this? Certainly there were many different reasons, and it seems that a combination of political and military factors, as well as historical precedent came into play. The military factors, in the spring and early summer of 1775, centered on the need to support and reinforce the New England Army which was more-or-less engaged with the British around Boston; and it was believed moreover that New York was likely to be attacked in the near future, and would therefore need to be defended as well. There were equally pressing political reasons that revolved around the New England colonies' desire to expand the war to include all thirteen colonies, and ultimately, the willingness of the Continental Congress to do so;⁶¹⁷ raising a "Continental Army," therefore, was a demonstration that the colonies were united in waging the war.

There was also a well developed colonial understanding that militia were not suitable for long term military action; historically, when it had been necessary for the colonies to put troops

⁶¹⁶ See Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*, Enlarged Edition, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1992, 61-63, 112-119, and *passim*, for a summary of the fears of a standing army in British and American political ideology.

into the field for longer periods than were practical for the militia, it had been the practice of the colonies to raise volunteer forces. These forces have generally been referred to as "Provincials" to distinguish them from, on the one hand militia, and on the other, British regulars. In one sense then, the Continental Congress, in raising a "Continental Army" was simply conforming to traditional colonial practice. Beyond this however, in deciding to organize a "regular" army, there was an at least implicit admission that the war of the revolution was likely to be a long one, and that popularly raised militias would not be suitable.

The decision to raise regular forces therefore was neither an original nor a radical decision: it amounted to a decision to raise a somewhat more "regular" force of the same sort as the colonies has done in raising their provincials, in previous wars. It is noticeable that the regiments of the Continental Army were raised by the states, and kept their states designation.⁶¹⁸ If raising regiments was a familiar process, however, other aspects of warfare were less familiar; none of the colonies ever dealt much with matters of higher military organization or administration. In short, while the colonies had raised regiments, they had never raised an army. Now they had to do so, and they were doing so largely from scratch. Naturally the Continental Congress looked to men in the colonies who had military experience to provide the leadership for their new army.

On June 15, 1775, George Washington, hailed by historians as the most famous military man resident in the thirteen colonies, as well as being the man who, arguably, by his actions in the Ohio Country, started the French and Indian War in North America, and the Seven Years' War in Europe, was chosen by the Continental Congress, as Commander-in-Chief.⁶¹⁹ Whether he was in fact the most famous military figure in the colonies, and whether he was the most suitable choice, were, perhaps, somewhat irrelevant points given his other virtues: he was a Virginian, and could therefore help secure the support of Virginia for the revolution, and he was a tall and imposing man, who had been wearing his military uniform at the Continental Congress, and so looked the part of a commander in chief. On the 16th a structure of staff officers was created and on the 17th, Horatio Gates, a major in the British army, who had

⁶¹⁷ Wright, *Continental Army*, 21-25.

⁶¹⁸ I must again thank Dr. Van Beck Hall for reminding me of the importance of this point.

⁶¹⁹ See Fred Anderson, *Crucible of War: The Seven Years War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2000, Prologue, 4-7, and 42-76 for the argument that Washington's actions were the principle trigger in beginning the 7 Years War in North America.

extensive active service in North America, was appointed Adjutant General. The first major general appointed was Artemus Ward, who had fought for two years in the French and Indian Wars, the second major general appointed was Charles Lee, another British Army officer who had served in Portugal and North America, and had also served with the Polish Army. These officers were men who know what a "regular" army was: it was the British Army; the British Army they had served either in or with.⁶²⁰

8.2.2 George Washington and the Leaders of the Continental Army

As a young man, George Washington was a frustrated soldier, in modern slang, "a wanna be." His youthful desire, having previously served in the Virginia militia, was to achieve a commission in the British Army;⁶²¹ and, indeed, so good was the relationship between them, that, had Edward Braddock, survived the Battle of the Monongahela, there is every chance that Washington would have achieved his goal. He would instead serve until 1758 as Colonel of the 1st Virginia Regiment, one of two provincial Virginia regiments; while in command, he would make strong efforts to have this regiment taken onto the British establishment, trying to make it a regiment of the regular British Army, and himself a British Army Colonel in the process.⁶²² While he failed in that ambition as well, he seems to have succeeded in turning his regiment of provincials into something close to regular soldiers, and he did so largely by imitating the British Army: for instance, he reported to Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia that he was doing things: "more after the British manner," and "pay[ing] that deference to her Judgment & Experience" that he seems to have felt that her military experience deserved.⁶²³ Washington certainly believed that his men were better than most provincial troops;⁶²⁴ and Washington was not alone in his good opinion of the Virginia Regiment: their Lieutenant Colonel, Adam Stephens, admittedly probably not an unbiased observer, professed to believe that they knew "parade as

⁶²⁰ Wright, *Continental Army*, 26-27

⁶²¹ Joseph Ellis, *His Excellency: George Washington*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, 20. Don Higginbotham, *George Washington and the American Military Tradition*, Athens, Georgia, The University of Georgia Press, 1985, 15-16, hereafter: Higginbotham, *Washington*.

⁶²² Higginbotham, *Washington*, 13-31.

⁶²³ Quoted in Higginbotham, *Washington*, 20.

⁶²⁴ Higginbotham, *Washington*, 19-20.

well as prussians, and the fighting in Close Country as well as "Tartars."⁶²⁵ Moreover, Washington personally seemed to have impressed General John Forbes, on the expedition against Fort DuQuesne, as a thoroughly competent officer.⁶²⁶

George Washington did not become a competent officer by accident. He learned his business in the same way as most British officers did, by watching other officers at work, by talking with them, and then by doing: the classic process of learning by imitation, and on-the-job training. Moreover, though they were probably much less important than example, he also studied military writings. There is strong evidence to suggest that Washington had read Humphrey Bland's *Treatise on Military Discipline*, and he regularly recommended it to other aspiring soldiers. Indeed Washington often urged professional reading to those under his command.⁶²⁷ While it is impossible to know whether he had read them all or not, he certainly left an impressive little English language military library when he died.⁶²⁸ This interest should not be seen as extraordinary, many British officers took a real interest in military reading, but neither should it be ignored as a sign of a more than usually competent officer. George Washington also studied the mannerism of the British officer and gentleman as well; the existence of his copied out rules of civility show the importance he placed on this subject.⁶²⁹ The point to be taken from all this is that the evidence of George Washington's military reading, in combination with his military experience, shows very clearly that military genius did not spring, Athena-like, from his brow; it had been formed by exposure to the best traditions of the British Army, and the pre-national, pan-European military world.

Much the same could be said for most of the senior officers of the Continental Line. The Continental Congress commissioned one commander in chief, (Washington) and twenty-nine major generals, for a total of thirty senior general officers in the Continental service. Of those thirty generals: four had prior service as regular British officers; six had served in other European armies; (seven if we allow double counting as Charles Lee had served in both the British and Polish Armies) at least seven, including Washington, had served as provincial

⁶²⁵ Quoted in Higginbotham, *Washington*, 32.

⁶²⁶ Higginbotham, *Washington*, 28.

⁶²⁷ Higginbotham, *Washington*, 18-19.

⁶²⁸ Oliver L. Spaulding Jr., "The Military Studies of George Washington," in *The American Historical Review*, Volume XXIX, No. 4, July 1924.

⁶²⁹ See George Washington, *Rules of Civility: The 110 Precepts that Guided our First President in War and Peace*, Richard Brookhiser, ed., New York, The Free Press, 1997.

officers; nine had served as militia officers; one served as a naval privateer; one seems not have any military service prior to the revolution, and for two information was not available.⁶³⁰ What these figures show is revealing, though probably not surprising. For those whose background is known, slightly over one-third of the senior leadership of the Continental Congress had served as regular officers in either the British, or other European armies; and slightly less than another third had served as provincial officers, indicating relatively long military service, with a significant exposure to regular military practices. In short, the senior leadership of the Continental Army was thoroughly familiar with the practices of pre-national, pan-European military culture, and the British Army.

Nonetheless, there were, unfortunately, not enough men of this sort to be found in North America. So the Continental Army, aided by the sometimes over-enthusiastic efforts of the political leaders of the American Revolution, sought other men with suitable backgrounds to help lead this new army, and, equally importantly, provide the technical military skills unavailable in North America.

8.2.2.1 Foreign Officers

Once the Continental Congress decided to raise a standing army of some size, it obviously needed officers for that army, particularly officers with experience at the higher levels of command, and there were not enough of these men to be found in North America. (George Washington, for instance, had served in no higher rank than that of colonel.) It also needed officers with certain specialized skills, particularly staff officers and military engineers, that were even less common in North America. In both cases, the only realistic source for these officers was Europe, where it was not uncommon for armies which lacked certain skills to seek to hire men that had them on the open market.

So, from early on, the Continental Congress' representatives in Europe made it their

⁶³⁰ *Historical Register of Officers of the Continental Army: During the War of the Revolution, April 1775, to December 1783. Reprint of the New, Revised and Enlarged Edition of 1914, With Addenda by Robert H. Kelby, 1932, Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1982.* The information regarding prior military service was assembled from a variety of sources on the internet. Differentiating between provincial and militia service was somewhat difficult, but generally "provincial" service was defined as service for a relatively long and continuous, period of time. In absolute terms the sample is distorted as not all of these officers served with the Continental Army for any long period of time, nonetheless the results are revealing.

business to try to find officers for their new army. This did not prove to be a problem, thanks to the "push" factors at work in the military world of mid-eighteenth-century Europe, which were discussed earlier. More specifically, it should not be forgotten that the last great European conflagration, the Seven Years War, (1756-1763) had ended over a dozen years before the Continental Army was in the market for officers. As a result, many European officers, such as von Steuben were un-, or under-, employed, and looking for work when the Continental Army was hiring.

Foreign officers serving in the Continental Line were often very unpopular, both to their contemporaries, and later to their historians. They were portrayed as frauds who overstated their qualifications and abilities, incompetents who blocked the promotion of deserving American officers, turbulent spirits who fomented quarrels, and mercenaries whose loyalty could not be trusted. As in all cliches, there is a measure of truth: the Continental Army was seen, for a time, as a "seller's market," and it certainly attracted a colorful collection of military adventurers. A "foreign" officer who received a commission possibly did prevent a "native" officer from receiving it. Foreign officers' presence certainly did create quarrels, and many proved all too eager to join them.

These accusations however, must be kept in perspective: native born officers' claims to military rank was often no more valid than that of foreign born officers; quarrels were endemic in the eighteenth-century military world, and American officers quarreled as eagerly as foreigners over command, seniority, promotion and many other causes. It is also not surprising to find that most of these European soldiers required some concrete promises of reward before they joined the patriot cause, for the cause was not their own.

In one of his many (and admittedly not always reliable) accounts of his decision to enter the service of the American Revolution, Baron Fredrich von Steuben reported that when he asked the Comte de Vergennes whether he had made the wrong decision, in joining the Continental Army, de Vergennes replied: "By no means, It is on the contrary the road to Glory & a means to acquire large possessions." It is perhaps worth noting that, in this account, von Steuben reported that de Vegennes also advised von Steuben that he "must make good Conditions before hand & not rely too much on the generosity of Republicks."⁶³¹

It must be admitted that Friedrich von Steuben, grotesquely overstated his qualifications:

(He claimed, amongst other things, to be a Prussian Lieutenant General, when he had only reached the rank of captain.) but, by almost universal agreement, he is also seen as the most useful off all the foreign officers who took service with the Americans, and was probably of greater use than most American officers as well. In short, the dissension which foreign officers sometimes caused must be balanced against the substantial contribution that they made to the Continental Army.

In general, foreign officers did what they were hired to do, and they did it quite well. Friedrich von Steuben attended to the drill and training of the Continental Line, and often served as a type of chief of staff for George Washington as well. Other foreign officers provided specialized military skills that were not commonly available in the colonies: Foreign officers provided the majority of the Continental Army's skilled military engineers, their commander was Louis le Begue de Presle Duportrail, a French officer. Casimir Pulaski, trained the Continental Cavalry; foreign soldiers helped organize the light infantry that became the elite arm of the Continental Line. It was a Prussian veteran, Captain Batholomew von Heer, who commanded the *Marechaussee* Corps, the Continental Army's military police force. The list goes on and on.⁶³²

More generally, the presence of experienced foreign officers, such as Johannes de Kalb, (Bavarian born, he came to the American Army from the French service) provided a pool of expertise that often proved useful to the American cause. George Washington's actions confirmed their value, he would, for instance, frequently refer important questions to a board of general officers, that often consisted largely of foreigners, and in this fashion make use of their expertise.⁶³³

It is also worth noting that the Continental Army spent much of the latter years of the war in close and successful cooperation with a small but quite competent French expeditionary force.⁶³⁴ Acting as part of a "coalition army" could not help but have some effect on the Continental Army. The example set by the French expeditionary force, and the hiring of a significant number of foreign officers, would help keep the Continental Army from being a

⁶³¹ Quoted in John McAuley Palmer, *General von Steuben, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1937, 107.*

⁶³² Robert K. Wright Jr. *The Continental Army*, Washington, D. C., Center of Military History, United States Army, 1983, 128-143, hereafter, Wright, *Continental*.

⁶³³ Wright, *Continental*, 128-143.

carbon-copy of the British Army. Taken together their influence would move the Continental Army in a slightly more "European," and less British direction, nonetheless the overall effect was to help seat the Continental Army even more firmly in the tradition of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture.

It would go too far to suggest that foreign officers were decisive in gaining the Americans victory in the Revolutionary War; the American victory involved many factors outside of the purely military. It would however be fair to say that the presence of foreign officers was critical, perhaps vital, in the development of the Continental Army as an effective fighting force that was a near equal to the British Army. Foreign officers provided experienced commanders and military skills that were simply not available in the colonies, and in numerous cases it is possible to draw direct connections between their presence, and an increase in military proficiency in the Continental Line.

Given the realities of the eighteenth-century military world, once the decision was made to organize a regular army, the Continental Line, rather than a revolutionary army, the presence of foreign officers was inevitable, and their contribution was great. Their reputation in popular history has been slandered; most served honorably and well. The Continental Army was probably exceptional in the proportion of foreign officer, particularly high ranking foreign officers in their ranks, though not uniquely so. (Though the Austrian Army, to name just one, certainly had a very large proportion of foreign officers as well.) The reason for this outsized proportion of high-ranking foreign officers was the obvious one: the new American Republic was building an army from scratch and needed help. They needed military expertise, they purchased it on the open market, and by and large the colonies got good value for their money. The cumulative effect of the foreign soldiers, and particularly foreign officers was profound; one historian describes their effect on the Continental Line as an "Europeanization."⁶³⁵

Finally, it is worth noting that the single greatest instance of disloyalty that threatened the Patriot cause came not from a foreigner, but a "native born" officer, Benedict Arnold. It is fair to say, however, that the use of foreign officers was not without political cost. It seems likely that their presence did contribute towards making one bad problem worse: For a Continental

⁶³⁴ I am again indebted to Dr. Van Beck Hall, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh, for raising this point.

⁶³⁵ Wright, *Continental*, 152.

Congress, and an American public, that was already made nervous by the presence of a "Standing Army," the fact that much of the leadership of this standing army consisted of foreign officers could only, and perhaps understandably, increase this anxiety. This anxiety was unjustified, but it existed, and it set a precedent for civil-military relations that would outlive the existence of the Continental Army. This political anxiety would only be increased by the nature of the men who made up the rank and file of the Continental Line.

8.2.3 Rank and File

Whether it was fully realized or not, the decision to recruit a "regular," long service, Continental Army was also a decision as to what kind of men would make up this army, which though new, would be decidedly old-fashioned in style. The Continental Line recruited exactly the same sort of men as had the colonial provincials regiments, and in their turn provincials had recruited exactly the same sort of men as had armies of pan-European military world, and the British Army.⁶³⁶ Almost by definition, the men who were enlisted as Continental Army soldiers were to be those who would seem to have the least vested in a successful outcome of the American Revolution.

Like most armies, and in contrast to the colonial militia, colonial "provincials" had been recruited largely from those who could be most easily spared from colonial society and the colonial economy: principally young men who had not established themselves, and those who were perhaps not so young, but were otherwise economically and socially marginalized.⁶³⁷ In fact, it seems that, as the eighteenth-century progressed, these tendencies became ever more pronounced and provincial volunteers were increasingly recruited from those on the fringes of society who did not qualify for militia duty. By 1740, Virginia was impressing vagabonds to fulfill their quota of men for the Cartagena Expedition, and this certainly sounds remarkably like

⁶³⁶ Charles Patrick Neimeyer, *America Goes to War: A Social History of the Continental Army*, New York, New York University Press, 1996, Chapter 1, particularly 8-14, hereafter: Neimeyer, *America Goes to War*.

⁶³⁷ While Fred Anderson argues that Massachusetts' provincials were not drawn from the "colonial proletarians," but from those who were "temporarily available from military service," he himself admits that: "Like armed forces in general, provincial armies were drawn from surplus manpower." It seems fair to say that Anderson's description of Massachusetts Provincials generally falls within the normal range for Colonial Provincials, and indeed for most of the armies of the pre-national, pan-European military world. Fred Anderson: *A People's Army: Massachusetts'*

the efforts of European nations to recruit soldiers.⁶³⁸ In short, the rank and file of the provincial regiments were men whom the local economy could easily spare, and needed the wages and bonuses offered as inducements to enlist. Indeed, as was discussed in chapter four, it has been argued that the colonial provincials were even more inclined than most soldiers to view their enlistment as a contract, and to take action if they felt that they were not receiving their due.⁶³⁹

The Continental Army would recruit from largely the same groups, with some new elements added, and possibly a somewhat wider selection of drifters. Quite simply, the Continental Line was recruiting exactly the same sort of people, with exactly the same sort of incentives, for exactly the same sort of reasons, as did both the colonial provincial forces, and the armies of Europe. Most recent studies have confirmed that the enlisted ranks of the Continental Line were made up by the poor, the marginalized and the dispossessed.⁶⁴⁰ The ranks of the Continental Army also included non-trivial numbers of Irish, Germans and German and British deserters.⁶⁴¹ It should be noted however, that like those who joined the provincial regiments that had been previously raised by the colonies, and unlike many who joined European armies, men who enlisted the Continental Army would probably not have had any expectation that their service would be long term.⁶⁴²

Nonetheless, as Mark Edward Lender argues, in his description of the New Jersey Brigade of the Continental Army, the rank and file looked exactly like a regular European Army.⁶⁴³ To quote his conclusion: "The New Jersey Brigade thus generally reflected the structure of the society for which it fought. It was officered by the 'best' men of society while the rank and file came from those who composed much of the populace at large - the poor, the least influential, and the non-resident drifting class. The brigade therefore contained a preponderance of men to whom army pay and bounties represented more than their meager stake in civilian

Soldiers and Society in the Seven Years' War, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 1984, 27-28.

⁶³⁸ John Shy, "A New Look at Colonial Militia," in *The Military in America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*, New, Revised Edition, Peter Karsten, ed., New York, The Free Press, 1986, 29-31

⁶³⁹ Anderson, F. W., "Why did Colonial New Englanders Make Bad Soldiers" in *The Military in America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*, New, Revised Edition, Peter Karsten, ed., New York, The Free Press, 1986

⁶⁴⁰ Neimeyer, *America Goes to War*, 15-26.

⁶⁴¹ Neimeyer, *America Goes to War*, Chapters, 2, 3, and 4.

⁶⁴² I am again indebted to Dr. Van Beck Hall for bringing this point to my attention as well.

⁶⁴³ Mark Edward Lender, "The Social Structure of the New Jersey Brigade: The Continental Line as an American Standing Army," in *The Military in America: From the Colonial Era to the Present*, Peter Karsten, ed., New York, The Free Press, 1986, 67, hereafter: Lender, "New Jersey."

life."⁶⁴⁴ Sadly, it seems very clear that the New Jersey Brigade, and the Continental Army was not at all like an army of yeomen farmers protecting their own lands and standing up for their beliefs.

According to political theory of the day, men who had little stake in society were not to be trusted with political power. It was generally assumed that a man had to be established and have property before he was fully committed to society, and therefore entitled to have a say in affairs. Men who have property, farmers and artisans who have lands and businesses to attend to for instance, could not just get up and leave to enlist in the Continental Line. The assumption that flowed from this was that the type of men who would join the Continental Army would be those who had no settled place in society, many in fact, would be, in the language of the day, "rogues" and "vagabonds." These were not persons who would necessarily be deeply interested in, or committed to, the patriot cause, and indeed could not be completely trusted to stay loyal to the Revolution. So, the questions which exercised many at the time, and some historians today, could be phrased thus: what would keep the Continental Army loyal? For what would they fight? In answering those questions, the pan-European martial culture would seem to have at least as much relevance to much of the motley crew of deserters, escaped slaves and the economically marginalized who made up the Continental Army, as the more exalted motives of revolutionary ideology.

⁶⁴⁴ Lender, "New Jersey," 75.

8.3 THE CONTINENTAL LINE

What kept the Continental Army of the American Revolution fighting? What kept it together and functioning for the eight years of the American Revolution; eight years (1775-1783) during which it was frequently ill-paid and quite often ill-supplied? This question has sparked a rather intense scholarly, and perhaps even ideological, debate; a debate which in turn has generated a variety of, and frequently contradictory, answers.

One, a somewhat older school of thought, answered those questions by seeing the members of the Continental Line as, in the stirring phrase which Charles Royster used to title his book, *A Revolutionary People at War*. In this interpretation the Continental Army was largely motivated and held together by a devotion to revolutionary ideology, a devotion to the causes and beliefs of the American Revolution. This explanation however has never seemed to hold up to even a cursory examination of the nature of the Continental Line. Even Royster, admitted that, in spite of his title, after the first year or so, what he termed the *rage militaire*, the burst of enthusiasm for, and the desire to actually fight for, the revolution, had largely died down amongst most of its supporters.⁶⁴⁵

On the other side of the debate, scholars have pointed out that the people who actually made up the Continental Army seem to have been those who had the least stake in the new republic; this school of thought therefore often lays great emphasis on the economic motives for serving in the Continental Army.⁶⁴⁶ In these interpretations the soldiers of the Continental Line are seen as essentially mercenary; men held to their duty by pay, the promise of land, and the coercion of military discipline. While these positions are not, in fact, quite mutually exclusive, they certainly lead to wildly different interpretations of the nature of America's first Army; though it is probably fair to say that recently the second school of interpretation has generally won out over the first.

⁶⁴⁵ See Charles Royster, *A Revolutionary People at War: The Continental Army and American Character, 1775-1783*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, The University of North Carolina Press, 1979, hereafter, Royster, *Revolutionary People*

⁶⁴⁶ See Niemeyer, *America Goes to War*.

In and of themselves, however, both these explanations seem rather unsatisfying: neither seem to explain the fortitude and devotion to duty which the Continental Army displayed in the service of a revolution which, by and large, did not treat it well. In fact the Continental Line was neither an army of patriotic citizen-soldiers, nor was it an army of cold-blooded mercenaries. The most reasonable description of the nature of the Continental Army was that it was an army modeled on the armies of the pan-European military world, and that its culture and motivations were largely those of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture, as transmitted through the British Army in North America. A great deal of the scholarship that has looked at the Continental Line tends to confirm this view. The Continental Army, in short, closely resembled the British Army and the reasons for this are straightforward: they shared the same background, and inevitably they shared the same ideology, the ideology of soldierly honor.

8.3.1 Military Honor and *Eespirit de Corps*

Much recent scholarship has appeared to demonstrate the importance that military honor came to have for the officers of the Continental Line. It would not go too far to say that many of the officers of the Continental Army, as they learned their jobs, came to pick up, in many cases quite consciously, the mannerisms, beliefs, and values, of their British and European counterparts. In the end incidents such as the "Newburgh Mutiny," in which Continental Army officers attempted to pressure Congress to pay the conversion of their seven years half-pay, and the creation of the Society of Cincinnatus, the fraternal organization of the officers of the Continental Line, would seem to show that many Continental Army officers had come to think of themselves, at least partially, as "military gentlemen."

There was certainly a strong element of upward social mobility in this "gentlemanization" of the officers of the Continental Line. It is worth recalling the experience of the unfortunate: "Lieutenant *Whitney*, of Colonel *Wheelock's* regiment, tried by the same General Court-Martial for infamous conduct in degrading himself by voluntarily doing the duty of an Orderly Sergeant, in violation of his rank as an officer, is found guilty, and sentenced to be severely reprimanded

by General *Bricket* at the head of the brigade."⁶⁴⁷ Certainly much of this must reflect concern on the part of his brother officers that their social status might be endangered by actions of this type.

It would probably be wrong however to see this as completely a reflection of social anxiety. As was the case of with their British counterparts, it seems likely that American officers came to view honor, and their status as gentlemen, as central to their role as officers. Striking at this status then, would not only harm their social position, it would harm their military position as well. Perhaps nothing better displays the Continental Army officers' strange co-mingling of gentlemanly style and military mastery than the popularity that Major John Andre, the arbiter of British Army elegance, and captured spy, enjoyed with the American officers who met him after his capture; many were charmed by him fawned over him, and deeply regretted his death.⁶⁴⁸

In a recent work, Caroline Cox has focused on the issue of honor in the Continental Army. She argues that different though their roles and their status were, both Continental officers and Continental soldiers came to associate a certain type of honor with the military duties. She identifies the development of gentlemanly mannerism as crucial for the self-image of the Continental Army officers. It is also not surprising to find that Cox identifies *esprit de corps*, which this work has argued represented the collective sense of honor of the rank and file of the pan-European military world, as central to the motivation of the enlisted men of the Continental Line.⁶⁴⁹

8.3.2 Military Style

For an army organizing itself largely from scratch and on the fly, it is entirely possible than the externals of the soldier's appearance were even more important than the internals of the soldier's attitudes. An examination of the externals of the military atmosphere of the Continental Army leads us straight to the larger than life figure of the Baron von Stueben. Fredrich von Steuben has always played a leading role in the myth of the Continental Army; the story of his

⁶⁴⁷ Horatio Gates, *Horatio Gates Papers, 1726-1828*, New York Historical Society and the National Historical Records and Publications Commission, James Gregory, Thomas Dunning, eds., Microfilm Corporation of America, Sanford, North Carolina, 1979. General Orders, Head-Quarters, October 3, 1776, hereafter *Gates' Papers*.

⁶⁴⁸ Judith L. Van Buskirk, *Generous Enemies: Patriots and Loyalists in Revolutionary New York*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002, 96-97.

⁶⁴⁹ Caroline Cox, *A Proper Sense of Honor: Service and Sacrifice in George Washington's Army*, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, University of North Carolina Press, 2004, particularly chapter 2 and the conclusion.

instructing American soldiers in the snow at Valley Forge, cursing them in a fractured mix of German, French, and English as he did so, is one of the most cherished of the purely military legends of the American Revolution.

Baron von Steuben has somehow managed to escape most of the obloquy that foreign officers in the Continental service attracted, both in his own lifetime and in the judgment of history. Partly this seems to be because he was a man of immense personal charm, who was apparently liked by nearly every person he ever met. It also seems however, that he was genuinely important in the development in the Continental Army. Though George Washington was unquestionably the commander of the Continental Line, in many way von Steuben, rather than Washington, is remembered as its builder.

This view has recently been challenged: Wayne Bodle, in *The Valley Forge Winter*, has vigorously argued that von Steuben's achievements have been overstated. He suggests that von Steuben's work did less to improve the tactical efficiency of the Continental Army, than it did to make its men feel and act like soldiers, and he believes that establishing routine and discipline were the most important legacy's of von Steuben's work.⁶⁵⁰ Whether or not Bodle is correct about in his judgments of the tactical impact of von Steuben's work, his judgment on what might be termed von Steuben's military-social impact, seems quite correct.

Another way of looking at this however, might be to say simply that both the officers and the rank and file of the Continental Line knew how soldiers should look and behave, and that once they had taken on the role of soldiers they wished to act the part. Von Steuben, by bringing them the externals of the pan-European martial culture enabled them to feel the role. In short, von Steuben became immensely popular by helping American soldiers to become what they needed to be: soldiers. He did this by enabling them to look and act the part through drill, and the other elements of military style. In return the Continental Army responded with a degree of affection that no other foreign officer achieved. As Alexander Scammell put it, clearly linking cause and effect: "Discipline flourishes and daily improves under the indefatigable Efforts of Baron Steuben -- who is much esteemed by us."⁶⁵¹

⁶⁵⁰ Wayne Bodle, *The Valley Forge Winter: Civilians and Soldiers in War*, University Park, Pennsylvania, The Pennsylvania University Press, 2002, 252-253.

⁶⁵¹ *von Steuben Papers*, Alexander Scammell to Timothy Pickering, Camp Valley Forge, 21 April, 1778.

In short the world of military style, of drill and precision and marching in step, seemed to have become as important to the Continental Line as it was to the British Army and the rest of the pan-European military world. In some ways it may have been more important: it can be argued that the Continental Army's greatest contribution to winning the war of the American Revolution was not defeating the British Army in battle, but simply staying in existence. In that sense Wayne Bodle might be correct: von Steuben's greatest contributions to the Patriot cause might have been pomp and circumstance, rather than battlefield skills. An eighteenth-century army was a martial community, and, as was argued earlier, display was an important part of this military community. Von Steuben provided the pomp and circumstance, was supplied in the traditional manner.

8.3.3 Military Community

By the end of the Revolutionary War, George Washington would allow up to one woman for every fifteen infantrymen, and one woman to every eleven artillery men.⁶⁵² This fact supplies visible evidence that the Continental Army established the same type of military community as did the British Army, and the other armies of the pan-European military world. Holly Meyer in *Belonging to the Army* has extensively examined this non-combatant world. Her work reveals the same mix of women, children and non-combatant men as were found among the camp-followers of the pan-European military world.⁶⁵³ This in turn suggests that the camp followers of the Continental Army that performed the same functions as they did throughout the mid-eighteenth-century military world. Not only did they cook and clean and nurse, they provided a social structure that was, in many way family-like; and it also seems likely that they provided the same type of gender-role motivation and enculturation that British camp followers supplied. It is perhaps suggestive that the Continental Army also had its share of "she-soldiers," and the presence, and treatment, of these she-soldiers in the Continental Line indicates not its the continuity with the ways of pan-European military world, but the stirring of change as well.

⁶⁵² Alfred F. Young, *Masquerade: The Life and Times of Deborah Sampson, Continental Soldier*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, 95-96, hereafter: Young, *Masquerade*.

⁶⁵³ Holly A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution*, Columbia, South Carolina, University of South Carolina Press, 1996.

Alfred Young has closely examined the life of the Continental Army's most famous she-soldier, Deborah Sampson.⁶⁵⁴ Deborah Sampson, using the name of Robert Shirtliff, served with the Continental Army's elite light infantry from May 20, 1782 to October 25, 1783. After her service, she too married and had children, and petitioned for a pension for her military service, which she was granted in 1805. She also assisted in the preparation of a very popular account of her service: *The Female Review*, in 1797, written largely by a hack writer named Herman Mann, who, Dr. Young suggests, had almost certainly read, and copied the style, of Hannah Snell's *The Female Soldier*.⁶⁵⁵

Times were changing however, and not all prospective "she-soldiers" had the same success as Deborah Sampson. One unfortunate who attempted to enlist in the Continental Army, had a far less happy experience than Deborah Sampson. According to an account by Lieutenant William Barton, she was serving the officers and when asked to: "hand the Tankard to the Table he did so and Made a Courtesy [curtsey][.]" Lieutenant Barton then became suspicious and summoned a Doctor to examine the soldier. The doctor "soon made the discovery by pulling out the Teats of a Plump young girl." Lieutenant Barton then "ordered the Drums to beat [play] her [while still in men's clothing] Threw the town with the whore's march."⁶⁵⁶

This story can perhaps suggest a paradigm for viewing the Continental Line and its relationship to the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, and the pan-European martial culture. The Continental Army was part of the pan-European military world, and therefore it closely resembled the British Army, and other armies of the mid-eighteenth century military world. Nonetheless, the Continental Army was American, in the same sense that the British Army was British, and the French Army that aided the revolution was French, so differences were to be found. Moreover, though the Continental Army was not a particularly revolutionary organization, it served a revolutionary ideology, so inevitably it would, at times, prove to be a harbinger of change. As the story of the unfortunate woman who fell afoul of Lieutenant Barton

⁶⁵⁴ Alfred F. young, *Masquerade: the Life and Times of Deborah Sampson, Continental Soldier*, New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 2004, hereafter: Young, *Masquerade*.

⁶⁵⁵ Young, *Masquerade*, 3-15,

⁶⁵⁶ Robert Fridlington, "A 'Diversion' in Newark: A Letter from the New Jersey Continental Line, 1778," *New Jersey History*, 105, (Spring/Summer 1987), 75-78, cited in Holly A Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution*, Columbia, South Carolina, University of South Carolina Press, 1996, 20, Young, *Masquerade*, 7.

indicates things were changing, both in the world of gender roles, and in the larger eighteenth-century military world.

8.4 THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN MARTIAL CULTURE

The Continental Army was a successful institution; it won the war of the American Revolution. Sadly however, it was never a popular institution, and it was disbanded in 1783 with few regrets. American memory chose to remember the American Revolution in a way that celebrated the minute-man and forgot the regulars of the Continental Line. Much as it wanted to do without however, the new American republic found it usually had need of some type of a regular army, and from 1784 to 1812 it periodically raised small numbers of troops, either to garrison important posts, or to fight on the frontier.

In its early years many of the officers of this proto-United States Army were, naturally enough, Continental Army veterans.⁶⁵⁷ The first manual of the United States Army was, of course, von Steuben's drill book.⁶⁵⁸ The rank and file was recruited from largely the same groups as were the soldiers of the Continental Line. Taken together these factors helped insure that the values of the pan-European martial culture that had been nourished in the Continental Army were transmitted to the regular Army of the United States; when, after the War of 1812, when the United States Army had gained some institutional stability, the pattern had been set: the culture and way of life of the regular army of the United States would look like the culture and way of life of the Continental Army which in turn was derived from that of the British Army, and the pre-national, pan-European military world. The bastard child the British Army left behind had finally become legitimate. The regular army of the United States, in its turn preserved the values, the culture, and the way of life of the pan-European military world and protected them from what they perceived as a hostile rival: the militias of the United States.

⁶⁵⁷ Edward Coffman, *The Old Army: A Portrait of the American Army in Peacetime, 1784-1898*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1986, 4, hereafter: Coffman, *Old Army*.

⁶⁵⁸ Baron Fredrick William von Steuben, *Baron von Steuben's Revolutionary War Drill Manual: A Facsimile Reprint of the 1794 Edition*, New York, Dover Publications, Inc., 1985.

8.4.1 Regulars vs. Militia

For most of its existence the regular army was only a small part of the military establishment of the United States. Collectively the various state militias far outnumbered a regular army that was miniscule until the beginning of the twentieth-century. The militia, later known as the National Guard, was, by the early nineteenth-century, a voluntary organization, and, for the most part, has remained so ever since. Unfortunately, but perhaps inevitably, the relationship between the regular army and the militia has historically been strained, and the regular army has often been regarded, both by the militia, and the wider American public, with outright hostility.

To students of American history, this qualifies as the oldest of news.⁶⁵⁹ The American distrust of a regular army is well known and needs no retelling. There were sound historical reasons for this hostility reaching back into the British political traditions and reinforced by the popular memory of the Revolutionary War. This popular distrust is however, only one half of the story. The other half of the story is the distrust of the militia held by the regular army, which is perhaps less commonly known. For military historians, there is a tendency to see this distrust originating during the American Revolution, when the Continental Line was so often "let down" by the militias, and it seems likely that this was indeed part of the problem. To a considerable degree however, the regulars of the United State Army came by their prejudice the old fashion way: they inherited it from their parents. Distrust of the militia by regular soldiers antedates the American Revolution, however: its origins are to be found in the eighteenth-century British Army, which came to see militias not only as rivals, but as organizations which were hostile to the values of the pan-European martial culture which was so central to their lives.

8.4.1.1 The Mid-Eighteenth-Century British Army and the Militia

As was argued elsewhere, soldiering is not an occupation like any other; it is special and different, it involves risking your life, being prepared to take the lives of other, and often enduring great hardships while doing so. It is not surprising therefore to find that officers and soldiers of the mid-eighteenth-century military world saw themselves as special - as members of

a distinct and unique group, even though they lived within, and not isolated from, the larger mid-eighteenth-century world. It does not seem to stretch logic too far to suggest that this sense of being unique and special was necessary to the operation of the pan-European martial culture: it helped provide the justification most men need to fight, and kill, and endure the deprivations of military life. Moreover a sense of being special and unique is an important component of *esprit de corps*, and *esprit de corps* was, as this work has argued, central to the operation of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture.

This sense of special status can be seen in many aspects of the life of the mid-eighteenth-century British Army, but the place that it shows itself perhaps most clearly is in the sharp distinction that the British Army drew between itself and the militia: this distinction found expression in the endless invective that these two institutions directed at one another. The author of a handbook for the Norfolk militia described this attitude clearly:

I say, my Lords, how astonishing it is, that there should be men, whose rank and knowledge should put them above such prejudices; who maintain that, in a nation circumstanced like this, a militia is dangerous; sometimes that it is impracticable. Even of your Lordships order, some who once raised a body of men not totally unlike a militia, are now become so very military, as to affect to despise it[.]⁶⁶⁰

By the mid-eighteenth-century, the militia in Britain was a two-century old institution, thriving in the midst of the Seven Years War, but likely to be in times of peace. The author of the Norfolk Militia, in striving to address the criticism of regular officers, gives us a good picture of the lines along which the militia defended themselves:

And we will venture to assert, that so much military knowledge, as is sufficient to enable a gentleman to go through the common course of duty, and be what is called a good battalion officer (which is all that is required of the militia officers who are never to command in chief) may be acquired by any man with a tolerable understanding, who will bestow a little pains and application upon it, in half a year, as well as in half a century, notwithstanding the great mystery some military pedants would make of it; for pedants there are of all professions; and most commonly they are such as, having very little real and solid knowledge, want to pass for

⁶⁵⁹ See for instance Marcus Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Civilians: The Martial Spirit in America, 1775-1865*, Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1968, particularly chapters 2 and 6, hereafter: Cunliffe, *Soldiers and Citizens*.

⁶⁶⁰ J. Shuckburgh, *A Plan of Discipline, Composed for the USE of the Militia of the County of Norfolk*, London, 1759, facsimile reprint, Ottawa, Ontario, Museum Restoration Service, 1969, iii-iv, hereafter: *Norfolk Militia*.

persons of great ability and importance. These gentleman also affect, in a supercilious and dogmatical manner, on all occasions, to cry down and vilify the militia, representing it as an impossibility ever to discipline and render it useful; and having themselves grovelled on for years in the routine of the service, without ever attaining to a greater degree of military knowledge than would constitute a tolerable serjeant, endeavour, by ridicule and all manner of absurd arguments, to discourage the country gentleman from acting as militia officers, and entering upon the study of military affairs[.]⁶⁶¹

What seems particularly noticeable was how defensive in tone the militia was, the author of the Norfolk militia handbook describing: "a worthy gentleman of Norfolk, though no regular bred soldier, or offspring of the parade,"⁶⁶² It is clear that the militia of Britain felt that they were the perpetual victims of the scorn of the regular army.

It is very tempting to frame the rivalry between British regulars and militia solely in terms of the traditional British fear and distrust of a standing army. It is noticeable that Humphrey Bland, who penned the most widely used guide for British officers of the first half of the eighteenth-century, attempted to argue that a regular army was, in fact, safer for a free people to maintain, since they had inculcated the idea of subordination:

I have throughout my Book, taken every Occasion to inculcate the Necessity of Legal Military Subordination. It has been the Practice of all Nations, ancient and Modern, even where the People have been blessed with the highest Liberty, never to admit of a Military Independence upon their Military Superiors: I look upon it as the Bond which ties the Whole together, and without it all our Rules and Forms to be of no use. Perhaps it is the great Distinction between Regular Troops and Militia, and the Cause why the Former have always had the Advantage over the latter.⁶⁶³

Clearly some of the tension between militia and regular Army in Britain can be explained by concerns about maintaining a standing army: it is not clear however that this accounted for all of the difficulties. It is not surprising that the militia disliked the disdain displayed by regular soldiers. What is surprising is that the regulars took such a superior tone. Why were British

⁶⁶¹ Norfolk Militia, V.

⁶⁶² *Norfolk Militia*, ii..

regulars hostile towards the militia rather than adopting them as potential allies in the struggle for acceptance? Possibly they viewed them as potential rivals, and this is not illogical given the struggles waged in Parliament to fund a regular army. Still, it is hard not to conclude that some of the regular's soldier's attitude can best be explained by the sense that they thought themselves a distinct and in some fashion superior group of people, and that they were unwilling to share this special status. Beyond this, there seems to have been a sense, as suggested in the quotation from Bland, that regulars soldiers brought a unique set of values, including subordination to the business of war.

8.4.1.2 The United States Army and the State Militias

It is not difficult to see these attitudes preserved in the regular army of the United States. Militias in America have generally tended to be much more democratic than the regular army in matters of organization, discipline and leadership. For most of the nineteenth-century, American militias were at least as social as military in their function. They elected their officers, who as a result usually socialized with their men. These facts alone guaranteed that militia leadership could not follow the authoritarian regular army style. Many, perhaps most militias in fact had military form but not function, spending most of their time on parades and social activities; by regular army standards they were untrained and ill-disciplined. In the eyes of the regulars they were not military; another way to say this is that militias were not living according to the values of the pan-European martial culture.

Moreover, in contrast to the regular army, militia members, and militia officers in particular, were usually intimately involved in politics, and election as a militia officer was often the beginning of a political career. Officers of the regular army had also adopted the European officer's profoundly apolitical attitude towards politics; until after World War II, members of the United States Army commonly did not vote, and they usually regarded politicians with a slight tinge of disdain.

⁶⁶³ Humphrey Bland, *A Treatise of Military Discipline, in which is Laid down and Explained The Duty of the Officers and Soldiers, Thro the several Branches of the Service*, 2nd Edition, London, Printed for Sam. Buckley, 1727, Preface, unpaginated, hereafter: Bland, *Treatise*.

From the perspective of the regular army, the state militias were incompetent, undisciplined rabble, ridden with politics, and led by political hacks. From the perspective of the militia the regular army was an undemocratic, archaic, ritual laden, dictatorship led by officers who acted like aristocratic tyrants. Successive attempts to reform and "regularize" the militias and National Guards from the 1880's to the 1980's were partially successful, but even today, the regular army tends to look down their noses and regards the National Guard, as, at best, partially trained "Weekend Warriors."

The difficulties that the regulars had in dealing with state militias, volunteers, and their successors, the National Guard, have continued to this day. It is tempting to frame these difficulties in terms of battles over missions and resources and professionalism: but it seems likely that there were deeper attitudinal differences that helped to sharpen the disagreements. Differences in attitudes are not surprising because the regular army of the United States was maintaining itself as an almost *ancient regime* institution. The regular army was maintaining the traditions of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture in an America that was becoming increasingly nationalistic, American and democratic.

8.4.2 European Military Culture

It has been said that armies irritate democracies because they serve as a perpetual reminder that democracy is not the only successful type of government. Be that as it may, it is certainly true that for most of its existence, the relationship between the culture of the regular army of the United States, and the ideals of the republic it served, has generally been an awkward one. The small regular American army maintained the culture as part of the older pan-European military world, even as American society moved in a much more democratic direction. During the early years of the republic, attacks launched against the regular army, as a threat to liberty, and against its officers, for their supposed aristocratic values, were not uncommon. When it has been necessary to augment the regular army the culture shock endured by "freeborn" Americans, when they encountered the ways of the regular army, has often been severe.

Logically, the establishment of the United States Military Academy at West Point, in 1802, should have helped to bridge the gap between European military culture and the citizen soldier. It professionalized the officer corps of the United States Army, and, in doing so, the

possession of specialized knowledge replaced membership in a social elite as the justification for an officer's right of command. In fact, West Point was originally intended to strengthen both the regular army *and* the militia by training young men, primarily in engineering, but also in more general military skills; it was hoped this would provide officers for both the regular army and the militia.

This plan succeeded, but only in part. Over time, graduates of West Point came to dominate the officer corps of the United States Army, but there were never enough graduates of West Point to provide more than a tiny proportion of the officers for the militia. Moreover, the Military Academy was an institution steeped in European military culture, both in its technical aspects, and in its attitudes. (This was true of its counterpart, the Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland that was created in 1845, as well.) For example West Point taught Engineering, European military strategy, tactics, and drill, as well as classical drawing and dancing. As a result, cadets at West Point absorbed the traditional "European" military culture of the regular army, rather than the "Minute Man" ethos of the citizen soldier. As a general rule, West Point graduates shared the contempt of the regular army for the militia, adopted the mannerism of an officer and a gentleman, and the "aristocratic" and autocratic style of leadership that came with it. As a result, on the occasions when the United States had to mobilize truly large armies, and employ conscription: during the Civil War (1863-65), World War I (1917-1919), World War II, (1940-1946) and the Cold War, 1947-1973, there would be a profound clash of culture when the army was forced to absorb millions of new, and often involuntary, recruits.

The regular army saw itself as a thing apart, socially and culturally isolated from the everyday course of American life. The American regular army generally followed the traditions of the pan-European martial culture. Close-order drill, drum and bugles calls, military music, ceremonies, and elaborate rituals of military courtesy were the staples of military life. Uniforms, always an important part of the military experience were ornate and followed European models. Officers were expected to behave as heroic leaders; they wore uniforms that were distinctly different from those of the other ranks; on formal occasions, they carried swords, and for less formal occasions, swagger sticks, both traditional symbols of authority. The relationship between officers and enlisted men was based upon the European model that saw officers as "gentlemen," and enlisted men as distinctly not; the interactions between these two groups were kept distant and formal. Strict subordination was insisted upon, and discipline was maintained

by severe punishment, and regulated by the Articles of War, derived from those of the British Army of the eighteenth-century.

Enlisted men were expected to be deferential and obedient. They made formal gestures of submission by standing to attention when an officer spoke to them, and by saluting. This social segregation and deference extended to military families as well. Officers had "ladies" while other ranks had only "wives," with all social connotations implied by that differing terminology. The regular army maintained the use of the language of chivalry into the 1880's and 1890's, officers sometimes portrayed themselves as "cavaliers."⁶⁶⁴ Amongst themselves, officers and their families engaged in a social life that mimicked, as closely as they were able, that of the upper class.

8.4.2.1 The Ike's and the Mac's

Perhaps the example of America's generals can best illustrate the pronounced difference between the ideals of the American citizen soldier, and traditional European military culture. Historian T. Harry Williams divided American generals into two types: the "Ike's" and the "Mac's." Taking their name from Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower, the Supreme Commander in Europe during World War II, the "Ike's" were generals such as Eisenhower, Ulysses S. Grant, the General in Chief of the Union Army during the Civil War, and Zachary Taylor, one of the two American commanders during the Mexican American War. (Many other well-known generals such as Omar Bradley during World War II, and Daniel Morgan during the American Revolution, would fit this pattern as well.) These men were generals who successfully led large American armies, composed mostly of citizen-soldiers. Many attribute their success to their ability to "play-against" the military type, and win the trust of citizen-soldiers who regarded more traditional military leaders with suspicion. Whether consciously or otherwise, Eisenhower, Grant and Taylor adopted a plain-spun, All-American image, seemed friendly and approachable, avoided military ceremony and fancy uniforms, and generally eschewed the trappings of European military culture. The "Ike's" were very popular with civilian leaders, and with the citizen soldiers they led.

⁶⁶⁴ See Oliver Knight, *Life and Manners in the Frontier Army*, Norman, Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, 1978, *passim* and particularly chapters two and three.

The "Mac's" are represented by, and take their name from, Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander in the South West Pacific during World War II, and Supreme Commander in Korea at the beginning of that war. He, along with George McClellan, commanding general of the Union's Army of the Potomac during 1861-62, and Winfield Scott, leader of the other American Army during the Mexican-American War and General in Chief of the United States Army until 1861, are held to represent the other pole of military style. (In many ways John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, commander in chief of the American Expeditionary Force in France during World War I, and General George S. Patton of World War II fame, would fit into this group as well.) These generals embraced, and often enjoyed, the role of traditional, European-style, great commanders: the image they presented was martial and dramatic. They were less affable and approachable and more autocratic; they enjoyed military ceremony, and wore distinctive uniforms. Unlike the "Ike's," civilian leaders felt very threatened by the "Mac's." The "Mac's" relationship with the soldiers they led was more complex: under certain circumstances they attained some popularity, but, amongst the very democratic-minded American army of World War II, Douglas MacArthur was not widely liked by his troops; and all of these generals somehow seem a bit out of place in the army of the United States. The final comment to be made about the "Ike's" and the "Mac's" was that all six harbored presidential ambitions, and five ran. All three "Ike's" won, both "Mac's" (Douglas MacArthur was never nominated) lost. It seems that America preferred its men on white horses to be wearing rumpled uniforms.

8.4.3 The Passing of the Old Army?

From the beginning of the republic to 1940, the regular Army of the United States was a small organization generally stationed in out of the way corners of America. For most of the nineteenth-century the regular army was a small and insular organization, many of whose members served for a very long time. (Until 1860, it never, in peacetime, numbered more than 16,000 men.) It recruited largely from the economically distressed, and its ranks were usually filled with large numbers of new immigrants. The officers, on the other hand, an even smaller group generally numbering only a few thousand, were usually members of America's middle-class, and were, by the 1840's, mostly educated at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Isolated as it was, both socially and geographically, the regular army could maintain the

traditions of European military culture with only minor modifications. The large armies of citizen-soldiers raised during the Civil War and World War I simply did not last long enough to make any permanent impact on the regular army's military culture; as the large armies were disbanded at the end of the wars, the regulars happily returned to "real soldiering" and their accustomed ways.

From 1940 to 1973 however, (with a gap of only a few months) the United States maintained a large conscripted army of several millions. This thirty-three year civilian intrusion did make large and seemingly lasting changes to the culture of the United States Army. (These changes, though to a lesser extent, would also affect the Navy, and Marine Corps. The Air Force, only established as an independent service in 1947, has always been the least "military," and most "civilian" of the military services.) The better educated and more assertive citizen-soldiers of the mid-twentieth-century would simply not accept the less democratic and more aristocratic aspects of European military culture, and over this thirty year period, the United States Army shed most of them.

Perhaps the most important change was the development of Reserve Officer Training Corps at colleges and universities, and Officer Candidate Schools, to train college students and former enlisted men as officers. With West Point-trained officers swamped under the vast number of new officers, who came from many different social, cultural, and educational groups, the concept of the officer as a gentleman became little more than an ironic catch-phrase. The former immense social and disciplinary distance between officers and enlisted men became impossible to maintain; over time most of the outward signs of this distance were eliminated. Officers lost most of their distinctions, by 1960 they were dressed in uniforms which were practically indistinguishable from those of the enlisted men; swords and swagger sticks, the traditional signs of their status vanished, as did most of the more elaborate forms of military courtesy.

More generally, military discipline was relaxed: coercive discipline was replaced by more persuasive methods. The post World War II "Doolittle" Board oversaw the replacement of the old Articles of War by a much more "civilian" Uniform Code of Military Justice. Bugle calls and military bands largely disappeared from military life, and close-order drill was much less common than it once was. As the last men with pre-World War II experience retired, the "old army" faded away, and so did most remnants of European military culture. As service as a

conscript became the norm for most American men, military service became much less unique and much more like a job for enlisted men. This change of tone was enhanced by the Army's need to recruit and retain skilled technicians to manage the machinery of a mechanized, and, later, computerized, army. The officer, many would say, changed from being an heroic leader, to working as a military manager.

The United States Army became an all-volunteer force again in 1973. In the period since then, the American army has made some very slight and tentative steps toward regaining some elements of the traditional European military culture. Officers are attempting, with mixed success, to once again take on the mantle of the heroic leader. The adoption of the beret (which has become almost the universal headgear of the soldier) in place of baseball-style caps likewise shows an attempt to re-identify with a more martial image. Though larger than any volunteer army in American history, nonetheless the United States Army is rediscovering its traditional isolation from mainstream American culture.

When the draft began in late 1940, many Americans worried that service in the military would militarize America. These worries proved unfounded: the military did not militarize American civilians, the civilians "civilianized" America's military. It remains to be seen if this change will be reversed.

8.5 CONCLUSION

When American soldiers stand to attention in the presence of an officer, and salute, they are not only showing deference to their superiors in rank, they are also acknowledging that the origins of the United States Army (and for that matter the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force as well) are to be found in Europe; and was brought to the United States by the British Army over two and a half centuries ago. The result of this British transmittal of our European military parentage is that, even today, the ethos of the American military shows the strong influence of the British Army and European military culture. Today this heritage is largely found in military externals, nonetheless the persistence of these externals: uniforms, drill, marching in step, things which originated in the pan-European military world of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century and are now to be found across the globe, show the profound influence that the pan-European military world has had on what is now a global martial culture.

The pan-European martial culture was the root culture of the world's armies. Many elements of this culture were fairly specific to the early modern era, and have largely vanished today: the honor of the officer and gentleman has largely been replaced by the specialized knowledge of the professional; the *esprit de corps* of the regiment has been pushed into second place behind the teamwork of the primary group. Other elements of the pan-European martial culture have proved more durable: military style itself has changed dramatically, from dressing like a gentleman, to dressing like an outdoorsman, but the uniform seems to be as important as it ever was. Other elements of the pre-national, pan-European martial culture vanished for a time, only to return later: camp followers vanished in the nineteenth-century only to return in the twenty-first, in the form of hired technicians. Woman and children largely vanished from military life for a time, but these days it seems as if the families of soldiers have regained the importance that they held in the eighteenth-century: in fact it seems as if they command much more attention than they ever did before.

Perhaps most surprisingly, with the transformation of the mass armies of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century into the smaller more professional armies of the twenty-first, the ethos of the soldier, after a period when the ideal of the citizen soldier predominated, appears to once

again be gaining ground. More broadly, it appears that around the world armies are re-discovering their sense of themselves as separate, special, and unique cultures, with their own values and ways of life. Whether this will build a pan-global military world on the model of the older pan-European military world also remains to be seen.

9.0 EPILOGUE: *LOEWENDENKMAL*

On August 10, 1792 the people of Paris stormed the *Tuileries* Palace to put an end to the French monarchy.⁶⁶⁵ The French Army was in disorder, the Regiment of French Guards had deserted. Only the Regiment of Swiss Guards stayed loyal, and over seven hundred officers and men laid down their lives defending the French royal family.⁶⁶⁶

They received their memorial in 1821. As a result, Switzerland maintains one memorial that at pays tribute to the values and the culture of the soldier - values and culture that were of major significance to the history of Europe: those of the pan-European martial culture. This memorial, the *Loewendenkmal*, the famous Lion of Lucerne, is the figure of a wounded lion, his head resting on a shield, sculpted into a sandstone cliff near the center of the City of Lucerne, Switzerland. It is dedicated to the memory of the Swiss Guards.⁶⁶⁷ The Swiss Guards made their stand in 1792, after the French Revolution which would do so much to undercut the basis of the culture by which they lived, had begun. But they died in the tradition of giving loyal service to the sovereign whom they served, and most of the men and woman who had lived their lives as part of the pre-national, pan-European military world would have understood and approved of what they did.

Today, it is much harder to share that understanding or approval. Our beliefs as to when and where and why to fight and kill and die have changed profoundly since the eighteenth-century: today, taking service to defend a foreign ruler seems, at a minimum, disreputable, and many would say, immoral. If we cannot approve of what they did however, surely we can at least admire the way in which the Swiss Guards, and all the other soldiers of the European military world, stood by their word and their honor. So there, carved into the hillside above Lucerne, we find the memorial to the Swiss Guards, and perhaps to the pan-European martial

⁶⁶⁵ Scott, "Foreign Mercenaries," 53.

⁶⁶⁶ Lucerne, Web Page.

culture as well. Certainly if there is to be a monument to the pre-modern, pan-European military world, Switzerland, the nation that sent so many soldiers off to the wars, is where it should be.

⁶⁶⁷ Lucerne, Web Page

APPENDIX A

JOHN LYNN'S TAXONOMY OF ARMY DEVELOPMENT AND THE EVOLUTION OF WESTERN ARMIES

To understand the multinational armies of eighteenth-century Europe, one needs to understand the structure and nature of the armies that were raised by eighteenth-century monarchs. It will surprise no one to learn that the armies of mid-eighteenth-century Europe were different from those of today. Some differences are obvious, there have been profound changes in the type and lethality of weapons, for instance. Others changes are more subtle: they only become apparent when viewed across a long period of time. When viewed with a wide perspective, it can be seen that the changes over time in the structure and organizing principles of European armies follow a common pattern. For example, in the early middle ages, most western European armies seem to have been raised primarily on the basis of the feudal obligations of a vassal to follow his lord. During the sixteenth-century most European armies were largely mercenary in nature, while by the beginning of the eighteenth century most European states had standing armies. These changes can be seen as evolutionary in nature, that is to say there has been a clear pattern of progressive development from one type of army to another, and this development has been fairly consistent across Western Europe. Perhaps the most useful description of this evolutionary change may be found in a “taxonomy of army development” created by Dr. John Lynn.⁶⁶⁸

Briefly, Dr. Lynn hypothesizes that European armies can be described as evolving through seven stages of development from about the eighth-century to the present. He has

⁶⁶⁸ This, and the next several paragraphs are taken from: John A Lynn, "The Evolution of Army Style in the Modern West, 800-2000," in *The International History Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, August 1996. A brief summary of his

termed these stages: the feudal; the medieval-stipendiary; the aggregate-contract; the state-commission; the popular-conscript; the mass-reserve; and the volunteer-technical. Like all descriptive models Dr. Lynn's taxonomy is schematic and general. Numerous exceptions can be noted. It certainly must be emphasized that, in practice, Dr. Lynn's descriptive categories are only approximations, they will tend to blur and overlap. In particular the changes in army style that Dr. Lynn describes were not clear-cut and abrupt, but occurred gradually with considerable transition. While keeping these caveats in mind, it is helpful to examine Dr. Lynn's taxonomy of western army style, to see what it can tell us about the origin of the multinational armies of the mid-eighteenth-century.

"Feudal armies," as Dr. Lynn terms them, were common from roughly the eighth to the thirteenth-centuries. Feudal armies were formed when rulers called upon their vassals to perform military service in return, typically, for land tenure. These vassals in turn called out their vassals, and so on, until a feudal army had been raised. Feudal armies were, from the perspective of rulers, far from ideal institutions. The amount of time vassals were required to spend in their lords' service was limited, meaning that armies often disappeared when the vassals' term of service was up. Moreover, the nature of feudal bonds meant that a vassal's immediate loyalty lay with his lord, rather than with his lord's lord. In short, rulers could seldom be certain of their army's loyalty in all circumstances. This was of particular concern when a ruler had to deal with a rebellion, a very common occurrence in the feudal world. As a result of these concerns, and with an increasingly robust economy leading to more money in circulation, the high middle ages would see the evolution of a new type of army.

During the twelfth century it became increasingly common for medieval rulers to convert feudal obligations into a tax paid in money. A ready supply of cash allowed European rulers to offer to pay the men who fought for them. Generally, rather than call out all their vassals in response to their feudal duties, European rulers would go to selected vassals and offer to pay them if they would, in turn, raise men for military service. This system, which Dr. Lynn terms the "medieval-stipendiary," might also be called "feudalism for hire." It offered numerous advantages to those European rulers who were able to employ it: the principal advantages were that it allowed armies to keep the field for as long as the ruler could pay; it also helped direct the

"taxonomy" may be found in: John A. Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siecle: The French Army, 1610-1715*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 1997, 4-8, hereafter Lynn, *Grand Siecle*.

army's loyalty toward the person who paid. Over time however, the social and cultural groups that controlled military skills changed. By the end of the fifteenth-century at the latest, it was apparent that military expertise no longer resided exclusively with the old class of medieval lords; they were therefore no longer necessarily the obvious people to go to when forming an army.

New military specialists, notably infantry, and artillery, had become important players on the battlefield. This consideration, plus the increased prosperity of the sixteenth-century, led to the development of the army style that Dr. Lynn has termed the "aggregate-contract army." Dr. Lynn also describes this as the "off the shelf" army. In essence the European ruler who wanted to form an army went to a middleman, a contractor, a military enterpriser. This person would go and hire the necessary components to supply an army of the required size and make-up. This system offered numerous advantages: the most obvious being that it was in fact "off the shelf." The ruler hired an army when he needed one, and discharged it when the need passed. Moreover, the aggregate contract army allowed rulers to tap into distant supplies of military expertise. Under this system Swiss Pikemen, and German *Landsknechts*, (both infantry) and *Reiters*, (German cavalry) served throughout Europe.

While the aggregate contract army met many of the military needs of European rulers, it also created serious dangers. Most obviously the aggregate-contract army was strongly, and often completely, mercenary in nature. There were always concerns, and on numerous occasions justified ones, about the loyalty of hired troops. The contractor, or military enterpriser, in particular was in a very powerful position. Several *Condotterie* (mercenary captains) made themselves rulers of the Italian city-states (most famously the Sforza's of Milan) which hired them. Only his murder, by his own officers, stopped Albrecht von Wallenstein, the last great military enterpriser in European history, from setting himself up as a power in central Europe during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648) at the expense of his patron, the Holy Roman Emperor.

These concerns, along with the development of new military techniques which required that the troops train together for long periods of time, led to the evolution of the next step in European army development, the "state-commission army." The "state-commission army," which appeared in the mid-seventeenth-century, cuts out the middleman. Instead, European monarchs hired regiments, and dealt directly with those regiment's colonels. These regiments moreover, were kept constantly in their employ as a standing army, thus enabling them to

continuously train in the new and more complicated tactics that had been developed. As time passed, these regiments became long-standing governmental institutions, and the colonels gradually lost their independent status. The European armies of the mid-eighteenth-century were of this state-commissioned type, as was the Continental Army of the American Revolution.

The French Revolution marks the appearance of the successor to the state commission army, which Dr. Lynn has identified as the “popular-conscript army.” Just as its name implies, the popular-conscript army drafted, on a relatively wide basis, citizens of the nation to serve in the army.⁶⁶⁹ The popular-conscript army addressed two major failings of the older state-commission army: first, maintaining a standing volunteer force was expensive, or to state this another way, European states could not maintain, in peacetime, as large an army as they would have liked; second, state-commissioned armies were often perceived as not being particularly dedicated to the states that they served. The popular-conscript army that, at least in theory, tapped the patriotism of the population of the nation, addressed both of these issues. Conscription allowed larger armies to be raised, and (again in theory) filled these armies with men who were dedicated to the interests of the state.

Most European states, however, could not maintain, in peacetime, the large armies which popular conscription made possible. It was too expensive, and of course, most conscripts did not want to spend their lives in the army. In peacetime they wished to be released and return to their homes. Yet, the wars of the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries would require mass armies. The solution arrived at Dr. Lynn has termed the “mass-reserve army.” In this type of army citizens are conscripted for a few years training, then released from the army, but held “in reserve,” that is, subject to recall, when war threatens. This allowed for the training and preparation, in peacetime, of a large army, without all the expense that would normally be entailed.

The great wars of the twentieth-century were fought with mass-reserve armies. Even mass-reserve armies, however, proved very costly, and at the same time technological development offered to put newer, deadlier, but far more complicated, and expensive, weapons in the hands of the soldier. In the second half of the twentieth-century, as defense budgets soared, most western armies slowly converted to what Dr. Lynn has described as the:

⁶⁶⁹ Conscription was not unknown in Europe prior to the French Revolution, but its operation tended to be relatively limited in scope, confined to small parts of the population, and except in a few states, notably Prussia, usually acted largely to make up for a shortfall of volunteers.

“volunteer-technical” model. In size the “volunteer-technical army” is much smaller than a mass-reserve army, and, as its name implies, the members of a volunteer-technical army, are in fact volunteers. This reduction in size moreover allowed states to pay their soldiers much better than they had paid the members of a mass-reserve army; and this, in turn allowed the army to attract men and women of a greater intellectual and educational status, and to train them to a higher standard. This in its turn allowed armies to use increasingly more sophisticated and difficult to operate weapons, with, so the reasoning goes, much greater lethality, thus allowing a smaller technical volunteer army to be much more effective than a larger mass-reserve army. Not coincidentally, it also does away with the requirement to conscript citizens to serve as soldiers, which was always a highly unpopular procedure in most western nations.

It is useful to look at the logic of the origins of the armies in the various stages of evolution that Dr. Lynn proposes so as to explain the phenomena of mid-eighteenth-century multinational armies. At one extreme, an army raised on a strictly feudal basis will be an army that by definition is manned only by the subjects of the feudal noble who raised it. At the other extreme a mass-reserve army will embrace only the citizens of the state which created it. In the stages in between these extremes however, aggregate-contract and state-commission armies, there is no constraint upon employing soldiers from outside the land which is raising the army, and no particular reason not to.⁶⁷⁰ For instance, Dr. Lynn describes the “aggregate contract army, as the “off the shelf army.”⁶⁷¹ To look at an example: if in the sixteenth-century, the King of France wished to raise an army, he would go shopping for middlemen who could bring him the best army they could find. There was no requirement, however, that the middlemen bring in men sitting on a shelf in France, and so the sixteenth-century French army might well include Swiss infantry and German *Rieter* cavalry.

In short, if we accept Dr. Lynn’s “taxonomy of army development,”⁶⁷² and it seems to be a powerful explanatory tool: then one of the principle reasons for the existence of multinational armies between roughly 1400 and 1800 C. E., lay in the fact that the structure of armies during

⁶⁷⁰ As an aside, I will note the intriguing point that there does not seem to be any inherent requirement in the technical-volunteer army, *within the structure of that army*, for its members to be citizens of the nation they serve. There are external restrictions, most obviously the general unacceptability of a nation-state employing mercenaries, which limit the employment of non-citizens in modern armies. I wonder, given the difficulties which western armies often experience in finding recruits, and the appearance of numerous private security firms that are taking an increasingly prominent role in modern warfare, how long these constraints will last? SNH

⁶⁷¹ Lynn, *Grand Siecle*, 6.

this period had no particular requirement for limiting the recruitment of soldiers to the lands of the nation which was raising the army.⁶⁷³

⁶⁷² Lynn, *Grand Siecle*, footnote, 5.

⁶⁷³ Lynn, *Grand Siecle*, 4-8.

APPENDIX B

THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF IRELAND LETTERS

Philadelphia, 16th May 1774

Dear Colonel

What shall I say or how shall I apologize for being so influenced as to forfeit your Friendship by Attaching myself to a set of Men whose Principals I now find are as different from Mine as honor & Truth are from Meanness & Duplicity.

Forgive me for signing the Letter to Sir John Sebright, & Gen^l Gage, I have no more to ask of you, and I can assure you that was done with reluctance - I can suport my Conduct to you in the Illinois as Uniform & consistent with the Character of a friend and of a Man of Honor, but this I shall not attempt 'till we have the pleasure of Meeting, which God forward - for there never was such a Continual Scene of Blundering Cruelty & Injustice Practiced in any Reg^l since the time of Edgar to the Present as has been in the Royal Irish since you left us - Nor do I expect Change 'till I se you again - Assume the Command - The very Countenance of a Wilkins will bring gladness to the hearts of many, and your appearance among us would restore Tranquillity and Bannish Oppression. Think not then of Leaving us, but return to the Royals of Ireland where you may be of utmost service to your King and Country, & distribute Happiness to a body of Men who Esteem and Revere you, to a body of Men who are at present distressed and Injured-

To give you a narrative of the Misconduct, Inconsistentness and malevolence of your Enemies would be to Voluminous for an Epistolary Correspondence, and at present I have not time to Arrange matters [word unclear] for the sailing of Cap^t Taleoner - I shall therefore content myself at present with Relating Briefly the causes of our Mischief and Animosity, leaving the Effects or Consequences To time or the Formation of your own Judgment - Soon after our Arrival from the Illinois a Private Soldier Married a Woman who was disliked by your friend & favorite B _____ G _____ for refusing his Caresses & ^{etc.} - The name of the Woman is [Shaw?], but to be particular would fill at least two or three sheets of paper -

The Man is brought before a Reg^l Court martial, he thinks the Sentence Cruel & Unjust, and Modestly appeals to a General Court Martial. He receives 500 Lashes, on the face of his Appeal, & is again confined for Insolence - his application for a General Court Martial being Construed in that Sense. He was brought again before a Reg^l Court Martial in the Shockingest Condition that ever a Soldier appeared before a Court of any kind with his Bloody Shirt on his

shoulders Unable to Stand Unsupported, the unpropriety & Cruelty of this was noticed by the Court, and the Major at their Intercession order'd the Court to be Suspended, therefore no Judgment was given - in the meantime the Prisoner applys for a General Court Martial which the General Granted, & notwithstanding the whole of the Reg^t attended at Brunswick to prosecute him, yet the General who by some means or Other had got a direct View of the Matter would not allow him to be punished, here they allowed a Private Soldier to Triumph over them all & have Subjected Themselves to an Action of Law, which if the Man has friends will not be easily averted -

Soon after this the Rev^d M^r Robert Newburgh our Chaplain arrives among us -A Polite, Sensible, Well bred young Gentleman Modest in Deportment & Entertaining in Conversation, and had it not been the Virulent Tongue & Poisonous Breath of a Certain Tho.^s Batt must have been respected by all of us, and been an Ornament to the Royal Irish - Batt Bellows & Trumpets forth with his usual effrontery, such horrid scandal against this young Divine, before his Arrival amongst us, and had Prejudiced the minds of Many - The Parson arrived & produces the most honorable Testimonials of his Character from Men of high rank & Great Worth, particularly a Most Affectionate Letter from Colonel Eyre Massey to you, fully contradicting to every unprejudiced mind Batt's aspersions & proves him by a letter of Sir John Sebright's & another from a Mr. Smith of Dublin, a *palpable* & Manifest L [sic] - & yet such has been his influence with the 18th Reg^t (which is saying very little for us) that he got every one of the Officers from the major downward Except Ensⁿ Trist & myself to join in the horrid Tale, and so uniform and assiduous have they all been in treating him with Disrespect and Countenancing & Aiding Mr. Batt in propogating his Groundless Slanders that they have at Last caused Mr. Newburgh (one of the most quiet & peaceable of men) to Commence Action against said Batt, as also against Captain Payne for Defamation as well as to apply to the General for a Court martial, in Order that he might have an Opportunity of Setting his Character in a fair Light. the Court Martial Assembles at Amboy next Saturday the 21st May -

Last Month Nicholas Gaffney formerly a Corporal, but now a Private Soldier in the Grenadier Company, Commanded by Cap^t [Shee?] exhibits several Charges against him while commanding at Cahoe in the Illinois Three of which are very serious Ones -

The 1st Charge, For Giving Stinking Venison & Bear Meet as Rations to him & the garrison against their Wills, said provisions being Shee's own property

2nd Charge, That by the Sale of Liqueur, sugar, Coffee &^{etc.} to him, Cap^t Shee was Interested in the sale thereof. -

5th Charge, That by Cap^t Shee's Misconduct when the Commandant at Cahoe in the Illinois country John Knight Soldier of his Company was Murdered by the Savages

A Court Martial as it was Call'd Tho it was in reality a Court of Enquiry was Order'd & sat four Weeks on this very perplexing Affair - when we gave Our Opinion with respect to the Validity of the Charges - in the Court of Enquiry the Complainant Gaffney complain'd loudly of the Court's partiality to Captain Shee, he has insisted to be heard before a General court martial, Which the General has granted, and he attends with his Evidences who are Numerous at the Court Martial at Brunswick to prosecute his Captain - I sat as a member of the Court of Enquiry & altho I did not write the Minute Proceedings, I minuted down the Cream of the [Jest?] and as there are many, Illiberal, Impertinent Reflections thrown on your Conduct & Character in the course of Cap^t C_____ns evidence as well as in Cap^t Shee's Defense (which is very flimsy performance of his friend Bens) I think it only fair to acquaint you Herewith -

God send you soon & safe Over the Atlantic, you would be a happy sight to the royal irish - do not sell [out?], I find you have Settld Matters with [Baynton?] Wheaton & Morgan, what have you to Dread; I have ever Esteemed you, I know declare myself your Friend, who then can prosecute Col.ⁿ Wilkins - who indeed among all your Enemies can look Col.ⁿ Wilkins in the face without being abashed.

Is it the Command at Caho? No he has lately Corresponded with a Gentleman of this City for his Oppressive & unjust Deed in the Illinois & is now before a Gen^l Court Martial for Charges of a Serious Nature

Is it the paymast.^{er}? No, his Conduct has been Arraigned before a Court of enquiry Composed of his Friends, which I don't apprehend he would wish to have Revised, Is it L.ⁿ [Connoley?], No that is Impossible you had him twice under An Arrest & twice he made you the Necessary Concessions, & you know the very Serious Complaint made by Corporal Saunders when you Ordered me to the Command at [Hashashiow?] - Richardson and Blackwood are Negatives - Why then leave the Service at a time too when your King may Want you - Gen.^l Gates I hope will be able to bring the refractory Bostonians to Reason & and your own pressure would Effectually restore that faculty to the Royals of Ireland - Should you think proper to Honor me with your Correspondence, I shall give you a ful & True Narrative of Every Transgression that has happened amongst since you left us. The most Inviolable Secrecy is Requested. you'll know if M.^r Bustricke is your Friend - tho I would wish our Correspondence & what I write you may be kept a secret from him & all Mankind till we meet, I am D^{ear} Sir

your Sincere Friend
& obliged humble Servant

a Copy

a Copy of a letter from the 18th Reg^t to L^{co}1 Wilkins⁶⁷⁴

⁶⁷⁴ *Thomas Gage Papers Collection, American Series*, William L. Clements Library, The University of Michigan, hereafter: *Gage Papers*.

[The letter quoted above was enclosed with the following:]

To Gage
From Wilkins

London 6 July 1774

London 6 July 1774

Sir

I did myself the honor of writing to Your Excellency by the May Packet, give me leave to congratulate you on your landing at your Government & your success in the important business that has or will Engage the Attention of the known World all good people here applaud your human [sic] & Steady conduct as the best method to reclaim deluded people -

I once lived in your good Opinion & flatter myself you will pardon my Indeavour [sic] to regain it, to attempt which I have sent you enclosed for your perusal & Confidence a Copy of a letter I have lately rec.^d from one of the signers agains me in the 18th Reg.^t you will be much surprised there at & I must beg you will let it rest with yourself at present or make such use thereof as my be Absolutely necessary, you have also my answer to his letter which I will beg Your Excellency to seal & forward to him as may be Necessary

I judge what himself & others that know me have felt on the occasion, their cause was bad, & I make no doubt if he would declare his sentiments I should have confession of the same kind from all the Others, I know them well and that every Officer & Soldier in the 18th Regim.^t have full cause to write and speak of me as this Officer has done, I have taken the liberty to desire he will declare himself to you, he seems to fear the Others & only wants me present to protect him, knows well I should soon bring the others to Order & by the most gentle means and which perhaps I have pursued to a fault, at present it would be highly inconvenient for me to leave this place having a Law Suit depending of the Utmost consequence, that once over, I should be happy to be under Your Excellency's Command,

I have the honor to be Sir
with real respect & Esteem
Your Excellency's most faithful
& obliged humble Servant
Jo. Wilkins L.^t Col.ⁿ
at Cox & Main Craigs Court
London⁶⁷⁵

⁶⁷⁵ Gage Papers.

APPENDIX C

OVER THE HILLS AND FAR AWAY

The song "Over the Hills and Far Away" seems to have appeared in the early eighteenth-century. As far as is known the music was first published in 1706 in Thomas D'Urfey's *Pills to Purge Melancholy*. Three verses of the lyrics and the chorus were used in George Farquhar's play, "The Recruiting Officer:"

Our 'prentice Tom may now refuse
To wipe his scoundrel Master's Shoes,
For now he's free to sing and play
Over the Hills and far away.

Over the Hills and O'er the Main,
To Flanders, Portugal and Spain,
The queen commands and we'll obey
Over the Hills and far away.

We all shall lead more happy lives
By getting rid of brats and wives
That scold and bawl both night and day -
Over the Hills and far away.

Over the Hills and O'er the Main,
To Flanders, Portugal and Spain,
The queen commands and we'll obey
Over the Hills and far away.

Courage, boys, 'tis one to ten,
But we return all gentlemen
All gentlemen as well as they,

Over the hills and far away.

Over the Hills and O'er the Main,
To Flanders, Portugal and Spain,
The queen commands and we'll obey
Over the Hills and far away.

According to one source the tune is an older air whose origin is unknown. According to another, the original air was "Jockey's Lamentation" or "Jockey met with Jenny fair." The song was also used (with somewhat different lyrics) in John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). "Over the Hills and Far Away" was very popular in Colonial and Revolutionary America, and it is not unknown amongst folk musicians today. A reasonably complete set of the "military" lyrics is given below:⁶⁷⁶

Over the Hills and Far Away

Hark! Now the drums beat up again,
For all true soldier gentlemen,
Then let us 'list and march I say,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus:

Over the hills and o'er the main.
To Flanders, Portugal, and Spain,
Queen Anne commands and we'll obey.
Over the hills and far away.

All gentlemen that have a mind,
To serve the Queen that's good and kind,
Come 'list and enter into pay,
Then over the hills and far away.

Chorus

Here's forty shillings on the drum,
For those that volunteers do come,
With shirts, and clothes, and present pay,
Then o'er the hills and far away.

⁶⁷⁶ George Farquhar, "The Recruiting Officer," Peter Dixon, ed., Manchester, UK, Manchester University Press, 1986, II,iii, 93-94, Appendix B, 193-195.

Chorus

No more from sound of drums retreat,
While Marlborough and Galway beat,
The French and Spaniards every day,
When o'er the hills and far away.

Chorus

The Constables they search about,
To find such brisk young fellows out;
Then lets be volunteers I say,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus

The 'prentice Tom he may refuse,
To wipe his angry master's shoes,
For then he's free to sing and play,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus

Over the rivers, bogs and springs,
We all shall live as great as kings,
And plunder get both night and day,
When over the hills and far away.

Chorus

Come on then boys, and you shall see,
We every one shall captains be!
To whore and rant as well as they,
When over the hills and far away.

Chorus

Courage, boys, 'tis one to ten,
But we return all gentlemen
All gentlemen as well as they,
Over the hills and far away.

Chorus

We then shall lead more happy lives,

By getting rid of brats and wives,
That scold on both the night and day,
When over the hills and far away.

Chorus⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷⁷ These verses were assembled from various internet sites.

APPENDIX D

PRECISION OF MOVEMENT AND LINE OF BATTLE *EN MURAILLE*

By the mid-eighteenth-century, the British, and most other European armies intended, at least in theory, to form their line of battle, *en muraille*, that is, like a wall: in one long continuous line, with minimal intervals between the sub-units involved. (In fact an army might well deploy into two or three lines, but the first line would generally be the largest, and it would be deployed *en muraille*, as described above.) This required an extraordinary degree of precision, both in the deployment itself; and more importantly when it became time to advance against the enemy. Marching a line of soldiers is (perhaps counter-intuitively) an incredibly difficult task, for the simple reason that the soldiers drift from side to side as they march and so push others off their path. The longer the line, the more this problem is compounded. To try to minimize this problem, the entire line needs to advance exactly perpendicular to its front; to insure this, elaborate procedures that involved the careful establishment of "points of view" were employed to keep the line aligned. (In fact surveyor's instruments were sometimes used to ensure that the "points of view" were exactly perpendicular the line of battle.) This was not a trivial issue; the precision needed to deploy and advance a line *en muraille*, significantly increased the time necessary to form line of battle and attack, often with negative consequences.

Most of these problems could have been avoided, or at least significantly alleviated, by deploying the sub-units in the line with wider intervals between them. This both speeded-up deployment, and minimizes the problem of the whole line drifting when it advances, as the intervals help insure that any drifting within one unit, does not compound the problem within another. The stated reason for not doing this was that the intervals between the sub-units, allows gaps within which the enemy could penetrate. This argument does not hold up, because later in

the eighteenth-century, the line *en muraille* was abandoned, and armies did deploy with significant intervals between the sub-units. (To be fair, some organizational and tactical change was needed to bring this about.) In examining this mid-eighteenth-century preoccupation with the line of battle *en muraille*, one finishes strongly disposed to believe that considerations of military style, that is a liking of show and precision, were at least as significant as tactical utility. Otherwise it is hard to see why such an awkward arrangement continued for so long.

Nor, it should be noted, was this preoccupation with straight lines confined to the British Army. Perhaps one of the best examples of this preoccupation with the geometric elements of linear tactics comes from the French Army. Under the influence of Baron de Pirch, a Prussian officer, who took service with the French Army, in the 1760's and 1770's, the tactical system of the French Army became centered round the use of "points of view." For a brief period the often mindless precision involved in "points of view" became the preoccupation of the French Army.

See Robert S. Quimby, *The Background of Napoleonic Warfare: The Theory of Military Tactics in Eighteenth-Century France*, New York, AMS Press Inc., 1973, especially Chapter 7, and Brent Nosworthy, *With Musket, Cannon and Sword, Battle Tactics of Napoleon and His Enemies*, New York, Sarpedon, 1996, particularly Chapter 6. Likewise, J. A. Houlding's *French Arms Drill of the 18th Century*, Alexandria Bay, Museum Restoration Service, 1988, shows that French eighteenth-century manuals-of-arms and drill books were just as concerned with unnecessary precision and excess motions as the British manuals.

APPENDIX E

THE CADENCED STEP AND CLOSE ORDER

Eighteenth and nineteenth century armies *formed* line parallel to a column, and when they wished to form a column parallel to the line they *broke* the line into a column. When they wished to again form a line parallel to the column, they *reformed* line. When a line formed a column perpendicular to the line the line *ployed* into column. When a column formed a line perpendicular to the column it *deployed* into line. Of these terms only "deploy" has survived in modern military usage in something close to its original meaning. All four of these procedures required great precision in movement. They were time consuming and could be nerve-racking when performed, as they often had to be, in the presence of the enemy. All four of these maneuvers are said to be closely connected with the re-adoption of the "cadenced step," or, as it is know today, "marching in step."

This issue here is a highly technical and complex one. It revolves around the fact that prior to the widespread re-introduction of the cadenced step, European armies typically marched with the ranks open; that is, each rank was separated by a distance of approximately thirteen feet, or six paces, from the one in front of it. This meant that a three-rank-line such as the British Army used would have a depth of about forty-feet, and other European nations who used formations four or five ranks deep, would have had an even greater depth. The first problem was that it was necessary to close-up the ranks, so that the soldiers are stacked closely one behind the other, when they were to fire. This takes time, and the procedure became even more inconvenient when, as was sometimes done earlier in the eighteenth-century, after firing, the soldiers then opened ranks to reload.

The distance between ranks becomes a critical issue when it is desired to break a line into column for easy maneuvering. The simplest way to break the line into column was for subdivisions of the line to make a simultaneous quarter wheel to (usually) the right. The first problem encountered was that the width of the subdivision doing the wheeling needed to be greater than its depth, and this was not always convenient. The point of forming a column was to have a smaller front, and using an open rank formation, this meant that at a minimum, in the British Army, the front could not be less than forty feet wide. Secondly with open ranks, the troops in the rear ranks on the wheeling flank would become entangled with the pivoting flank of the next subdivision to (when wheeling to the right) the left. To get around these disadvantages, complex maneuvers had to be performed: maneuvers that were often very time-consuming. Even more problematical was that it also proved impossible to speedily reform line from column, as the same complex maneuvers then had to be performed in reverse to reform the line. Moreover the column formed in this manner would be longer than the line it replaced, which often made the whole exercise pointless, was unhandy to move, and generated the need for even more complex maneuvers when reforming line. Finally, since troops marching in column almost inevitably tend to stretch out, that is to increase the distance between themselves and the man in front, the open ranks of the troops exaggerated this tendency even further, and so exacerbated the whole problem of the length of the column.

Many of these problems were solved when it was decided that the soldiers would regularly form and march in closed ranks, that is, with the soldiers stacked closely together, one behind the other. It would now no longer be necessary to close the ranks before firing. Moreover most of the problems with wheeling to break the line into column, and reform the column into line would be eliminated. Most historians believe that the cadenced step is crucial to this process. With soldiers standing closely, one behind the other, it is argued, the cadenced step was necessary to keep them from treading on the heels of the man in front of them. Moreover, it is argued, the uniform length of step greatly speeded up things in general, by allowing greater precision in movement.

While maneuvering in closed ranks was undeniably a significant improvement on earlier systems, the argument that the cadenced step was necessary to accomplish this simply do not hold up. As was argued in chapter six, it does not seem likely that the cadenced step was, or could be, used on uneven ground or in battle. What most likely occurred was that each soldier

backed off from the man in front of him just enough to avoid treading on his heels. When it was necessary to regain the distance for firing or any other purpose, he lengthened his stride just enough to regain the distance or took a quick extra pace. It is worth noting that the soldiers were often described as running when it was essential to complete a movement quickly, often when deploying, or wheeling to form line, these being moments when formations are exceedingly vulnerable to enemy action. This would seem to indicate, quite strongly, that the precision that the cadenced step supposedly brought to battlefield maneuvers was not as important as it is often described. Furthermore the use of the cadenced step would, in theory at least, have prohibited any effort to hurry a movement, which argues that, if strictly applied, the use of the cadenced step would, in practice have often *slowed* rather than hastened a movement.

See Robert S. Quimby, *The Background of Napoleonic Warfare: The Theory of Military Tactics in Eighteenth-Century France*, New York, AMS Press Inc., 1973, especially Chapters 1 and 3, and also Brent Nosworthy, *The Anatomy of Victory: Battle Tactics, 1689-1763*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 1992, especially Chapter 4.

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