

# THE EVOLUTION AND DECLINE OF THE RESTORATION MILITIA IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, 1660-1745

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*It was one of the ironies of the English Civil War and Interregnum that the triumph of the Parliamentary cause should have resulted in the emergence of the kind of large standing army, careless of constitutional niceties, against which Parliament had ostensibly fought in the first place. Invariably, opponents of the army saw a militia system as a natural alternative to the standing army and the threat of military despotism, the Militia being increasingly referred to as an 'Old Constitutional Force' whose very existence negated the need for a standing army at all. That some kind of armed force was required was obvious both from the often violent nature of English domestic politics after 1660 and the continuing tradition of real or imagined threats of invasion. In the event the Militia, as established by the Restoration Militia Acts of 1661-3, was capable of containing the former but not the latter and by the middle of the Eighteenth Century had become little more than the butt of ridicule and contempt. Of this process, the development of the Militia in Buckinghamshire between 1660 and 1745 affords an illuminating example.*

## I

Within four months of Charles II's return to England in May 1660 the House of Commons was considering a systematic programme for disbanding the New Model Army. This had been all but completed by December<sup>1</sup> although other New Model regiments remained in existence at Dunkirk for a further two years. The new army that Charles began to create in 1661 to safeguard his throne was destined to remain limited in size. It reached a strength of only 6,000 men as late as 1684, while the monarchy was faced with the very real danger of republican conspiracies such as that of Thomas Venner in January 1661. With possibly as few as twenty men Venner succeeded not only in putting the London Trained Bands to flight but subsequently holding off vastly superior numbers of the King's Life Guard and City Militia for half an hour. In such a situation order could only be maintained by an adequate militia system and, indeed, to a large extent the

Militia Acts passed between 1661 and 1663 were an indemnification for measures already put into effect by gentry in the counties, the Privy Council having re-issued the Militia statute of 1558 in December as a temporary means of legalising the re-establishment of the Militia<sup>2</sup>.

The Militia Acts themselves\* were firmly rooted in the recent past. Parliament appeared to have surrendered the command of the Militia to the Crown through royal prerogative, the very right denied Charles I by Parliament between 1640 and 1642 but, in reality, all control devolved upon Lords Lieutenant and, through the Lieutenancy, to the local gentry who provided both officers and Deputy Lieutenants. The basis of militia service was to remain the possession of property, echoing the ancient precedents of the Statute of

\* 13 Car. II, c. 6; 13 & 14 Car. II, c. 3; 15 Car. II, c. 4.

Westminster and before; but with a system of rating owing more to the monthly assessments of the Civil War and the tax on gentry utilised to raise the militia gendarmerie of the Major Generals. Thus, those with an income of over £50 per annum or an estate worth £600 per annum would be liable to provide foot soldiers, and those with an income of over £500 per annum or lands worth £6,000 per annum would be liable to provide horse. Property owners worth less than the stipulated minimum levels could, however, be joined in groups to find foot or horse under the 1662 Act, and the 1663 Act enabled Petty Constables to be authorised to raise foot from parishes in respect of estates liable to find less than one man.

In effect the numbers of men raised in each county would depend upon the value of property in the county as a whole and the ratio of horse to foot upon the actual distribution of that property between larger and smaller estates<sup>3</sup>. In addition, those property owners liable to find men — the 'finders' — would also contribute to the provision of ammunition and other expenses through a rate based on a quarter of monthly assessment, known generally as 'trophy money'. 'Finders' also had to pay men during training at 1s a day for foot and 2s a day for horse (2s 6d from 1663), the regiment being expected to muster for four days' training annually, inclusive of travel, and companies for two days up to four times per annum. In the event of the Militia being ordered out for service over longer periods the 'finders' were liable to provide a month's pay in advance but this would have to be reimbursed by the Crown in full before another month's pay could be charged. At first the Crown was also authorised to raise a sum equal to the county monthly quota based on the 1661 assessment for each of three years in order to maintain the Militia in service during the period of greatest threat, and this was utilised from 1662-4, when it lapsed.

Although the burden may appear onerous, in practice only small amounts were actually charged. The Hillesden account book, for example, shows that Mrs Elizabeth Denton was required to pay only £1 4s 8d or a third of

the bill of militia charges relating to the service of one horseman on her behalf in the militia between 7 May 1661 and 17 September 1662 while the trustees of Edmund Denton provided the remaining two thirds of the bill<sup>4</sup>. Since the gentry was under no statutory obligation to declare actual income the militia assessments were frequently rough calculations working to the benefit of those assessed, as the exceptionally well-rounded figures for horse assessments in the three hundreds of Buckingham indicate (Table 1). There was some discrimination in that the smaller estates sometimes bore a proportionately greater charge than larger estates, but the adaptation of monthly assessments to militia rating eliminated most of the inequalities of the pre-Civil War system, since all estates in a county were now charged, including non-residents, and no estate was charged with finding both horse and foot.

The haste with which militia arrangements were undertaken can be gauged from the convening of a 'Committee for settling the Militia' in Bucks as early as 22 March 1660, when it was decided to raise two troops of horse and a regiment of foot under the existing Commonwealth militia ordinances. By the time of the second meeting on 3 April it is clear that a considerable amount of work had been completed, since officers had already been nominated for both horse and foot and the committee members were requested to provide the names of persons enlisted in the horse and foot by 5 April or, failing that, at least the numbers of men to serve for each division of the county. It was resolved also that those with an income of as little as £15 would be required to contribute to finding foot<sup>5</sup>. Sir Richard Temple was appointed Colonel of the foot by the Council of State on 9 April 1660. By September the new Lord Lieutenant, the 2nd Earl of Bridgewater, had appointed nine Deputy Lieutenants — Sir Richard Temple, Sir Toby Tyrell and William Tyringham for the Buckingham and Newport hundreds; Sir Ralph Verney and Mr. Cheney for the Ashendon and Cottesloe hundreds; Sir Thomas Lee and Richard Ingoldsby for the Aylesbury hundreds; and Sir John Borlase and Sir William Bowyer for the Chiltern hundreds. The Deputy

Name	Location of Estate	Value of Estate, £ per annum	No. of Horse to find
George Purefoy Esq.	Shalstone	400	
Roger Price	Westbury	400	1
Sir Richard Temple, Bt.	Stowe	1134	
Edmund Dayrell, Gent.	Stowe	200	2
Sir Toby Tyrell, Bt.	Thornton	1050	
Sir Edmund Pye, Bt.	Leckhamstead	411	2
Viscount Baltinglass	Thornborough	400	
Simon Bennett Esq.	Beachampton	700	2
Mrs. Elizabeth Denton	Hillesden	300	
Executors of Edm. Denton	Hillesden	600	1
Sir Richard Minshull	Bourton	600	1
Francis Ingoldsby and the Lady his Mother	Lenborough	900	1
Lord Norman and the Countess of Suffolk	Twyford	1600	2
Edward Greenvill	Foscott	200	
Thomas Risley Esq.	Chetwode	200	1
Maxamilian Board, Gent.	Caversfield	300	
Edward Baggott Esq.	Buckingham	360	
Colonel William Smith	Radclive	400	1
Robert Dormer Esq.	Edgcott	300	
Mrs Busby, Widow and her children	Addington/ Marsh Gibbon	550	1
Peter Dayrell	Lillingstone	100	
Peter Dayrell, Gent.	Dayrell (ditto)	200	
Sir Thomas Dayrell		200	1
William Pollard, Gent.	Leckhamstead	300	
Francis Dodsworth and Mr Hayes	Lenborough	200	
Dr Bates	Maids Moreton	200	To find
Mr Thomas Edgerley	Water Stratford	250	Foot
Mr James Challenor and Thomas Challenor	Steeple Claydon	450	

Source: BL Stowe MSS 441, fo. 5.

Table 1. Assessment for the Horse in Three Hundreds of Buckingham, 1660-1.

Lieutenants acting as a committee (and they may also have formed the committee in the previous April) then apportioned 801 foot and 158 horse in the county (Table 2), the foot to be armed with pike, sword and belt or musket, sword, belt and 'bandyliers'<sup>6</sup>.

The actual allotment of numbers was, however, apparently arrived at by deciding the numbers required first as the uniform distribution of men per hundred suggests and then subsequently fitting the available estates to the

numbers required. Thus, in the case of the 16 horse apportioned to the three hundreds of Buckingham, the total value of estates considered liable to find horse was calculated at £11,725 per annum and a simple division by sixteen made to arrive at an average assessment of £733 per annum for one horseman. Some 25 estates were then grouped accordingly to provide the 16 horsemen (Table 1) while a further five estates considered liable for horse could not be fitted in to the scheme and had to be allocated to find foot instead<sup>7</sup>. The division of foot for the Buckingham hundreds was similarly apportioned on the basis of a total value of £8,275 in estates liable, with 60 musketeers and 22 pikemen divided between the parishes accordingly. The existence of several copies of the foot division with differing apportionments indicates that a considerable amount of adjustment was required in order to obtain the specified number of men. Indeed, one copy of the foot apportionment shows parish quotas being interchanged in varying combinations between two hundreds (Buckingham and Ashendon) and three militia companies (those of Captains Ingoldsby, Stafford and Risley)<sup>8</sup>.

Hundreds to be found	Horse	Foot to be found
Ashendon	24	123
Aylesbury	24	123
Buckingham	16	82
Chiltern	40	200
Cottesloe	24	123
Newport	30	150
<b>Totals</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>801</b>

Source: BL Stowe MSS 441, fo. 5. BRO *Lieutenancy L/Md 1/8.*

Table 2. Organisation of Bucks Militia, Sept. 1660.

Inevitably there were disputes on assessments since, although land value was familiar as a basis for assessment, it was at best ill-defined. In the three hundreds of Buckingham, Temple and his fellow Deputies had to make further inquiry into the Badwell estate at Foscott in September 1660. In the three hundreds of Ashendon Sir Ralph Verney received complaints from several quarters. Lady Stanhope, for example, considered in January

1661 that her husband's service and death in the Boarstall garrison during the Civil War should have been taken into account in her assessment, while Thomas Cobb wished to be relieved of the burden of finding foot and a Mr. Fonkinson claimed exemption as a non-resident of the county. In all, Verney listed 41 persons in default in the Ashendon hundreds on 31 January 1661 who, between them, should have found 37 musketeers and 9 pikemen for the company. In the Cottesloe hundreds the company commanded by Edmund Stafford, the son of the former Royalist officer, was still short of 36 men on 18 January 1661 and, in addition, Stafford, who needed 28 muskets and 84 pikes for his company, had only 14 pikes and 56 muskets available. Stafford was concerned that 'the Colours, leading Staffe, Partizans, Halberts, Muskets and Drums should be ready, that he may be in an equipage to march, trayne and exercise his Company, according to the modern discipline of warr'<sup>9</sup>.

Thus, although Temple and William Tyringham appear to have mustered the company in the three hundreds of Buckingham at the Cock Inn, Buckingham, as early as 2 November 1660, progress in the three hundreds of Ashendon and the three hundreds of Cottesloe was much slower. A warrant was issued for the militia to assemble at Grendon Underwood on 31 January 1661 but, as already noted, there was a large number of defaulters and Stafford requested a further muster at Winslow in order to ensure the roll was correct. There were already some alterations to be made such as the death of the minister at Waddesdon whose quota had to be reallocated, while some men had been sworn in and others had not. One problem was the absence of many of Verney's fellow Deputy Lieutenants in London, of which he complained to both Stafford and Captain John Risley<sup>10</sup>.

There was little difficulty finding officers, since they were exempted from militia assessment. Some commissions were granted as rewards, such as that of William Abell of East Claydon as a captain in October 1660, Abell having been instrumental in taking up a collection for the King. It was, of course, the

failure of many people to recognise the legality of the new militia system at all that had led to the Council of State order, sent to the Earl of Bridgewater for Bucks on 14 December 1660, which reiterated the 1558 statutes. The difficulty in establishing the Militia also led to the creation of bodies of volunteers in several counties while the peace of the country as a whole appeared at risk and the Militia still disorganised. Such a body of volunteers, all mounted, made its appearance at Aylesbury in February 1661, having been conceived in early January. Sir William Smith of Radclive was one who readily contributed horses to the volunteers and the Verney papers contain one list of 19 volunteers who took the oath of allegiance on 6 February 1661<sup>11</sup>.

A militia distribution based entirely on the location of property did not make much actual military sense and it may well have been for this reason that the Bucks Lieutenant aimed at a more uniform distribution between hundreds. There were many tasks of importance for a military force to perform immediately after the Restoration and, indeed, the entire period of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries might be characterised as a series of domestic crises threatening successive monarchs. In all counties the newly-formed Militia was active in disarming those suspected of disaffection, Bridgewater receiving orders to this effect in both December 1660 and January 1661. In April 1661 a report by Ingoldsby of 'dangerous words' being spoken by former associates of Richard Cromwell was communicated to Bridgewater by Sir Toby Tyrell and resulted in the recall of the Deputy Lieutenants from London to secure the county. Between 1663 and 1666 the Crown was able, through application of the special sums raised for the Militia, to maintain a standing guard of one twentieth of the Militia for 14-day periods at a time.

In Bucks the Deputy Lieutenants met in Aylesbury on 28 August 1663 to establish a standing guards system, ordering that Captain the Hon. James Herbert of Kingsey 'begin his motion with the Hors Guards' on 16 September. Half of Herbert's troop began

seven days' duty at Wing on the appointed day, to be followed by the second half of the troop on 23 September. The rota then worked its way through duties by the other two troops of Sir Henry Andrewes (at Buckingham) and Sir John Borlase (at Beaconsfield). In October the duty fell on the first half of the Colonel's company (at Wing), and so on through the remaining nineteen half-companies until March 1664, when the rota began again with the mounted troops. This 'second turne' as the Muster Book described it lasted until September 1664 when the 'second yeare' of standing service commenced. By the time the duty finally ended in July 1666 each half troop or half company had, in the course of three years, completed six separate tours of duty, each of seven days' duration, so that at any one time approximately 40 foot or 30 horse had been immediately available for service, although the actual places of duty had varied widely from Newport Pagnell, Buckingham and Winslow in the north to Colnbrook and Beaconsfield in the south<sup>12</sup>.

Although this kind of permanent partial mobilisation could not thereafter be repeated in times of domestic crises, the Militia was still available for internal security duties when required on a temporary basis. There does not appear to have been particular activity in Bucks during the Exclusion Crisis to rival the role of the London Trained Bands in patrolling the Capital by day and by night from October 1678 to December 1681 since, in Bucks, the oath of allegiance only had to be administered to fourteen suspects<sup>13</sup>. In July 1683, however, the Militia was ordered to arrest Simon Mayne, son of the Dinton regicide, at the time of the Rye House Plot, and arms seized from suspects by the Militia during the summer of 1684 were subsequently retained by the muster master, Joseph Rawson, for use by the county. Seizure of arms remained a task for the Militia in future crises such as Monmouth's rebellion in 1685 but also, for example, in April 1696 in the wake of the assassination plot against William and Mary when horses and arms were confiscated from Catholics, and again in February 1709 when arms and horses were seized in anticipation of a possible Jacobite landing in Scotland<sup>14</sup>.

Apart from disarming, the Militia also performed a function in active harrassment of potential troublemakers (which invariably came to imply dissenters) against whom were arrayed a variety of punitive legislative measures from the Acts of Uniformity to the Corporation Act, the Five Mile Act and the Conventicle Act. Not every county pursued dissenters to the same extent, much being dependent upon the character and attitude of the Lord Lieutenant and his appointees. Thus, in Norfolk, where moderates controlled the Lieutenancy, little was done. In Bucks, on the other hand, Bridgewater's known strong Anglicanism and his harassment of Quakers such as Isaac Penington and Baptists such as Benjamin Keach suggests that the Militia may have been used more extensively. Certainly the Verney papers refer to the arrest of Samuel Clarke, the Non-conformist rector of Doddershall, by three men of Lord Brackley's Militia troop in 1685. Clarke, together with John Hampden's former chaplain, was then confined in the Red Lion at Aylesbury<sup>15</sup>.

If the Militia as a whole was reasonably successful in curtailing political opposition to the Crown, it was less well regarded by contemporaries for its role in defence of the country against external aggression. The Second Dutch War from February 1665 to August 1667 brought two relatively brief direct threats to the country, the first from June to July 1666 between the defeat of the British fleet at the 'Four Days' Battle' and its subsequent victory at 'St. James' Fight', and the second from May to July 1667 during which the Dutch fleet successfully destroyed ships at anchor at Chatham on 10 June and made an assault on Landguard Fort near Harwich on 2 July 1667. The outbreak of the war at least resulted in efforts in some counties to regularise the somewhat haphazard system by which the Lieutenancy operated. Bridgewater, for example, instructed his Deputies in May 1665 that the Lieutenancy could not function 'except there be at proper times and places meetings of the Deputy Lieutenants that so both the captains and other officers and the persons who either beare or finde arms may have their several complaints reasonably considered and

justly relieved'. In fact, there is some evidence from the muster book that Bridgewater's Deputies had begun to meet regularly on the Wednesday before the commencement of the Easter and Michaelmas sessions at Aylesbury to hear complaints in 1663, subsequently systematically touring the county as a whole. The only military response to the first crisis of the Dutch War was an order to the mounted troops to prolong the standing duty in which they were still engaged from seven to fourteen days and from half to full troop strength in June and July 1666 so that one troop was immediately available<sup>16</sup>.

The second crisis in the summer of 1667 was, however, far more serious. Bridgewater had received a warrant from the King in February 1667 to seize arms and horses from suspects and he, in turn, wrote to his Deputies on 22 February asking for their assistance in putting the Militia in hand. A second royal communication on 1 April ordered the Militia to be put in readiness and the company trainings were completed in April and May, although Sir Ralph Verney for one was unable to attend at least three through absence in London. Verney was much angered by the 'insolence' of the Dutch fleet, warning his son, Edmund (at East Claydon) on 12 June 1667, to get his arms and horses ready to send at an hour's notice though, if possible, the Verney tenants should not be unnecessarily alarmed by 'apprehension of warre'. When Verney wrote from London the Council had still not decided upon the course of action to be followed but by 14 June the Bucks Militia was ordered out 'at the Dutch attempt upon Chatham', serving periods ranging from five to thirteen days at Aylesbury, Colnbrook and Newport Pagnell (Table 3).

The fact that the Militia, which performed reasonably well in action against the Dutch in both Kent and Essex, could simply not be brought out for longer periods, resulted in efforts at reform which were ultimately frustrated by the Crown's attempt illegally to appropriate, for other purposes, money raised for the Militia. In May 1665 Bridgewater had been asked to send the balances and arrears of the Militia money to the Tower of London or

<i>At Aylesbury</i>	
Captain Herbert's troop	15-26 June (12 days)
Colonel's company	17-21 June (5 days)
Lt Colonel's company	15-21 June (7 days)
Captain Ingoldsby's company	15-21 June (7 days)
Captain Norton's company	16-21 June (6 days)
Captain Stafford's company	16-21 June (6 days)
<i>At Colnbrook</i>	
Captain Borlase's troop	16-26 June (11 days)
Major's company	15-22 June (8 days)
Captain Wyan's company	16-22 June (7 days)
Captain Saunders' company	15-22 June (8 days)
Captain Longe's company	14-22 June (9 days)
Captain Widmore's company	15-22 June (8 days)
<i>At Newport Pagnell</i>	
Captain Andrewes' troop	15-27 June (13 days)

Source: BRO *Lieutenancy L/Md 1/8.*

Table 3. Duty of the Bucks Militia 'at the Dutch attempt upon Chatham', June 1667.

similar repository for 'safe keeping'. Many counties regarded this with deep suspicion and indeed in January 1666 Bridgewater was asked why he had so far failed to send the money to Windsor Castle as promised the previous summer. In fact, two thirds of the money raised from less suspicious counties was spent not on the Militia but on the fortification of Plymouth while the remainder was devoted to the government's new plan in July 1666 for a 'select militia' of horse. This force was dismissed almost at once in September 1666 though temporarily re-embodied in 1667.

The attempted fraudulent use of such funds ended any real possibility of genuine reform and, thereafter, it has been argued that the Militia simply decayed. This was a gradual rather than a sudden decline and the Bucks Militia certainly continued to function well enough. The usual two days' training was held in October 1670, though that of Ingoldsby's company was delayed by his absence in London, and similarly in November 1671, August-October 1672, and May 1673. A warrant also survives for May 1675 ordering the Chief Constable of the three hundreds of Ashendon to muster William Serjeant's company at the Ship, Grendon Underwood, with two days' pay and 6d for the muster master being provided by each 'finder' as well

	<i>May 1673</i>		<i>1 August 1684</i>	
Viscount Brackley's troop	62 men	34 Ashendon 7 Aylesbury 21 Cottesloe	59 men	32 Ashendon 7 Aylesbury 20 Cottesloe
Captain Sir Henry Andrewe's troop	61 men	18 Buckingham 10 Cottesloe 33 Newport	60 men	18 Buckingham 7 Cottesloe 35 Newport
Captain John Loggon's troop	61 men	13 Aylesbury 16 Burnham 19 Desborough 13 Stoke	Captain Sir Dennis Hampson's troop 55 men	11 Aylesbury 14 Burnham 16 Desborough 14 Stoke
Colonel Viscount Brackley's company	86 men	13 Aylesbury 73 Cottesloe	86 men	13 Aylesbury 73 Cottesloe
Lt Colonel Sir Anthony Chester's company	83 men	83 Newport	86 men	86 Newport
Major Sir Philip Palmer's company	79 men	22 Burnham 57 Stoke	Captain Henry Somner's company 83 men	22 Burnham 61 Stoke
Captain Edmund Stafford's company	84 men	38 Ashendon 4 Buckingham 42 Cottesloe	Major Edmund Stafford's company 84 men	37 Ashendon 4 Buckingham 43 Cottesloe
Captain Brett Norton's company	85 men	11 Cottesloe 74 Newport	Captain Roger Chapman's company 86 men	10 Cottesloe 76 Newport
Captain George Longe's company	85 men	21 Burnham 64 Desborough	Captain William Fleetwood's company 84 men	18 Burnham 66 Desborough
Captain William Serjeant's company	80 men	80 Ashendon	Captain Thomas Piggott's company 82 men	82 Ashendon
Captain Sir John Busby's company	85 men	85 Buckingham	85 men	85 Buckingham
Captain Sir Richard Anderson's company	84 men	32 Aylesbury 45 Burnham 3 Cottesloe 4 Desborough	82 men	32 Aylesbury 43 Burnham 3 Cottesloe 4 Desborough
Captain Thomas Saunders	81 men	81 Aylesbury	85 men	85 Aylesbury
<i>Totals:</i>		184 Horse 832 Foot (525 muskets, 307 pikes)	<i>Totals:</i>	
			174 Horse 843 Foot	

	<i>1673</i>	<i>1684</i>		<i>1673</i>	<i>1684</i>
Horse:			Foot:		
Ashendon	34	32	Ashendon	118	119
Aylesbury	20	18	Aylesbury	126	130
Buckingham	18	18	Buckingham	89	89
Burnham	16	14	Burnham	88	83
Cottesloe	31	27	Cottesloe	129	129
Desborough	19	16	Desborough	68	70
Newport	33	35	Newport	157	162
Stoke	13	14	Stoke	57	61

Source: BRO *Lieutenancy L/Md 1/8; PRO E101/67/15 (2).*

Table 4. The Bucks Militia 1673 and 1684.

as a pound of powder for each musketeer. Detailed muster rolls for 1673 and 1684 show that the Militia had varied hardly at all in terms of its numerical composition since 1660 (Table 4) even though it is highly likely that the financial condition of the population as a whole had changed considerably<sup>18</sup>. But,

increasingly, the Militia was to fall foul of the turbulent politics of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a process particularly marked with the accession to the throne of a monarch who found local control of the Militia sufficiently irksome to cause him to neglect the force altogether.

## II

To a certain extent, of course, politics had always played a part in the business of the Lieutenancy and the organisation of the Militia. Danby, the Lord Treasurer, had purged several Lords Lieutenant in 1675-6 including the Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, while there was, for example, a long-standing dispute between the Earl of Winchelsea and the Duke of Richmond in Kent between 1660 and 1669. In Bucks, the Lieutenancy was partly purged during the Exclusion Crisis, with Sir Richard Ingoldsby and Richard Winwood of Ditton being 'put out' as Deputy Lieutenants in April 1680 and replaced by Sir Thomas Lee of Hartwell and Sir Dennis Hampson of Taplow. At the same time Thomas Wharton, son of the veteran Presbyterian leader who had replaced Paget as Lord Lieutenant in 1642, was dismissed from the magistracy<sup>19</sup>. These were, however, minor occurrences to compare with the experiences of James II's reign.

The crucial turning point for the Militia as far as the new King was concerned was probably the inept performance of the Militia in the south-western counties during Monmouth's abortive rebellion in June and July 1685. Outside the West Country, the Militia was, however, able to maintain order. In Bucks a quorum of Deputy Lieutenants had been ordered to be constantly available as in other counties in February 1685 and the Militia itself was ordered on immediate readiness to act if required on 16 June. In July Ingoldsby and other former opponents of Charles I and Charles II, such as Major Beke of Haddenham, were arrested and conveyed to the Tower of London, while Lords Lieutenant were instructed to keep a careful watch for fugitives from the field of Sedgemoor. The cost of even

this comparatively limited duty was sufficient for a weekly tax to be deemed necessary by the county's Militia treasurer to replenish his funds and made nonsense of Lord Sunderland's request to Bridgewater to estimate the probable expense of keeping the Bucks Militia out for a year's permanent duty. It was not only that the Militia was too costly, but also that it was too inflexible an instrument and too much under the control of local gentry for it to be ideal for the kind of policing force James required<sup>20</sup>. In this respect the army was far more suitable as an agent of central government in the provinces.

Charles II, although retaining his foot soldiers in large garrisons, had himself utilised cavalry for internal security duties. In December 1665, for example, detachments of the Royal Horse Guards were located at ten different stations in England ranging from York to Salisbury and including High Wycombe, Aylesbury and Colnbrook. Colnbrook remained a major garrison station throughout the reigns of both brothers. The presence of regular troops was hardly welcomed with enthusiasm especially as billeting on private households, theoretically illegal under the Petition of Right of 1628, was widespread by 1671. The prevailing attitude of much of the country to the army can be illustrated by the failure to find any recruits in the county in March 1678 as recounted by Edmund Verney:

The Drums beat up last Saturday at Alesbury for Volontiers, but not a man came in to list, altho' they might have been under Wisedome's conduct, whereby it playnely appears, the spirit of the nation is down, or else we are not the men we fancy ourselves to

be, for I have heard many say if we had war with the French that vast Multitudes would go against them, but for my part I see no such thing, if people in other parts of England are as backwards as in our country and Wallingford where I myself frightened most of the young fry into Holes and Cellars, with only walking up and down the streets, being taken for a Presse-Master<sup>21</sup>.

According to Verney only 'Gaolbirds, thieves and rogues' would enlist under Captain Wisedome at Aylesbury.

However, some of the hostility shown towards the army and its recruits can be explained by the county's experience in the following year when two regular units were disbanded in the county as part of that general reduction in the army forced upon the King by Parliament under the Disbanding Act. Lord Gerrard's regiment of horse was disbanded at Aylesbury on 10 January and Lord Latimer's troop of the Duke of York's regiment at Buckingham on 17 January 1679. At Buckingham, Latimer was roundly abused by his men when the Deputy Lieutenants of the county\* proceeded to disband them and Edmund Verney evinced some pity for the men being 'turned out' in frosty and snowy weather without pay. Inevitably several men sold off their equipment whilst others turned to robbery and indeed a contemporary Bucks proverb quoted by Verney was 'Here, if you beat a bush, it's odds you'd start a Thief'<sup>22</sup>.

Billeting was again declared illegal by the Disbanding Act of 1679 with the usual exception of inns and alehouses. To a certain extent James tried to avoid indiscipline of troops towards civilians by issue of orders to this effect in August 1685 and September 1688 and a complete survey was prepared in 1686 by the Secretary of War of all inns and alehouses. This revealed, for example, that 136 out of 181 parishes and hamlets in Bucks were capable of providing accommodation for troops amounting to 1,210 beds and 1,936 stable

\* Verney described one of the Deputies involved in disbanding the two units, Sir John Busby of Addington, as posing as a 'great soldier', acquiring two small field pieces in order to be able to discharge them regularly.

places. But the massive expansion of the army between 1685 and 1688 proved too great a burden especially as the troops, both infantry and cavalry, were now spread throughout the country in an effort to exert government control and ultimately the need to quarter troops was placed firmly above concern for civilian rights.

One of the new regiments originated in the area, the 13th Foot being raised by the Earl of Huntingdon with its headquarters at Buckingham in June 1685. Its first duty was the guarding of captured Monmouth rebels at Buckingham and Aylesbury before the regiment moved to James' military camp on Hounslow Heath in August. The regiment was again stationed in the county in May 1688 en route from Chester to Hounslow with its companies quartered at Colnbrook, Slough, Eton and Windsor. Another regular regiment associated with the county in later years was the 16th Foot, raised in Middlesex in October 1685 but stationed at Stony Stratford where it returned in 1688 until its despatch to the United Provinces in April 1689<sup>23</sup>. The Aylesbury parish registers also testify to the continual presence of troops with, for example, two burials recorded in 1686 — a soldier who died at the 'Crowne' in January and another hanged for an unspecified offence in March. Another soldier was murdered in September 1687 and Thomas Clay of the 13th Foot buried in May 1688. In fact, units of the main army were stationed in Marlow, High Wycombe, Buckingham, Winslow, Wendover and Aylesbury throughout the winter of 1686-7. This constant attention was such that innkeepers at Colnbrook removed their inn signs in October 1688 in an attempt to ward off unwelcome military guests. Irish troops were particularly resented for their lack of discipline, the younger Edmund Verney recording of their march through East Claydon in October 1688:

and just at the town's end they quarrelled amongst themselves about going over a stile in Newfield. One of them was knocked down and his skull much broken and he now lies insensible at Thomas Miller's. 'Tis thought he will die very shortly if he is not dead already<sup>24</sup>.

The army, which James attempted to divorce from society as much as possible, was also used as a ready source of loyal supporters to replace those purged from lieutenancies and magistracies in the course of 1686 and 1687. In Bucks a Catholic army officer was created a Deputy Lieutenant and two Protestants and another Catholic officer created Justices. In all three Catholics and twenty-one dissenters were brought onto the county bench while five other Catholics and only nine Anglicans remained from the original list. The only prominent Catholics not appointed were a minor and a lunatic while Sir Edward Longville provided a Catholic Sheriff in 1687. Out of the sixteen Deputy Lieutenants serving in March 1685 only four had been replaced by November 1686, but only two — Sir Richard Anderson and Sir Dennis Hampson — survived by February 1688 with none of the four replacements of 1686 surviving either. The 2nd Earl of Bridgewater died in November 1686 to be succeeded as Lord Lieutenant by his son, Viscount Brackley. Within months the 3rd Earl was one of seventeen Lords Lieutenant dismissed for refusing to obey the King's instruction to provide the names of Catholics and Dissenters to serve as Justices and Militia officers. He was succeeded by Judge Jeffreys, who had purchased the Bulstrode estate at Hedgerley and some of the Hill estate at Fulmer in 1686. Yet even Jeffreys failed to provide the government with an adequate reply to its demand in October 1687 for a comprehensive canvass of the likely attitudes of Deputies and Justices if elected to a new Parliament. Parallel to this purging of Deputies and Justices was an attempted purge of Corporations, the mayor of Buckingham alone being replaced three times<sup>25</sup>.

Inevitably this purge of local gentry and the deliberate neglect of the Militia, except in the Capital, eroded the Crown's support in the localities and even the army was far from immune to conspiracy. When James attempted to mobilise support and the Militia in September 1688 in face of an expected invasion by William of Orange it was too late to repair the damage of the previous three years. Sir Ralph Verney had warned his son, John, to avoid Militia service in such troubled times in October

1688 while his grandson, Edmund, also intended to refuse any Militia commission. There was considerable uncertainty and, when Sir Henry Andrewes' house at Newport Pagnell was broken into, Ralph urged Edmund to 'be careful to secure your plate and other things of value as well as you can'. After William's landing at Torbay on 5 November 1688, his supporters began to come out into the open. In Bucks Lord Wharton's house at Wooburn had been a regular venue for conspirators and at Upper Winchendon his son, Thomas Wharton, having had his armoury seized at the time of the Rye House plot, had gathered far more weapons than those seized five years previously. Two days after William's landing, Anthony Wood saw sixty horsemen riding through Oxford led by Thomas Wharton and 'supposed by some to be Buckinghamshire gentlemen to go into the West'<sup>26</sup>.

Although some county Militia such as that of Norfolk had been on coast watch since October the Bucks Militia was not called out until late November. There is considerable confusion over events at this time, with clear indications that the allegiance of the Bucks militia was severely divided. On 25 November 1688 Sir Ralph Verney in writing to his son, John, reported that the raising of the Militia horse had been under way in the expectation that it would not be sent outside the county. Verney had then been roused from his bed at 2 a.m. to send in horses, men and arms to Stony Stratford by 2 p.m. and 'all the Bucks trained bands are gone with thos forces as is to march against the Prince'. Lady Gardner similarly reported on 29 November that all the Bucks trained bands were gone 'as is to meet the Prince' but on 28 November rebels led by Lord Manchester and Lord Northampton had reached Northampton 'where Captain Atkins and Captain Chapman joyned them with the militia of Buckinghamshire'. Atkins and Roger Chapman, who commanded the company mostly drawn from the Newport hundreds, had 'pretended too an order from my Lord Chancellor [the Lord Lieutenant, Jeffreys] to call the Bucks Militia . . .' As Chapman's party only swelled the force at Northampton to about

300 men it would appear that possibly only his own company was involved.

There was, however, virtually no fighting and James had fled his Kingdom by 23 December leaving the remnants of his army around Uxbridge. The greatest problem was the indiscipline of the Irish regiments who were at first disbanded and then hastily recalled to the

colours when their meanderings through England threatened the maintenance of law and order. At Maidenhead the Irish were frightened out of the town by the inhabitants playing the 'Dutch march' on kettles while at Wendover many of the inhabitants fled when they believed the Irish might be approaching as some had killed two or three peasants nearby and plundered houses<sup>27</sup>.

### III

Several of the influences apparent between 1685 and 1688 continued to characterise the period following the 'Glorious Revolution'. The first, which cannot be developed at any length here, is the continuing unpopularity of the Regular Army and that paradox so often glimpsed whereby English victories abroad were welcomed but not their victors. The virtually continuous wars in Flanders and elsewhere between 1688 and 1714 thus have many echoes in the county with the considerable demands upon the county resulting in the 'middle and trading sort of people' being reported as desperate for peace by 1712<sup>28</sup>.

One cause of civil-military friction was billeting, the rates for innkeepers claiming reimbursement being regularly issued at Quarter Sessions. There were, however, continuing complaints<sup>29</sup> while similar controversy surrounded the provision of waggons and horses to enable military baggage to be conveyed. There was legal confusion over the means by which the army could acquire transport and understandable reluctance to let soldiers requisition waggons and horses at all<sup>30</sup>. The wars were also accompanied by attempts at impressment for military service<sup>31</sup> and, although theoretically restricted to the more unproductive members of society, it could still generate resistance<sup>32</sup>. Lastly, the impact of the wars could also be revealed in other ways, such as providing relief for soldiers and seamen passing through parishes under the provisions of Elizabethan legislation of 1597; the maintenance of the parish's own veterans; and the steady passage of troops suffering from

disease who were regularly buried in the county's churchyards<sup>33</sup>.

The second characteristic of the period 1685-8 to survive into the later seventeenth century and early eighteenth was the increasing politicisation of the Lieutenancy. The 3rd Earl of Bridgewater was restored to the Lieutenancy in March 1689, Jeffreys having been committed to the Tower of London. When Bridgewater died he was succeeded in January 1702 by Thomas Wharton, now 5th Lord Wharton. However, when Anne succeeded to the throne in June 1702 Wharton, as the leading Whig party manager of his day, was dismissed and replaced by the Tory, William Cheyne, 2nd Viscount Newhaven. Cheyne had in fact fought a duel with Wharton during the Bucks Quarter Sessions in July 1699 and was Wharton's leading political opponent in the county. In January 1703 the political 'musical chairs' continued with the Whigs able to oust Cheyne and have him replaced with the 4th Earl of Bridgewater. In turn, Bridgewater lost his place when the Tories returned to power and Cheyne was reinstated in May 1712.

On the accession of George I and the Whigs' return to power, Cheyne was again dismissed and Bridgewater reinstated in December 1714. On his death in 1728 he was succeeded as Lord Lieutenant by Richard Temple, 1st Viscount Cobham, who was in his turn dismissed in 1738 having deserted the Walpole faction some years earlier. Not unexpectedly when the Lord Lieutenant changed there were parallel changes in the composition of the Deputies, although by no means on the same scale as in James II's

reign. Thus, four separate lists of Deputies for the county between March 1701 and March 1703 spanning the four Lieutenancies of the 3rd Earl of Bridgewater, Wharton, Cheyne, and the 4th Earl of Bridgewater show only four men retaining their position throughout — Sir Peter Tyrell, Thomas Pigott, Stephen Waller, and Richard Beke. The political nature of the Militia after 1688 was also illustrated by Dr. Townsend's request to Sir Ralph Verney that his son be made muster master for the county in 1689, Townsend having been previously a staunch supporter of James II. Factionalism became such that in the crucial year of 1745 many Lieutenancies were vacant, including some in the north-western counties which faced the brunt of the Jacobite invasion<sup>34</sup>.

The third characteristic of the post-1688 period was the continuing neglect of the Militia although, as previously indicated, this remained a gradual rather than a rapid progress towards decay. There were still emergencies in which Militia forces were required. In June 1690, for example, the Militia, including that in Bucks, was called out for over a month in face of a French and Jacobite invasion threat following the naval battle off Beachy Head. In May 1692 some units were called out and the customary arms searches made when the French again attempted to land James II and an army on English soil, only to have their fleet checked at the battle of Barfleur and destroyed off Cap La Hogue in the space of six days between 19 and 24 May 1692. There was, as already recounted, another French and Jacobite invasion scare in 1708/9, Scotland being the target on that occasion. In 1718/9 and 1726/7 there were Spanish invasion threats and, in 1744, a serious surprise French naval concentration on their entry into the war between Britain and Spain<sup>35</sup>. In 1715 and 1745, of course, there were actual Jacobite invasions against which the Militia in northern England proved highly fallible although this was partly due to the neglect that had already taken place.

One factor contributing to this general neglect was the lack of interest in the House of Commons and the legislative confusion that resulted. The Commons was concerned pri-

marily with cutting costs, a process which inevitably militated against creating an efficient Militia whilst simultaneously preventing the Crown from expanding the regular army. The last serious attempt to reform the Militia for fifty years was a bill in 1689 designed as much as anything to regulate the powers of the Lieutenant, but it was lost when Parliament was dissolved in January 1690. Thereafter bills were of a temporary nature. In 1690, for example, an Act was passed enabling the Crown to call out the Militia for a year without the necessity of reimbursing the month's pay advanced by 'finders' before the commencement of the subsequent month's duty under the Act of 1662.

That this was militarily desirable might be illustrated by the example of Bucks where the summoning of the Militia for more than a month's service in June 1690 resulted in the Militia Treasurer reporting at the Michaelmas session of that year that his stock had been completely 'expended in necessary Trophies on that extraordinary occasion'. No means could be found by the Lord Lieutenant or his Deputies to pay the men so it was agreed by the Justices that the Treasurer of County Stock should contribute £126 to discharge the Militia Treasurer from his debt. The need to reimburse the first month's pay was again suspended by an Act of 1715 but this lapsed in 1720, was renewed for seven years in 1722 and was renewed again for one year in 1734. The measure again lapsed with the result that after 1735 the Militia could not in theory be mustered again until the pay advanced by counties in the past had been repaid by the Crown. When the crisis of 1745 occurred the problem was accentuated by the fact that Parliament was prorogued and a bill had to be passed through all its stages in one day in November 1745 since those Lords Lieutenant who had summoned the Militia had, in theory, acted illegally. In many cases it actually proved easier to raise *ad hoc* bodies of volunteers such as those in Northants, Kent and Liverpool than the Militia<sup>36</sup>.

Another factor in the decline was that

successive governments increasingly preferred to use the army rather than the Militia for internal security duties. In theory the population as a whole had been progressively disarmed, with those arms seized in 1684 not being returned to their owners and many others losing their weapons under the provisions of the Game Laws of 1671. Late Stuart and early Georgian England, however, remained an age of considerable domestic violence with frequent food riots at times of high prices and constant royal and religious carnivalia punctuating the political factionalism. In Bucks there were, for example, food riots at Marlow and High Wycombe in 1693 and an election riot at Marlow in 1710. The Bucks Militia, however, played no part in these affairs, though elsewhere some Militia units were so employed, notably in the Capital. Governments, however, clearly regarded the Militia as unreliable and the 1715 Riot Act significantly gave no role to the Militia in peace time unless embodied<sup>37</sup>.

In purely local terms the Militia remained a prominent part of the Justices' work, with the Militia accounts regularly submitted for inspection at Quarter Sessions, John Eddowes acting as Militia Treasurer of the county from 1687-1691 and John Maccasree from 1692 to at least 1709. Isolated pieces of evidence are extant showing the Militia remaining in operation — a summons of the Chief Constable of the three hundreds of Buckingham to parish petty constables directing them to assemble Edmund Dayrell's company at the Crown Inn, Buckingham, at 8 a.m. on 20 May 1695 for training; and a muster roll of 1697. The latter reported that all arms had been good at the 1695 muster and showed 30 officers and 820 men in ten foot companies and 12 officers and 177 men in three mounted troops. The mounted troops were now commanded by Sir Dennis Hampson while the foot were commanded by Lt. Col. Roger Chapman, the rebel of 1688, under the Colonelship of William Cheyne<sup>38</sup>.

The Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745, however, indicate that the Bucks Militia was no more prepared than those of any other

county to meet emergencies and, indeed, it was not called out at all in the latter year. On 8 November 1715 the 4th Earl of Bridgewater forwarded to his Deputies the instructions he had received from the Council to administer oaths of allegiance and seize arms, ammunition and gunpowder from all papists and suspected papists. Viscount Fermanagh wrote to his son, Ralph Verney, on 4 December 1715 of how the Michaelmas Quarter Sessions were to be held at Chesham, Buckingham and Aylesbury in order to administer the oaths more conveniently. Unfortunately, Fermanagh's Militia horse had died from 'stone' and this appears to have been generally prevalent in the county at this time. Sir Thomas Cave of Leicestershire, Fermanagh's son-in-law, clearly had no great regard for the efforts in Bucks, writing to Fermanagh on 12 November that his men were ready but,

I judge yours will require more time, and perhaps some of the young officers may by mistake dress for an opera, and so make a farce of a jackboot. I verily believe my troop will eat up three of the Bucks officers at once.

Cave penned a similar indictment to his brother-in-law, Ralph Verney, on 3 December,

The Militia of Bucks has been out too, but the whole County I hear are Cowards, for ye men are unwilling to go, whereas I have two or three ready for every horse, and could have a troop in a week's time for ye service of his Majesty.

The crisis was also marked by the passage of Dutch troops of Lt. General Pallandt's regiment through the county from Berkhamsted through Winslow to Towcester, Fermanagh recording that they 'would not keep the Road but cutt or pulled up the Hedges at Sand Hill to go over the pasture . . .' <sup>39</sup>

After 1715 the Militia all but disappears from view in the county. There is a commission of Sir Thomas Lee of Hartwell as Colonel of the Militia in 1715 and the disposal of arms of some militiamen at High Wycombe in April 1716. The only evidence of the operation of the Militia thereafter is three short miscellaneous accounts, mostly of clothing, prepared by Quartermaster George

Smith for the years 1729 to 1732. It can safely be presumed that with the lapsing of the provision for Militia payment in 1735 the activity of the Bucks Militia also ceased if it had not already done so. It is therefore not surprising that the voluminous correspondence of the Purefoy family of Shalstone between 1735 and 1753, which for all their neglect of national events are a full catalogue of local concerns, contains not a single reference to the Militia<sup>40</sup>.

Significantly, the only mention of national events in the Purefoy letters refers to the 1745 Jacobite rising which indicates the measure of panic and confusion in the county and indeed the country as a whole, when the Jacobites were able to advance as far south as Derby in December 1745. In May 1745, before the Jacobite landing in Scotland, there had been little concern, recruiting officers meeting their customary lack of success in Bucks. Justices had not been available to assist, Ralph Verney, now 1st Earl Verney, being informed by Mr. Millward on 7 May that,

As I am told there was some officers who wanted a number of men to be raised in the County, and they was so angry that there was no justices to do their Business, they writ up to the War Office from Aylesbury. No association was formed in Bucks when the Jacobite success became apparent, the 3rd Viscount Fermanagh informing his father, Earl Verney, on 8 December 1745,

The County was greatly alarm'd on Friday with ye Rebels. They thought they had been coming here. Several Families removed and vast numbers pack'd up their Valuables and some sent them away.

The Lord Lieutenant, the 3rd Duke of Marlborough, who had succeeded Cobham in 1738, apparently did nothing and Cobham himself 'frightened the people very much' by packing up his arms and plate and sending them

towards Oxford only to have them turned back by Richard Grenville of Wotton. But Grenville himself subsequently set out for London 'not caring to stay' and the Lowndes family at Winslow also packed their plate and moved to Wotton as being a 'more private place'. According to Fermanagh, it was believed that the Young Pretender had reached Northampton when in fact it was the Duke of Cumberland *en route* for the north, although his progress was delayed for an hour and a quarter by a Jacobite sympathiser who locked up Lathbury bridge while the Ouse was in flood. At Aylesbury the parish register indicated similar panic, recording on 22 November 1745,

This parish was sadly surprised through fear of an immediate visitt by the Hland Rebels from whom Good Lord deliver us.

At Chesham the streets were reportedly barricaded with carts, waggons and beer barrels<sup>41</sup>.

The failures of the Militia in 1745, when their worth was signified by the Jacobites assigning to them the code word 'small beer', coupled with the French invasion threat of the previous year, began a new agitation for a reformed Militia as an adequate and more cost-effective means of home defence. Since the country as a whole still set its face against a large standing army the only viable alternative to an efficient Militia would have been the importation of foreign mercenaries at times of crisis, but that was both impracticable and undesirable. The agitation was to reach a climax with the loss of Minorca in 1756, an operation which the French had originally intended as diversion for invasion itself. There was a far more ambitious French scheme for invasion in 1759, destroyed by Hawke's victory at Quiberon Bay, but by that time the Militia had finally been reformed and an entirely new kind of force created.

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  41. Lady Verney, *op. cit.*, II (1930) 196-7, 200-1; BRO Verney M11/59 Fermanagh to Verney, 8.12.1745; Gibbs, *op. cit.*, 359; G. J. Smith, *A Chat about Chesham* (Chesham, 1903) 32.